

# **Bylaws of the Nevada Interagency Civil Rights Advisory Committee**

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Nevada Interagency Civil Rights Advisory Committee (NICRAC) is a standing committee whose members are appointed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist as Deputy Equal Employment Opportunity (DEEO) Officer, and the USDA State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency (FSA), as DEEO Officer. NICRAC primarily supports civil rights activities related to Title VII, as amended, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. NICRAC may also provide outreach assistance under Title VI of the Act upon request from a person(s) responsible for programmatic outreach or from a DEEO Officer. NICRAC is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and civil rights for all employees and customers by identifying needs and making recommendations to the DEEO Officers in Nevada. The specific functions of NICRAC are:

- 1) Identify and bring to the attention of the DEEO Officers any trend, problem, issue, or concern on all matters related to the NRCS Nevada Civil Rights program.
- 2) Contribute to the development and implementation of strategies designed to improve and increase awareness of, and participation in, USDA programs and activities by under-served groups, individuals, and communities.
- 3) Monitor recruitment practices and make recommendations to ensure under-represented groups are aware of employment opportunities for career positions, temporary summer employment, or special appointment.
- 4) Inform DEEO Officers of any specific personnel practices or problems of an EEO nature that are producing, or could produce, dissension and dissatisfaction among employees (e.g. merit promotion procedures; selection for training and assignments; criteria, nomination and distribution of awards; etc.).
- 5) Monitor the policies and overall effectiveness of Affirmative Employment with regard to recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention.
- 6) Provide training resources for various civil rights workshops, seminars, and meetings.
- 7) Act as a forum for exchange of ideas and action proposals on sensitive issues, matters, or concerns pertaining to civil rights.
- 8) Promote and communicate efforts to achieve and operate an effective and ongoing civil rights program.
- 9) Actively participate in the development and implementation of Affirmative Employment.
- 10) Compile and report data to assist in completion of civil rights compliance reviews.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Name**

The name of the committee shall be the USDA, Nevada Interagency Civil Rights Advisory Committee (or NICRAC, hereinafter referred to as the Committee.)

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Purpose**

#### **Section 1:**

The purpose of the Committee shall be to serve as an advisor to the USDA DEEO Officers of Nevada NRCS and FSA. NICRAC is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and civil rights for all customers and employees by identifying needs and making recommendations to the DEEO Officers.

#### **Section 2:**

The Committee has the following objectives:

- 1) To promote and assist in meaningful and effective affirmative employment that is consistent with the goals and objectives set forth by the U.S. government.
- 2) Establish communication between employees and management through which employees' views on civil rights issues may be brought to the attention of management, providing management with feedback on the performance of the civil rights program, and identifying defects and recommending ways the program can be improved. All recommendations are to be reported in writing to the DEEO Officers for appropriate consideration and action.
- 3) The Committee will maintain copies of the minutes of each meeting and forward copies to the DEEO Officers and National teams.
- 4) The Committee identifies special areas or emerging developments and brings them to the attention of the Nevada DEEO Officers.

#### **Section 3:**

The Committee does not receive, investigate, and/or in any way adjudicate individual or class complaints of discrimination.

**ARTICLE III**

**Officers**

**Section 1:**

The officers of the Committee shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary.

**Section 2:**

The Committee shall forward the names of nominees or volunteers to the DEEO Officer for appointment as necessary.

**Section 3:**

Committee Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and the rules of procedure cited in Article VI.

**Section 4:**

The DEEO Officer shall provide appropriate staff and related resources to the Committee as requested by the Committee.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Members**

**Section 1:**

The voting members of the Committee are the three officers and the following Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPMS):

1. American Indian Emphasis Program Manager
2. Asian Pacific Islander Emphasis Program Manager
3. Black Emphasis Program Manager
4. Disability Emphasis Program Manager
5. Federal Women's Program Manager
6. Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager
7. Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgender Emphasis Program Manager
8. Veterans Emphasis Program Manager

SEPM positions may be shared between appointees from NRCS and FSA.

