Orange Southwest Supervisory Union Civil Rights Complaint Procedure

Individuals and groups are never discouraged from submitting a complaint of discrimination. Complaints may be written or verbal. Complaints may be anonymous. The Orange Southwest Supervisory Union instructs program participants to send complaints of discrimination directly to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR). The complainant must file within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination. The superintendent or appointed designee is responsible for implementing the Civil Rights Complaint Procedure. The complainant can file on their own directly with the USDA or report the complaint to the School Food Authority (SFA) or sponsor.

The contact information is found on the "And Justice for All" nondiscrimination posters which are prominently displayed in all required areas.

1. All complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability will be forwarded to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights immediately.

   mail:
   U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
   fax:
   (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442
   email:
   Program.Intake@usda.gov

Complaints should be put into writing, by the complainant, using the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint.

2. In the event that a complainant makes the allegations verbally or in person and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made must record the details of the complaint for the complainant. Every effort will be made to have the complainant provide the following information:
   a) Name and contact information for the complainant.
   b) The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory actions occurred or, if continuing, the duration of such actions.
   c) The specific location and name of the entity delivering the service or benefit.
   d) The nature of the incident or action that led the complainant to feel that discrimination was a factor.
   e) The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists within any of the protected classes.
   f) The names, titles, and business addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action.

3. If the USDA determines that a civil rights compliant warrants an investigation, it will occur based on established FNS policy and procedures, and then finalized into a report. They will investigate the complaint and this is the sole responsibility of the USDA.

4. In addition to submitting the complaint to the USDA, the SFA will keep a Civil Rights Complaint Log on site. Use of the Civil Rights Complaint Log Template is recommended. Maintaining confidentiality is crucial. As much information as possible will be documented, including:

- Name and contact information of complainant
- Description of incident including date, time, location, and persons present
- Relevant Protected Base(s)
- Name of organization and individuals alleged to have engaged in discrimination
- Date of referral to USDA
- The findings of any investigation conducted
- Description of the final disposition of the complaint including any corrective action planned or taken

5. The SFA will also notify Child Nutrition Programs at Vermont Agency of Education of any complaints of discrimination. The State Agency maintains the information in a confidential database with limited access. Child Nutrition Programs does not investigate complaints of discrimination, but ensures complaints are received by the USDA and will cooperate in the tracking, processing, and resolving of complaints of discrimination.

6. The Vermont Public Accommodations Act (9 V.S.A. Chapter 139) protects against discrimination in places of public accommodation. This law protects against discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship, immigration status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Places of public accommodation include any school, restaurant, store, establishment, or other facility at which services, facilities, goods, privileges, advantages, benefits, or accommodations are offered to the general public.
   **Please reach out to your legal counsel if you have questions about whether you are considered a place of public accommodation.*
   Complaints related to these state-protected bases may be filed with the Vermont Human Rights Commission.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.