

Blue Earth County Human Services Comprehensive Civil Rights Plan (CCRP)



Blue Earth County Human Services
410 S 5th Street PO Box 3526
Mankato MN 56002
507-304-4335

Civil Rights Coordinator: 507-387-8664 (voice)
ADA Coordinator: 507-387-8664 (voice)
Limited English Proficiency Coordinator: 507-304-4228 (voice)

This CCRP is posted in the lobby next to the reception desk

Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats to individuals with disabilities and for information about equal access to services, call 507-304-4335.

TTY users place calls through MN Relay Service: 711 or (800) 627-3529

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Purpose
2. Legal Authorities
3. Civil Rights Contact
4. Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedure
5. Complaint Resolution Procedure
6. Complaint Notification Form
7. Disability Compliance
8. Limited English Proficiency Plan
9. Annual Civil Rights Training for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
10. Civil Rights Assurance of Compliance
11. CCRP Administration
12. Appendix

Attachment A – Full List of Legal Authorities

Attachment B – Equal Opportunity Policy

Attachment C – Complaint Procedure and Forms

Attachment D – DHS Brochure: Do you have a Disability, DHS 4133

Attachment E – Program Accessibility Policy for People with Disabilities

Attachment F – Limited English Proficiency Plan

Attachment G – 2016 Civil Rights Assurance of Compliance



1. Purpose

As a recipient of federal financial assistance, Blue Earth County Human Services is responsible for providing core services to assist and support Minnesota's most vulnerable individuals and families so they can meet their basic needs and be treated with respect and dignity. Blue Earth County Human Services has a CCRP to ensure that all eligible individuals receive equal access to program services and information. Its programs are operated in a nondiscriminatory way, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, creed and public assistance status. In medical programs, sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any health program or activity receiving federal funds. This CCRP also serves as a source of information for county agency staff and the general public. It sets out Blue Earth County Human Service's civil rights administrative policies and procedures, identifying key contacts within the agency and linking the reader to applicable state and federal civil rights laws and resources.

2. Legal Authorities (See full list in Appendix, Attachment A)

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability)
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability)
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; State and local government services (disability)
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age)
- Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (added sex discrimination in health care programs)
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex)
- Bilingual Requirements in the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (2005)
- Minnesota Human Rights Act, Chapter 363A

3. Civil Rights Contact

Blue Earth County Human Services designates the Director of Human Resources to serve as the agency's Civil Rights Contact, agency point person on civil rights matters.

Krista Amos, Director of Human Resources
507-387-8664
MN Relay Service: 711 or (800) 627-3529
kamos@city.mankato.mn.us

4. Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedure

Blue Earth County Human Services Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedure

It is the policy of Blue Earth County Human Services to make sure that program benefits and services are available to everyone and provided to all eligible individuals without discrimination, in compliance with civil rights laws.

Blue Earth County Human Services employees, services, programs, benefits and policies will not discriminate against applicants, clients or members of the public because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. "Sex" includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any medical or health program receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, CHIP programs, health clinics, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

This policy covers Blue Earth County Human Service's full range of services, programs and benefits, including, but not limited to, access to information about services, eligibility determinations and intake, admission procedures and treatment. The policy applies to the agencies and providers receiving federal and state funds under contracts, licenses and other arrangements with Blue Earth County Human Services. The Minnesota Human Rights Act also applies to the work of Blue Earth County Human Services and those agencies carrying out its programs.

Program Accessibility for People with Disabilities

Blue Earth County Human Services and all of its services, programs and benefits, are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, including people with hearing loss, low vision and other sensory disabilities.

To avoid disability discrimination, Blue Earth County Human Services will:

- Notify the public about rights and protections for people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Designate an ADA Contact and maintain a complaint procedure
 - Make sure that its buildings are physically accessible for people with disabilities
 - Assist individuals with disabilities to apply and qualify for benefits based on their eligibility
 - Provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities
 - Provide services, programs and benefits that are accessible to and usable by qualified people with disabilities
-

Physical access includes:

- Convenient off-street parking designated specifically for people with disabilities
- Curb cuts and ramps between parking areas and the Blue Earth County Human Service's building
- Level access into the first floor of the Blue Earth County Human Service's building with elevator access to all other floors

Reasonable Modifications to Policies, Procedures or Practices

Blue Earth County Human Services will make reasonable modifications to its policies, procedures or practices when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless Blue Earth County Human Services can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, programs or benefits.

Effective Communication and Auxiliary Aids and Services

Blue Earth County Human Services will take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with people with disabilities and companions with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To ensure effective communications, the agency will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, so that people with disabilities can receive services, programs and benefits and participate in them in the same way as people without disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services include qualified readers, writers and interpreters who convey information effectively, accurately and impartially using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

To determine what types of auxiliary aids or services are necessary, Blue Earth County Human Services will give primary consideration to the requests of people with disabilities. The agency will honor the choice of the person requesting the auxiliary aid or service unless it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or benefit or cause an undue administrative or financial burden. If this happens, the agency will find another equally effective auxiliary aid or service.

5. Complaint Resolution Procedure

Blue Earth County Human Services Civil Rights Complaint Procedure

You have the right to equal access to services, if you are an applicant, client or member of the public trying to gain access to human services program information or benefits. Blue Earth County has a civil rights complaint procedure that provides prompt and thorough resolution of civil rights complaints.

Civil rights complaints allege discrimination. You have a right to file a civil rights complaint if you believe you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender

identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

It is against the law for anyone who works for Blue Earth County Human Services to retaliate against a person who files a complaint or who cooperates in the investigation of a civil rights complaint.

