



**Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance
Program (SNAP/Food
Stamps)
Civil Rights Training
2021**

Introduction

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requires that staff working with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps) receive annual Civil Rights training incorporating program requirements. This training meets that annual training requirement.

Training Overview

- Civil Rights and SNAP
- Civil Rights Legislation
- Public Notification of Nondiscrimination Policies
- Collection and Use of Data
- Reasonable Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Assistance
- Customer Service
- Conflict Resolution/Complaint Procedure
- Right to a Hearing
- Compliance Reviews
- Resolution of Noncompliance

Civil Rights and SNAP

Protecting the civil rights of all people who receive assistance or services through the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) is every employee's responsibility. As outlined by [DSS Administrative Policy 2-104 \(Client/Applicant Complaints of Discrimination\)](#), DSS prohibits harassment of and discrimination against any client or applicant for DSS services, benefits or employment. No person will be discriminated against in federally assisted programs of DSS because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status.

Civil rights are an important aspect of the department's mission to maintain or improve the quality of life for Missouri citizens. As a public agency, DSS has an obligation to uphold provisions mandated by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other anti-discrimination legislation and mandates.

We are prohibited from having policies and procedures that exclude or limit participation in department programs, benefits and activities based on an individual's protected basis.

What are civil rights? The rights belonging to an individual by virtue of citizenship, especially the fundamental freedoms and privileges guaranteed by the 13th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by subsequent acts of Congress, including civil liberties, due process, equal protection of the laws, and freedom from discrimination.

What is discrimination? 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 a protected class.

What is a protected class? For a SNAP applicant/recipient, a protected class as provided by state and federal laws and Governor's Executive Order 10-24 includes:

- **Race**
- **Color**
- **Sex**
- **Age**
- **National Origin**
- **Disability**
- **Religion**
- **Political Belief**
- **Ancestry**
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Veteran's Status**

Civil Rights Legislation

The premise upon which all compliance requirements are built is the concept of equal treatment to all persons, regardless of their race, color, or national origin.



For example, if two people of different races have the same circumstances and are seeking similar services, they should be offered and have the same opportunity to receive the same services; the same eligibility standards should be applied to each person; and, each person is to be treated with the same respect and courtesy.

Highlighted civil rights legislation includes:

<p>The Civil Rights Act of 1964</p>	<p>This historic bill made discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin illegal. Title VI of the Act states, “No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”.</p>
<p>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</p>	<p>Protects qualified individuals from discrimination based upon their disability under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.</p>
<p>Age Discrimination Act of 1975</p>	<p>Protects qualified individuals from discrimination based upon age, from being excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.</p>
<p>Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended</p>	<p>Prohibits discrimination against any applicant or participant in any aspect of program administration for reasons of age, race, color, sex, handicap, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs.</p>
<p>Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</p>	<p>Reinforced the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 giving greater protection in services and employment to people with disabilities in state and local government. The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 expanded these protections.</p>

Public Notification of Nondiscrimination Policies

All FNS assistance programs must include a public notification system which informs applicants, recipients, and potential eligible persons of program availability, program rights and responsibilities, the policy of nondiscrimination, and the procedure for filing a complaint.

Required Language for Communications and Informational Materials

A USDA required nondiscrimination statement must be included on communication and informational materials and sources that are used to inform the public about SNAP. The statement is:

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, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, 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, audiotape, 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), which can be obtained online at 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.

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material will at a minimum include the statement, in print size no smaller than the text that “This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

Posting Requirements

All FSD offices must prominently display the following posters where they can be viewed by customers/clients, which are copied below for reference:

- DSS Nondiscrimination Policy Statement
- DSS Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement
- USDA “And Justice for All” poster *

*The USDA “And Justice for All” poster has to be the blue “And Justice for All” poster issued by USDA that is 11” width x 17” height.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and equal access to services. Accordingly, DSS employees, applicants for employment, and contractors are treated equitably regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or veteran status.

All DSS contracts and vendor agreements shall contain nondiscrimination clauses as mandated by the Governor's Executive Order 94-3, Article XIII. Such clauses shall also contain assurances of compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended and other pertinent civil rights laws and regulations.

