

Civil Rights Compliance in Food Distribution Programs for Volunteers

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

- Civil Rights are “The nonpolitical rights of a citizen; the rights of personal liberty guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by acts of Congress.”
- Discrimination: The act of distinguishing one person or group of persons from others, either intentionally, by neglect, or by the effect of actions or lack of actions based on their protected classes.

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write UDA Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 866-632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339; or 800-845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

- Protected classes: Any person or group of persons who have characteristics for which discrimination is prohibited bases on a law, regulations, or executive order. Protected classes in TEFAP are: race, color, national origin, age, sex, and disability.
- Federal financial assistance is anything of value received from the Federal government such as: cash grants and loans, USDA food/commodities, training, property donations, permission to use Federal property and similar items and services.
- Goal of Civil Rights Legislation:
 - Equal treatment for all eligible participants
 - Knowledge of rights and responsibilities
 - Overcome the Civil Rights barriers that people have in participating in the program
 - Dignity and respect for all
- People receiving TEFAP products, have the right to fill and submit a complaint. These might be based on: race, color, age, sex, disability.
- Complaints might be verbal or written. Complaint forms are available at the Lincoln Food Bank website
- Never discourage anybody to submit a complaint.
- Customer service: Making a difference treating all people with dignity and respect. Answering questions in a non-threatening voice, clearly explain rules, rights and responsibilities to everyone, find tools and techniques to improve customer service and recognize that stress can impact customer service.