To file a complaint, ask for Blue Earth County Human Service's equal opportunity policy, complaint procedure and complaint form. Use the contact information below to help you to file your complaint. You can also review the law and regulations that outlaw discrimination in the Civil Rights Contact's office at Blue Earth County Human Services:

Krista Amos, Director of Human Resources
Blue Earth County Human Services
410 S 5th Street, PO Box 3526
507-387-8664 (voice)
MN Relay Service: 711 or (800) 627-3529
507-304-4336 (fax)

Procedure:

1. Civil rights complaints **must** be submitted to the Civil Rights Contact within 180 days of the date the alleged discrimination occurred.
 2. A complaint **must** be in writing and contain the name and address of the person filing it. You should also give your telephone number or relay service number if you are deaf or hard of hearing. Give your email address if it helps get in touch with you. The complaint **must** state the problem or action alleged and the relief desired. If you need assistance with your complaint, the Civil Rights Contact will help you.
 3. Blue Earth County Human Services **must** conduct an investigation of the complaint. The investigation may be informal, but it **must** be thorough and timely. People who have an interest in the complaint **must** have an opportunity to submit relevant evidence about the complaint. Blue Earth County Human Services will issue a written decision on the complaint within 90 days after its filing. The agency will maintain the complaint records and files for three years. Complaints about program rules are not civil rights complaints and will be resolved through a different complaint process.
 4. The person filing the complaint may appeal the decision by writing to the agency's Civil Rights Contact within 15 days of receiving the written decision. The Civil Rights Contact **will** issue a written decision in response to the appeal, no later than 30 days after the filing. This decision is final. – This
-

appeal process is not the same as filing a fair hearings appeal with the Department of Human Services' Appeals and Regulations Division.

5. The person filing the complaint must be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint **directly** with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the SNAP Program.

- (a) The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights** prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex and religion. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medicaid, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges under Title I of the Affordable Care Act. Contact the federal agency directly:

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights**

Region V
233 N. Michigan Avenue
Suite 240
Chicago, IL 60601
312-886-2359 (voice)
800-368-1019 (toll free)
800-537-7697 (TTY)

- (b) USDA requires that the following nondiscrimination statement be provided **exactly** as it is shown below:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and **U.S. Department of Agriculture** (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who required alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDS office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide 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.

6. Filing Complaints with State Agencies:

The person filing the complaint **must** also be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint **directly** with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

- (a) The Minnesota Department of Human Rights prohibits discrimination in public services programs because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or public assistance status. Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights directly:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-539-1100 (voice)
800-657-3704 (toll free)
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)

- (b) The **Minnesota Department of Human Services** prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, public assistance status, age, disability, or sex, including sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in health programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges. Contact the Equal Opportunity and Access Division **directly** only if you have a discrimination complaint:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
P.O. Box 64997
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

- (c) County agencies are not permitted to investigate civil rights complaints in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because counties directly administer SNAP benefits. County agencies **must** refer SNAP civil rights complaints to DHS or the USDA regional office in Chicago. The USDA regional address is:

Civil Rights Director
Midwest Regional Office
USDA/Food and Nutrition Service
77 W. Jackson Blvd., 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3591
(312) 353-6657 (voice) or use your preferred relay service
Tamara.earley@fns.usda.gov

7. Arrangements for People with Disabilities:

Blue Earth County Human Services **will** make appropriate arrangements to ensure that people with disabilities are provided accommodations to participate in the complaint process in an equal to manner to people without disabilities. Appropriate arrangements include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; providing taped cassettes and accessible formats for people who are blind or have low vision; and assuring a physically accessible location for complaint proceedings. The Civil Rights Contact or designee is responsible for making these arrangements.

8. Blue Earth County Human Services will refer all SNAP civil rights complaints to DHS or the USDA regional office in Chicago as soon as possible after received.

6. Complaint Notification Form

Blue Earth County Human Services will use the *Complaint Notification Form* to notify DHS in writing of all service delivery discrimination complaints filed against the agency and resolved on the county agency level. Blue Earth County Human Services will make sure the complaint notification form is completed and sent to DHS within 90 days of the date the complaint was filed in the county, so DHS can report the complaint to the appropriate federal office. A copy of the *Complaint Notification Form* is located in the Appendix; Attachment C.

7. Disability Compliance

a. Disability Law and Standard of Access for State and Local Government Services

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination based on their disability in federally funded programs and services.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II of the ADA) protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of their disability when the discrimination occurs in state or local government services. An agency does not have to receive federal financial assistance to be required to comply with Title II of the ADA. An agency just has to be a state or local government entity.

County human services agencies must ensure that people with disabilities are able to use their programs and services. Disability laws set out an equal access standard for providing services. This means that individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal access to human services programs; the same standard of access that applies to people without disabilities.

A public agency must reasonably modify its policies, procedures and practices to avoid discrimination. A public agency must also take appropriate steps to ensure that its communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

b. ADA Contact

Blue Earth County Human Services has designated an ADA Contact person to serve as its point person on disability matters raised by applicants, clients and members of the public. ADA Contact information is located on the cover page of this CCRP.

Krista Amos, Director of Human Resources
507-387-8664
MN Relay Service: 711 or (800) 627-3529

c. Disability Complaints

People filing disability complaints will use Blue Earth County Human Service's civil rights complaint procedure.

d. ADA Notice Document

Blue Earth County Human Services will use the DHS brochure: *Do you have a disability* (DHS-4133-ENG) as its ADA notice document. This notice document informs applicants, clients and members of the public that our agency does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The notice document also gives information to the public about the rights of people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Blue Earth County Human Services has a copy of DHS brochure: *Do you have a disability* (DHS-4133-ENG) posted in the lobby.

