



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

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Subject: Languages Spoken in the Workplace

To: All Region 5 Employees

Region 5 is comprised of a culturally diverse workforce. As a result, many of our employees are multi-lingual. The primary language of an individual is often an essential national origin characteristic. There are some "specific instances" driven by business necessity when an employer can legitimately require that employees speak English in the workplace. However, absent those instances, employees are not required to speak English 100% of the time.

Enclosed is a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) guide, which defines "national origin discrimination." The FAQ serves as practical guidance and an informational resource on Title VII's prohibition against national origin discrimination and is derived in conjunction with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Compliance Manual Section 13. Further information regarding this topic can be found at <http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/national-origin.html>.

We must continue to strive for a workplace that is inclusive and respectful of differences. We believe that everyone in the workplace has the right to be treated fairly, impartially, and respectfully. Each employee is responsible for maintaining a workplace that recognizes and appreciates each individual and treats others with respect and dignity.

Supervisors and employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the attached guidelines.

If you have questions regarding the EEOC requirements, please contact Annette Delos-Santos, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist at (707) 562-8738 or via e-mail at annettedelossantos@fs.fed.us.

/s/ Angela V. Coleman (for)
RANDY MOORE
Regional Forester

Enclosure

cc: pdl r5 feros

