Hattiesburg Public Schools

Wellness Policy

Strong | Leaders | Resilient | Persistent | Unified

WELLNESS COMMITTEE/SCHOOL HEALTH COUNCIL

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Tonsa Vaughn, Hattiesburg Public Schools Assistant Superintendent
Yolanda Morris, Hattiesburg Public Schools Board Trustee
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HATTIESBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS WELLNESS POLICY

Rationale:

The link between health of students and learning is well documented. If children are to be successful in school they cannot be tired, hungry, sick, suffering from drug abuse, or worried that school is an unsafe environment in which they could become a victim of a violent act. It has become apparent that problems such as poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, obesity, bullying, and more – can adversely affect not only a child's health, but also his or her ability to learn! And that is precisely why the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model approach to school health can make a difference! The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model approach to school health improves kids' health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together. At its very core, the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model approach to school health is about keeping students healthy over time, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that good health and learning go hand in hand.

Goal:

All students in the Hattiesburg Public Schools will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff members in the Hattiesburg Public Schools are encouraged to model a lifestyle of healthy eating patterns and moderate physical activity as a valuable part of their daily lives.

To meet this goal, the Hattiesburg Public Schools adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to implementing a coordinated approach to school health, based on the

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

Commitment to Nutrition Environment and Services

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Promote participation in school meal programs to families and staff.
- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2001).
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2002).
- Include goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity and other school based activities to promote student wellness.
- Implement Nutrition Standards as adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4011),
  - Healthy food and beverage choices;
  - Healthy food preparation;
  - Marketing of healthy food choices to students, staff and parents;
  - Food preparation ingredients and products;
  - Minimum and maximum time allotment for students and staff lunch and breakfast periods;
  - The availability of food items during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs; and
  - Methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.
- Establish guidelines in accordance with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. (see Nutrition Environment and Services section of the Tools That Work – Your Guide to Success for Building a Healthy School

Toolkit that is found on the Office of Healthy Schools website at http://www.mdek12.org/OHS

- Use Smart Snacks Resources to educate the school community about the importance of offering healthy snacks for students and staff members.
  Smart Snacks Product Calculator: https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) and the ChooseMyPlate resources, by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried foods), whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and reduced-fat dairy products. Read more about HHFKA at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/pdf/2013-15249.pdf and ChooseMyPlate at http://www.choosemyplate.gov/
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students; and with eliminating carbonated soda containers and fast food and /or restaurant packaging by students, staff, and visitors in the cafeteria.
- Replace deep fat fryers with combination oven steamers. Schedule recess before lunch, in order to increase meal consumption and nutrient intake at meals and to improve behavior in the dining area.
- Make school meals accessible to all students with a variety of delivery strategies, such as breakfast in the classroom, grab-and-go lunches, or alternate eating sites.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents improve food that they serve at home.
- Add nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, reduced-fat milk, reduced-fat yogurt, reduced-fat cheese, 100% juice, and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at school, including vending machines, school stores, concession stands at sporting and academic events, parties, celebrations, social events, and other school functions.
- Eliminate use of foods as rewards for student accomplishment and the withholding of food as punishment (e.g., restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to behavior problems). Also, do not use any type of physical activity as a means of punishment.
- Eliminate foods sold to students in competition with school meals (one hour before breakfast and during breakfast, one hour before lunch and during lunch).
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy as a fund-raiser is strongly discouraged.

Commitment to Food Safe Schools

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals, as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school site. HACCP Principles for K-12 schools can be downloaded at: http://www.icn.org
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® (www.fightbac.org) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.
- All school personnel (school board members, administrators, teachers, school nurses, instructional and health services paraprofessionals, foodservice staff, custodians and facilities managers, and administrative support staff) will have access to the Local School Wellness Policy to include food safety policies and procedures and relevant professional development via the Hattiesburg Public Schools website.
- Adequate access to hand-washing facilities and supplies will be available whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.
- The food safety assurance plan must address strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.

Commitment to Physical Activity/Physical Education

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-8 (in accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference 2014 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 27.1.
- Provide Physical Education/Activity in accordance with the Physical Education Rules and Regulations as approved by the State Board of Education in compliance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).
- Require fitness testing for all 5th grade students.
- Require fitness testing for high school students; during the year they acquire the ½ Carnegie unit in physical education as required for graduation by the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Instruction must be based on 2013-2014 Mississippi Physical Education Frameworks.

- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 2369).
- Graduation requirements for 9th through 12th grade students shall include ½ Carnegie unit in physical education.
- Provide instruction in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for students in grades 9-12 in the school year they earn their ½ Carnegie Unit for physical education. (House Bill 432)
- Address concussions by adopting and implementing a policy for students in grades 7-12 who participate in activities sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA). This policy will include a concussion recognition course that has been endorsed by the Mississippi Department of Health. This course will provide information on the nature and risk of concussions for students participating in athletics. Also included in the policy, parents/guardians will be provided with a concussion policy before the start of regular school athletic season. (House Bill 48) Links to resources to aid policy development and Office of Healthy Schools website https://www.mdek12.org/OHS
- Incorporate 5 to 10 minute physical activity sessions in classrooms to teach subject areas and to make transitions between different lessons (Examples can be found at www.movetolearnms.org
- Participate in a yearly fitness test for all students. Examples are: Fitness Gram® www.fitnessgram.net or Presidential Youth Fitness Program www.presidentialyouthfitnessprogram.org.
- Establish or enhance physical activity opportunities (like walking clubs or fitness challenges) for staff and/or parents.
- Encourage active transportation to/from schools by assessing the safest routes for students to walk or bike to school, and by installing bike racks at school buildings.
- Collaborate with local recreational departments and youth fitness programs to promote participation in lifelong physical activities.
- Create opportunities for students to voluntarily participate in before-and after-school physical activity programs like intramurals, clubs, and at the secondary level, interscholastic athletics.

Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of health education for graduation (2012 Mississippi Public School
- Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).

- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades 9-12 (2012 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007, which requires 45 minutes per week of health education instruction as defined by the State Board of Education for grades K through 8.
- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K-8.
- Implement the requirements of MS Code 37-13-171, which requires the development of a sex related education policy and instruction on medically accurate or evidenced based abstinence-only or abstinence-plus curricula.
- Emphasize the disease prevention strand in the 2012 Mississippi Contemporary Health Education Curriculum.
- Participate in USDA nutrition programs such as Team Nutrition Schools and the Healthier U.S. School Challenge. The school will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school team responsible for planning nutrition activities will include school foodservice staff, school nurses, health and PE teachers, coaches, and additional staff, as appropriate.

Commitment to a Healthy School Environment

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed (in accordance with Mississippi State Fire Code). Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible.
- Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly (in accordance with the Safety Data Sheet https://www.osha.gov/chemicaldata/).
- Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety (www.cpsc.gov); for federal guidelines for playground safety.
- Ensure that fire extinguishers are inspected each year and properly tagged.
- Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling system in your school; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.
- Every school will have an anti-bullying policy that outlines procedures for dealing with bullying situations in the school.
- Ensure that two means of egress are available in each classroom in case of an emergency; if there is only one door, designate a window (properly sized) as a means of egress.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of electricity anywhere on a school campus.

- Comply with the applicable rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the operation of its transportation program (in accordance with the MS Code 37-41-53; State Board of Education Policies 7903, 7904, and 7909; and Accreditation Standard #29).
- Inspect all buses on a quarterly basis and ensure that they are well maintained and clean.
- Require that all bus drivers have a valid bus driver certificate and a commercial driver's license and operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures. Maintain a record of yearly motor vehicle reports on each bus driver and evidence that each driver has received two hours of in-service training per semester. (SB Policy 7903)
- Ensure arrival of all buses at their designated school sites prior to the start of the instructional day.
- Conduct bus evacuation drills at least two times each year. (SB Policy 7904) Provide facilities that meet the criteria of: (MS Code 37-7-301 (c) (d) (j); 37-11-5, 49 and 45-11-101; and Accreditation Standard #29).
- Provide facilities that are clean.
- Provide facilities that are safe.
- Provide proper signage that explains tobacco, weapons, and drugs are prohibited on the school campus and at school functions.
- Provide operational facilities that are equipped and functional to meet the instructional needs of students and staff
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms, Code §37-17-6(2) (2000). Comply with the requirements for Safe and Healthy Schools
- Maintain a comprehensive School Safety Plan on file that has been approved annually by the local school board. (MS Code 37-3-81 and 37-3-82(2); and Accreditation Standard #37.1); see the School Safety Manual and the MDE School Occupational Safety and Crisis Response Plan at: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSOS/SS
- State Board Policy EBB (1990) prohibits the possession of pistols, firearms or weapons by any person on school premises or at school functions. Code §37-11-18 (1996) requires any student who possesses a knife, a handgun, other firearm or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commit a violent act on educational property be subject to automatic expulsion for one calendar year. The superintendent of the school is authorized to modify the period of time for expulsion on a case-by-case basis.
- Prohibits students from possessing tobacco on any educational property, Criminal Code §97-32-9 (2000). Code §97-32-29 (2000) further prohibits the use of tobacco on any educational property for adults who, if in violation, would be subject to a fine and issued a citation by a law enforcement officer. Educational property is defined as any public school building or bus, campus, grounds, athletic field, or other property used or operated during a school-related activity.
- Conduct self-assessments of the school building(s) annually prior to school opening using the School Facility Safety Assessment found at the link below