A copy of the DHS brochure: *Do you have a disability* (DHS-4133-ENG) is located in the Appendix; Attachment D.

e. **Disability Policy Prohibiting Discrimination**

The Blue Earth County Human Services Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedure includes provisions which prohibit disability discrimination in human services programs. This policy is located in the agency lobby.

A copy of the Equal Opportunity Policy is located in the Appendix; Attachment B. A copy of the Program Accessibility for People with Disabilities is located in the Appendix, Attachment E.

8. Limited English Proficiency Plan

A copy is located in the appendix; Attachment F.

9. Annual Civil Rights Training for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Blue Earth County Human Services will conduct annual SNAP civil rights training for all staff who administer the SNAP program and all staff who have direct contact with the public, such as support staff, supervisors and managers. Blue Earth County Human Services will use DHS' PowerPoint presentation to train staff, document the date of the training each year and document who attends the training.

10. Civil Rights Assurance of Compliance

The Blue Earth County Human Services Director and County Attorney Representative have signed the *2016 Civil Rights Assurance of Compliance*. A copy is located in the Appendix; Attachment G.

11. CCRP Administration

Blue Earth County Human Services will:

- Post a copy of its CCRP in the agency lobby where members of the public can review it and in the employee break room where staff can review it
 - Post the CCRP on the agency's public website
 - Review the CCRP annually with ALL staff
 - For the benefit of applicants, clients and members of the public, prominently post in the lobby a copy of the equal opportunity policy and
-

procedure that includes provisions prohibiting disability discrimination and a copy of its civil rights complaint procedure

- Post a copy of the DHS brochure: *Do you have a disability* (DHS-4133-ENG) in the lobby
- Conduct annual SNAP civil rights training for all staff who administer the SNAP program and all staff who have direct contact with the public, including support staff, supervisors and managers. Blue Earth County Human Services will document the date of the training each year and document who attends the training.

12. Appendix

- a. **Attachment A** – Full List of Legal Authorities
 - b. **Attachment B** – Equal Opportunity Policy
 - c. **Attachment C** – Complaint Notification Procedure and Forms
 - d. **Attachment D** – DHS Brochure: Do you have a Disability, DHS 4133
 - e. **Attachment E** – Program Accessibility Policy for People with Disabilities
 - f. **Attachment F** – Limited English Proficiency Plan
 - g. **Attachment G** – Signed Copy of the *2016 Civil Rights Assurance of Compliance*
-

LIST OF LEGAL AUTHORITIES

Federal

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin)
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability)
3. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability)
4. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; State and local government services (disability)
5. Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age)
6. Community Service Assurance Provisions of the Hill-Burton Act (health facilities receiving Hill-Burton Funds)
7. Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (added sex discrimination in health care programs)
8. Nondiscrimination Provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (Federal Block Grants):
 - Community Services Block Grant (race, color, national origin, sex) **Remaining block grants** (race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion)
 - Social Services Block Grant
 - Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant
 - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness Block Grant
 - Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant
 - Community Mental Health Services Block Grant
 - Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant
9. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex)
10. Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion)
11. Food Stamp Act of 1977
12. Nondiscrimination Compliance Requirements in the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
13. Bilingual Requirements in the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
14. FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (2005)
15. Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations Regulation

State

1. Minnesota Human Rights Act, Chapter 363A



Blue Earth County Human Services Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of Blue Earth County Human Services to make sure that program benefits and services are available to everyone and provided to all eligible individuals without discrimination, in compliance with civil rights laws.

Blue Earth County Human Services employees, services, programs, benefits and policies will not discriminate against applicants, clients or members of the public because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. "Sex" includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any medical or health program receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, CHIP programs, health clinics, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

This policy covers Blue Earth County Human Service's full range of services, programs and benefits, including, but not limited to, access to information about services, eligibility determinations and intake, admission procedures and treatment. The policy applies to the agencies and providers receiving federal and state funds under contracts, licenses and other arrangements with Blue Earth County Human Services. The Minnesota Human Rights Act also applies to the work of Blue Earth County Human Services and those agencies carrying out its programs.

If you have any questions, complaints, or concerns, please contact:

Civil Rights Coordinator
410 S 5TH Street
PO Box 3526
Mankato MN 56002-3526

Blue Earth County Human Services Civil Rights Complaint Procedure

You have the right to equal access to services, if you are an applicant, client or member of the public trying to gain access to human services program information or benefits. Blue Earth County has a civil rights complaint procedure that provides prompt and thorough resolution of civil rights complaints.

Civil rights complaints allege discrimination. You have a right to file a civil rights complaint if you believe you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

It is against the law for anyone who works for Blue Earth County Human Services to retaliate against a person who files a complaint or who cooperates in the investigation of a civil rights complaint.

