Civil Rights Complaint Procedures

For USDA Child Nutrition Programs

I. Purpose

This procedure ensures that all civil rights complaints related to USDA Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), are received, documented, and processed in compliance with federal regulations.

II. Scope

These procedures apply to all students, parents, guardians, employees, and other individuals who participate in or are affected by the school's child nutrition programs.

III. Non-Discrimination Statement

The school must prominently display the USDA's **Non-Discrimination Statement** on all program materials and public postings. Complaints may be based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

IV. Complaint Filing Process

1. How to File a Complaint

- Any individual who believes they have been discriminated against within the USDA Child Nutrition Program may file a complaint.
- Complaints must be filed **within 180 days** of the alleged discrimination.
- Complaints may be submitted:
    - **Verbally** (in-person or via phone)
    - **In writing** (email, letter, or school complaint form)
    - **Electronically** (USDA online complaint portal)

2. Where to File a Complaint

Complaints can be submitted to:

- **School's Civil Rights Coordinator (CRC):** Dr. Kathryn Meyer
- **USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR):**
    - **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

- **Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442
- **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov
- **Online:** USDA Discrimination Complaint Form

V. Complaint Documentation & Processing

1. Initial Complaint Intake

- The **Civil Rights Coordinator** (CRC) or designated staff member must:
  - Record the complaint details, including:
    - **Complainant's name and contact information**
    - **Date of the incident**
    - **Description of the alleged discrimination**
    - **Names of involved individuals**
    - **Witnesses (if any)**
  - The CRC will forward it to **USDA's Office of Civil Rights** within **5 business days** of receipt. The school may not investigate or resolve a complaint of civil rights discrimination themselves.

VI. Confidentiality & Retaliation Protections

- All complaints are confidential.
- Retaliation against any individual who files a complaint is **strictly prohibited**.

VII. Staff Training & Awareness

- **Annual training** for all nutrition staff on civil rights compliance.
- Clear signage and notification of complaint procedures for students and families.

VIII. Record Keeping

- The school must **retain complaint records for three (3) years** and provide them upon request during audits or reviews.