DSS applicants for, or recipients of, services from DSS are treated equitably regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or religion. Appropriate interpretive services will be provided as required for the visually or hearing impaired and for persons with language barriers. **Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the Department of Social Services should notify DSS as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event, by contacting either their DSS local office or Anna Wise, DSS ADA Coordinator and Manager of the DSS Office for Civil Rights at the address/phone number listed below.**

Applicants for, or recipients, of services from DSS who believe they have been denied a service or benefit may file a complaint by contacting either their DSS local office or the Missouri DSS Office for Civil Rights at (800) 776-8014; or (866) 735-2460 (Voice); (800) 735-2966 (Text). Complaints may also be filed by writing to: Missouri DSS Office for Civil Rights, P. O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1527.

Applicants for, or recipients, of services from DSS who believe they have been denied a service or benefit because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or religion may also file a complaint by writing to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, 601 East 12th Street, Room 353, Kansas City, MO 64106, (800) 368-1019 (Voice); (800) 537-7697 (TDD).

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, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, 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, audiotape, 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 <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, 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
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- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Rather than using the links in the above statements, for your convenience, the Family Support Division customer service number is 855-FSD-INFO (855-373-4636).

In regard to victim's assistance grants, in accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) civil rights regulations and policies, the Missouri DSS, DSS' employees, and subrecipients administering DOJ funding are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, and age, or retaliating for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by DOJ. If you believe you have been discriminated by DSS or its' subrecipients, you may file a complaint by contacting the Missouri DSS Office for Civil Rights at (800) 776-8014; or (866) 735-2460 (Voice); (800) 735-2966 (Text) or in writing to: Missouri DSS Office for Civil Rights, P. O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1527. You may also file a complaint by writing to: Office for Civil Rights; Office of Justice Programs; U.S. Department of Justice; 810 Seventh Street N.W.; Washington, DC 20531 or <https://ojp.gov/about/ocr/complaint.htm>.

INTERPRETATIVE SERVICES

Español – AVISO: Si usted habla español, hay servicios de asistencia de idioma disponibles para usted, sin costo alguno.

中文 – 如果您讲中文，我们将免费为您提供语言协助服务。

Tiếng Việt – CHÚ Ý: Nếu quý vị nói tiếng Việt, dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ, miễn phí, có sẵn cho quý vị.

Hrvatski – PAŽNJA: Ako govorite hrvatski, usluge govorne pomoći, bez ikakvih troškova su vam dostupne.

Srpski – PAŽNJA: Ako govorite srpski jezik, biće vam dostupna usluga pomoći za jezik bez ikakve nadoknade.

Српски – ПАЖЊА: Ако говорите српски језик, биће вам доступна услуга помоћи за језик без икакве надокнаде.

Deutsch – ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen Sprachassistentendienste kostenlos zur Verfügung.

عربي – تنبيه: إذا كنت تتحدث اللغة العربية، فسوف تتوفر لك خدمات مساعدة اللغة، بدون تكلفة.

한국어 – 주의: 한국어가 모국어인 경우, 무료로 언어 지원 서비스를 이용하실 수 있습니다.

Russian – ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите по-русски, вам будет предоставлена бесплатная помощь переводчика.

Français – ATTENTION : si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont offerts, sans frais.

Tagalog – PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad.

Nederlands – AANDACHT: Als u Nederlands spreekt, kunt u gratis gebruikmaken van de taalhulpverlening.

فارسی – توجه: اگر به زبان فارسی صحبت می‌کنید، خدمات کمک‌های زبانی رایگان برای شما موجود است. برای شما موجود است.

Afaan Oromoo – XIYYEEFFANNOO: Afaan Oromoo dandeessa yoo ta'e, tajaajilliwwan gargaarsa afaanii, baasii tokko malee, siif ni jiru.

Português – ATENÇÃO: Se você fala português, estão disponíveis serviços de assistência linguística para você, sem custo.

አማርኛ - ማሰቢያ:- አማርኛ የሚናገሩ ከሆነ፣ ያለምንም ወጪ የቋንቋ እገዛ አገልግሎቶች ለእርስዎ ይገኛል።

This policy shall be posted in a conspicuous place, accessible to all applicants for services, clients, employees, and applicants for employment, in all divisions, institutions and offices governed by DSS.

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT

The Missouri Department of Social Services supports equal employment opportunity in the workplace. It is the policy of the Department of Social Services not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

This policy extends to recruitment, employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off, termination, compensation, training, benefits, and all other terms and conditions of employment. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for applicants and employees with disabilities. We are dedicated to both effective human resources management and equitable treatment of our employees.