To file a complaint, ask for Blue Earth County Human Service's equal opportunity policy, complaint procedure and complaint form. Use the contact information below to help you to file your complaint. You can also review the law and regulations that outlaw discrimination in the Civil Rights Contact's office at Blue Earth County Human Services:

Krista Amos, Director of Human Resources
Blue Earth County Human Services
410 S 5th Street, PO Box 3526
507-387-8664 (voice)
MN Relay Service: 711 or (800) 627-3529
507-304-4336 (fax)

Procedure:

1. Civil rights complaints **must** be submitted to the Civil Rights Contact within 180 days of the date the alleged discrimination occurred.
2. A complaint **must** be in writing and contain the name and address of the person filing it. You should also give your telephone number or relay service number if you are deaf or hard of hearing. Give your email address if it helps get in touch with you. The complaint **must** state the problem or action alleged and the relief desired. If you need assistance with your complaint, the Civil Rights Contact will help you.
3. Blue Earth County Human Services **must** conduct an investigation of the complaint. The investigation may be informal, but it **must** be thorough and timely. People who have an interest in the complaint **must** have an opportunity to submit relevant

evidence about the complaint. Blue Earth County Human Services will issue a written decision on the complaint within 90 days after its filing. The agency will maintain the complaint records and files for three years. Complaints about program rules are not civil rights complaints and will be resolved through a different complaint process.

4. The person filing the complaint may appeal the decision by writing to the agency's Civil Rights Contact within 15 days of receiving the written decision. The Civil Rights Contact **will** issue a written decision in response to the appeal, no later than 30 days after the filing. This decision is final. – This appeal process is not the same as filing a fair hearings appeal with the Department of Human Services' Appeals and Regulations Division.
5. The person filing the complaint must be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint **directly** with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the SNAP Program.

- (a) The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights** prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex and religion. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medicaid, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges under Title I of the Affordable Care Act. Contact the federal agency directly:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Region V
233 N. Michigan Avenue
Suite 240
Chicago, IL 60601
312-886-2359 (voice)
800-368-1019 (toll free)
800-537-7697 (TTY)

- (b) USDA requires that the following nondiscrimination statement be provided **exactly** as it is shown below:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and **U.S. Department of Agriculture** (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who required alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDS office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide 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.

6. Filing Complaints with State Agencies:

The person filing the complaint **must** also be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint **directly** with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

- (a) The Minnesota Department of Human Rights prohibits discrimination in public services programs because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or public assistance status. Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights directly:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-539-1100 (voice)
800-657-3704 (toll free)
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)

- (b) The **Minnesota Department of Human Services** prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual

orientation, public assistance status, age, disability, or sex, including sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in health programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges. Contact the Equal Opportunity and Access Division **directly** only if you have a discrimination complaint:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
P.O. Box 64997
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

- (c) County agencies are not permitted to investigate civil rights complaints in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because counties directly administer SNAP benefits. County agencies **must** refer SNAP civil rights complaints to DHS or the USDA regional office in Chicago. The USDA regional address is:

Civil Rights Director
Midwest Regional Office
USDA/Food and Nutrition Service
77 W. Jackson Blvd., 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3591
(312) 353-6657 (voice) or use your preferred relay service
Tamara.earley@fns.usda.gov

7. Arrangements for People with Disabilities:

Blue Earth County Human Services **will** make appropriate arrangements to ensure that people with disabilities are provided accommodations to participate in the complaint process in an equal to manner to people without disabilities. Appropriate arrangements include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; providing taped cassettes and accessible formats for people who are blind or have low vision; and assuring a physically accessible location for complaint proceedings. The Civil Rights Contact or designee is responsible for making these arrangements.

8. Blue Earth County Human Services will refer all SNAP civil rights complaints to DHS or the USDA regional office in Chicago as soon as possible after received.

**BLUE EARTH COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT FORM
Discrimination in Service Delivery**

Complete the questions on this form and return to Blue Earth County Human Services Civil Rights Coordinator.

Client/complainant information

CLIENT'S NAME			
CLIENT'S STREET ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
CLIENT'S TELEPHONE NUMBER	Name, address and telephone number of someone who will know how to reach you (optional)		

Information about discriminating agency and/or parties

AGENCY NAME AND/OR PERSON'S NAME	AGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER		
AGENCY STREET ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

Information about discrimination (check as many as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Color	<input type="checkbox"/> National origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Creed	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Political beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> Age
<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Public assistance status	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation					
If you filed this charge with any other agency, please give the name, address and telephone number of the agency and the name of the investigator assigned to the case.							

Details of discrimination

<p>Explain what happened to you, including the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why you believe you were treated differently. • Explain how you were treated differently from other people. • Give the date(s) of the incident(s). • Give the name(s) of the people who were directly involved. • If there were any witnesses, give their name(s) and explain what information they can provide. <p>If you need more space, attach additional pages.</p>	
SIGNATURE	DATE

For any questions, please contact the Civil Rights Coordinator/Human Resources Director at 507-387-8664 (voice) 711 (TTY) or PO Box 3526 Mankato MN 56002.

**BLUE EARTH COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT NOTIFICATION FORM
Alleging Discrimination in Service Delivery**

Authority: U.S Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service Instruction 113-1

Requirement: County Human Service Agencies must notify the DHS Civil Rights Coordinator within 90 days of all service delivery discrimination complaints filed against them.

Action Required: Complete this form and send it to DHS Civil Rights Coordinator.

1. Name, address, telephone number of complainant:

2. Name and address of county agency delivering the benefits, including names of any employees accused of wrongdoing:

3. Type of discrimination alleged:

4. Describe the alleged discrimination, including the dates it happened. Give names and contact information of any witnesses:

5. Give a summary of the investigation findings, including any corrective action ordered:

Contact Information: DHS Civil Rights Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
PO Box 64997, St Paul MN 55164-0997
651-431-3034 (voice) or use your preferred relay service
651-431-7444 (fax), joann.daSilva@state.mn.us

Do you have a disability?

