



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6200 Jefferson NE, Room 305
Albuquerque, NM 87109
Phone: (505) 761-4400 Fax: (505) 761-4463
Web site: www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov

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NEW MEXICO BULLETIN NO. 360-13-06

SUBJECT: PER – IMPLEMENTATION FOR ADOPTION OF NATIONAL ONBOARDING FRAMEWORK FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

TO: All Employees

Purpose: To inform employees of the process for onboarding new NRCS employees.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2013

In accordance with National Bulletin 360-13-8, issued January 10, 2013, and Departmental Regulation 4720-001 issued June 3, 2011, NRCS New Mexico will begin using USDA's Onboarding Requirements for new employees effective immediately.

The new Onboarding System is a framework that will allow NRCS to be concise and consistent in the process of bringing new employees into their jobs and will help give those employees a better sense of culture and belonging to NRCS.

Within this new process, partnerships will be formed with New Mexico supervisors/sponsors assigned to the new employees, human resources, civil rights and the leadership team to ensure that each new employee goes through the onboarding process successfully and we have a more engaged and successful workforce environment with the goal of increasing employee retention within the agency. The process for onboarding takes place over an extended period of time and follows a new employee for the first year of their new job.

Responsibilities:

State Conservationist is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the onboarding process is adopted in the state of New Mexico.
2. Meeting with new employees within the first month of their employment to welcome them to our team.

Leadership Team Members are responsible for:

1. Working with the Civil Rights Advisory Committee chairperson to assign a Civil Rights Advisory Committee member to welcome the new employee.
2. Identifying a Sponsor who is located in or near the same location as the new employee.

Human Resources is responsible for:

1. Working with new employees to complete the following items, prior to reporting for duty:
 - (a) Start of background check to be completed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
 - (b) Sending information on New Employee training, available on the USDA Onboarding Portal.
 - (c) Sending out initial confirmation letter to new employees with information on the USDA Onboarding portal where all onboarding forms can be found. When an applicant does not have a personal computer, the HR specialist should explore options before deciding to mail forms to the individual. Alternatively, in the event that the employee is unable to complete the forms on a personal computer, the agency should mail the forms to the employee to complete.
2. Conducting, at a minimum, the following actions on the employee's first reporting day of work:
 - (a) Verify that all mandatory first day forms are complete (e.g., I-9, emergency contact information).
 - (b) Provide a briefing on employee benefits. While an overview is acceptable, the goal of this requirement is to ensure the employee has enough information to begin to consider benefit options and ask appropriate questions prior to filing deadlines.
 - (c) Begin, if not complete, the process of issuing an identification badge.
3. Follow the human resources checklist for any additional items/responsibilities.

Supervisors/Sponsors are responsible for:

1. Being engaged in the hiring process for their new employee and being the primary owners of the onboarding component for their new employees. Specifically, this means that:
 - (a) Supervisors are expected to welcome their new employees to USDA and to introduce them to the culture and values of their agency.
 - (b) Supervisors must contact the employee prior to their entrance on duty to welcome them, preferably by telephone.
 - (c) Supervisors must use the standard USDA onboarding checklist on the USDA Onboarding Portal at: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/OBP/supervisors.htm> to track the employee's onboarding progress. When complete, the checklist will be maintained by the supervisor.
 - (d) Supervisors are expected to use the tools on the USDA Onboarding Portal also located within the link above.
 - (e) Swear-in employee.
 - (f) Provide a map and/or tour of the facility.
 - (g) Review what the employee can expect during his or her first 60 days at USDA and agency and provide written notification of any mandatory meetings.
 - (h) Answering any questions that the new employee may have or directing them to where they might find the correct answer.
2. Following the supervisor/ sponsor guide located at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/OBP/docs/SponsorGuide.pdf>.

Civil Rights Advisory Committee Members are responsible for:

1. Informing the new employee about the Civil Rights Advisory Committee.
2. The functions of civil rights in NRCS.
3. Serving as another welcoming person to the new employee.
4. Following the Civil Rights Advisory Committee member checklist.

If you have any questions about the process for Onboarding new NRCS employees, please contact Human Resources Officer Sarah Pak at 505-761-4409. You can also refer to General Manual Title 360, Part 423 for additional guidance.

The new Onboarding process is essential to our recruitment and retention processes and it will give us all a better understanding of what is involved in welcoming new employees to the agency. This is another needed change that will bring great opportunity for current and future New Mexico NRCS employees.



J. XAVIER MONTOYA
State Conservationist