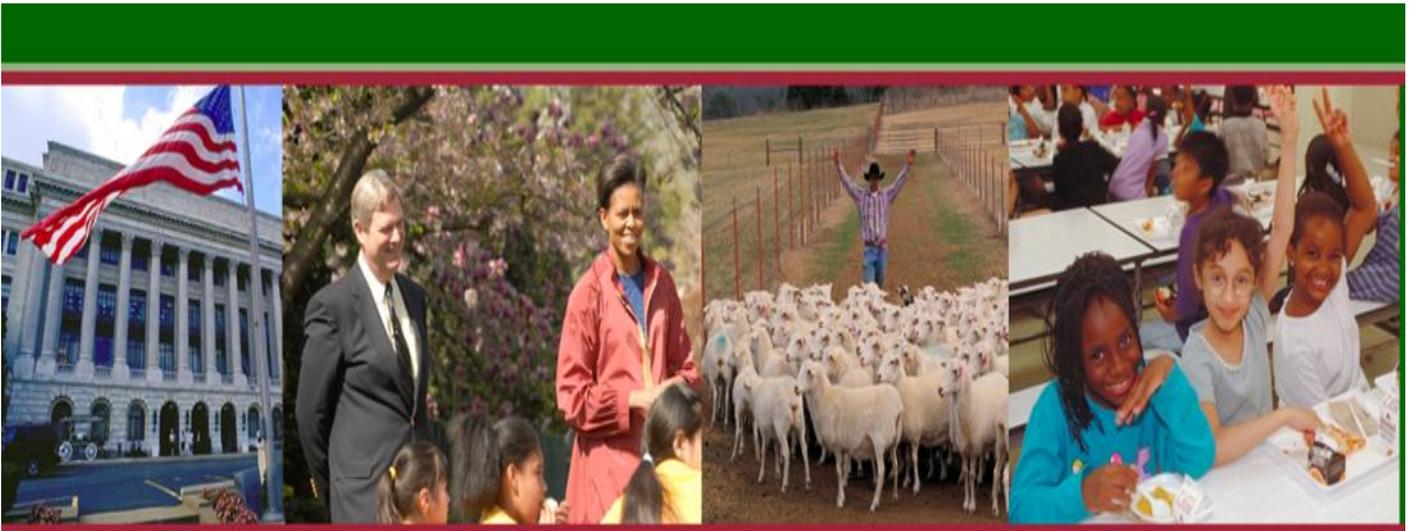


# Strategic Plan

Office of the Assistant  
Secretary for Civil Rights

FY 2016 - 2020



United States  
Department of Agriculture

# Table of Contents

Message from the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights .....	iii
Mission Statement.....	v
Vision Statement.....	v
Core Values .....	v
Strategic Goals Overview.....	7
How to Read This Strategic Plan.....	7
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	7
Strategic Goals .....	9
Strategic Goal 1. ....	9
Strategic Goal 2. ....	15
Strategic Goal 3. ....	20
Appendix A:.....	28
Division-Specific Performance Steps .....	28
Appendix B:.....	33
Organizational Chart.....	33
Appendix C:.....	34
Division Descriptions.....	34
Summary.....	39

# Message from the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

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The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR) is the chief advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on civil rights. OASCR's strategic plan implements President Barack Obama's and Secretary Tom Vilsack's vision for civil rights at USDA. My vision of "speaking with one voice" on civil rights matters throughout the Department *that ensures our internal and external civil rights programs are vigorously administered and enforced for the thousands of USDA employees and millions of USDA program beneficiaries*, is consistent with that of the President and Secretary. This requires all USDA civil rights directors aggressively develop a diverse and collaborative workforce enabling the Department to create a culture, policies, and programs that advance our vision.



To this end, OASCR has been engaged in business process improvement and the development of standard operating procedures consistent with those improvements for the Program Intake, Investigation, and Adjudication Divisions. The improvements will decrease processing times and errors so all complainants, including those with Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) claims, receive a timely, fair, and accurate response from OASCR. Some of these improvements include: a standard complaint form USDA customers can use to file a program complaint, the elimination of duplicative reviews of documents and correspondence, and standard checklists staff can use to determine jurisdiction. Today, OASCR has in place new standard operating procedures for all three program complaint processing divisions that incorporate these improvements and prioritize timely completion of ECOA claims.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The leadership at USDA has established civil rights as one of its top priorities. To be successful, all employees must be committed to making the Department a model in the Federal Government for respecting the civil rights of its employees and customers. USDA will change the direction of equal employment opportunity, civil rights and program delivery through a comprehensive approach. This approach will ensure fair and equitable treatment for all employees and

applicants. It also will improve program delivery to every person entitled to services. This effort will assist the Department in addressing past errors, learning from its mistakes and moving forward to a new era of equitable service and access for all. USDA's plans include:

- ❖ Increasing early resolution usage in program civil rights and equal employment opportunity complaints;
- ❖ Reducing the inventory of program civil rights complaints; and,
- ❖ Analyzing field operations for systemic improvements.

OASCR has established the following three strategic goals for FY 2016 – 2020:

- GOAL 1: Improve civil rights complaints processing for internal and external customers in keeping with Federal laws, mandates, and Departmental Regulations and guidelines.
- GOAL 2: Engage leadership in preventing workplace conflict and support conflict management at the earliest stage possible.
- GOAL 3: Demonstrate effective engagement within USDA by ensuring all USDA employees have the necessary resources to support the civil rights of all employees and customers of USDA.

The strategic goals articulate OASCR's priorities for FY 2016—2020. These goals encompass outcomes and performance indicators that monitor programs, policies and services administered by OASCR, produce results and improve the organization's performance. Further, these goals mirror USDA's commitment to strengthening equal employment opportunity and civil rights enforcement throughout the Agency.

## Mission Statement

OASCR will provide leadership, assistance, training, and guidance to customers and employees of USDA to ensure all civil rights laws, policies, mandates, and regulations are enforced, and equal access and equitable treatment is the standard.

## Vision Statement

To create a community environment that embraces and values civil rights and equal access and opportunity for all people.

## Core Values

Our success depends on:

- **Mutual Respect** – We embrace the highest ethical and professional standards. We maintain a workplace and community environment that encourages respect for all employees and customers.
- **Professionalism** – We exemplify the highest standards and work ethics. We maintain a respectful work environment and provide customer service that demonstrates our commitment to excellence.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration** – We strive to maintain a collaborative and team-centered structure to achieve the Department’s strategic goals.
- **Results Orientation** – We measure performance and encourage management to direct resources where they have the most impact.
- **Customer Focus** – We strive to understand and meet the needs of our customers through service, innovation, and creativity. We are dedicated to delivering results that matter to the American people.
- **Communication** – We share information and ideas, listen to our employees and customers, and provide timely feedback. Information and new ideas influence and affect the way we do business.
- **Cooperation** – We work closely with our employees, customers, and stakeholders, to provide assistance and support that strengthens our programs, services, and processes.
- **Integration** – We continually work to create coherent and well-defined systems and processes capable of delivering consistent and quality civil rights programs and equal opportunity for all.

