

Guidelines for Developing and Sustaining Civil Rights Action Plans

Beginning in 2004, annual civil rights action plans should be developed and implemented: 1) at the county office level and 2) at the county program area level (in some counties this may be at the level of cross-program-area teams).

Civil rights action plans are intended to provide guidance for moving county Extension programming toward parity.

Parity is the point at which program participation by people from underrepresented groups reflects their proportionate representation in the population of the potential audience.

Action plans should consist of lists of all reasonable efforts intended to reach out to underrepresented audiences.

All reasonable efforts are a series of activities and approaches that are required of Extension personnel to encourage the participation of underrepresented groups. All reasonable efforts are required when programs are not in parity and must include in-person contacts with individuals from targeted audiences.

General Guidelines

- The primary and required target audiences for civil rights compliance and the action plans are people protected by civil rights laws (people of racial/ethnic minority groups and women). In addition to these audiences, others who are underserved (religion, income level, age, physical ability) may be targeted with special outreach efforts in these plans.
- All individuals in the county office should have a role in the development and implementation of the action plans. The office team should use its discretion in how to divide the county office action plan into sections, based on the way programming is carried out in the county.
- Action plans should cover the calendar year. They include relevant recommendations from the most recent civil rights review report and other all reasonable efforts that will move programming toward parity in that year.
- Timelines for implementation of the all reasonable efforts should be included in the action plans. The plans should be updated annually as all reasonable efforts are accomplished and become part of routine program outreach. All versions of action

plans should be filed in civil rights files.

- Discussion of civil rights action plans should be an agenda item at county office staff meetings throughout the year. Progress on all reasonable efforts should be discussed.
- The district director and program area representatives will ask about progress on civil rights action plans at least once annually, during county visits and conversations about program development.
- Action plans will be filed in the county civil rights files. They will be discussed during civil rights county reviews.
- All reasonable efforts that are listed in action plans are an important part of the Extension program planning and development process. These efforts should be mentioned in discussions about programming and in written reports.

County Office Action Plans

- The county department head or director should provide leadership to the office team in the development of the office action plan and all colleagues should contribute.
- County office action plans should be brief. One page is appropriate for small and medium size counties. Two pages is appropriate for large counties.
- County office action plans should generally reflect the intended all reasonable efforts of the program areas or cross-program-area teams in the office for the year. In addition, each office action plan should contain some steps to be implemented by colleagues together as an office team.
- County office action plans should be filed in the general office civil rights files. They will be discussed during county civil rights reviews.

Program Area or Program Team Action Plans

- Program area or cross-program-area team action plans should contain more detail than office action plans.
- The main action steps from these plans should be included in office action plans.
- Faculty and academic staff should seek ways of working with colleagues from other program areas or program teams in their county to implement all reasonable efforts together.
- The program area action plan should be filed in the program area civil rights files. They will be discussed during county civil rights reviews.

Examples Of Civil Rights Action Plan Items

County Office Action Plan Items Might Be:

- With leadership from the department head, faculty and academic staff in this county office will devote one meeting annually to work on updating the resource materials in the general county office civil rights files.
- By March 31, the office manager will have updated the mailing list of organizations to receive the required nondiscrimination letter. He/she will do this by working with each program area. The nondiscrimination letters will be sent no later than March 30. This activity will continue annually on this timeline.
- One representative from each program area will participate in a meeting in May to share and discuss contacts from underserved groups. The department head will facilitate the meeting. The office manager will schedule the meeting, collect notes on the contacts and place them in an electronic file. This activity will continue annually.
- The office manager will research the availability of sign interpreters in the county and will compile a list of resources by April 1. The office manager will be responsible for keeping the list up to date.

Program Area or Cross-Program-Area Team Action Plan Items Might Be:

4-H

- By March 15, the 4-H agent will develop a list of club leaders and other interested individuals who will be invited to serve on the Expansion and Review Committee. A Latino representative from the St. Mary's parish should be included.
- By March 15, the 4-H agent will have found two new members for the Expansion and Review Committee. A member who has good contacts for the establishment of new after school clubs is needed.
- By June 1, the 4-H agent will have provided orientation to the new Expansion and Review Committee members. The Power Point presentation will be updated with information about the needs of new Latino families.
- By June 1, the 4-H agent will have sought assistance from the CRD educator in compiling a list of African American business leaders who will be invited to be volunteers for the High Street 4-H Club. The new promotional brochure will be ready by that time.

Family Living

- The family living agent will work with the ag. agent to make new contacts and build relationships with volunteers at St. Mary's parish as part of the effort to reach Latino dairy workers.
- The family living agent and the nutrition coordinator will work together to update the shared mailing list of community organizations with the names of groups that serve older citizens.
- By June 1, the family living agent and the nutrition coordinator will prepare a new promotional flyer about the new family financial management program for distribution to African Americans and Latinos in the High Street neighborhood.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- By April 1, the agriculture agent will update the program area mailing lists with the names of women who might be interested in or benefit from ag. programs.
- By April 1 the agriculture agent will have met with ag. colleagues from adjacent counties to begin planning for a Latino dairy worker education program in this county. The goal is to begin serving three dairy operations this summer.
- The horticulture agent will begin working with the nutrition coordinator to develop a new list of new contacts for reaching African American and Latino families in the City View Neighborhood Project. Communication to these residents will begin April 1.

Community Resources Development

- In January, the CRD educator will work with the assistant program leader to determine how to calculate potential audience for the education program for county nonprofits.
- In March, the CRD agent will build a relationship with the owners and managers of county businesses that employ Latino workers as the first step in learning about the needs of these individuals and reaching them personally.

City View Neighborhood Project Team

- In November, the team will develop a strategy to promote Extension gardening programs among residents of the new apartment building on the corner of Market Street and 1st Street. Three residents of the apartment building will be invited to serve on the promotions committee.
- This year, the 4-H assistant will provide leadership and will work with others on the team to do a monthly review of all mailing lists for the City View Neighborhood Project.