

## How to Recognize a Civil Rights Complaint

If a person says their **civil rights** are being affected, the complaint must be treated as a civil rights complaint. Other legitimate complaints may only be voiced or observed as being unequal treatment. In all cases, the established procedure is to use a complaint form, the log, referring the request to the civil rights authority in the school district or facility and reporting the complaint to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The complaint can be investigated locally, resolved locally and the MDE is notified of the resolution.

Potential issues for a civil rights complaint may start with a phone call, letter, email, fax or any form of communication where someone feels they or someone they know has received unequal treatment in the operation of any Child Nutrition Program.

There are six protected classes in Child Nutrition Programs and these are **race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability**.

Discrimination is defined as different treatment which makes a distinction of one person or a group of persons from others; either intentionally, by neglect, or by the actions or lack of actions based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability

To quickly identify a civil rights violation, remember **4 D's**:

1. **Deny** program benefits unfairly
2. **Delay** program benefits unfairly
3. Treat **differently** (a policy or practice that has an adverse impact or any form of intimidation or retaliation)
4. Give **Disparate** Treatment (defined as a policy or practice which, "on the face of it" is not discriminatory, but has a discriminatory impact in practice, also known as the "effects test")

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign

Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

USDA Civil Rights Complaint Link:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>