The Department of Social Services is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity that utilizes all qualified employees and applicants to their full potential. Employees are our most valuable resource and it is our policy that equal employment opportunity is afforded to all present and prospective employees. The Department will act assuredly to recruit, employ, and advance minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

The Department of Social Services is dedicated to maintaining a workplace that is diverse, respectful and in compliance with all federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines in our employment practices and in the provision of services to clients. In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 10-24 and applicable federal and state regulations, the department has prepared a Workforce Diversity Plan to provide information and to assist managers and employees in our pursuit toward maintaining a workplace that is diverse and respectful. The division directors have the authority, responsibility and accountability for providing equal employment opportunity within the department.

This policy shall be posted in a conspicuous place, accessible to all employees and applicants for employment, in all offices of the Department of Social Services.

AND JUSTICE FOR ALL



In accordance with Federal 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, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or 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:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

fax:

(202) 690-7442; or

email:

program.intake@usda.gov.

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Conforme a las leyes federales y a los derechos civiles, reglamentos y políticas del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA) se prohíbe a esta institución discriminar por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, sexo, religión, discapacidad, edad, convicciones políticas o reprimir o tomar represalias por actividades realizadas en el pasado relacionadas con los derechos civiles.

Para presentar una queja por alegada discriminación, complete el formulario de quejas por discriminación del programa del USDA, AD-3027, que podrá encontrar en http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Spanish_Form_508_Compliant_6_8_12_0.pdf o en cualquier oficina del USDA o escriba una carta dirigida al USDA e incluya en esta toda la información que se solicita en el formulario. Para solicitar una copia del formulario de presentación de quejas, comuníquese al **(866) 632-9992**. Envíe su formulario completo o carta completa al USDA por:

correo:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

fax:

(202) 690-7442; o

correo electrónico:

program.intake@usda.gov.

Esta institución ofrece igualdad de oportunidades

Collection and Use of Data

Each DSS Family Support Division (FSD) Office that works with SNAP is required to obtain **race, ethnic category, and language preference data** on potentially eligible populations, applicants, and recipients in their service area.

The purpose of gathering this information is to determine how effectively FNS programs are reaching potential eligible persons and beneficiaries, to assist in the selection of locations for compliance reviews, and to complete required reports.

Process

An interview is required for each SNAP application and can be conducted using an office, telephone, or home visit. During this interview, data on race, ethnicity, and language preference is collected and entered into the *DSS common area. An applicant has the right to self-declare race and ethnicity during the application process; however, self-identification must be voluntary.

Ethnicity and Race categories are:

- **Ethnicity:** Hispanic or Latino, Not Hispanic or Latino
- **Race:** American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Multi-Racial (Two or More Races), Unable to Determine

Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS) generates a monthly report tracking race and ethnicity for SNAP and this report is maintained by Central Office. The SNAP Program and Policy Unit compiles this information into an annual report which is sent to FNS each August.

* The DSS common area assigns each applicant a Department Client Number (DCN) upon initial intake into any of DSS' client-oriented systems. The applicant retains that number allowing tracking throughout his or her life between the various systems. The common area is the backbone of DSS' program applications and helps our department to be organized, efficient, and responsive to the applicant and their family.

Reasonable Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities

Applicants and recipients with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation to effectively access or utilize DSS' services or programs by contacting their local FSD Office or the DSS Office for Civil Rights (DSS OCR).

Examples of reasonable accommodations may include providing a sign-language interpreter for a person with a hearing impairment or conducting a telephone interview for a SNAP applicant who cannot access the office due to a disability. To provide a sign language interpreter, the current statewide [sign language interpretation services contract](#) should be used.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information should contact their local FSD Office or the DSS Office for Civil Rights at (573) 751-4244; (800) 776-8014 (Toll-Free); (866) 735-2460 (Voice); (800) 735-2966 (Text) or in writing to DSS Office for Civil Rights, P.O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

If you receive an accommodation request from a client, you should:

- document the request in the appropriate case management system, FAMIS,
- notify your chain of command,
- approve the request if you are able to meet the needs of the client at the local office and the request does not create an undue hardship on the operation of the agency/division and document the accommodation approved by the division.
- before you deny a request for accommodation or if you are unsure if you should approve a request for accommodation, you should work through your chain of command and contact ADA Coordinator/Office for Civil Rights Manager Anna Wise.

