



Rural Development

November 30, 2015

Office of the
Under Secretary

RURAL DEVELOPMENT
CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY STATEMENT

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As the Under Secretary, I am committed to improving Civil Rights throughout Rural Development. I support and will reinforce Secretary Vilsack's policy of zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or reprisal. As the Secretary has stated, "There exists no reason to discriminate."

Rural Development will adhere to its policy of promoting equal employment and program opportunities for all employees and applicants for employment, program benefits, and services regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, genetic information, national origin, age, disability, marital or parental status. Harassment of any kind in the workplace is prohibited. Managers must work to insure a safe and inclusive work environment.

We value our employees for the depth of diversity that they bring to the workforce. We recognize the importance of inclusion of employees, constituents, and stakeholders in accomplishing the mission of Rural Development.

All employees will be held accountable through directed and effective monitoring, outreach, and compliance in the administration of all Rural Development programs. This will ensure that employees, applicants, constituents, and stakeholders are provided access to opportunities, programs, benefits and services Rural Development provides.

It is up to all of us to make Civil Rights a top priority and USDA a model organization. Individuals, who believe they have been discriminated against due to a protected basis as defined on Attachment A to this letter, may participate in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) process without fear of coercion, restraint, interference, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal. More information about the EEO process may be found on Attachment A.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed the RD Office of Civil Rights at 1-800-787-8821 or by email at rd-crs@wdc.usda.gov.

Lisa Mensah
Under Secretary