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Internal Management

By now you already know that District Conservationists have to know about many things including "not so technical" things. This section will provide an overview of a number of important topics which are crucial for you to be aware of as a NRCS Manager and supervisor. Please review and complete the questions and activities associated with the following learning units:

Performance Management (Power point)

If you are a supervisor, you need to keep learning about how to effectively motivate and manage your people. Review this power point and consider this as one more opportunity to learn. People and their skill sets are our most valued asset. Your continued attention to "growing leaders" will pay off for you, your clients and the agency!

Administrative Grievance System

NRCS has a grievance process that employees can use. Although your supervisor and HR Specialists can help you deal with a grievance, you need to be aware of the process so you are not totally surprised if and when you are impacted by a grievance filed by an employee.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

NRCS has an Alternative Dispute Resolution Staff. This staff is mostly used to help deal with issues related to grievances. They offer a neutral third party role to help parties explore their differences, find commonality, and find solutions to the conflict. ADR is a tool that you could use in addressing conflicts between you and employees, partners or clients; or conflicts between employees; or conflicts between employees and partners.

Reasonable Accommodation

NRCS Managers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to employees. As a supervisor, it is important that you have some understanding of the policy and procedures in order to effectively address employee issues.

Employee Assistance Program

USDA provides employees and their families with the services of an employee assistance program. DCs should be aware of the EAP services and how they may be used to assist themselves or their employees.

Safety and Health

In order to foster a productive work environment, District Conservationists need to assure the safety and health of their employees. Read this unit to learn more of your responsibilities.

Ethics Orientation (Power point)

Review the Ethics power point and take a look at the memo on Ethical Conduct issued by Secretary Vilsack in March 2009. As a DC, you may be asked to fill out a Financial Disclosure Form and take annual Ethics Training. Taking your ethics responsibilities seriously is crucial to establishing and maintaining the trust of your employees and clients.

Freedom of Information Act - FOIA

All NRCS employees need to be as transparent as possible in our processes while at the same time protecting the personally identifiable information of our employees and clients. Section 1619 of the new Farm Bill outlines new requirements to protect producer information. Review this learning unit to get an overview of this topic.

IT and Security Issues

Computer Security, information security,… you already know quite a bit about this since you take the annual IT Security training. This learning unit will give more information relative to requirements of employees and partners in accessing our computer and network resources.

State Food Advisory Council

You are a member of your local Food Advisory Council (FAC). Are you clear about what the FAC is all about? Read this section to learn more.

Summary: You should now have a good idea of your responsibilities as a supervisor, have an awareness of requirements associated with maintaining a safe and productive work environment, a secure information management system, and a work protocol that protects the privacy of client and employee information. You also better understand your role with the Food Advisory Council. Complete this when all learning units are completed.

Section Completed

_____ **Date**_____

District Conservationist Initials

_____ **Date**_____

Supervisor Initials