



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of Civil Rights | FS-851 | August 2022 (revised)

What does the Forest Service do to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination responsibilities?

The Forest Service will conduct reviews of your programs and activities on a periodic basis to ensure that they comply with civil rights laws. The USDA will receive, investigate, and adjudicate claims alleging violation of civil rights laws by holders of special use authorizations.

What Federal civil rights laws must you follow to ensure compliance?

U.S. Code	Statute	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of:
(42 U.S.C. 2000d–2000c)	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	Race, color, or national origin (including LEP)
(20 U.S.C. 1681–1686)	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972	Sex (in educational programs and activities)
(42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.)	Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended	Age
(29 U.S.C. 794)	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended	Disability

“Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes, or results in racial discrimination.”

—President John F. Kennedy, 1963, calling for the enactment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

For More Information

The Forest Service is your partner in providing equal opportunity to the public. For more information, including reviews and accessibility, please contact your local Forest Service office.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Special Uses Authorizations

Complying With Civil Rights Requirements

Your Responsibilities as a Partner With the Forest Service

Who is required to comply with Federal civil rights laws?

If you are a holder of a special use authorization from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service to provide programs or activities to the public, by law you must provide equal opportunity for all people to participate in the programs and activities you offer. For example, you should not deny or exclude anyone from programs, services, aids, or benefits. Also, you must not retaliate in any manner against a person who files a complaint or opposes any unlawful or discriminatory practice. The back of this brochure shows Federal civil rights laws that apply.

This brochure provides a basic overview of your responsibilities for ensuring nondiscrimination in the delivery of your programs and activities to the public on bases covered by Federal law. These bases include race, color, national origin, sex (in educational programs or activities), age, and disability.

What are your responsibilities for complying with Federal civil rights laws?

As a public service provider, your responsibilities for complying with Federal civil rights laws include, but are not limited to:

- Signing a special use authorization, which includes a nondiscrimination assurance clause certifying that you will comply with civil rights laws. If you have subcontractors or vendors, they must also comply with civil rights laws.
- Displaying the “And Justice for All” USDA poster (AD-475A) in your public reception areas or other areas visible to the public. Contact your local Forest Service office to obtain copies.
- Including in any of your publications and outreach materials a statement of affiliation with the Forest Service, e.g., “This institution is operated under special use permit with the _____ National Forest.”

- Providing program information in alternative formats for people with disabilities and in alternative languages for people with limited English proficiency (LEP), as appropriate to your customer base.
- Developing a language access plan to translate or interpret vital documents free of charge to your customers when needed or requested by local members of the public with LEP. Visit <http://www.lep.gov/lepbrochure.pdf>.
- Identifying a person to be responsible for ensuring your program is in compliance with civil rights requirements.
- Reviewing all your policies, procedures, and practices to ensure they do not limit participation on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (in educational programs and activities).
- Evaluating the accessibility of your programs and facilities. If they are not now accessible, develop a transition plan for making them accessible and then carry out the plan as appropriate.
- Ensuring that your staff understands their civil rights responsibilities including their role in the USDA complaint process.
- Providing outreach to a wide variety of communities to ensure diversity if you advertise or market your program.
- Providing the Forest Service with demographic information on program participation based on race, national origin, sex, age, and disability, where applicable.
- Including in your publications and outreach materials the following statement about nondiscrimination and how to file a complaint:

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information is also available in languages other than English.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provided in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

If the publications or materials are too small to permit the use of the full statement, at a minimum include the following statement, in print size no smaller than the text: *“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”*