



## **Civil Rights Complaint Procedure Template for Child Nutrition Programs**

1. The complainant may file a complaint with the sponsor, State Agency, or directly with USDA.
2. The civil rights complaint should be written in the [Civil Rights Complaint Log](#) regardless if the complaint is expressed in writing or verbally.
3. The complainant and/or sponsor should complete the [Civil Rights Complaint Form](#). Use of a Civil Rights complaint form must not be a prerequisite to an acceptance of a complaint.
4. Include the following in your complaint letter:
  - a. Your name, address and telephone number.
  - b. The name, address, and telephone number of your attorney or authorized representative, if you are represented.
  - c. The basis of your complaint. The basis is what you believe was the motivating factor for the discrimination. For example, you may believe you were treated differently because of your race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, familial/parental status, disability, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from a public assistance program. (Not all bases apply to all programs).
  - d. The date(s) that the incident(s) you are reporting as discrimination occurred.
  - e. The name of the individual(s) or entity you believe discriminated against you and the agency or recipient that employs that/those individual(s).
  - f. The issue(s) of your complaint. The issue is a description of what happened, or the action that was taken by the individual(s) or agency that discriminated against you, resulting in some harm. Explain as clearly as possible what happened, why you believe it happened, and how you were discriminated against. Please include how other persons were treated differently from you, if applicable. If you were denied a benefit or service, please provide a copy of the denial letter. If you have documents to support the events you are reporting, provide a copy of the supporting documents.
5. All civil rights complaints, written or verbal, are then forwarded to USDA for investigation.

## **Important**

- It is necessary that the information provided be sufficient to determine the identity of the agency or individual towards which the complaint is directed and to indicate the possibility of a violation.
- Anonymous complaints should be handled as any other complaints.
- In the event a complainant makes the allegations verbally or through a telephone conversation and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made shall write up the elements of the complaint for the complainant.

***Any person alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability has a right to file a complaint within 180 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory action.***

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.