If a client asks for the DSS ADA Coordinator, the following contact information should be provided:

Anna Wise, Office for Civil Rights Manager

Phone: (573)751-4244

Email: anna.wise@dss.mo.gov

Limited English Proficiency Assistance

We have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful and equal access to person(s) with **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** in our programs, activities, benefits and services, including SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and MO HealthNet.

This applies to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. LEP individuals are entitled to a trained interpreter, at no cost to them.

FSD will ensure that LEP persons are not:

- Required to find their own interpreter.
- Denied basic information about benefits/services for which they are eligible.
- Turned away from applying for or requesting services.
- Forced to wait for long periods before effective communication can occur.
- Required to make repeated visits to offices until an interpreter is available.

FSD staff will not:

- Provide translations in lieu of using contracted interpreters. (FSD employees who are bilingual should not be used to provide interpretive services.)
- Rely on the LEP person's friends or family or other untrained interpreters to provide interpretation services.

Such acts may be found to be in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

To overcome communication barriers:

The [Point to your language poster](#) should be displayed in all offices to allow LEP individuals to easily show you their language.

The applicant or recipient's language preference should be noted in the DSS common area and in FAMIS.

Language interpretive services should be obtained using the current contractor, CTS Language Link. The contractor provides a three-way call service that can be used

when an LEP person calls or visits a FSD office or when FSD staff calls an LEP person.

Resources for using CTS Language Link are on the [FSD Intranet](#) under the Resource Tab, [Translation Services](#) (e.g., [Income Maintenance How to Use Interactive Voice Response \(IVR\)](#)). When interpretive services are provided each time, it is a best practice to note this in FAMIS, identifying the provider used (e.g., CTS Language Link).

The FSD INFO Center at 855-373-4636 is the Customer Service Centers for FSD Income Maintenance programs staffed by DSS employees. The Benefit Program Technicians (formerly known as Family Support Eligibility Specialists (FSES)) are trained to answer income maintenance program and case specific questions. The FSD INFO Center uses the contracted interpretive service, CTS Language Link, for callers who are LEP. Such information will be included in the FAMIS and/or MEDES case record so other staff needing to contact the client can make arrangements with CTS Language Link for an interpreter before they call the client back.

Spanish or other versions of forms and materials should be provided as appropriate and available. Examples are listed below:

Available on the FSD Intranet in the IM Forms Manual Volume I and II	
Form Number	Title
FS-1 (Spanish)	Application for Food Stamp Benefits in Spanish
IM-1CC (Spanish)	Child Care Application in Spanish
IM-2C (Spanish)	Expenses of Producing Income in Spanish
IM-3A (Spanish)	Reinvestigation Notice in Spanish
IM-4EBT(Spanish)	EBT Information Pamphlet – Spanish
IM-4 Finding Help	Finding Help Brochure
IM-4 Hearings (Spanish)	Hearing Rights in Spanish
IM-6AR	IM Authorized Representative in Spanish
IM-31A (Spanish)	Request for Information in Spanish
IM-31A MC+ (Spanish)	MC+ Request for Information in Spanish
IM-31F (Spanish)	Instructions for Making Your Food Stamp Application/ Food Stamp Rights (in Spanish)
IM-32 (Spanish)	Approval Notice in Spanish
IM-62 (Spanish)	Notice of Eligibility for Nursing Facility/Other Vendor
IM-82A (Spanish)	Notice of Vendor Termination
IM-90 (Spanish)	Withdrawal of Request for Hearing
IM-214 (Spanish)	Affidavit for Replacement Check
IM-215 (Spanish)	Affidavit of Forgery

Available on the DSS Internet

Application for Food Stamp Benefits -- in Spanish as a .pdf
Important Information about Your Hearing Rights Brochure -- in Spanish as a .pdf
Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) pamphlet-- in Spanish as a .pdf
EBT Customer Service Line at 800-997-7777 -- provides services in Spanish
Missouri Food Stamp Pre-screening Eligibility Tool -- available in Spanish
MO HealthNet Single Streamlined Application for families, kids, and pregnant women -- available in Spanish as a .pdf
Finding Help Brochure – available in Spanish
MHD's Managed Care Health Plans provide non-English handbooks, interpretative services

Additional LEP Resources

For additional information, review the brochure [Limited English Proficiency: What Federal Agencies and Federally Assisted Programs Should Know about Providing Services to LEP Individuals](#).

