

Civil Rights Training for Teachers/Classroom Staff

Civil Rights are the non-political rights of a citizen and are guaranteed by the 13th and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and Acts of Congress.

“Treat others the way they want to be treated (or at least know what that is).”

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Make sure participants receive equal treatment and services.
- Do not impose policies that unfairly impact certain groups.

Types of Discrimination

Disparate Treatment (Intentional) - A person is intentionally discriminated against as a member of a protected class or group. This type of discrimination occurs when people make plans or rules that will intentionally treat some groups different than others based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

Example: A group of students is denied breakfast based on their race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

Disparate Impact (Unintentional) – Actions that appear neutral but have an excessive impact on a protected class or group. This type of discrimination occurs when a program makes a decision that unfairly affects protected classes in a way that results in receiving less.

Example: A sponsor asks individuals with Limited English Proficiency to wait for assistance because interpreters are not available until late afternoon. This creates a situation where meal services may be unavailable to a specific group.

Reprisal/Retaliation – Negative treatment of a member of a protected class in response to previous civil rights activity. This includes actions against their family and/or their associates. This type of discrimination occurs when a person or organization purposely acts so that specific individuals or groups are denied the same opportunities or benefits as other participants in response to a person's previous actions, comments, or behaviors.

Example: Family and friends of a school meals participant are mistreated after a civil rights complaint was filed against the sponsor.

Filing a complaint

The process for filing a complaint is described on the “And Justice for All...” poster. Follow the process as described. Prominently display the “And Justice for All” poster where participants see it.

Everyone has the right to file a civil rights complaint. All staff and volunteers need to know what to do if someone wants to file a complaint. Be aware of the basis for which complaints may be filed: race, color, national origin, age, sex, and disability. Never discourage anyone from filing a complaint or voicing concerns of discrimination.

- Follow the written and posted policy for dealing with unacceptable behavior and conflicts.
- Listen to participant's concerns.
- Try to explain the situation.
- Get help, especially with threats or violence.
- Use alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques.
- Do not retaliate against anyone who files a civil rights complaint.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Civil Rights Complaints for the following programs may be sent to the MDE School Nutrition Programs Office at mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov or by calling 517-241-5374.

- The National School Lunch Program (NSLP)-
- The School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- The Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)

Failure to comply with Civil Rights requirements for USDA FNS Child Nutrition Programs can result in the loss of financial assistance from all Federal sources.

Signature: _____ Date: _____