

Iowa Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC)

The CRAC serves as an advisory body to the State Conservationist to:

- Identify and bring to management's attention needs, problems, issues, and/or concerns.
- Monitor recruitment practices and make recommendations to ensure underrepresented groups are aware of employment opportunities.
- Focus management's attention on specific personnel practices or problems of an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) nature that could produce dissension and dissatisfaction among employees.
- Participate and take an active role in the development and implementation of the Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP) and monitor the effectiveness of the AEP with regard to recruitment, hiring, promotions, and retention.
- Provide training resources for various civil rights workshops, seminars, and meetings.
- Act as a forum for exchange of ideas and action proposals on sensitive issues, matters, or concerns of a civil rights nature.
- Encourage, support, and assist in development of projects or activities associated with civil rights needs or opportunities.

- Contribute to the development and implementation of strategies designed to improve and increase awareness of and participation in NRCS programs and activities by under-served groups, individuals and communities.
- Promote and communicate efforts of management to achieve and operate a realistic and ongoing civil rights program.
- Participate in civil rights compliance reviews.
- Establish communication between employees and management so employees' views on civil rights issues may be brought to the attention of management.

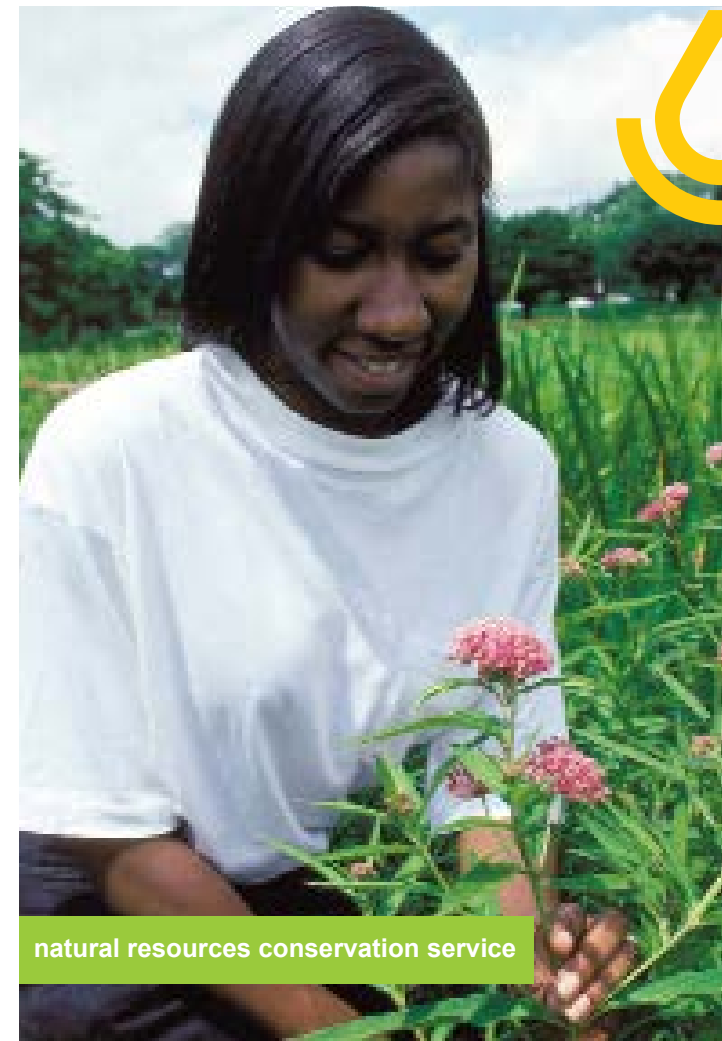
The CRAC does not receive, investigate, and/or in any way adjudicate individual or class complaints of discrimination employment opportunities.

Helping People Help the Land

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Special Emphasis Programs and Civil Rights Committee in Iowa



natural resources conservation service

What are Special Emphasis Programs?



The term Special Emphasis Program (SEP) refers to those programs that focus special attention on specific groups as a result of a particular law, regulation, or Executive Order. SEPs were established to address the employment-related concerns of groups not specifically included in other programs where a need for special emphasis or employment concerns of such groups has been demonstrated.

NRCS SEPs include:

- **American Indian/ Alaska Native**
- **Asian American/ Pacific Islander**
- **Black**
- **Disability**
- **Hispanic**
- **Federal Women's Program**
- **Veterans**
- **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender**

Why are Special Emphasis Programs needed?

Members of these special emphasis groups are substantially underrepresented at all grade levels in technical and professional positions within NRCS. The purpose of each of the SEPs is to provide focus on issues such as employment, retention, promotion, training, career development, and advancement opportunities affecting NRCS applicants and employees

Month	Observance
February	Black History
March	Women's History
May	Asian American/ Pacific Islander Heritage
June	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender
September/October	Hispanic Heritage
October	Disability Employment Awareness
November	Veterans
November	American Indian/ Alaska Native Heritage

Duties of Special Emphasis Program Managers

- Serve on the Iowa NRCS Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC).
- Evaluate and report on the impact of recruitment, selection, placement and promotion, training, career counseling, and career enhancement policies and practices.
- Participate in writing CRAC business plans for approval of the State Conservationist.
- Analyze and evaluate statistical reports to identify barriers to the recruitment, employment, and advancement of protected groups; and recommend corrective action, if needed.
- Help develop and implement Affirmative Employment Plans.
- Conduct training and/or provide training resources for equal employment workshops and meetings.
- Provide advice to the State Conservationist regarding fair and equitable service to and employment of the protected group served.
- Write special emphasis program business plans for the approval of the State Conservationist and implement plan.
- Keep employees aware of special emphasis program activities.
- Participate in recruitment efforts.