https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OA/OSOS/School%20Buildings%20and%20Grounds/2021/1_school_facility_safety_assessment_instrument_2019.pdf

- Conduct self-assessments of the school(s) bus transportation system prior to school opening using the MDE pre-trip inspection check list https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OA/OSOS/Pupil%20Transportation/pre_trip_inspection_form_20220623.pdf
- Install locks on classroom doors in order to create security from the inside.
- Complete a yearly comprehensive health and safety assessment of the school building and grounds and report to the superintendent and school board; using the Healthy SEAT Assessment Tool https://www.epa.gov/schools or other applicable resources.
- Eliminate unnecessary school bus idling that causes pollution and creates health risk for children such as; asthma, allergies, and other respiratory problems- http://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus
- Hire a District Safety Officer or a School Resource Officer.
- Conduct random drug testing on students.
- Utilize regularly scheduled meetings with the School Health Council, school board members, etc. to determine and discuss the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges associated with implementing and maintaining your school's healthy and safe environment.
- Utilize best practices for the use of pesticides and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in school buildings and on school grounds; IPM Institute of North America – www.ipminstitute.org

Commitment to Quality Health Services

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the 2019 Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care.
- Provide for teachers and staff training regarding signs and symptoms of asthma. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 73-25-37)
- Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.
- Know the district anaphylaxis policy. Providing training by a healthcare professional, preferably a school nurse, for the individuals that will be responsible for implementing the policy at the school site. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 73-25-37)
- The school nurse should attend at least one MDE sponsored training each school year.
- Offer comprehensive health services for students in grades K-12, through the employment of school nurses, as a means to academic success.

- Collaborate with other school staff to provide health services as part of a Coordinated School Health Program.
- Work with students, parents, and local healthcare providers to effectively manage and treat chronic diseases.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through school and community events (PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).

Commitment to Providing Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines (436 or 451) when hiring guidance counselors and psychologists. The state does not have a policy specifically outlining the requirements for a school social worker. For licensure as a social worker in the state of Mississippi, a candidate must: provide verification of a baccalaureate degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and scores a minimum of 70 on the ASWB basic exam.
- Abide by Mississippi Code 37-9-79 (Amended 2014) as the school provides for counseling and guidance for students.
- Provide at a minimum, a ½ time licensed guidance counselor for high school and ensure that all elementary school students have access to qualified student support personnel such as: guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, psychologists, psychometrists, and others (as required by the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, Process Standard 6).
- Hire school guidance counselors with a minimum of a Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling, or in an emergency situation, an appropriate certification as determined by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development.
- Hire school counselors who agree to abide by the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics.
- Ensure that all school guidance counselors provide comprehensive counseling services such as:
    - Academic and personal/social counseling.
    - Student assessment and assessment counseling.
    - Career and educational counseling.
    - Individual and group counseling.
    - Crisis intervention and preventive counseling.
    - Provide all licensed teachers and principals with in-service suicide prevention training as directed by MS Code 37-3-101.

    - Referrals to community agencies.
    - Educational consultations and collaborations with teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders.
    - Education and career placement services.
    - Follow-up counseling services.
    - Conflict resolution.
    - Other counseling duties or other duties as assigned by the school principal.
- Offer quality counseling, psychological and social services provided by professionals such as certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers.
- Provide additional services to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health.
- Hire qualified counselors who will address the mental health, academic, and career needs of students in the school setting.