**Section 2:**

A person eligible for membership shall be a permanent NRCS or FSA employee willing to serve on the Committee.

**Section 3:**

The Membership of the Committee shall, to the extent possible, consist of representatives of minority groups, women, various grade levels, classification categories, and geographical regions.

**Section 4:**

The Committee will be assisted by a Civil Rights Liaison who will represent, and be appointed by, the NRCS DEEO Officer, and by an Advisor appointed by the FSA DEEO Officer. The State Administrative Officer and Outreach Coordinator may also be appointed to serve as Advisors to the Committee.

**Section 5:**

The Committee shall notify the DEEO Officer of anticipated vacancies on the Committee.

**Section 6:**

The Committee shall solicit volunteers to serve on the Committee before anticipated vacancies occur. The Committee shall provide this list to the DEEO Officer so that he or she may appoint SEPMs for their jurisdictional areas.

**ARTICLE V****Term on Committee****Section 1:**

Each committee member shall be appointed to serve a three-year term. With approval of the DEEO Officer, a SEPM's term may be extended twice for one year intervals, not to exceed a total of five consecutive years. Advisors and Officers shall be appointed to a three-year term which may be extended at the discretion of the DEEO Officer.

**Section 2:**

The term of membership shall begin with the call to order of the first Committee meeting immediately following a member's appointment to the Committee and shall end upon adjournment of the last quarterly meeting of their three-year term, or extended term.

**Section 3:**

Members shall serve overlapping terms such that no more than half of the membership is replaced in a year.

**Section 4:**

If a member leaves the Committee before the appointment term ends, the Committee shall solicit volunteers for the DEEO Officer's approval. A person shall be appointed by the DEEO Officer to serve a three-year term. If the Chair position is vacated, the Vice-Chair shall execute the office of Chair until such time as the DEEO Officer can appoint a new Chair.

**Section 5:**

Each person who has served as a Committee member shall provide a written exit report to the Committee Chair within 30 days of the end of their term on the Committee.

**ARTICLE VI****Meetings****Section 1:**

The regular meetings of the Committee shall be held quarterly, or as deemed necessary by the Committee and the DEEO Officer. The exact dates shall be set by the Committee Chair in consultation with the DEEO Officer and Committee members.

**Section 2:**

Special meetings may be called by the DEEO Officer, or by the Chair upon approval by the DEEO Officer.

**Section 3:**

Two-thirds of the Committee shall constitute a quorum, whether physically present or by teleconference.

**Section 4:**

Meetings shall be conducted by the Chair according to the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (Da Capo Press, 2011). That authority shall govern the Committee meeting procedure in all cases to which it applies and is consistent with these bylaws.

**ARTICLE VII**

**Voting**

**Section 1:**

Except as otherwise specifically provided for in these bylaws, decisions shall be reached by a majority vote of the members at meetings in which a quorum is present, including by teleconference.

**Section 2:**

Voting by proxy shall not be permitted except on votes pertaining to amendment of the bylaws.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Removal of Members**

Removal of a member from the Committee for cause shall be determined by the DEEO Officer.

**ARTICLE IX**

**Amendment of the Bylaws**

**Section 1:**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws may be submitted in writing by any member of the Committee to the Chair.

**Section 2:**

The Chair will refer proposed amendments to these bylaws to the Nevada DEEO Officers.

**Section 3:**

All amendments to these bylaws are subject to the approval of the Nevada DEEO Officers.

These bylaws are hereby submitted for approval:

Recommended: Garrod Edmunds 1-19-12  
Chair, Nevada Interagency Civil Rights Committee Date

Approved: [Signature] 1/19/12  
State Conservationist, Nevada Date  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Approved: Clint Koble 2-2-2012  
State Executive Director, Nevada Date  
USDA Farm Service Agency