If you have a disability, you have the same rights as others.

Please tell us if you have a disability so we can help you access human services programs and benefits.

What medical conditions may be disabilities?

A disability is a physical, sensory, or mental impairment that materially limits a major life activity.

Types of disabilities may include:

- Diseases like diabetes, epilepsy or cancer
- Learning disorders like dyslexia
- Developmental delays
- Clinical depression
- Hearing loss or low vision
- Movement restrictions like trouble with walking, reaching or grasping
- History of alcohol or drug addiction, although current illegal drug use is not a disability.

If you are asking for or are getting benefits through either a county human services agency or the Minnesota Department of Human Services, that office will let you know if you have a disability using information from you and your doctor.

What help is available?

If you have a disability, your county or the state human services agency can help you by:

- Calling you or meeting with you in another place if you are not able to come into the office

- Using a sign language interpreter
- Giving you letters and forms in other formats like computer files, audio recordings, large print or Braille
- Telling you the meaning of the information we give you
- Helping you fill out forms
- Helping you make a plan so you can work even with your disability
- Sending you to other services that may help you
- Helping you to appeal agency decisions about you if you disagree with them.

You will not have to pay extra for help. If you want help, ask your agency as soon as possible. An agency may not be able to accommodate requests made within 48 hours of need.

How does the law protect people with disabilities?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act are federal laws, and the Minnesota Human Rights Act is a state law. Each gives individuals with disabilities the same legal rights and protections as people without disabilities, including access to public assistance benefits. You will not be denied benefits because you have a disability. Your benefits will not be stopped because of your disability. If your disability makes getting benefits hard for you, your county human services agency will help you access all of the programs that are available to you.

Discrimination is against the law

You have the right to file a complaint if you believe you were treated in a discriminatory way by a human services agency. You can contact any of the following agencies directly to file a civil rights complaint.

The **Minnesota Department of Human Services, Equal Opportunity and Access Division**, prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, public assistance status, age, disability or sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity under any health program or activity receiving federal financial assistance). Contact the Equal Opportunity and Access Division directly:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
P.O. Box 64997
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
651-431-3040 (voice) or
use your preferred relay service

The **Minnesota Department of Human Rights** prohibits discrimination in public services programs because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or public assistance status. Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights directly:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-539-1100 (voice)
800-657-3704 (toll free)
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights** prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, age and disability; in block grant complaints, religion and sex are included; and in medical



program complaints, sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any health program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medicaid and CHIP programs, hospitals, clinics, employers, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges created under Title I of the Affordable Care Act. Contact the federal agency directly:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights, Region V
233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 240
Chicago, IL 60601
312-886-2359 (voice)
800-368-1019 (toll free)
800-537-7697 (TTY)

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the **USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form**, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at 800-221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the **State Information/Hotline Numbers** (click the link for a listing of hotline numbers by State); found online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/contact_info/hotlines.htm.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Blue Earth County Human Services Program Accessibility for People with Disabilities

Blue Earth County Human Services and all of its services, programs and benefits, are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, including people with hearing loss, low vision and other sensory disabilities.

To avoid disability discrimination, Blue Earth County Human Services will:

- Notify the public about rights and protections for people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Designate an ADA Contact and maintain a complaint procedure
- Make sure that its buildings are physically accessible for people with disabilities
- Assist individuals with disabilities to apply and qualify for benefits
- Provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities
- Provide services, programs and benefits that are accessible to and usable by qualified people with disabilities

Physical access includes:

- Convenient off-street parking designated specifically for people with disabilities
- Curb cuts and ramps between parking areas and the Blue Earth County Human Service's building
- Level access into the first floor of the Blue Earth County Human Service's building with elevator access to all other floors

Reasonable Modifications to Policies, Procedures or Practices

Blue Earth County Human Services will make reasonable modifications to its policies, procedures or practices when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the agency can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, programs or benefits.

Effective Communication and Auxiliary Aids and Services

Blue Earth County Human Services will take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with people with disabilities and companions with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To ensure effective communications, the agency will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, so that people with disabilities can receive services, programs and benefits and participate in them in the same way as people without disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services include qualified readers, writers and interpreters who convey information effectively, accurately and impartially using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

To determine what types of auxiliary aids or services are necessary, we will give primary consideration to the requests of people with disabilities. The agency will honor the choice of the person requesting the auxiliary aid or service unless it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or benefit or cause an undue administrative or financial burden. If this happens, the agency will find another equally effective auxiliary aid or service

Limited-English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

Effective September 1, 2001

Last Updated July 18, 2016

Blue Earth County Human Services

410 S. Fifth Street

P.O. Box 3526

Mankato, MN 56002-3526

Telephone: (507) 304-4222

Fax: (507) 304-4379

www.blueearthcountymn.gov

Table of Contents

<u>100 Purpose and Legal Basis</u>	1
 <u>200 Assessments</u>	
201 Needs Assessment	2
202 Case Finding	2
203 Points of Contact	2
204 Resources Needed	2
205 Timely Access	3
206 Notice of Service Availability	3
 <u>300 Policies and Procedures</u>	
301 Agency Commitment	4
302 Range of Oral Language Assistance	4
303 Uncommon Languages	4
304 Affirmative Action	4
305 Use of Family and Friends	4
306 Competency Standards for Interpreters	4
307 Assigning Clients with LEP to Bilingual Staff	5
308 Dissemination of LEP Plan	5
309 Services to Illiterate	5
310 Emergency Situations	5
311 Access to and Cost of Interpreters	5
312 County-Produced Materials	5
313 Complaint Resolution Protocol	6
314 Procedure for Using/Distributing Translated Forms	6
 <u>400 Training</u>	
401 Distribution of Plan	7
402 Training of Staff - Initial	7
403 Training of Staff - Ongoing	7
 <u>500 Monitoring</u>	
501 Evaluation of the LEP	8
502 LEP Contact Person	8

