

PROCUREMENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026

Child Nutrition and Food Distribution

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Overview

This document provides guidance on procurement for sponsors participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Sponsor Lunch Program (NSLP), the Sponsor Breakfast Program (SBP), and the USDA Foods Program.

Procurement is the act of obtaining goods or services in exchange for money or value. The process is intended to ensure program integrity and establish internal controls.

Per program regulations set forth under 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [Part 200.317-327](#) (all federal grants), [7 CFR 210.21](#) (NSLP), and [7 CFR 220.16](#) (SBP), and [7 CFR 250.31](#) (USDA Foods) sponsors are required to procure all products and services used in the operation and administration of child nutrition programs competitively.

Written Procurement Procedures

Per federal regulations, 2 CFR Part 200.318, sponsors must write their own procurement procedures. These procedures must be written to comply with state, local, and tribal laws and regulations and the standards identified in [§§ 200.317](#) through [200.327](#).

Procurement procedures should address the following:

Conflict of Interest:

- Sponsors must maintain written standards covering conflicts of interest
 - Define “conflict of interest” (e.g., financial stakes, family ties, or employment with a vendor)
 - No employee, officer, or agent may participate in procurement if they (or their immediate family, partners, or organizations they are tied to) have a financial or other interest in the vendor
 - The sponsor may set standards for situations where financial interest is not substantial, or a gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value
 - Set rules on gifts (e.g., “No employee may accept gifts exceeding \$50 in value from vendors”)

Avoidance of Unnecessary or Duplicative Items:

- Sponsors must avoid the acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items and consider consolidating purchases
 - Perform a needs assessment before any purchase to confirm whether it is necessary

Encourage Cooperation

- Sponsors are encouraged to use inter-agency agreements or cooperative purchasing programs to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

Recordkeeping

- Sponsors must maintain sufficient records to detail the history of each procurement, including the rationale for the procurement method, contract type selection, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price
 - Keep records such as solicitations, bids, evaluations, contracts, and correspondence
 - Set a retention period (typically 3 years, plus the current)
 - Designate a custodian (e.g., business office)

Forecasting

Forecasting is the process of analyzing current and historical data to determine procurement needs. Forecasting involves predicting and estimating the goods, works, and services needed.

Forecasting includes assessing the following factors:

- Past purchasing history and trends
- Current Prices and trends for the same or like goods or services
- Student enrollment (currently and projected)
- Average daily participation (current and projected)
- Available storage
- Velocity reports (amount ordered/used or served in the past)

Cost Analysis

- Sponsors must perform a cost analysis before any procurement
- Cost analysis will help determine what type of procurement method to use and ensure the price is fair and reasonable
- The sponsor will use the tools that are used in forecasting, as well as any other available tools or strategies that may help estimate the cost

Note: Forecasting and performing a cost analysis will help determine the appropriate procurement method and ensure fair pricing.

Oversight:

- Describe how the sponsor will oversee the contract
 - Identify who is responsible for monitoring the contractor's performance (e.g., a procurement officer or program manager)
 - Specify how oversight will occur (e.g., regular reviews of deliverables, or progress reports)
 - Define a process for addressing non-compliance (e.g., issuing notices, withholding payment until corrected, or termination of contracts)

Full and Open Competition

- All procurement transactions under the award must be conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition. This means that all possible bidders or offerors are on a level playing field and have the same opportunity to compete.
- Examples of situations that may restrict competition include, but are not limited to:
 - Placing unreasonable requirements on firms for them to qualify to do business
 - Requiring unnecessary experience
 - Organizational conflicts of interest
 - Specifying only a “brand name” product instead of allowing “an equal” product to be offered, and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement
 - Any unjustified or unfair actions in the procurement process
- Vendor restraint guidelines
 - Vendors who have had poor performance issues in the past should not face indefinite issues
 - Schools must establish clear criteria and procedures for reinstatement, allowing vendors to demonstrate corrective action and improve performance. This ensures fairness, encouraging vendors to maintain high standards
 - Implementing guidelines promotes transparency and provides vendors with a pathway to reengage in competition

Procurement Methods and Thresholds (2 CFR 200.320)

Before any procurement, sponsors should reference their written procurement procedures to ensure all procedures are followed. All local, state, and federal regulations must be referenced in the solicitation.

