

# Administrative Notice AMS-06-03 1/19/07

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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE  
CIVIL RIGHTS ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

It is the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS') policy that harassment in any form is inappropriate and unacceptable conduct, which will not be tolerated. It is illegal, undermines employee relationships, interferes with productivity, and threatens the mental, emotional and physical well-being of employees.

AMS strives to maintain a working environment free of harassment 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 program (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Slurs, derogatory remarks, obscene materials, and other verbal or physical conduct constitute harassment when this conduct:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; and
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Employees should inform the alleged harasser to cease the inappropriate comment or action. Studies have shown this is the most effective means for addressing inappropriate behavior. Employees should also inform their managers and supervisors of inappropriate activity. Managers and supervisors are responsible for acts of harassment in the workplace where the managers or supervisors knew or should have known of the conduct. They are expected to take immediate and appropriate corrective action when harassment occurs.

AMS may also be responsible for the acts of non-employees with respect to harassment of employees in the workplace (or vice versa), where supervisory employees knew or should have known of the conduct and failed to take immediate corrective action. In such cases, AMS will consider the extent of the supervisor's control and any other legal responsibility which the supervisor may have with respect to the conduct of such employee(s).

Managers and supervisors who participate in, or fail to take appropriate action on, reported harassment incidents, or retaliate against employees who report such incidents, could jeopardize their careers for failure to perform their assigned duties, and may be disciplined.

I know you will join me in creating a better workplace for all employees, a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment.

Lloyd C. Day  
Administrator