Blue Earth County Human Services

410 S. Fifth Street

P.O. Box 3526

Mankato, MN 56002-3526

Limited-English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

LEP Coordinator: Phil Claussen, HS Director (507) 304-4228

Financial Services: DeAnn Boney, Supervisor (507) 304-4358

Social Services: Anne Broskoff, Supervisor (507) 304-4459

100 Purpose and Legal Basis

The following document serves as the Blue Earth County Human Services (BECHS) plan to meet the legal obligation of language access requirements in compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights act of 1964 and for the Office for Civil Rights (OCR); 7 CFR, 273 et seq; and 42 CFR 435 et seq.

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. '2000 et seq; 45 CFR '80, Nondiscrimination Under Programs Receiving Federal Financial Assistance Through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Office for Civil Rights Policy Guidance, 65 Fed. Reg. 52762 (2000), Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Policy Guidance on the Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination As It Affects Persons With Limited English Proficiency (August 30, 2000); OCR Website www.hhs.gov/ocr/lep/.
- Department of Justice Regulation, 28 CFR '42.405(d)(1), Department of Justice, Coordination of Enforcement of Non-Discrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs.

There are four components to this document:

200 Assessments

300 Policies and Procedures

400 Training

500 Monitoring

200 Assessments

201 Needs Assessment. Identification of LEP consumers will take place at initial contact with the agency. Consumers coming into the agency will be assessed by office support staff as to the level of verbal communication. The CAF and HCAPP have questions referring to language of preference, and these will be reviewed by IM intake staff if applying for public assistance. If the consumer is contacting our agency for social services or other services, the intake worker will assess the need for an interpreter when speaking with the consumer. “I speak” cards are available in the agency for languages not commonly spoken in Blue Earth County. LEP posters are posted in the public waiting area.

Language assistance is most needed when consumers are making application or recertifying for public assistance, when contacting child support and working with establishment of paternity and/or court orders, and/or working with social services in any aspect. It is also necessary for ongoing case maintenance contacts (i.e., the consumer contacts the agency without a scheduled appointment).

We have contracted with local agencies to provide interpreters that are available on an on-call basis and can be available to allow the same access to emergency benefits as English-speaking persons. We currently have bilingual (Spanish and Somali) staff and will strive to add additional bilingual staff in our agency in the future. We will make use of the Language Line to assist with emergent interpreting. Interpreters are available to assist via telephone as needed.

202 Case Finding. Specific language needs of each applicant with LEP will occur at the time of screening, intake, or application. This will primarily be done by reviewing the language preference questions on the Health Care Application (HCAPP) and the Combined Application Form (CAF). Language preferences will be entered into the applicant’s primary language fields in the MAXIS and/or MMIS system. If an interpreter is needed, it also will be entered in the MAXIS and/or MMIS system. If the main receptionist or intake worker suspects that the applicant is a person with LEP, the worker will present the LEP person with a card that lists the ten principal languages (Spanish, Somali, Russian, Arabic, Oromo, Serbo-Croatian, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian [Khmer], and Lao) in order to determine which language is involved, if any. It is expected that reasonable efforts will be made by Blue Earth County Human Services to provide same-day interpreter services.

203 Points of Contact. The greatest likelihood of need for interpreter services will be at the point of intake - at the time of an emergency or application for financial assistance. The most appropriate form of interpreter services will likely be language assistance in completion of an application for financial assistance or health care. The other point of contact may involve field-based contact when conducting child protection assessments. These contacts will typically take place in the home of the child’s caretaker or parent.

204 Resources Needed. Blue Earth County Human Services will utilize its resource of PMAP Interpretive Service Providers and its contracts with other community agencies for interpreter services. Additionally, Blue Earth County Human Services has a working relationship with Language Line Services (1-800-752-0093) for languages involved with Language Line Services “tier” system. When feasible, on-site interpreter services will be made available and would be the

first preference. When appropriate, the use of ITV may be considered. Use of reciprocal faxing processes will be used when necessary to facilitate completion of applications and processing of interviews.

205 Timely Access. Services through PMAP providers and contracted providers are available during customary business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Language Line Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact with either entity will be made by commercial phone. When on-site interpreter services are to be used, it will be necessary to schedule appointments at mutually-convenient times for the client and the interpreter. Use of ITV, if used, will occur in a private setting within the agency.

206 Notice of Service Availability. LEP clientele will be informed of the availability of free interpreter and translation services at the point when it appears that the customer is not able to communicate in English. Notice of service availability will come from the interpreter poster displayed in the central reception area. Distribution of the LEP Plan will help in putting those entities on notice that interpreter and translation services are available on a timely basis and free of charge. Insofar as the Department of Human Services has translated many forms into multiple languages, Blue Earth County Human Services will access these forms as necessary. These forms can be accessed at the Department's website at <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us>.

300 Policies and Procedures

301 Agency Commitment. Blue Earth County Human Services is committed to the spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It recognizes the importance of providing meaningful access to all persons, including persons with LEP, to the various programs operated under Blue Earth County Human Services.