Additional LEP resources are located at www.LEP.gov and <http://ojp.gov/about/ocr/lep.htm>.

Point to your language

Amharic	Hebrew	Portuguese
አማርኛ	עברית	Português
Arabic	Hindi	Punjabi
العربية	हिन्दी	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
Bosnian (Serbo Croatian)	Hmong	Romanian
Bosanski	Hmoob	Română
Burmese	Italian	Russian
မြန်မာစာ	italiano	Русский
Cambodian	Japanese	Somali
ខ្មែរ	日本語	Soomaali
Cantonese	Karen	Spanish
廣東話	ကညီ	Español
Haitian Creole	Kirundi	Swahili
Kreyól Ayisyen	Ikirundi	Kiswahili
Farsi	Korean	Tagalog
فارسی	한국어	Tagalog
French	Laotian	Thai
Français	ພາສາລາວ	ภาษาไทย
French-Canadian	Mandarin	Tigrinya
français canadien	國語	ትግርኛ
German	Nepali	Urdu
Deutsch	नेपाली	اردو
Turkish	Polish	Vietnamese
Türkçe	Polski	Tiếng Việt

Over 240 languages 24/7/365

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 Find us online: [ctslanguagelink](https://ctslanguagelink.com)
 Telephone: 1.800.208.2620

 **language**link®
 We speak your customer's language

How to Use Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

Step 1: Call 1 888-338-7394

Step 2: Enter Account Number 20683, followed by # sign

Step 3: Select 1 to be connected directly to your Spanish interpreter, *or*
Select 2 to be connected directly to your Russian Interpreter, *or*
Select 3 to be connected directly to your Vietnamese interpreter, *or*
Select 4 to be connected directly to your Somali Interpreter, *or*
Select 9 for all other languages

***If you require a 3rd party call, press 9 to reach a Customer Service Representative**

Step 4: Enter Employee ID (Employee Worker Number), followed by # sign

Step 5: Enter County Number (County Code), followed by # sign

IVR FAQs:

What if I do not know my Account number?

You do need this information in order to reach the interpreter directly. If you are unsure of your account number, wait and the system will direct you to a live operator who will look up your account.

What is IVR?

IVR stands for Interactive Voice Response. CTS LanguageLink's IVR system allows a customer to quickly select the language desired for interpretation and be connected immediately to an interpreter without interaction with a live attendant. The benefit of this is an even faster connect time to your interpreter and better service to your limited English proficient (LEP) client.

What is a third party call?

A third party call is when you need CTS LanguageLink to call the LEP client and then bridge the call together with you and the interpreter.

How do I make a third party call with CTS LanguageLink?

If you need a third party call, **press 9 (even for Spanish)** to reach a Customer Service Representative (CSR) and let the operator know you need a third party call. We are happy to assist you with this at no additional charge. Our ***interpreters are not able to make the third party call*** directly.

I need another language other than the ones listed. How do I get my interpreter on the line?

Press 9 for other languages and let the CSR know which language you require and they will connect you. If the language is unknown, you may reference the "Point to your Language" visual for help with most requested languages or ask a representative for assistance.

Please contact our Client Relations Team if you have any further questions:

Email: clientrelations@ctslanguagelink.com

Toll Free: 1 (855) 579-2704

**Providing Services to
All People Regardless
of Race, Color, or
National Origin**

Limited English Proficiency

**What Federal
Agencies and
Federally Assisted
Programs Should
Know about
Providing
Services to LEP
Individuals**

For information on LEP and detailed agency-specific guidance, go to **www.LEP.gov**

For more information go to
www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Coordination and Review Section - NYA
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

Title VI Hotline:
1-888-TITLE-06 (1-888-848-5306) (Voice/TDD)

The federal government and those receiving assistance from the federal government must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information those entities provide. This will require agencies to develop creative solutions to address the needs of this ever-growing population of individuals whose primary language is not English.

Limited English Proficiency—LEP

Who is a Limited English Proficient Person?

Persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or “LEP.” These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.

Who Must Comply and Who Can be Found in Violation?