The following table summarizes the procurement methods for school nutritional programs. Detailed guidance for each method is provided below.

Procurement Method	State Threshold	Requirements
Micro-Purchase	<\$10,000	No quotes required; price must be reasonable; plan to use all vendors within a cycle
Small Purchase	\$10,000-\$50,000	2-3 quotes minimum; document specifications, Buy American; quote. Price is the only award factor
Formal Purchase	>\$50,000	Public solicitation, sealed bids/RFP

Micro-Purchase

Purchases below the micro-purchase threshold, which is currently \$10,000 (aggregate total) (or a lower threshold set by state/local rules or the sponsor's internal policy, whichever is lower).

- No competitive quotes are required if the price is considered reasonable based on market knowledge or past purchases
 - E.g., if a sponsor purchases \$500 in cleaning supplies, the price can be deemed reasonable by comparing it to a recent purchase of similar items or checking online prices from other vendors
- Purchases should be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers to avoid favoring one vendor
- Sponsors will collect and maintain invoices or receipts to document the purchased items
- Purchases cannot be split transactions to purposely fall below the threshold
 - E.g., if a sponsor needs \$12,000 in computer equipment, it cannot split the purchase into two \$6,000 orders to use the micro-purchase method
- Micro-purchases are not intended to be the primary method of procurement
- The micro-purchase method is not appropriate when routine maintenance or repairs exceeding the micro-purchase threshold are broken into smaller payments. Instead, a small purchase method or a formal method should be used

Small Purchase

Purchases above the micro-purchase threshold but below the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT), currently \$250,000 (federal level) or a lower local threshold. Sponsors must follow the lowest applicable threshold.

- Per ND 15.1-09-34, North Dakota requires competitive bidding for purchases exceeding \$50,000. For small purchases between \$10,000 and \$50,000, sponsors must obtain price quotes from multiple sources as described below, unless local school board policies set a lower threshold
- Sponsors should verify that their simplified acquisition threshold has not changed
- Sponsors may also be subject to a lower threshold based on local policies

A written solicitation including specifications must be prepared and prices obtained from multiple sources, a minimum of two (preferably three or more), either by providing specifications to the vendors or researching vendor prices. If pricing is readily available, sponsors may use prices gathered from a minimum of two verified sources (preferably three or more) through research.

- If factors other than price must be considered, these factors must be specified in the solicitation. Factors might include quality, geographic preferences, delivery, scope of work, etc.

Sponsors must ensure that all vendors receive the same information about the products and services.

- E.g., if a vendor asks clarifying questions about specifications, the question and answer must be shared with all vendors

The purchases must be awarded to the most responsive and responsible vendor based on either price or other specified factors identified in the solicitation. Quotes should be evaluated based on price and any other factors identified in the original request for quotes. Generally, small purchases are awarded strictly on price.

- E.g., if soliciting quotes for tables, a vendor offering \$10,000 with a 2-week delivery might be selected over a \$10,200 quote with a 6-week delivery, if delivery time was a specified factor

The price quotes must remain confidential to the vendors before the award.

Methods for obtaining a quote may include:

- E-mail,
- Written via mail, date, and time stamp
- In-person date and time stamped
- Internet research: if pricing is readily available and accurate

This method cannot be used when contracting with a Food Service Management Company or Vended Meal Provider, regardless of the contract amount.

Formal Purchase

This method of purchasing should be used when the total annual aggregate dollar amount of products or services for the year exceeds the small purchase threshold (Over \$50,000). There are two types of formal purchases: invitations for bids and requests for proposals.

Invitation for Bid (IFB) (Sealed Bid)

An IFB is a competitive procurement method for a fixed-price contract where sealed bids are submitted. An IFB is an ideal procurement method to use when the offers only differ in price for a lump sum or unit pricing. It is commonly used for a fixed-price contract and is most effective when there are clear specifications and/or technical requirements (e.g., Use an IFB to purchase 10,000 pounds of ground beef at a fixed price per pound, where the lowest price from a responsible bidder wins.