302 Range of Oral Language Assistance. There will be limited oral language assistance on-site. Use will be made of the formal linkage between PMAP providers and contracted providers to address our non-English-speaking clients. Specifically, in regard to Spanish and Somali needs, we do have staff that are proficient at interpreting. Subsidiary use of Language Line Services for all other non-English languages will take place as necessary.

303 Uncommon Languages. There may be circumstances when customers present for services that use a language other than that most commonly used in Blue Earth County. There may be languages such as Russian, Hmong, Vietnamese, Khmer/Cambodian, Lao, and the like. Receptionist staff will use the "I speak" cards to determine the correct language and contact one of our contracted interpreter providers to provide the service. If the front desk is unable to determine the uncommon language, then they should refer all such cases to the financial assistance supervisor, social services supervisor, or director. This person will be responsible for trying to determine the customer's language or country of origin. Once determined, contact will be made with an appropriate interpreter service and/or an appropriate Language Line Services interpreter in the customary manner.

304 Affirmative Action. The Blue Earth County Human Services employee handling the case will inform either the customer or the interpreter, once it has been determined that interpreter services are needed, there is no charge or fee for the service. This will be communicated in verbal form. At no time in the service-delivery process will the customer incur any costs associated with LEP-directed interpreter services.

305 Use of Family and Friends. Use of family or friends as interpreters is not the preferred method of providing interpreter services. But when the intake worker has determined that it is not feasible to use formalized interpreter services, a consultation will be made with that worker's immediate supervisor or director. Alternative methods of customer service will need to be discussed. If the worker has determined that a family member, friend, or other responsible party is competent and can adequately perform the interpreter service, approval may be given. The worker needs to feel confident that the client's data privacy rights will be protected and that the quality of the interpreter services to be provided by the family member or friend will be acceptable. The worker will need to document in the case file the extenuating circumstances for use of family or friends, particularly that the family was offered other interpreter services and that the client insisted that a family member or friend be used. **Under no circumstances may minor children be used for interpreter services.**

306 Competency Standards for Interpreters. Blue Earth County will make sure that interpreters, whether bilingual staff or professional interpreters, are competent. To be *competent* to provide interpreter services, the interpreter must be proficient in both English and the target language and be able to convey information in both languages accurately, have had orientation/training that includes

the skills and ethics of interpreting, have basic knowledge in both languages of specialized program terms or concepts, and be sensitive to the client's culture. When using family, friends, or significant others, the intake worker must make a judgment as to the competency of the proposed interpreter. "Certification" as an interpreter is preferred but not a prerequisite.

307 Assigning Clients with LEP to Bilingual Staff. Where applicable, and as a program practice, Blue Earth County will use its best efforts to assign clients with LEP to bilingual staff who speak their language.

308 Dissemination of LEP Plan. Copies and access for the LEP Plan will be provided to the following: all Blue Earth County Human Services employees who have direct customer contact, area Legal Aid Office, contracted providers, and Blue Earth County Courthouse.

309 Services to Recipients Who Don't Read Their Own Language. When confronted with a situation in which the customer cannot read or write in his/her native language, it is incumbent that Blue Earth County Human Services find a suitable interpreter, one who can assist the person in completion of necessary forms, documents, and the like. The Blue Earth County Human Services intake worker needs to make the determination, in conjunction with the interpreter, about the customer's literacy skills. The clear choice in dealing with cases of illiteracy will be to have an on-site interpreter. It may be necessary to schedule interviews when face-to-face interpreter services can be provided. Use of the ITV, faxing of forms, and over-the-phone services may be required on a case-by-case basis.

310 Emergency Situations. When programs require access to services within short time-frames, Blue Earth County will take whatever steps necessary to ensure that all clients, including clients with LEP, have access to services within the appropriate time-frames. For example, when a client needs an interpreter or other language assistance services to obtain expedited program services, Blue Earth County's goal is to make the services accessible within the required time-frame, whether that means using an interpreter or any other appropriate type of language assistance.

311 Access to and Costs of Interpreters. Under no circumstances will Blue Earth County Human Services indicate (either verbally or in writing) that any applicant or client in need of LEP services will be charged for interpreter or translation services. All such services shall be at no expense to the applicant or client. Such services will be provided during all normal business hours and, when necessary, during non-business hours when an emergency has been determined to exist.

312 County-Produced Materials. It is not anticipated that Blue Earth County Human Services will develop any special material. Rather, Blue Earth County Human Services will rely on the state-produced documents as the primary source of translated materials. Downloading of documents from the DHS web page will be used as necessary.

313 Complaint Resolution Protocol. Any adverse action taken by Blue Earth County Human Services with which an applicant or recipient disagrees is subject to complaint. Blue Earth County Human Services has a formal complaint process that can be utilized to try to resolve any dispute. Any person can receive and complete a formal grievance procedure form by requesting this form at the first-floor reception desk at the Blue Earth County Government Center, 410 S. Fifth Street, Mankato, Minnesota. (See Attachment 1.) In the absence of local resolution, the person making the complaint will be informed in a language understandable to the grievant of the process to follow in making a complaint to DHS or the Office of Civil Rights. The complaint procedure will conform in all respects to the extant Blue Earth County Human Services' procedure included in Civil Rights Compliance Requirements. Appropriate use of interpreter services, either a PMAP provider or a contracted provider, or Language Line Services, to facilitate the dispute resolution process will take place. All such complaints can be made to any of the parties listed at the top of this LEP Plan.

314 Procedures for Using/Distributing Translated Forms. Blue Earth County accesses from the Department's website a number of documents and forms which are available in languages other than English.

