

Why Emphasize Diversity?

An organization which values diversity and encourages and recognizes the contributions of all employees is a healthier, more productive organization.

All employees should be free to focus on their jobs without worry that race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or any other characteristics which have no bearing on job performance, will influence career opportunities or opportunities to make contributions to the organization.

Diversity contributes to the organization's problem solving and responsiveness by increasing the variety of viewpoints and perspectives to meet new challenges. Everyone gains strength through unity.

Valuing and recognizing diversity enables an organization to benefit from the different perspectives and contributions that each employee brings to the workplace and to maintain competitiveness in a global environment.

Agency resources can be more focused on business issues and work environment improvements and less on processing employee complaints (e.g., grievances and equal opportunity complaints).



What Should I Do if I Believe I Have Been The Recipient Of An Act Of Discrimination?

You should call an Equal Opportunity Counselor (EOC) right away. Equal Employment Opportunity counseling, or pre-complaint processing, is conducted in accordance with 29 CFR 1614.105. This states that aggrieved persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or disability (physical or mental), or in retaliation for having participated in activity protected under various civil rights statutes, must consult an EOC prior to filing a complaint, in an attempt to resolve the matter informally. The EOC must be contacted within 45 days of the alleged discriminatory act.

Employees or applicants for employment with NRCS, seeking counseling, should call (301) 504-2181 for assignment of an EOC or write to the Office of Civil Rights as shown in the nondiscrimination statement below.

Contact: Paul King
Bismarck State Office
Civil Rights Advisor
and Liaison Officer
for Employment at
701-530-2005



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to: USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, DC 20250-9410 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382(TDD) USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

What Is A Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM)?

A SEPM is responsible for planning and implementing a program to improve employment and advancement opportunities for women, Hispanics, Blacks, American Indians, Asian Americans, members of other minority groups, and persons with disabilities. SEPM positions are collateral duty positions and are under the direct supervision of the NRCS State Conservationist.

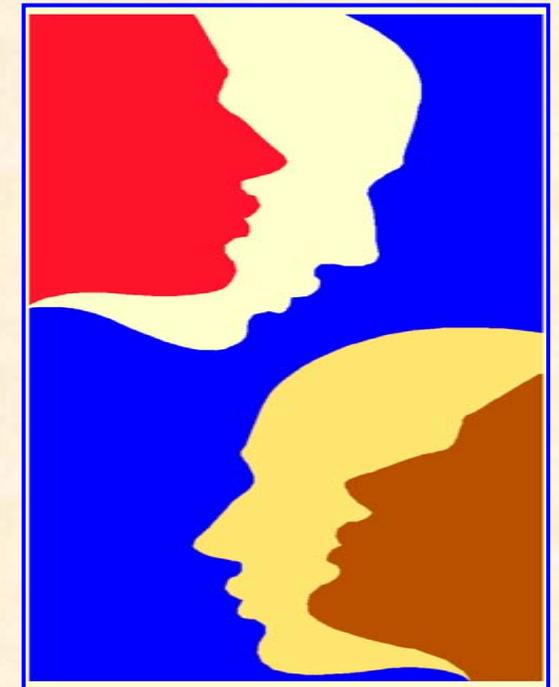
An SEPM is responsible for:

- Analyzing challenges facing women, minorities, or persons with disabilities in the agency
- Advising management of problems and providing possible solutions
- Offering career information to minorities, women, and persons with disabilities
- Maintaining educational and training information
- Sponsoring programs to increase awareness of employment opportunities
- Assisting in a diversified recruitment effort in North Dakota

North Dakota's SEPMs are:

- ◆ *Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager*
- ◆ *Federal Women's Program Manager*
- ◆ *Disability Emphasis Program Manager*
- ◆ *Black Emphasis Program Manager*
- ◆ *Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program Manager*
- ◆ *American Indian/Emphasis Program Manager*
- ◆ *Veteran's Emphasis Program Manager*

North Dakota



Civil Rights Committee