What to Include in Your Solicitation – The following is a list of required elements in an IFB solicitation:

- The Solicitation must contain the following:
 - Specifications and/ or technical requirements for the products and services to be purchased (e.g., for ground beef specify “270 pounds of ground beef, delivered weekly”)
 - Bonding requirements, if applicable, (e.g., bid bonds or performance bonds for contracts over \$150,000)
 - Method for submitting an offer (e.g., in a sealed envelope, delivered in person or by mail).
 - Method and criteria for evaluating a bid
 - When the sealed bids are opened, the sponsor must use the rubric or scoring tool that was provided in the solicitation to determine whether an offeror is responsible and responsive.
 - Procedure to respond to and resolve a bid protest

- Method for submitting a protest for the bid award
- Timeframe:
 - Date issued – deadline for receipt of questions – proposal due date – Notice of intent to award – contract start date
- The purchase amount for an IFB is the total cost for a single contract (or single renewed contract)
- The invitation for offers must be publicly advertised with sufficient response time
- The award from an IFB must be made in writing to the lowest responsible offeror
- Buy American provision
- There must be two or more offerors that respond to the solicitation
- Question and answers from offerors - If the sponsor answers a question from an offeror, there must be a method for the sponsor to share this information with all potential offers
 - Example: record questions and your answers from offerors as they come in. Once the deadline for questions has passed, the sponsor will send all questions and answers to all the offerors.
- Public bid opening - State (N.D.C.C. 44-08-01.1) and federal law require that the sealed bids be opened publicly.
 - As sealed bids arrive, the bid should be dated and stored in a secure place
- Award in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder
- Maintain all documentation from all bidders and the IFB process
- All applicable federal clauses (see page 13)

Request for Proposal (RFP)

A request for proposal (RFP) is a competitive procurement method that includes specifications and/or technical requirements for the product(s) and/or service(s) to be provided under a fixed price (fee) in a cost-reimbursable or firm-fixed-price contract. Offerors submit a detailed offer for providing the products and/or services. An RFP is an ideal procurement method when an IFB (sealed bid) method is not appropriate, when price will not be the only determining factor for awarding the bid.

What to Include in Your Solicitation: The following items must be included, but are not limited to, in your procurement solicitation:

- The Solicitation must contain the following:
 - Specifications and/ or technical requirements for the products and services to be purchased (e.g., “cafeteria management system with inventory tracking, compatible with existing software, and staff training included”)
 - Bonding requirements, if applicable, (e.g., bid bonds or performance bonds for contracts over \$150,000)
 - Method for submitting an offer (e.g., in a sealed envelope, delivered in person or by mail).
 - Method and criteria for evaluating a bid, award based on a combination of factors (e.g., price, technical expertise, delivery timeline) using the rubric or scoring tool that was provided in the

solicitation to determine whether an offeror is responsible and responsive.

- Procedure to respond to and resolve a bid protest
- Method for submitting a protest for the bid award
- Timeframe:
 - Date issued – deadline for receipt of questions – proposal due date – Notice of intent to award – contract start date
- The purchase amount for an RFP is the total cost for a single contract (or single renewed contract)
- The invitation for offers must be publicly advertised with sufficient response time
- Buy American provision
- There must be two or more offerors that respond to the solicitation
- Questions and answers from offerors - If the sponsor answers a question from an offeror, there must be a method for the sponsor to share this information with all potential offers
 - Example: record questions and your answers from offerors as they come in. Once the deadline for questions has passed, the sponsor will send all questions and answers to all the offerors
- Maintain all documentation from all bidders and the RFP process
- All applicable federal regulations (see page 13)
- Award in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder

Noncompetitive Procurement (2 CFR 200.320(c))

There are very specific circumstances in which the recipient or subrecipient may use a noncompetitive procurement method. The non-competitive procurement method may only be used if one of the following circumstances applies:

- The aggregate amount of the procurement transaction does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold of \$10,000 (e.g., a \$5,000 purchase of emergency supplies can use a noncompetitive procurement without quotes, provided the price is reasonable)
- The procurement transaction can only be fulfilled by a single source (sole source)
 - Description of the product and or services to be purchased and the cost (e.g., Specific part for a freezer that only one manufacturer produces)
 - Description of the method used to determine if the cost is reasonable
 - Documentation that indicates why the sole source method was appropriate
 - The period of time the sponsor plans to use the sole source method
- The public emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from providing public notice of a competitive solicitation
 - Include the description of the emergency situation (e.g., flood damage to kitchen equipment, requiring immediate replacement)
 - Products or services to be procured and the estimated cost

- Supplier, distributor, or manufacturer from whom the product or service will be procured
 - The period of time the sponsor plans to use the non-competitive method for the emergency
- Inadequate Competition - After soliciting several sources, the competition is determined to be inadequate (e.g., only one response was received, multiple responses were received, but not all met specifications)
 - Sponsors must ensure that the solicitation was conducted in a manner that promoted full and open competition (e.g., publicly advertised, sufficient response time, non-restrictive specifications)
 - Keep documents related to solicitation (e.g., list of vendor responses including why they were deemed non-responsive)
- The recipient or sub-recipient requests in writing to use a non-competitive procurement method, and the federal agency or pass-through entity provides written approval

When a sponsor uses a non-competitive method of procurement, the sponsor must retain all related documentation.

USDA Foods Processing

If a sponsor participates in the Net Off Invoicing (NOI) program, it must competitively procure its USDA Foods processor(s). Sponsors must receive approval before procuring USDA foods.

- Sponsors must competitively procure the USDA food processor per 7 CFR 250
 - Use the appropriate procurement method based on the contract value
- Sponsors are encouraged to submit solicitations to the USDA Foods in Schools specialists for review prior to issuing the solicitation and before awarding the solicitation.
 - Sponsors should allow the state at least two weeks to evaluate the solicitation before it is issued.
- Verification of USDA value – Sponsors must ensure the correct USDA food value is credited on invoices
 - Compare the invoiced USDA food value to the value report provided by the manufacturer or USDA
 - If discrepancies are found, contact the distributor to resolve the issues and document the resolution (e.g., an adjusted invoice or credit memo)
- Sponsors must retain all documentation related to USDA Foods processing and procurement for a minimum of three years plus the current

Contracts

Once an offeror has been awarded a contract, the sponsor must ensure that the resulting contract reflects the specifications and/or technical requirements outlined in the solicitation. All contracts should result from proper procurement and be awarded to a responsible and responsive offeror. Contracts should follow regulations set forth under 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [Part 200.317-327](#) (all federal grants), [7 CFR 210.21](#) (NSLP), and [7 CFR 220.16](#) (SBP), and [7 CFR 250.31](#) (USDA Foods).

It is the sponsor's responsibility to ensure that the contract requirements mirror those found in the solicitation and that all the terms and conditions of the contract are met. Any cost arising from a contract that was improperly procured is unallowable to the sponsor nutrition programs and must be paid from non-federal funds.

The result of the procurement process is a contract that can be enforced by both parties. A contract helps avoid misunderstandings and disputes by clearly defining the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of each party. Verbal agreements can lead to price discrepancies, service disagreements, and legal disputes.

Elements of a Contract

The following elements, at a minimum, should be included in the contract.

General Contract Requirements

- Identification of the parties in the contract (e.g., identify the buyer (sponsor) and the contractor as the seller)
- Contract Duration and renewal options (if applicable) (e.g., Contract begins on July 1, 2025, and ends on June 30, 2026)
- Required compliance certifications
- Type of contract (e.g., fixed price or cost reimbursable with a fixed fee)
 - Fixed Price example
 - A sponsor needs to purchase milk for breakfast and lunch. The vendor will supply 1,000 half-pint cartons of milk daily to five sites at a fixed price of \$0.30 per carton, totaling \$54,000 for 180 days (1,000 cartons x 180 days at \$.030).
 - Payment terms: monthly invoice based on verified deliveries, paid within 30 days
 - Deliverables: Milk delivered twice weekly on Monday and Thursday by 7:00 am to each site
 - The contract states that the vendor covers any cost increases
 - Cost Reimbursable with Fixed Fee
 - A sponsor needs to purchase and install new kitchen equipment (ovens and refrigerators) for the high sponsor cafeteria. The project includes equipment cost and installation services, with uncertain cost due to potential site modifications
 - The district will pay the vendor for allowable costs (e.g., equipment purchases, labor, electrical upgrades) up to a maximum amount of \$150,000 plus a fixed fee of \$15,000 as profit
- All applicable federal clauses (see page 13)