All programs and operations of entities that receive assistance from the federal government (i.e. recipients), including:

- State agencies
 - Local agencies
 - Private and nonprofit entities
- Subrecipients (entities that receive federal funding from one of the recipients listed above) also must comply.

All programs and operations of the federal government also must comply.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Recipients

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

—42 U.S.C. § 2000d.

The United States Supreme Court in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) stated that one type of national origin discrimination is discrimination based on a person’s inability to speak, read, write, or understand English.

Recipients and Federal Government

Executive Order 13166

In August 2000, this Order “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency” was issued and directed federal agencies to:

- Publish guidance on how their recipients can provide access to LEP persons.
- Improve the language accessibility of their own programs.
- Break down language barriers by implementing consistent standards of language assistance across federal agencies and amongst all recipients of federal financial assistance.

The Order covers all federal and federally assisted programs and activities.

OBLIGATIONS

Four-Factor Analysis

Recipients of federal financial assistance have an obligation to reduce language barriers that can preclude meaningful access by LEP persons to important benefits, programs, information, and services. (The federal government has the same obligations as a result of Executive Order 13166.) The starting point is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee/recipient;
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people’s lives; and
4. The resources available to the grantee/recipient and costs.

Elements of an Effective LEP Policy

Elements that may be helpful in designing an LEP policy or plan:

- Identifying LEP persons who need language assistance
- Identifying ways in which language assistance will be provided
- Training staff
- Providing notice to LEP persons
- Monitoring and updating LEP policy

Language Assistance Services

- Oral interpretation services
- Bilingual staff
- Telephone interpreter lines
- Written language services
- Community volunteers

Customer Service

To better serve our customers, know that they want:

- Respect
- An environment free from discrimination or harassment
- Reliability
- Personal and prompt attention

Tips for successful customer interaction:

- Meet the customer at their level of understanding
- Avoid jargon and/or acronyms
- Speak with authority, as you are the expert
- Empathize, recognize, and identify customer emotions
- Believe in what you are doing and be committed to the Department's goals
- Communicate effectively and control your own emotions
- Watch your tone, body language, and personal prejudices
- Be "can do" or find alternate solutions
- Listen, don't tell the customer what they want

Difficult customer interactions:

- Listen and empathize
- Ask questions
- Give feedback
- Summarize

In order to reduce the risk of a civil rights discrimination complaint, ask yourself the following questions each time an applicant and/or participant comes to your program:

- Am I treating the individual with respect?
- Am I treating this person in the same manner I treat others?
- Have I given this person the opportunity to clarify all relevant factors or inconsistencies?
- Have I informed this person exactly what information I need to make a determination on the application?
- Have I provided the person with the information he or she needs to make necessary decisions?

Conflict Resolution/Complaint Procedure

A **complaint of unlawful discrimination in SNAP** is defined as a verbal or written allegation by an applicant or recipient that he/she has been unlawfully denied or excluded from participation in SNAP, or has otherwise been subjected to disparate treatment in the delivery of benefits or services regarding SNAP on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, political belief, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, or veteran's status (*not all prohibited bases are federally protected*).

Clients/applicants have the right to file a complaint within **180 days** of the alleged discriminatory action. The Secretary of Agriculture may extend this time under special circumstances.

Applicants or recipients may file a complaint of discrimination for SNAP in one of the ways listed below. Anonymous complaints will be handled as any other complaint, to the extent feasible, based on available information.

- **Contacting a Family Support Division Office.**

If allegations are made to an employee and the applicant or recipient declines to complete the [DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination form](#), the employee is responsible for recording the information, completing the form and forwarding it to the DSS Office for Civil Rights (DSS OCR) as follows.

If the allegation/complaint is received *in person*, provide a copy of the [DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination form](#) to the individual, asking him/her to complete and return it to you. You will then complete section 7 of the form and forward it to DSS OCR as described below. If the applicant/client chooses not to complete the form, or if the allegation/complaint is received in *writing or verbally*, you are responsible for completing sections 1 and 7 of the [DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination form](#), to the extent possible.

Send the form and any written information received by the complainant to DSS OCR as soon as possible or within five working days. DSS OCR will follow-up with the complainant.