- **Accountability** – We hold employees accountable so that our collective behavior results in transformative work practices.
- **Diversity and Inclusion** – We will establish systems to foster an inclusive workplace environment that promotes equal opportunities and empowers employees to reach their full potential.

## Strategic Goals Overview

- GOAL 1: Improve civil rights complaints processing for internal and external customers in keeping with Federal laws, mandates, and Departmental Regulations and guidelines.
- GOAL 2: Engage leadership in preventing workplace conflict and support conflict management at the earliest stage possible.
- GOAL 3: Demonstrate effective engagement within USDA by ensuring all USDA employees have the necessary resources to support the civil rights of all employees and customers of USDA.

## How to Read This Strategic Plan

This Plan provides a clearer vision of the OASCR strategic direction for fiscal years 2016 through 2020. The strategic plan has two sections: Introduction and Goals.

**Outcomes:** Clear objectives and expectations resulting from the completion of Strategies.

**Strategies:** Actionable steps that focus on a set of tasks or responsibilities.

**Performance Indicators:** Quantifiable results or tangible measurements of Strategies.

**External Factors:** Challenges that may affect the Plan's Outcomes or Strategies.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

**ADR** Alternative Dispute Resolution

**CR** Civil Rights

**CRES** Civil Rights Enterprise System

**CRIA** Civil Rights Impact Analysis

**CCD** Conflict Complaints Division

**DRMD** Data and Records Management Division

**EAD** Employment Adjudication Division

**ECD** Employment Complaints Division

**ECOA** Equal Credit Opportunity Act

<u>EEO</u>	<u>Equal Employment Opportunity</u>
<u>EOA</u>	<u>Equal Opportunity Assistant</u>
<u>EOS</u>	<u>Equal Opportunity Specialist</u>
<u>ERCD</u>	<u>Early Resolution and Conciliation Division</u>
<u>FOIA</u>	<u>Freedom of Information Act</u>
<u>GAO</u>	<u>Government Accountability Office</u>
<u>GPRA</u>	<u>Government Performance and Results Act</u>
<u>IT</u>	<u>Information Technology</u>
<u>OA</u>	<u>Office of Adjudication</u>
<u>OASCR</u>	<u>Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights</u>
<u>OBPA</u>	<u>Office of Budget, Planning and Analysis</u>
<u>OCFO</u>	<u>Office of the Chief Financial Officer</u>
<u>OCIO</u>	<u>Office of the Chief Information Officer</u>
<u>OIG</u>	<u>Office of Inspector General</u>
<u>OCPTCT</u>	<u>Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation</u>
<u>OCPTCT-PD</u>	<u>Policy Division</u>
<u>OCPTCT-CD</u>	<u>Compliance Division</u>
<u>OCPTCT-TCT</u>	<u>Training and Cultural Transformation Division</u>
<u>PAD</u>	<u>Program Adjudication Division</u>
<u>PCD</u>	<u>Program Complaints Division</u>
<u>PPAD</u>	<u>Program Planning and Accountability Division</u>
<u>SME</u>	<u>Subject Matter Expert</u>
<u>SOP</u>	<u>Standard Operating Procedures</u>

## Strategic Goals

### Strategic Goal 1: Improve civil rights complaints processing for internal and external customers in keeping with Federal laws, mandates, and Departmental Regulations and guidelines.

Based on Title VI and Title VII laws, USDA's leadership is accountable for ensuring its customers are treated fairly and with respect in accordance with USDA's mission. USDA's goal with respect to its external customers is to build upon its actions to resolve past issues of discrimination through strict compliance with civil rights laws. The success of this effort is dependent on the commitment of all USDA employees to transform the Department into a model employer within the Federal Government which respects the civil rights of its employees and customers.

Any current or former employee, or applicant for employment with USDA, who believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color, sex (gender identity, expression, and orientation), religion, national origin, age, disability, reprisal, political affiliation, marital status, parental status or genetic information, has the right to file an EEO complaint.

Any person who participates in USDA conducted programs or is a recipient or beneficiary of Federal financial assistance from USDA, and believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, reprisal, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, or income derived from public assistance, has the right to file a program discrimination complaint.

***This goal consists of outcomes and performance indicators focused on improving proficiency in managing USDA employee and program civil rights complaints processing.***

## OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes for Strategic Goal 1 are:

1. Civil rights complaint processes meet statutory and regulatory mandates;
2. timeframes for civil rights complaint processing are consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements;
3. the inventory of complaints has been reduced and is maintained at a manageable level;
4. Improve reporting mechanisms and access to data through technology solutions; and
5. Improve branding of Conflict Complaints Division

## Performance Indicators.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators					
1. Civil rights complaint processes meet statutory and regulatory mandates	Table 1					
	<b>1.1 Develop and implement a 5-Year Internal Audit Plan within the Office of Adjudication</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
	1.1.1 Develop 5-Year OA Audit Plan	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter				
	1.1.2 Develop and implement an EEO Complaint Processing Audit	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	N/A	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	N/A	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
	1.1.3 Implement a Program Complaint Processing Audit		4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	N/A	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	
	1.1.4 Conduct quality control assessments in PCMS and iComplaints	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
	<b>1.2 Establish a Uniform USDA EEO Complaint Form</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
	1.2.1 Secure required clearances (OCIO, OBPA and OMB) for use of the USDA EEO Complaint Form	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter				
	1.2.2 Post the approved USDA EEO Complaint Form online and notify stakeholders.		1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter			
	1.2.3 Explore the development of electronic filing of EEO complaints via a web-based portal.		4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter			

1.3.1 Create a standard EEO Counselor's Report template for completion by agency Civil Rights Counselors.	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter				
1.3.2 Secure required clearances (OCIO, OBPA and OMB) for use of the USDA EEO Counselor's Report template.		4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter			
1.3.3 Automate the EEO Counselor's Report.			4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter		
<b>1.4 Build Coalitions with Stakeholders to Improve Complaint Processes</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
1.4.1 Conduct Civil Rights Directors Meetings	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
1.4.2 Conduct Agency Partnership Meetings	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
1.4.3 Implement Agency Liaison Initiatives	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly

<b>1.5 Expand Internal Professional Development and Training</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
1.5.1 Mandate annual specialized training on case law updates, recent case decisions, evidence gathering, technology advances and information security.	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually
1.5.2 Identify career paths and progressions, and developmental opportunities to transition staff from entry to middle and middle to senior level positions.	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually
<b>1.6 Strengthen Resource Management</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
1.6.1 Establish core requirements for staffing and funding of all OA functions.	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually
1.6.2 Obtain adequate resources to address complaints immediately upon receipt.	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually	Annually

Table 3

2. Timeframes for civil rights complaint processing are consistent with

	2015 Baseline (days)	2016 Target (days)	2017 Target (days)	2018 Target (days)	2019 Target days	2020 Target days
Employment Intake	73	70	65	60	58	55
Employment Investigations	95	90	85	80	75	70
Employment Adjudications	129	115	101	87	73	60
Programs	44	20	15	15	15	15

3. The inventory of complaints has been reduced and is maintained at a manageable level	Intake						
	Programs Investigation	716	700	365	180	180	180
	Programs Adjudication	324	135	135	135	135	135
		2015 Baseline (complaints)	2016 Target (complaints)	2017 Target (complaints)	2018 Target (complaints)	2019 Target (complaints)	2020 Target (complaints)
	Employment Intake	56	55	54	53	52	50
	Employment Investigations	87	75	70	65	60	55
	Employment Adjudication	122	120	118	116	114	112
	Programs Intake	80	79	78	77	76	75
	Programs Investigation	207	206	205	204	203	202
	Programs Adjudication	94	92	90	88	86	84

Table 4

Table 5

4. Improve reporting mechanisms, and access to data through technology solutions	4.1 Review, revise, and post Departmental regulations and manuals on OASCR website; and 4.2 Establish transparency for OASCR resources, activities, achievements, and accessibility to public data, as appropriate.
5. Improve branding of Conflict Complaints Division	5.1 Improve the Conflict Complaints Division website; 5.2 Publish Conflict Complaints Division-issued EEO complaint processing materials on the website; and 5.3 Include customer service surveys in the Informal Intake Packages to the Aggrieved Party and request voluntary reviews of services rendered.

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

A number of external factors could affect our ability to achieve our strategic goals and objectives. The United States is an increasingly multicultural and multiracial society. To the extent to which societal attitudes and practices reflect a continuing commitment to tolerance, diversity, and equality affects the scope and nature of our work. Changes in fiscal policies and priorities may impact our ability to meet desired goals. Changes in Federal laws may affect the scope of our responsibilities. Global crises may require changes in immigration and refugee policies. State and local government responses may impact the workload of complaints from affected populations.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The following table contains the performance indicators used to measure progress.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
1. Civil rights complaint processes meet statutory and regulatory mandates	Extent of implementation of strategic and operational goals to assure processes meet statutory and regulatory mandates
2. Timeframes for civil rights complaint processing are consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements	Number and percent of reduction in complaint processing time
3. The inventory of complaints has been reduced and is maintained at a manageable level	Number and percent of reduction in the inventory of complaints
4. Improve reporting mechanisms and access to data through technology solutions	4.1 Commit sufficient staff resources to update OASCR Departmental rules, guidelines, and regulations; 4.2 Create and post manuals on OASCR website; and 4.3 Review and update templates for the Age Discrimination Act, No FEAR Act, and annual Farm Bill reports.
5 Improve branding of Conflict Complaints Division	5.1

## Strategic Goal 2: Engage Leadership in preventing workplace conflict and support conflict management at the earliest stage possible.

The ultimate benefit of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is to resolve workplace disputes before they escalate into formal complaints. It is important to engage labor-management representatives in early-stage conflict resolution. Therefore, OASCR is shifting the focus to training supervisors and managers in effective leadership, management, and communication skills to help mitigate conflict situations. ADR will remain a focus for leadership development and training. Leadership skills and proactive measures to prevent conflict and ADR is a reasonable order for effective training. The focus is not to increase the use of ADR, but to ensure leaders and managers treat employees and customers in a fair and respectful manner. The final component of training focuses on ADR as an organizational and management tool to increase complaint and conflict outcomes based upon fair and equitable treatment for all parties. Utilizing a third-party facilitator in the dispute (ADR) process builds a positive perception of the process and builds confidence and confidentiality crucial to success of the process.

***This goal consists of outcomes and performance indicators focused on improving early recognition and resolution of workplace conflict.***

### OUTCOMES

The Leadership Goal has five outcomes:

1. Participate in civil rights activities to increase awareness of ADR techniques;
2. Establish effective practices to mitigate conflict in the workplace;
3. Improve ADR training and leadership development;
4. Increase utilization of ADR; and
5. Provide fair, efficient, and high quality processes for resolving workplace disputes.
6. Provide organizational climate assessments and focus group facilitation to assist agencies in overcoming workplace challenges.

## STRATEGIES

Table 2.1 specifies strategies to achieve each outcome.

Outcomes	Strategies
<p>1. Participate in civil rights activities to increase awareness of ADR techniques</p>	<p>1.1 Attend civil rights events hosted throughout the Department to ensure ADR practitioners are available to discuss the benefits of ADR;</p> <p>1.2 Market the use of ADR strategies to ensure all personnel have an awareness of ADR to mitigate conflict; and</p> <p>1.3 Encourage dialogue on the benefits of ADR usage with agency leaders and stakeholders.</p>
<p>2. Establish effective practices to mitigate conflict in the workplace.</p>	<p>2.1 Establish core ADR techniques that all agencies should incorporate into their ADR portfolio;</p> <p>2.2 Showcase effective processes for agencies to utilize for workplace conflict; and</p> <p>2.3 Recognize Civil Rights Directors and ADR Practitioners for their efforts in advancing the use of ADR and deploying ADR techniques in their agencies.</p>
<p>3. Improve ADR training and leadership development</p>	<p>3.1 Develop conflict management curriculum to be deployed throughout the Department;</p> <p>3.2 Partner with agencies to determine the type of ADR training and develop standardized training for all personnel to complete annually; and</p>

	<p>3.3 Draft ADR Policy Statement for Secretarial endorsement and distribution throughout the Department.</p>
<p>4. Increase utilization of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)</p>	<p>4.1 Develop a cadre of USDA shared neutrals to serve as ADR practitioners for workplace conflict throughout the Department;</p> <p>4.2 Meet quarterly with USDA leaders to showcase the benefits of utilizing ADR;</p> <p>4.3 Market the technological approaches available to USDA personnel to mitigate conflict; and</p> <p>4.4 Specify ADR contacts on OASCR website for information and utilization.</p>
<p>5. Provide fair, efficient, and high quality processes for resolving workplace disputes</p>	<p>5.1 Ensure all Civil Rights and ADR Program Offices provide ADR services in accordance with the principles of ADR (Confidentiality, Neutrality, Integrity of Process, Voluntariness, and Self-Determination);</p> <p>5.2 Annually assess ADR programs to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of ADR processes; and</p> <p>5.3 Strengthen the use of ADR through contracting for additional ADR support.</p>
<p>6. Provide organizational climate assessments and focus group facilitation to assist agencies in overcoming workplace challenges</p>	<p>6.1 Inform agencies that organizational climate assessments and group dynamic problem solving is available to their teams to address group conflict; and</p> <p>6.2 Develop Action Plans for agency leaders endorsing recommendations</p>

	for their consideration to help personnel work through conflict.
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## EXTERNAL FACTORS

