

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL CENTER

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AGCENTER PS-23

Revision: 1

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Programs

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the LSU Agricultural Center's commitment to provide equal opportunity for all qualified persons in admission to, participation in, or employment in the programs and activities which the AgCenter operates without regard to race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status.

The AgCenter supports affirmative action and equal opportunity standards as set forth in this policy and other related documents including LSU System PM-55. These documents require that all employees and applicants receive fair consideration for employment and that all employees are treated fairly with regard to recruitment, promotions, demotions, transfers, layoffs, furloughs, terminations, rates of pay and other forms of compensation, tenure, training, and other employment practices.

The AgCenter complies with the provisions of Title IX, Title VI, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VII, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state law.

Overall coordination is provided by the Human Resource Management Office (HRM). The HRM Director has primary responsibility for coordinating AgCenter compliance with statutory provisions cited above. The vice president for agriculture, associate vice chancellors and program leaders, unit heads, and other supervisory employees are responsible for assisting the AgCenter in implementation of this policy with advice and guidance from the HRM Office. All employees in the AgCenter are charged with supporting implementation efforts.

Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the AgCenter will make reasonable accommodations to enable persons with disabilities to perform essential duties of their positions and to make program services available to all. Requested accommodations may only be deemed unreasonable after consultation with and support of the HRM Office. Further only the vice president for agriculture and associate vice chancellors may determine that an accommodation is unreasonable on the basis of cost. When an accommodation is needed to participate in an AgCenter program, the request should be sent in accordance with instructions included in the announcement of the program. If no such instructions are included or applicable, the request should go to persons serving in leadership roles over the program. Alternatively, requests for assistance with accommodations may be made to the HRM Office or to the vice president for agriculture or an associate vice chancellor.

No employee, student, witness or other participant or other individual who complains about a violation of this memorandum or participates in an investigation of a complaint made pursuant to this policy shall be subject to retaliation in any form. Further, no individual is required to report or make a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment to the person who is engaging in the alleged discriminatory/harassing conduct. To that end, multiple offices have responsibilities in this area.

A. Recruiting/Hiring Guidelines

The AgCenter will recruit and employ qualified personnel for all its diverse activities and will provide equal opportunities in employment without regard to race, color, marital status, sexual orientation, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status. The following guidelines are designed to achieve the recruitment and placement objectives of the AgCenter and to assure equal employment opportunity.

1. All vacant regular full-time and part-time positions will be publicized so that interested qualified employees are aware of opportunities for promotion or transfer. Classified openings will be advertised as required by AgCenter policy and Civil Service Rules and Regulations. In some cases, exceptions may be indicated waiving the normal advertising requirements. Requests for advertising exceptions must be approved by the HRM Office. Additionally, the vice president for agriculture or an associate vice chancellor may waive advertisement in consultation with the HRM Office. Examples of situations in which it might be appropriate to grant an exception include:
 - a. Acting or interim appointments based on objective criteria, usually when the appointment is for one year or less.
 - b. Visiting faculty, researchers, or comparable positions.
 - c. Intern and similar programs with established and pre-approved selection criteria.
 - d. Temporary appointments, usually for 180 days or less.
 - e. Promotions and similar position changes if the net result will not be adding an employee to the unit, provided that the position should be made available at least to qualified applicants within the unit.
 - f. Lateral transfers and other position changes involving the same or equivalent rank or title.
2. Position advertisement and selection criteria will be developed in direct relationship to job requirements. Subject to Section A.1. above, the following general requirements will be followed for positions that require advertisement:
 - a. All positions will be advertised on the lsusystemcareers web site for a minimum of one week.
 - b. Initial announcements of positions in professorial ranks and agent ranks, excluding internal announcements, will be advertised a minimum of 30 days. At least one method in addition to 2.a. above will be used for tenure-track professorial ranks. Such methods include but are not limited to newspaper or journal ads, listservs, or other professional distributions lists.
 - c. A re-advertisement must be for a minimum of one week.

- d. Advertisement of classified positions will follow Civil Service guidelines in addition to being advertised on the [lsusystemcareers](http://lsusystemcareers.com) web site.
 - e. When advertisement of internal promotions, interim appointments, and temporary appointments is needed, suitable advertisement procedures and period will be used to ensure that the process is a reasonable effort to reach persons eligible for the position.
3. The recruitment process will be conducted in a manner consistent with the goal of attracting a diverse pool of applicants. The HRM Office will work with units to place ads in appropriate sources to attract candidates from underrepresented groups.
4. All advertisements will include a statement that the AgCenter is an equal opportunity and equal access employer.
5. All pre-employment selection procedures, including credential reviews, interviews, and reference checks will be conducted without regard to race, color, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability or veteran's status.
6. Identification of persons to be involved in the selection process is critical. For regular full-time faculty and professional vacancies, it is expected that search committees will be used. For other positions, search committees may be used but other methods may also be effective. When it is not practical or appropriate to use a search committee, steps should be taken to see that multiple persons have input into the selection process. Every effort should be made to assemble diverse search committees or other selection groups.

B. Complaint Procedures

Any member of the AgCenter community, including applicants for positions and clientele, who believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment in violation of this policy has a right to report the conduct to the HRM Office. If the matter involves the 4H program, it may also be reported to the 4H Department administration. Alternatively, the report may be made to the vice president for agriculture, an associate vice chancellor or the respective unit head. No individual is required to report or make a complaint of discrimination to the person who is engaging in the problematic conduct. Further, any employee or person acting on behalf of the AgCenter who becomes aware of a possible violation of this policy will immediately notify one of the above parties. When a complaint is received, the following procedures shall apply:

1. If the complaint does not come to the HRM Office, the person receiving the complaint will obtain the advice and assistance of the HRM Office in responding to the complaint.
2. The HRM Director and/or his/her designee will investigate the complaint in a manner appropriate for the situation. Alternatively the vice president or an associate vice chancellor may designate someone else to investigate the complaint, but that individual must have been trained through an HRM Office to investigate the complaint.
3. The complainant and the individual who is the subject of the complaint will be notified about its resolution. Information obtained regarding the complaint will be treated as

confidentially as possible with only those with a need to know being informed of the complaint.

4. The individual responsible for investigating the complaint shall report his/her findings to HRM and/or to the associate vice chancellor or to the vice president for agriculture.
5. Substantiated violations of this policy will result in appropriate discipline or corrective action.

NOTE: At any time the AgCenter has available an ombudsperson(s), reporting an incident to the ombudsperson(s) shall not constitute notice to the AgCenter. The ombudsperson, however, shall make strong efforts to encourage the individual to report the incident to the HRM Office.

The procedures set forth in this policy do not create independent rights in third parties.