- **Contacting the DSS Office for Civil Rights** at (573) 751-4244; (800) 776-8014 (Toll-Free); (866) 735-2460 (Voice); (800) 735-2966 (Text) or in writing at DSS Office for Civil Rights, P.O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

- **Writing the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights**, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or calling (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); fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Policy Statement and Posting Requirement

Applicants and recipients are informed of their option to file a complaint with the DSS Office for Civil Rights, and the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights via the nondiscrimination poster posted in all DSS offices. Applicants and recipients who file a complaint with the DSS Office for Civil Rights are also reminded of their option to file a complaint with the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

Copied below are our [DSS Client/Applicant Complaints of Discrimination Policy \(2-104\)](#) and the [DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination form](#).

Administrative Policy

Subject: Client/Applicant Complaints of Discrimination

Section: 2 – Employment Practices

Adm: 2-104

Issued: 04/12/04

Revised: 09/15/05

POLICY: The Department of Social Services (DSS) prohibits harassment of and discrimination against any client or applicant for DSS services, benefits or employment. No person will be discriminated against in federally assisted programs of DSS because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status.

COMPLAINT OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION DEFINED

For purposes of this policy, a complaint of unlawful discrimination is defined as a verbal or written allegation by a client/applicant that he or she has been unlawfully denied or excluded from participation in DSS services, benefits or employment, or has otherwise been subjected to disparate treatment in the delivery of benefits or services, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, and/or in cases of provision of Food Stamp benefits, political beliefs.

PROCEDURE FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING COMPLAINTS

Employees who receive verbal or written allegations/complaints of unlawful discrimination from DSS clients and applicants are responsible for recording the information and providing it to their supervisors and to the DSS Office for Civil Rights (OCR) as explained below. NOTE: Complaints from clients/applicants that are not based on unlawful discrimination should be forwarded through supervisory channels to the appropriate division director or designee for review and action.

Complaints Received In Person

If the allegation/complaint is received in person, the employee should provide a copy of the “DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination” form ([Exhibit 1](#)) to the individual for completion and return to the employee. The employee is responsible for ensuring that section 1 of the form is completed, either by the complainant or by the employee; completing section 7 of the form; and sending a copy of the form to OCR as soon as possible or within five working days. OCR will follow-up with the complainant.

Complaints Received In Writing or Verbally (telephone)

If the allegation/complaint is received in writing or verbally, the employee is responsible for completing, to the extent possible, section 1 on a “DSS Client/Applicant Complaint of Discrimination” form; completing section 7 of the form; and providing a copy of the form and any written information received by the complainant to OCR as soon as possible or within five working days. OCR will follow-up with the complainant.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

OCR is responsible for investigating client/applicant complaints of unlawful discrimination. Upon completion of an investigation, OCR will provide the client/applicant with a written determination of whether unlawful discrimination occurred. The complainant will also be notified of his/her right to file a complaint with the appropriate

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federal agency, regardless of OCR's determination. Copies of the investigation and determination will be provided to the appropriate division director or designee for review and action, if appropriate.

All DSS employees are required to provide requested information and assistance to OCR during its investigation. If unlawful discrimination has occurred, appropriate action will be taken. Employees who are determined to have violated any portion of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

POLICY STATEMENT AND POSTING REQUIREMENT

DSS division directors are responsible for enforcing DSS' commitment to nondiscrimination by affirming the principles of equal access to benefits and services. Facility administrators and managers are responsible for ensuring the attached "Nondiscrimination Policy Statement" ([Exhibit 2](#)) is posted in all DSS offices and facilities in places conspicuous to clients and applicants.

4. Provide the name of the Department of Social Services agency and/or person(s) who are responsible for the alleged difference in treatment.

AGENCY NAME

ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE)

PERSON(S) INVOLVED

5. DID YOU REPORT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU TO ANYONE AT THAT AGENCY?
 YES NO If yes, provide the name of the person(s) you talked with and what you reported to that person.

6. DO YOU KNOW OF ANYONE ELSE WHO WAS TREATED IN THE SAME MANNER AS YOU OR ANYONE WHO WITNESSED WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
 YES NO If yes, provide the name of the person, their address and telephone number and a summary of what happened to them.