The OASCR leadership goal of engaging leadership in preventing workplace conflict and supporting conflict management at the earliest stage possible will face challenges from several external factors:

**Management Challenges** – There must be a consistent and continuous commitment to civil rights between OASCR, agency Civil Rights Directors’ offices, and field offices. Senior leadership in each of the agencies and offices must be held accountable for ensuring that civil rights is fundamental to relationships between staff and leadership, and ensuring a productive, diverse and inclusive workforce. Agency Civil Rights Directors, expert trainers, and field agencies and offices must work collaboratively to achieve civil rights goals and unified best practices.

**Human Resources Challenges** – A stronger commitment within human resources offices to support civil rights throughout USDA in its entirety is essential to achieve successful outcomes. Human resources leadership and staff must provide balanced advocacy for staff, employees, and management to strengthen labor-management relations and ensure a fair and balanced approach in the employment experience. Labor relations and collective bargaining are an essential and integral part of the strategic plan.

The internal processes within each human resources office require a closer examination to determine whether the structure, processes, and practices are consistent with the goals and priorities of the Department as well as OASCR. Human Resources must become a strategic partner with management and staff in the enforcement of civil rights, equal employment opportunity, and cultivating a positive and emancipating workplace environment.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Table 2.2 contains the performance indicators used to measure progress toward each outcome.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
1. Participate in civil rights activities to increase awareness of ADR techniques	1.1 Annually assess whether ADR Practitioner presence at events has been effective; 1.2 Annually assess whether marketing strategies are effective; and

	<p>1.3 Annually assess whether ADR utilization has increased from year-to-year.</p>
<p>2. Establish effective practices to mitigate conflict in the workplace</p>	<p>2.1 By 2017, annually review Agency Head Assessment to ensure core ADR techniques are incorporated;                  2.2 By 2018, develop ADR Effective Processes Guide for agency usage; and                  2.3 Annually, during Conflict Resolution Week, showcase Civil Rights Directors and ADR Practitioners for their efforts in advancing the use of ADR in their agencies.</p>
<p>3. Improve ADR training and leadership development</p>	<p>3.1 By 2018, ensure USDA agencies are utilizing OASCR Conflict Management Curriculum;                  3.2 By 2018, track agency ADR training and competency of practitioners; and                  3.3 By 2016, complete clearance process for ADR Policy Statement.</p>
<p>4. Increase utilization of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)</p>	<p>4.1 By 2018, ensure cadre is representative of ADR practitioners from all 17 agencies;                  4.2 Annually meet with USDA leaders to determine ADR participation;                  4.3 By 2020, track USDA agency use of technological approaches in ADR and make recommendations for improvement, if needed; and                  4.4 By 2017, provide ADR contacts on OASCR website.</p>
<p>5. Provide fair, efficient, and high quality processes for resolving workplace disputes</p>	<p>5.1 ADR program evaluation through the Agency Head Assessment, internal, or external ADR practitioner(s) will</p>

	<p>ensure determining program effectiveness.</p> <p>5.2 Assess ADR program effectiveness through quarterly survey reviews.</p> <p>5.3 Monthly evaluate ADR contract expenditures to assess usage.</p>
<p>6. Provide organizational climate assessments and focus group facilitation to assist agencies in overcoming workplace challenges</p>	<p>6.1 Quarterly query agencies during civil rights directors meetings and ADR Leadership Group meetings regarding usage of organizational climate assessment.</p> <p>6.2 Conduct three month follow-up with agency leadership on the success of implemented recommendations.</p>

**Strategic Goal 3: Demonstrate effective **Engagement** within USDA by ensuring all USDA employees have the necessary resources to support the civil rights of all employees and customers of USDA.**

A number of federal statutes govern EEO in the federal government. This goal addresses the importance of USDA agencies and offices adhering to these statutes and receiving adequate civil rights training as they relate to anti-discrimination and employment laws. However, federal statutes that prohibit discrimination and support civil rights require full and consistent engagement of leadership and management to ensure fairness, equality, and justice.

**OUTCOMES**

The Engagement Goal has four outcomes:

1. Hold employees and leadership accountable for fair and equitable treatment of employees and customers;

2. Improve agencies’ implementation of discrimination complaint settlement agreements and use the results of compliance reviews;
3. Evaluate program effectiveness, determine challenges, and develop solutions; and
4. Renew departmental regulations, prepare Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA), increase CRIA training, monitor LEP compliance, and provide oversight for REG data collection, and prepare annual reports (No Fear Act, Age Report, and Farm Bill); and
5. Monitor Civil Rights Practitioner Training.

## STRATEGIES

Table 3.1 contains the strategies needed to achieve each outcome.

Outcomes	Strategies
<p>1. Hold employees and leadership accountable for fair and equitable treatment of employees and customers</p>	<p>1.1 conduct needs assessment to determine the extent and reach of civil rights training in USDA field offices;</p> <p>1.2 Target USDA field offices with highest number of EEO and program complaints, followed by state field offices’ leadership and staff for priority civil rights training;</p> <p>1.3 implement the Department-wide civil rights education training program plan;</p> <p>1.4 Evaluate No FEAR training metrics against baseline;</p> <p>1.5 Receive, review and approve agency civil rights training plans;</p> <p>1.6 continue monitoring and tracking agency civil rights training; and</p> <p>1.7 Ensure that employee performance standards include civil rights as a critical element and that employees participate in mandatory Civil Rights training</p>
<p>2. Improve agencies’ implementation of discrimination complaint settlement agreements and use the results of compliance reviews</p>	<p>2.1 Increase the number of compliance reviews conducted;</p> <p>2.2 Conduct quarterly and semi-annual compliance reviews as needed (no less than an annual review of each department and/or agency);</p>