Commitment to Family and Community Involvement

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Invite parents and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the local School Health Council.
- Invite family or community members to participate in health and/or physical education classes.
- Invite family or community members to eat a meal at school.
- Provide resources and training to parents on health-related topics, parenting skills, child development, and family relationships.
- Use the Family and Community Involvement Packet documents to promote health and wellness among families and communities – https://www.mdek12.org/OHS/FCS
- Recruit, train and involve family and community members as volunteers for teaching certain health units.
- Invite family and community volunteers to lead physical activities for children, such as lunchtime walkathons, weekend games, after-school programs, cheerleading, karate, aerobics, yoga, etc.
- Encourage health education skill-building activities at home by including homework for health instruction, personal goal setting for healthy behaviors, and other health education-related activities.
- Develop homework assignments for students that involve family discussions about health topics and age-related health issues.
- Encourage regular family mealtimes that include healthy choices.
- Schedule school health fairs and invite parents and the public to attend.
- Update parents on school health successes through monthly newsletters and/or email.

- Sponsor a Family Fitness Night.
- Increase PTA/PTO Membership.
- Plan Healthy Fundraisers and Healthy School Celebrations.
- Plan Healthy Rewards for students and encourage parents to do the same.

Commitment to Implementing a Quality Staff Wellness Program

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Make as a Requirement that all staff are aware of the Mississippi State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan that has been enhanced to include My Active Health, a wellness and health promotion program designed to help individuals live a healthy lifestyle and increase their overall wellness benefit – www.MyActiveHealth.com/Mississippi .
- Promote health and reduce risk factors through professional and staff development programs, providing information flyers and newsletters, introducing incentives for participating in healthy practices and activities, and offering an employee assistance program.
- Provide health promotion programs for school staff to include opportunities for physical activity, health screenings, nutrition education, weight management, smoking cessation, and stress reduction and management.
- Encourage after school health and fitness sessions for school staff.
- Develop relationships with community health providers (e.g., local health departments, hospitals, neighborhood clinics, health professionals), recreational facilities, voluntary health organizations (e.g., American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, American Heart Association), and other community members who can provide resources for or support school employee wellness activities.
- Organize employee walking teams or clubs.
- Coordinate Staff Wellness events and activities with state and national health observances throughout the year.

Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Provide positive, consistent, and motivating messages about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting.
- Use school announcement systems, internal TV channels, school website, Facebook, text messaging and other social media to promote health messages to students and families.
- Use traditional marketing materials such as posters, flyers, T-shirts, wrist bands, buttons, etc. to promote health messages to students and families.
- Involve students in the local school health council for planning and marketing school health messages throughout the school.

- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent teacher conferences, PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Work with the local newspaper, TV and radio to promote healthy lifestyles and to highlight the benefits and successes of school health initiatives.
- Create awareness of the link between the health of students and academic performance.
- Prepare media releases that share successes to local newspapers.

Commitment to Exploring Social Emotional Learning Standards

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Establish framework for incorporating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into the school wellness activities. Refer to the MDE K-12 SEL Resource Guide https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/Secondary%20Ed/sel_standards_finalupdated.pdf

Commitment to Implementation

Minimum requirements:

The Hattiesburg Public Schools will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to ensure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.
- Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy (Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 37-13-134).
- Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.
- Use monitoring instruments, developed by the Office of Healthy Schools, to conduct a self-assessment that identifies strengths and weaknesses toward implementation of the minimum requirements. Monitoring instruments can be downloaded at https://www.mdek12.org/OHS/Resources

NON-FOOD REWARDS

Kids naturally enjoy eating nourishing foods and being physically active. Schools and teachers can provide them with an environment that supports these healthy behaviors by using non-food rewards. Here are effective alternatives – from outstanding educators across the country – to offering food as a reward to individual students or entire classes.

Sit by friends.
Read a book.
Read outdoors.
Teach the class.
Have extra art time.
Enjoy class outdoors.
Have an extra recess.
Play a computer game.
Read to a younger class.
Sing a silly song together.
Get a 'no' homework pass.
Make deliveries to the office.
Listen to music while working.
Earn play money for privileges.
Play favorite games or puzzles.
Walk with a teacher or principal.
Eat lunch outdoors with the class.
Be a helper in another classroom.
Eat lunch with a teacher or principal.
Start and maintain a vegetable garden.
Dance to favorite music in the classroom.
Be first in line when the class leaves the room.
Listen with a headset to a book on audiotape.
Get a "free choice" time at the end of the day.
Have a teacher perform special skills (i.e. sing).
Have a teacher read a special book to the class.
Take a trip to the treasure box (filled with stickers, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, etc.).

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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: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, 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

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