

## **Civil Rights Program in Montana Extension**

Information available on our msuextension.org website, intranet, civil rights.

Equal Employment Opportunity Program

MSU complies with the Equal Employment Opportunity requirements contained within USDA

Need to make sure that people who believe they've been discriminated against can complain about the discrimination to USDA/NIFA

Civil Rights Program Division

Making certain that MSU Extension does not discriminate in any of its programs

## **Civil Rights Policy Statement**

Montana State University Extension is committed to ensuring the civil rights of its clients and employees. Every client and every employee must be treated fairly and equitably, with dignity and respect. This policy applies to all clients and employees – regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior credible activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Each Extension employee has an important role in ensuring that our programs are open and accessible to all clients in accordance with the goals of the program, and for maintaining a positive and equitable environment. The challenge, for each of us, is to seek out diversity. We are all responsible to recruit and retain people who are traditionally underrepresented in our programs and employee groups. We each become more effective in teaching and learning when we are open to a diversity of ideas, cultures, experiences and backgrounds. Not only are our lives enriched, but we also build healthier communities for learning and living.

I am pleased to partner with you to achieve the important goals of equity and fairness to all.

Signed, Executive Director

Cody Stone

## Laws involved:

Montana State University Extension Civil Rights/Equal Opportunity Policy/Guidelines are based on federal laws, and require the following documents to be present in each Extension office:

- Age Discrimination Act of 1975(link is external)
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967(link is external)
- Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008(link is external)
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title I, II and V(link is external)
- Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VI(link is external)
- Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII(link is external)
- Civil Rights Act of 1991(link is external)
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973(link is external)
- Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972(link is external)
- USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights – Departmental Directives and Regulations
- USDA DR 4330-002: Nondiscrimination in Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from USDA

## Civil Rights Terms and Efforts:

- **Parity:** an Extension program is in parity when the participation of individuals of minority groups reflects the proportionate representation in the population of potential recipients. A program will be considered in compliance when its population has reached 80% of parity.
- **Potential Audience/Recipients:** potential recipients are persons or groups within your defined geographic area who might be interested in or benefit from the educational program. Potential recipients should be estimated for each program carried out in the Extension office. For instance, Extension educators may conduct family living programs in nutrition, family finances and parenting. Potential recipient should be estimated for each of these three efforts. Potential recipients are estimated by using a combination of county/area demographic data and the Extension educator's knowledge and information about the population of the county/area. When a target audience is identified through program planning, it should be inclusive of the entire potential recipients as defined by demographic data. Census data is available on the msuextension.org website.
  - **Planning and Reporting – Activity Insights** is used to determine how many minority participants have been served by the Extension Office. Care should be taken that a proportionate number of the population is served through the programs in the office.
- **All Reasonable Effort:** Extension must be able to demonstrate that federally funded programs or activities have been made available to the maximum possible audience of a given locale or area. Three steps are required to demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to reach underserved audiences: a) the use of all available mass media; b) the use of personal letters and/or flyers or publications; and c) the use of personal contacts (invitations to participate) by Extension staff.
- **Adequate Public Notification:** Public notification plans are a part of the delivery mode in the affirmative action goals related to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Extension program outreach should use the most diversified possible communications to attract persons of all races, religions, genders and national origins to participate. Examples include

posters, flyers, minority organization bulletin board notices, grocery flyers, or other public mailings.

- Be certain that everyone in the office knows how to help someone file a discrimination complaint. This includes reporting to agent, RDH, Associate Director, Director, Civil Rights Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity on the MSU Campus or USDA. “And Justice for All” poster includes information on filing a complaint with USDA.
- Harassment is not tolerated at MSU Extension.

EEO based harassment becomes unlawful when tolerating the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a work environment a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee, such as a client or customer.

Non-EEO harassment (including bullying) is any form of unwelcome conduct, pervasive, persistent, and unsolicited verbal, non-verbal, written, or physical conduct that is objectively offensive and could alter the affected employee's terms and conditions of employment.

- All publications and brochures should include a non-discrimination statement. If there is room, our entire indicia is to be included. If there is limited space, our shorted statement can be used.
- Does each organization with which the office works receive a non-discrimination agreement?
- Are all websites complying with 508 laws (ADA accessible)?
- Non-discrimination laws and policies should be discussed with all volunteers. Should become part of volunteer training. Volunteers should be signing non-discrimination statements.
- If there is a significant portion of the population with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), steps should be taken to translate documents for the population.
- Mailing lists of all typed should remain diverse and reflect the racial, ethnic and gender proportions of the general population.
- Committees should have proportionate representation of race, gender and ethnicity populations.
- Required documents should be available in office, in an accessible location. These documents are listed above.
- “And Justice for All” poster should be displayed everywhere programming is held. This should be in the 11x17 inch format. Currently, the non-food service poster is green