	<p>2.3 Increase the number of agencies and offices with full employee participation in civil rights training;</p> <p>2.4 Develop technology solution for monitoring and tracking settlement agreements, compliance reviews, EEOC Orders, Orders in-agency issued FADs with findings of discrimination and, and number of employees who received agency/office civil rights training;</p> <p>2.5 Recognize agencies and offices with minimal number of EEO and program complaints and examine their best practices for supporting civil rights and fair treatment;</p> <p>2.6 Review makeup of compliance teams and establish schedule for mandatory reporting;</p> <p>2.7 Develop reporting mechanism for agencies and offices with higher number of EEO/program complaints and non-compliance with settlement agreements and EEOC Orders;</p> <p>2.8 Enforce compliance by holding directors accountable for agency/office compliance outcomes;</p> <p>2.9 Evaluate resources available to provide technical assistance and guidance for agencies and offices in noncompliance; and</p> <p>2.10 Prepare and submit No Fear quarterly reports and Farm Bill annual reports.</p>
<p>3. Evaluate program effectiveness, determine challenges, and develop solutions</p>	<p>3.1 Conduct annual EEO/program complaints evaluation and root cause analysis to address systemic barriers, trends, and programmatic challenges;</p>

	<p>3.2 Engage an expert to design leadership action plans to address challenges, and schedule leadership-director follow-up meetings to ensure completion of action plan items;</p> <p>3.3 Implement customer service survey for USDA customers and beneficiaries to determine if program participants are treated in a fair, equitable manner;</p> <p>3.4 Promptly analyze survey results to determine appropriate proactive measures necessary to reduce number of program complaints; and</p> <p>3.5 Engage an expert in data management and records department to produce/conduct program participant survey.</p>
<p>4. Renew departmental regulations, prepare Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA), increase CRIA training, monitor LEP compliance, and provide oversight for REG data collection, and prepare annual reports (No Fear Act, Age Report, and Farm Bill)</p>	<p>4.1 Review Departmental civil rights regulations and manuals, and update regulations and manuals according to recent legislation and civil rights laws;</p> <p>4.2 Provide technical assistance to agencies in CRIA preparation, meet with agency program officers, designated Federal officers, human resource specialists and agency civil rights offices;</p> <p>4.3 Provide oversight and monitoring of agencies race, ethnicity and gender (REG) data collection efforts. Ensure agencies have established a system for collecting REG data for its conducted programs; Provide annual CRIA training for all USDA agencies and staff offices and provide train the trainer CRIA training;</p>

	<p>4.4 Provide oversight and monitoring of Agencies Limited English Proficiency (LEP) conducted and assisted programs;</p> <p>4.5 Work with agencies in developing barrier analysis for its programs which lack diversity;</p> <p>4.6 work with agencies to establish effective outreach strategies to ensure protected groups receive information on USDA programs;</p> <p>4.7 Conduct civil rights review of USDA agencies’ policies, rules, regulations, advisory committees, and reorganizations submitted for Departmental clearance; and</p> <p>4.8 Develop a Race, Ethnicity, and Gender data collection monitoring system.</p>
<p>5. Monitor Civil Rights Practitioner Training</p>	<p>5.1. Establish minimum model civil rights training standards to ensure relevant competencies are developed and/or refreshed;</p> <p>5.2 Establish a portfolio and schedule of required training;</p> <p>5.3 Provide advice and counsel on agency training plans designed to meet/exceed minimum standards;</p> <p>5.4 Update required training portfolio and schedule annually; and</p> <p>5.5 Prepare an annual report on civil rights training including correlations between training and complaint activity, best practices</p>

	for monitoring, and strategies for evaluating training and measuring results.

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

Achieving the engagement goal of ensuring all USDA employees have the resources necessary to support civil rights of employees and customers will face significant challenges.

**Employees** – The customized civil rights training offered to agencies has been a positive first step toward a results-driven civil rights culture. OASCR continues to listen and take feedback to improve the content and impact of the civil rights training offered to USDA employees. Analysis and findings from employee surveys indicate OASCR and agency leadership continue to have challenging work ahead to improve the workplace environment.

**Leadership** – Agency leadership and OASCR must continue to work to build a strong partnership to support USDA’s commitment to civil rights for all USDA employees, program beneficiaries, customers and stakeholders.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Table 3.2 contains the performance indicators used to measure progress toward each outcome.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
1. Hold employees and leadership accountable for fair and equitable treatment	1.1 Produce tracking documents and data for civil rights training in USDA field offices; 1.2 Conduct civil rights training for USDA employees, including field offices with highest number of EEO and program complaints, followed by state field office leadership and staff; 1.3 Continue to engage a cadre of credentialed civil rights training experts to construct civil rights training modules;

	<p>1.4 Continue tracking for No FEAR training; and</p> <p>1.5 Revise performance standards and leadership training.</p>
<p>2. Improve agencies' monitoring of discrimination complaint settlement agreements and use of compliance reviews</p>	<p>2.1 Complete 24 compliance reviews in (or by) 2020;</p> <p>2.2 Increase the number of agencies and offices from 12 to 18 that demonstrate full employee participation in civil rights training by FY 2018;</p> <p>2.3 Establish Recognition Award program for agency/office with all employee participation in civil rights training.</p> <p>2.4 Recognize agencies and offices with the lowest number of EEO and program complaints; and</p> <p>2.5 Publish agency/office earning "OASCR Best Practices Award" for supporting civil rights and fair employment practices.</p>
<p>3. Evaluate program effectiveness, determine challenges, and develop solutions</p>	<p>3.1 Complete internal audit of annual EEO/program evaluations, and establish planning priorities to eliminate systemic barriers, trends, and programmatic challenges;</p> <p>3.2 Assign Data &amp; Records Management Department responsibility to produce/conduct program participant civil rights surveys; and</p> <p>3.3 Review and analyze survey responses from USDA customers within one week.</p>
<p>4. Renew departmental regulations, prepare Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA), increase CRIA training, monitor</p>	<p>4.1 Select task groups to revise departmental civil rights regulations by 2017;</p>

<p>LEP compliance, and provide oversight for REG data collection, and prepare annual reports (No Fear Act, Age Report, and Farm Bill)</p>	<p>4.2 Create bulletins for OASCR staff regarding possible changes to legislative rulings;</p> <p>4.3 Utilize Adobe Connect and AgLearn as additional methods of CRIA training;</p> <p>4.4 Create a reserve of experts who can be engaged in providing information for CRIAs; and</p> <p>4.5 Publish scheduled dates for CRIA mandatory training for agencies and offices.</p>
<p>5. Civil Rights Practitioner Training</p>	<p>5.1 The mandated civil rights competency training will be conducted or coordinated by OASCR staff;</p> <p>5.2 By the end of each fiscal year, agencies will report that all of the civil rights practitioners training has been completed; and</p> <p>5.3 At the end of each fiscal year, OASCR will report on the percentage of agency civil rights practitioners who have completed the training.</p>