Contract Management

- Contract renewal options, including terms, conditions, and (as applicable) provisions for price changes
 - Contracts may be renewed annually up to four times. After the fourth renewal, the contract must be rebid (e.g., a milk contract from July 1,

2025, to June 30, 2026, may be renewed annually with a price adjustment if justified by market conditions)

- Contract termination rights for cause and convenience
- Contractor record-keeping requirements
 - Example: Contracts, invoices, and oversight records will be stored digitally for 3 years post-payment, accessible for audits
- Default and breach of contract provisions, remedies, cancellation procedures, and penalties
 - For contracts in excess of \$10,000
 - Termination for cause and for convenience clause with an explanation of when the clause applies and the basis for settlement
 - For Contracts That Exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold
 - Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate breach of contract terms, which include sanctions and penalties as appropriate
- Procedure for contract modifications
 - Justification: Staff will submit a written request detailing the need (e.g., increased meal quantities due to enrollment changes).
 - Scope and Competition: Verify modifications are within the original contract's scope (e.g., same meal types). Changes outside the scope or exceeding the procurement threshold may require a new procurement
 - Cost Review: Obtain revised quotes or cost analyses. For changes under \$10,000, verify reasonableness; for small purchases, secure at least two quotes; for larger changes, re-bid as needed
 - Contract Amendment: Execute a signed amendment specifying revised terms
 - Recordkeeping: Retain justifications, quotes, approvals, state correspondence, and amendments for 3 years
- Invoicing and Payments
 - Method for tracking costs to ensure that the sponsor receives credits, rebates, discounts, USDA Foods values, or any other applicable credits
- Dispute Resolution
 - What is the process for handling disagreements between the sponsor (as a non-federal entity) and contractors? (e.g., The parties will first attempt to resolve any disputes through informal discussions. If unresolved, the matter may be submitted to mediation. This clause does not prevent either party from seeking legal remedies
 - Timeline for dispute resolution

Products and Services to Be Provided

- Product specifications and/or technical requirements
 - Product specification examples: Detailed descriptions of the food products to be provided, including characteristics like type, quality, quantity, size, packaging, and compliance standards. Avoid overly restrictive specifications.

- Technical requirement examples: Conditions or standards for how products are produced, processed, delivered, or stored, including safety, regulatory compliance, and delivery schedules

Buy American

Per 7 CFR 210.21(d), sponsor food authorities (SFAs) must purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities or products for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and USDA Foods using federal funds. A domestic commodity is an agricultural product produced in the United States. A domestic product is a food item that is processed in the United States using a substantial amount (more than 51%) of U.S.-grown agricultural commodities. This applies to all procurement methods (micro-purchases, small purchases, IFB, RFP).

- Exceptions are allowed when:
 - The product is not produced or manufactured in the U.S. in sufficient and reasonably available quantities of satisfactory quality (e.g., bananas). See the non-available list ([FAR 25.104](#)) in accordance with [25.103\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)](#)
 - As of July 1, 2025, no documented justification for purchasing is needed for purchasing an item on the FAR 25.104 list
 - Competitive bids show U.S. products are significantly more expensive than non-domestic alternatives (e.g., 50% cost increase)
 - As of July 1, 2025, sponsors must document the bids showing that these products are more expensive than the domestic product as a justification for their purchase
- Sponsors must include a Buy American clause in all solicitations and, contracts verify compliance, and document exceptions for audits (2 CFR 200.334, 7 CFR 210.23)
- Starting SY 2025-26, sponsors must track all non-domestic purchases to show that no more than 10% of the school food service funds have been used for their purchase
 - SY 2028-29, the non-domestic food purchases cap will be 8 percent
 - SY 2031-32, the non-domestic food purchases cap will be 5 percent

Record Retention

Sponsors must maintain records to detail the history of each procurement transaction, ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. These records provide transparency for audits. Sponsors should designate a custodian (e.g., business manager or procurement officer).