SIGNATURE DATE

7. THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY DSS EMPLOYEE

DSS EMPLOYEE NAME (PRINT) JOB CLASSIFICATION WORK TELEPHONE NUMBER

DIVISION WORK LOCATION COUNTY

DATE CLIENT'S COMPLAINT WAS RECEIVED DATE FORM PROVIDED TO CLIENT SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE DATE

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION WITH CLIENT (ATTACH WRITTEN COMPLAINTS)

Right to a Hearing

Individuals who have applied for or are receiving SNAP benefits have a right to a hearing conducted by a Hearings Officer in the DSS Division of Legal Services when:

- FSD informs them that they are not eligible and the customer believes they are.
- FSD provides them with benefits and then reduces or stops those benefits for reasons the customer believes are wrong.
- FSD refuses to take their application.
- FSD does not act promptly on their request for help and the customer believes the office has had enough time to do so.
- The applicant or recipient disagrees with the information used to determine the benefit amount or disagrees with the benefit amount.

If the applicant's or recipient's application has been refused or rejected or the intended action has already been taken by the county office, he or she may request a hearing within 90 days of the refusal or action. If the proposed action will change or stop the recipient's benefits, and he or she requests a hearing within ten days from the date of the notice, the applicant or recipient may continue receiving the same benefits until the hearing decision.

Compliance Reviews

Compliance reviews examine activities to determine adherence with civil rights requirements for state agencies, local agencies, and other sub-recipients.

FSD Quality Assurance conducts annual compliance reviews of FSD offices and forwards a report of the results to FNS. Components reviewed include, but are not limited to:

- Whether potentially eligible persons and households have equal opportunity to participate;
- How racial and ethnic data are collected and documented;
- Whether the DSS Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, DSS Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement, and the USDA “And Justice for All” posters are placed in prominent areas;
- Whether program information is available to potential eligible persons, program applicants, and participants;
- How complaints are processed;
- Whether there are any barriers to participation by the disabled;
- How limited English speaking persons are served; and
- Whether staff has received required civil rights training.

Resolution of Noncompliance

Noncompliance is a factual finding that any civil rights requirement, as provided by law, regulation, policy, instruction, or guidelines, is not being adhered to by a State agency, local agency, or other sub-recipient. A finding of noncompliance may be the result of an FSD Quality Assurance Annual Civil Rights Review, an FSD Management Evaluation (ME) Review, an FNS Civil Rights Compliance Review, a special review, or an investigation.

Examples of noncompliance:

- Denying an individual or household the opportunity to apply for program benefits or services on the basis of a protected class.
- Providing FNS program services or benefits in a disparate manner on the basis of a protected class (except as a disability accommodation).
- Selecting FNS program sites or facilities in a manner that denies an individual access to FNS program benefits, assistance, or services on the basis of a protected class.

If noncompliance is determined, DSS must take steps to immediately obtain voluntary compliance. If corrective action has not been completed within 60 days of the finding, DSS will submit a Report of Findings of Noncompliance in letter format to the USDA FNS Regional Administrator.

The FNS Regional Office for Civil Rights, with the concurrence of the FNS Regional Administrator must determine whether further voluntary compliance efforts should be pursued.

- If so, the case is referred back to DSS with suggestions for further actions.
- In cases where all efforts have been exhausted or if the initial determination was made by the FNS Regional Administrator, the FNS Regional Office for Civil Rights must prepare a letter to DSS, the local agency or other sub-recipient for the FNS Regional Administrator's signature.

If voluntary corrective action cannot be achieved within 60 days:

- The FNS Regional Administrator must submit the Report of Findings of Noncompliance to FNS. FNS will decide on an appropriate action.
- Once voluntary compliance efforts are exhausted, the FNS Regional Administrator will provide a 30-day notification to DSS to resolve the matter and agree to corrective action or to submit a request for reconsideration.

- If still unresolved, the issue will be forwarded to the USDA National Office for Civil Rights for a formal enforcement action.
- As a last resort, the National Office for Civil Rights will forward the issue to the USDA Office of General Council (OGC) for consideration and review for termination and suspension of administrative funding by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).



Congratulations! You have finished the SNAP Civil Rights Training. After reviewing, close the pop-up window. Return to this window and click the "Exit" link at the bottom of the window and completion of this course will be tracked in your training record through the Employee Learning Center. If you do not complete this step, you will not receive credit in the Employee Learning Center. If you have any questions regarding this information, contact your supervisor or feel free to contact the DSS Office for Civil Rights.