## Appendix A:

### Division-Specific Performance Steps

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
<p>1.1 OCPTCT Performance Steps - OCPTCT</p>	<p>1.1 The Director of OCPTCT shall conduct an internal audit and monitor processing timeframe. If, after one year, the Director of OCPTCT finds deadlines are not being met, the Director of OCPTCT is directed to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The Compliance Division shall perform the following amount of compliance reviews per year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2016- 8 compliance reviews</li> <li>2017- 9 compliance reviews</li> <li>2018- 9 compliance reviews</li> <li>2019- 10 compliance reviews</li> <li>2020- 10 compliance reviews</li> </ul> </li> <li>(b) The Office of Planning, Performance, and Adjudication shall be in charge of all construction and execution of budget exercises.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Training and Cultural Transformation Performance Steps – OCPTCT</p>	<p>2.1 The Training and Cultural Transformation Division shall provide civil rights training to all political employees once a year every year;</p> <p>2.2 The Training and Cultural Transformation Division shall annually provide civil rights training to USDA’s leadership ; and</p> <p>2.3 The Training and Cultural Transformation Division will annually identify, coordinate and monitor</p>

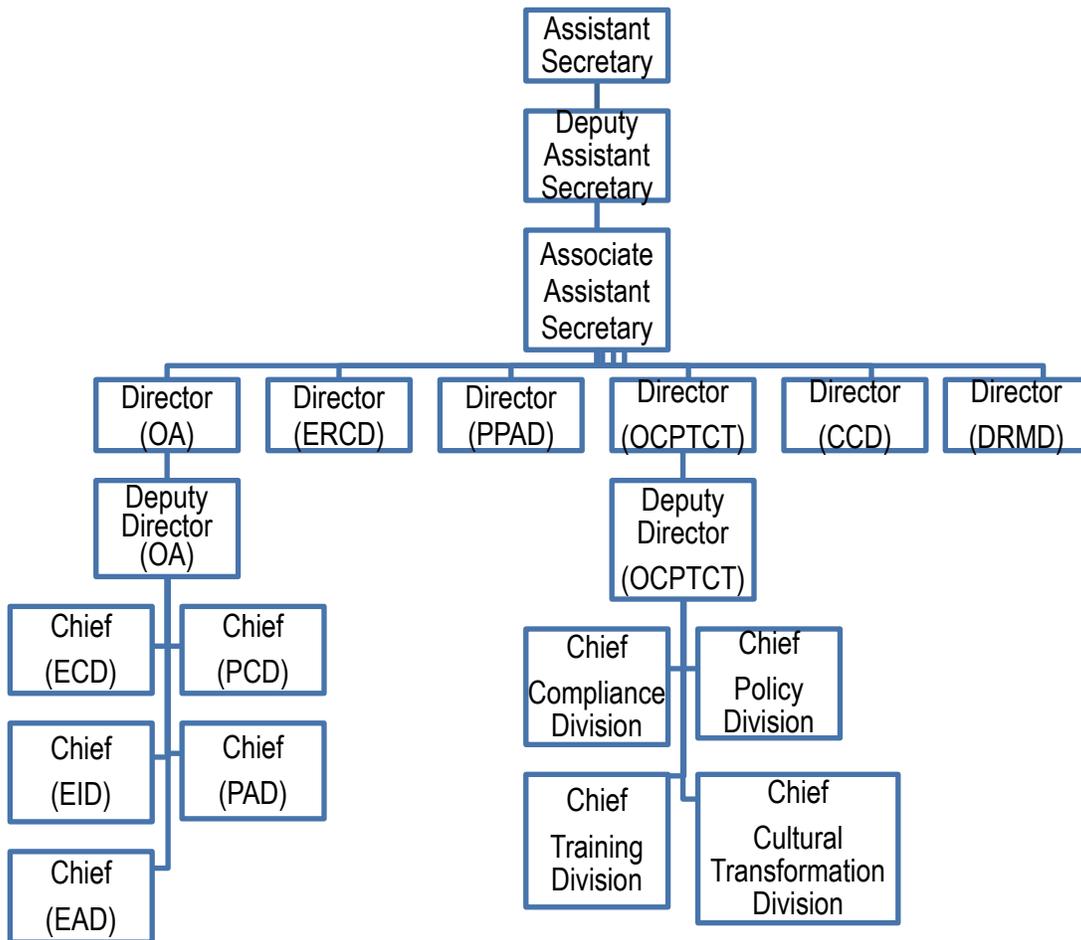
	<p>mandatory civil rights training for all employees.</p>
<p>3. Policy Division - OCPTCT</p>	<p>3.1 Timely Completion of CRIAs - Complete CRIAs ready for review in a timely fashion (regulations, advisory committees – 5 days; reorganizations – 15 days) Baseline – 67% CRIAs annually (based on two year average)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 2016 - Complete 70% of CRIAs ready for review</li> <li>(b) 2017 - Complete 75% of CRIAs ready for review</li> <li>(c) 2018 - Complete 80% of CRIAs ready for review</li> <li>(d) 2019 - Complete 85% of CRIAs ready for review</li> <li>(e) 2020 - Complete 90% of CRIAs ready for review</li> </ul>
<p>4. CRIA Training - OCPTCT</p>	<p>4.1 Provide 17 USDA agencies with CRIA training—USDA receives one or more CRIA trainings (regulations, advisory committees, or reorganizations) per year;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 2016 - 75% of all agencies receive(s) one or more training session(s)</li> <li>(b) 2017 - 80% of all agencies receive(s) one or more training session(s)</li> <li>(c) 2018 - 85% of all agencies receive(s) one or more training session(s)</li> <li>(d) 2019 - 90% of all agencies receive(s) one or more training session(s)</li> </ul>

	<p>(e) 2020 - 95% of all agencies receive(s) one or more training session(s)</p>
<p>5. Regulations/Manual Development - OCPTCT</p>	<p>5.1 Complete the development or revision of 25 DRs and DMs</p> <p>(a) 2016- 5% complete</p> <p>(b) 2017- 10% complete</p> <p>(c) 2018- 35% complete</p> <p>(d) 2019- 60% complete</p> <p>(e) 2020- 100% complete</p>
<p>6. Training and Cultural Transformation Division -OCPTCT</p>	<p>6.1 The Training and Cultural Transformation Division works collaboratively with other departments within USDA to conduct training , cultural transformation, and employee engagement activities that promote diversity, inclusiveness and high performance;</p> <p>6.2 Identify, conduct, coordinate, assess and report results of the annual mandatory civil rights training;</p> <p>6.3 Create and conduct cultural transformation initiatives designed to increase employee knowledge of and appreciation for the origins of civil rights law and policy;</p> <p>6.4 Establish a core civil rights training portfolio (employment and program) for all political appointees and conduct the training within 6 months of their employment at USDA;</p> <p>6.5 Provide training of selected emerging civil rights issues to political appointees;</p>