Per 2 CFR 200.334, sponsors must retain procurement records for 3 years plus the current year.

Types of Records to Retain – Sponsors must retain the following records for each procurement transaction:

- Solicitations: Copies of all solicitations, including micro-purchase documentation (e.g., receipts, invoices), small purchase solicitations, and formal IFB/RFP documents

- Bids/Proposals: All bids, quotes, or proposals received, including documentation of vendor communications (e.g., questions and answers shared with offerors)
- Evaluations: Records of bid/proposal evaluations, including scoring rubrics, notes on responsiveness and responsibility of vendors, and justification for contractor selection or rejection
- Contracts: Signed contracts, amendments, renewals, and any correspondence related to contract management
- Cost Analysis: Documentation of cost analyses, including market research, historical pricing, or forecasting data used to determine price reasonableness
- Noncompetitive Procurement Documentation: If noncompetitive procurement is used (e.g., due to inadequate competition), retain justifications, cost analyses, etc.
- Invoicing and Payments: Invoices, payment records, and documentation of credits, rebates, discounts, or USDA Foods values received
- Dispute Resolution: Records of any disputes, protests, or resolutions related to the procurement

Required Clauses

The following federal clauses must be included in the procurement solicitations and contracts as required by 2 CFR Part 200 and other applicable regulations. The use of the clause depends on the procurement method and dollar threshold. Sponsors must ensure compliance with these clauses based on the aggregate value of the purchase.

Sponsors must maintain records to demonstrate compliance with these clauses, including solicitations, contracts, and any exceptions.

Clauses	Micro-Purchase (\$10,000 or less)	Small Purchase (\$10,001 - \$50,000)	Formal Purchase (IFB & RFP) (Over \$50,000)
Rights to Inventions 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(f)	N/A	N/A	Required (*if research related)
Equal Employment Opportunity 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(c)	N/A	Required (**construction over \$10,000)	Required (**construction)
Affirmative Actions to Include Minority, Women's, and Small Businesses 2 CFR 200.321	N/A	N/A	Required
Buy American 7 CFR 210.21(d)	Required	Required	Required
Davis Beacon Act 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(d)	\$2,000 or more (**construction)	Required	Required
Termination Clause and Convenience 2 CFR 200.339, Appendix II(B)	N/A	N/A	Required
Remedies for Breach of Contract (2 CFR 200, Appendix II(A))	N/A	N/A	Required
Recovered Materials 2 CFR 200.323	\$10,000 or more	***Required	***Required
Debarment and Suspension Certification 2 CFR 200.214	N/A	\$25,000 or more	Required
Assurance of Civil Rights FNS 113-1	Required	Required	Required
Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(E)	N/A	N/A	Required
Program Compliance 7 CFR 210 & 7 CFR 250	Required	Required	Required
Recordkeeping 7 CFR 200.334 & 7 CFR 250.37	Required	Required	Required
Environmental Protection, including Clean Air and Water 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(g)	N/A	N/A	Required (over \$150,000)
Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment 2 CFR 200, Appendix II(i)	N/A	N/A	Required (over \$100,000)
Recordkeeping Requirements 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17), 7 CFR 250.16(b))	Required	Required	Required

* Research-related example: Development of new food products or recipes. A contract with a research institute or university to develop a meal option for school lunch programs.

** Construction examples: Building or renovating kitchen facilities, installing food storage infrastructure, repairing structural damage to a food service area.

***Recovered Materials – The recipient should acquire or use products and services that can be reused, refurbished, or recycled (e.g., purchase recycled paper products for food service, purchase recycled plastic trays)

Non-Discrimination 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, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

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 State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [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, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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