	<p>6.6 Monitor OASCR participation in meeting the cultural transformation goals and metrics; and</p> <p>6.7 Provide employees training opportunities designed to help close competency gaps that impact career advancement.</p>
<p>7. Program Planning and Accountability Division (PPAD) -</p>	<p>7.1 PPAD is designated as the lead coordinator for all OIG and GAO audits;</p> <p>7.2 PPAD will assume all human resource functions and all operational functions, including coordination of all telework requests in a timely fashion; and</p> <p>7.3 PPAD will maintain and coordinate all facility management requests.</p>
<p>8. Data and Records Management Division (DRMD)</p>	<p>8.1 Develop, institutionalize, and lead an ongoing annual process to review, analyze, and report on “lessons learned” from (a) EEO complaints, and (b) program complaints, closed during the year. This should include identification of recurring themes underlying the analysis of complaints, results of investigations (which often turn up areas for improvement in communications, training, and other areas even when there is no finding of discrimination, and certainly do so when there is such a finding), and recommendations for improving practices to avoid such complaints in the future. These reports should be distributed on the intranet to all</p>

	<p>employees, and to all USDA senior officials and managers; and</p> <p>8.2 Create two reports one for program complaints and the other for employment complaints that list complaints by state, agency, issue, and basis, which will be submitted to the Office of the Secretary monthly, quarterly, and annually, highlighting significant accomplishments in complaint processing and resolution, compliance, policy and training.</p>
<p>9. OASCR Customer Service Performance Steps – Data and Records Management</p>	<p>9.1 OASCR shall maintain the widely publicized toll-free Hotlines (one for employees and one for customers), integrated with the Complaint System, which logs in and creates files for all complaints received.</p>

# Appendix B: Organizational Chart



## Appendix C:

### Division Descriptions

**Data and Records Management Division (DRMD)** oversees the Civil Rights Enterprise System and management of information technology (IT), automated applications and statistical and economic functions in the OASCR as related to the CRES. DRMD effects planning, representation, and acquisition; development, integration, analysis, presentation and implementation; maintenance, training and support. DRMD develops, recommends, and implements policies, strategies, plans, standards and procedures related to IT, automated applications, and analytical activities on all equal employment opportunity, and civil rights activities in OASCR. DRMD represents OASCR on task forces, committees, and work groups, and in meetings, conferences and workshops regarding policies, regulations, current events, and emerging issues related to Civil Rights systems and statistics; identifies needs, sets direction, and implements good business practices for Civil Rights-related IT and statistical matters. It maintains and assures integrity of the tracking system for employment and program complaints, compliance with settlement agreements, and counseling contacts and closures. DRMD represents the Program Offices within the OASCR on E-Gov initiatives that impact the Program Offices; develops and maintains the information on OASCR's Websites relating to the Program Offices within OASCR, and provide leadership for Web initiatives, and Web Presence and Web content management as it relates to Program Offices within OASCR; provides continuous development and postings of internet intranet applications as a central source of electronic information and a communications medium with the public, employees, USDA agencies, and other stakeholders. The DRMD prepares data for No FEAR Act, EEOC 462 reports, Section 14010 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 and Age Discrimination in Employment Reports.

**Office of Adjudication** provides direct oversight of EEO and Program complaints filed against the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Office of Adjudication's mission is to promote full realization of civil rights laws and implement complaint processing to eliminate barriers of discrimination which impede the productivity of USDA. The Office of Adjudication manages the following divisions: EEO Intake, EEO Adjudication, Program Intake, Program Investigation, and Program Adjudication. The Office of Adjudication is also responsible for the direction and implementation of OASCR's FOIA and PA program in accordance with Title 5 of the United States Code, Sections 552 and 552a. The FOIA Office adjudicates FOIA administrative appeals and provides guidance

and training to OASCR's staff with regard to the collection, use, and disclosure of OASCR's information.

**The Program Complaints Division (PCD)** is an integral part of the Office of Adjudication. The mission of the division is to make the jurisdictional determination of civil rights complaints involving USDA's federally conducted or assisted programs. Program Intake determinations include acceptances, non-jurisdictional closures, program referrals, program referrals based on a Memorandum of Understanding between USDA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and a separate processing Memorandum of Understanding with the Food and Nutrition Service. PCD will ensure the facts, evidence, and findings of the investigation will withstand legal sufficiency. PCD will diligently work to reduce the number of program investigations by processing all cases expeditiously and proficiently, while seeking and identifying opportunities to engage in Alternate Dispute Resolution.

PCD provides comprehensive investigations based on legal and ethical standards. PCD also develops policies and requirements guided by Federal statutes, regulations, Executive Orders, policies, and case law decisions related to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance source, while fostering a collaborative and cooperative relationship between PCD and the Program Adjudication Division. PCD will provide quality assistance to all US citizens who file program civil rights complaints against the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**The Program Adjudication Division (PAD)** provides enforcement of civil rights laws and regulations via the adjudication of complaints filed with OASCR alleging discrimination in programs and activities conducted by, or receiving financial assistance from, the USDA.

PAD adjudicators issue Final Agency Decisions (FAD) which provide complainants with a full and fair adjudication of their discrimination claims, and order relief, as appropriate, in those cases where there is a finding of discrimination. PAD also issues decisions on Appeals that are filed with the OASCR challenging program complaint FADs issued by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. As directed, PAD also makes recommendations for changes to enhance OASCR's program complaint process.

**The Employment Complaints Division (ECD)** primary function is to process Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints filed against the Department under various Federal antidiscrimination statutes, regulations, and legal precedent for acceptance and

referral to investigation. Additionally, ECD is responsible for processing all Appeals filed with the EEOC.

ECD's operations include identifying demographic, geographic, and substantive trends in EEO complaint filings, advising OASCR leadership on proactive solutions to reducing complaints, and assisting with OASCR's strategic plan. ECD also provides training on various aspects of the EEO process to our various customers throughout the Department.

**The Employment Investigations Division (EID)** ensures that formal complaint investigations are conducted within the required timeframe established by 29 CFR 1614.108 (180) days of the date of filing of an individual complaint or within the time period contained in an order from the Office of Federal Operations on an appeal from a dismissal pursuant to the law.

EID ensures that the agency, and any employee within USDA or of a Federal agency that serves as a witness shall produce documentary and testimonial evidence as the investigator deems necessary. The testimonial evidence is taken from the complainant and witnesses under oath or affirmation or interrogatory. When the complainant, or the agency fail without good cause to respond fully and in timely fashion to requests for documents, records, comparative data, statistics, affidavits, or the attendance of witness(es), the investigator may note in the Report of Investigation (ROI).

**The Employment Adjudication Division (EAD)** mission is to independently and objectively issue Final Agency Decisions on the merits of employment discrimination complaints filed by current employees, former employees, or applicants for employment with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**The Early Resolution and Conciliation Division (ERCD)** mission is to increase the prevention and promote the early and effective resolution of both employment and program conflicts at USDA through the enhancement of conflict management skills and the widespread use of ADR techniques. ERCD's goal is to provide a variety of conflict resolution intervention and training services to all Departmental mission areas and agencies. Additionally, ERCD provides oversight to USDA agency ADR programs, consisting of ADR policy and regulatory development, implementation, and monitoring. ADR services include mediation, conciliation, settlement conferences, group problem solving and team building, and conflict management training. ERCD is also responsible for USDA's ADR reporting and for providing requested ADR information to the EEOC and other entities such as the Federal Interagency ADR Working Group. The Federal Interagency ADR Working Group issues a bi-annual report on ADR that is a compilation of all ADR efforts in the Federal sector; this report is presented to the President and to selected congressional committees.

**The Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation (OCPTCT)** oversees all aspects of the USDA's civil rights program pertaining to compliance, policy and training, and assists in providing overall coordination, oversight, and enforcement for the Department's civil rights program. OCPTCT has primary responsibility for enforcement of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other grant-related non-discrimination statutes. OCPTCT provides civil rights expertise, research, and advice, as well as interpretation of laws on pending legislation, existing laws, regulations, applicable Executive orders, and court decisions. OCPTCT is responsible for monitoring all EEO/civil rights settlement agreements on behalf of USDA. The following EEO/civil rights reports are issued by OCPTCT on behalf of the OASCR: EEOC Management Directive 715 report; Department of Justice 12250 report; Age Discrimination Act Report; No FEAR Act Report; and the Farm Bill Report. OCPTCT is also responsible for the implementation of DR 4300-4, Civil Rights Impact Analysis; DR 4330-003, Nondiscrimination in USDA-Conducted Programs and Activities; DR 4300-010, Civil Rights Accountability Policy and Procedures; and DR 4120-001 Annual Civil Rights Training (including No FEAR Act training). Finally, OCPTCT is responsible for developing OASCR's workforce by providing career development training to employees and developing activities to enhance employees' morale, productivity, and satisfaction with their work environment.

**The Compliance Division (Compliance)** provides oversight and monitoring of USDA-wide compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and civil rights laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination in USDA programs and employment. The major functions of the Compliance Division include: conducting reviews of individual agency EEO and civil rights programs; monitoring and enforcing USDA compliance with Federally-mandated complaint reporting requirements; conducting annual evaluations and assessments of Agency Heads and Staff Office Directors on their civil rights performance, activities, and accomplishments to ensure accountability throughout USDA. Additional functions include the development, management and submission of mandated annual reports such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Management Directive (MD) 715 Model EEO program, and the Executive Order 12250 Report - Information and Reporting Requirements for Agencies that Administer Federally Assisted Programs.

**The Policy Division (Policy)** is responsible for developing and disseminating Department-wide regulations, Secretary's memoranda, and other forms of policy guidance to implement civil rights law, policies, and requirements in the Department. The Division is responsible for OASCR responses to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Management Challenge Reports. The Division also develops policy on program and employment civil rights impact analyses (CRIAs); reviews CRIAs prepared by agencies for C.F.Rs.,

Departmental Regulations, advisory committees, policies, notices, and reorganizations; conducts CRIA training; and prepares and posts annual reports on the No FEAR Act, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Farm Bill including coordination among USDA agencies.

**The Training and Cultural Transformation Division (TCT)** is responsible for conducting, coordinating, monitoring, assessing, and recommending policy for USDA-wide civil rights training for all employees. TCT is also responsible for creating employee engagement and educational activities that promote team building, high performance and transformative practices. TCT ensures employees are trained on civil rights statues applicable to administrating the Department's programs and services, and equal employment opportunity. TCT also prepares monthly and annual reports of training and cultural transformation activities, including No FEAR training and other mandatory civil rights training.

**The Program, Planning and Accountability Division (PPAD)** oversees development of the five-year strategic plans for OASCR. PPAD develops organizational strategic plans and annual performance standards to implement federal civil rights policies and establishes missions, vision, goals, objectives and work plans for CR that are linked with OASCR and other Departmental strategic plans on budget, performance and results as prescribed in the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). The PPAD ensures adequate financial resources for office-wide operations and maintains effective management controls, and efficient budgeting for procurement and contracting requests. It establishes performance measures for the CR organizations, conducts performance analyses and makes recommendations to senior management regarding policies, procedures and programs relative to USDA's civil rights strategic plan and annual performance plans and reports. The PPAD establishes and maintains liaisons with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), Office of Budget, Planning and Analysis (OBPA), Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and offices within the Office of the ASCR relating to all planning and performance activities.

**The Conflict Complaints Division (CCD)** is responsible for the management and processing of conflict of interest and highly sensitive Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints of discrimination for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In this capacity, CCD oversees all aspects of the informal and formal complaint process where it is determined that the named management official has sufficient involvement in the facts of the complaint such that it creates a conflict of interest for the complaint to be processed via normal processing means. In addition, CCD is also responsible for processing all informal complaints of discrimination filed by or against Departmental Management and Staff Office employees.

# Summary

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The Strategic Plan for OASCR articulates priorities for civil rights activities and programs over the next several years. The Plan presents key issues identified by the leadership and management team that require a strategic vision and focus for the organization and employees to ensure compliance with its primary mission statement. Each division and office of OASCR has contributed to the plan with their strategic objectives to support organizational and operational performance improvements.

The Plan uses a *goals approach* methodology. This approach aligns with *conventional planning theory* which stipulates an organization should establish goals and objectives for itself and then develop strategies to achieve those goals and objectives. The design also describes quantitative objectives and strategies offering a “blended” approach to this model.

The Performance Indicators described in the Plan measure performance against the strategies for each outcome. The Indicators tell management whether the Plan is achieving the desired result. We strongly encourage periodic performance review sessions as an essential part of strategic planning. The reviews enable management to assess and analyze “how are we doing.” If new priorities, politics, budgets, human capital, stakeholder needs, etc., dictate change in direction or re-prioritization, the performance review sessions will enable management to shift and make decisions reflecting new realities. Performance review sessions should be conducted quarterly at a minimum.

Finally, close coordination and collaboration with the USDA’s Strategic Plan is encouraged and periodic reports to the Secretary will ensure alignment with the Department’s goals and objectives.