400 Training

401 Distribution of LEP Plan. All Blue Earth County Human Services employees who have direct contact with customers will be provided a copy of the LEP Plan upon its adoption. If any changes are made in the document, a revised copy will also be provided to the same entities listed in 308.

402 Training of Staff - Initial. With approval of the LEP Plan, there will be initial training on the document. This training will take place for current staff by unit supervisors in the context of a unit staff meeting. For any new employee affected by the LEP Plan, this document will be incorporated into that person's "generic orientation" protocol at the time of hire and reviewed with their direct supervisor.

403 Training of Staff - Ongoing. On at least an annual basis at a specific unit meeting, a review of the LEP Plan will take place.

500 Monitoring

501 Evaluation of the LEP. On at least an annual basis, the LEP Plan will be reviewed for effectiveness. This review will normally take place in January. It will be coordinated by the Blue Earth County Human Services LEP coordinator. The evaluation will involve consultation with representatives of the Financial Assistance Unit and Social Services Unit to determine compliance with the LEP Plan, identification of any problem areas, and development of required corrective action strategies. Elements of the evaluation will include the following.

- Number of persons with LEP in Blue Earth County.
- Assessment of current language needs of Blue Earth County Human Services applicants and clients to determine if the clients need an interpreter and/or translated materials, updating case files which lack information about a client's language preference, determining if clients need to be asked their language preference at the time of certification.
- Determining whether existing assistance is meeting the needs of applicants and clients with LEP.
- Assessing whether staff members understand Blue Earth County Human Services' LEP policies and procedures and how to carry them out and whether language assistance resources and arrangements for those resources are still current and accessible.
- Seeking and obtaining feedback from non-English- or limited-English-speaking communities in Blue Earth County including applicants and clients as well as any known community organization or advocacy group working with non-English- or limited-English-speaking communities.
- Contacting the local school district to gather information on identifying all non-English-speaking needs.

502 LEP Contact Person. For purposes of the LEP Plan, Blue Earth County's designated contact person is the director with appropriate delegation made to both the financial assistance supervisor and the social services supervisor of the agency.

Telephone: (507) 304-4228

Fax: (507) 304-4379

Website: www.blueearthcountymn.gov

Blue Earth County Human Services Client Grievance Procedure

Purpose

The client grievance procedure is a way to solve problems between you and your worker. This policy does not change your rights under Minnesota Statutes as they may apply.

Procedure

You are encouraged to try to solve this conflict directly with your worker. If you want to bring this matter to the attention of the agency, please write out your concerns or the nature of the problem. Send it to the supervisor of the staff person with whom you are working. Your worker's supervisor will investigate and respond to you in writing within one week.

If you are not satisfied with the decision of the supervisor, you may write out your objections or concerns and send them to the Director of Business Operations. The Director of Business Operations will review the issues and respond in writing within one week.

If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Business Operations, you may report these concerns in writing to the Director. The Director will examine the issues and will respond to you in writing within one week.

If the problem is still unresolved, you may write out your concerns and forward it to the County Administrator whose decision will be final.

Each of these people may want to meet with you as they work with you to solve the problem.

County Board Role

Nothing in this policy statement is intended to modify the interaction of county board members with people from their district. Rather, a citizen may approach a county board member at any time concerning the operation of county government.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Client Complaint Form

Nature of Complaint: _____

Signature of Individual Initiating Complaint Date

Employee's Response: _____

Signature of Employee Date

Supervisory Action: _____

Signature of Supervisor Date
DB/, 5-22-08, LEP 2008.Doc

**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CIVIL RIGHTS ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE**

NONDISCRIMINATION IN STATE AND FEDERALLY FINANCED PROGRAMS

**BLUE EARTH COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
(HEREAFTER CALLED THE "COUNTY AGENCY")**

THE COUNTY AGENCY provides this civil rights Assurance of Compliance (hereafter called the "Assurance") in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all federal financial assistance from the United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture. The County Agency agrees that compliance with this Assurance is a condition of continued receipt of federal financial assistance and that it is binding upon the County Agency directly or through contract, license, or other provider of services, as long as it receives federal or state financial assistance; and shall be submitted with the required Comprehensive Civil Rights Plan update.

THE COUNTY AGENCY ASSURES that it will comply with:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Department of Health and Human Services, Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons; Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C 6101, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010; Federal Block Grant Programs of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981; as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; Family Violence Prevention and Services Act; Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, including the Nondiscrimination Compliance Requirements in the Food Stamp Program and the Bilingual Requirements in the Food Stamp Program; FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (2005); and Interethnic Adoption Provisions of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 (formerly Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994).

PURSUANT TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS PLAN for the Minnesota Department of Human Services, by accepting this Assurance, the County Agency agrees to allow access, by authorized personnel of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture, during normal working hours to private and/or confidential data maintained by the County Agency (or other sub-recipient of federal financial assistance) to the extent necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation into any complaint of discrimination, including to compile

data, maintain records and submit reports as required to determine compliance with the above mentioned laws, rules and regulations. The Minnesota Department of Human Services agrees to comply with all requirements of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 13.01 *et seq.*). No private and/or confidential data collected, maintained or used in the course of an investigation shall be disseminated except as authorized by statute, either during the period of the investigation or after it has been concluded. If there are any violations of this assurance, DHS shall have the right to invoke fiscal sanctions or other legal remedies in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 256.0117.

THE PERSON WHOSE SIGNATURE APPEARS BELOW is authorized to sign this Assurance and commit the County Agency to its terms.

7/19/16
Date


Director's Signature

I CERTIFY that the signatory for the County Agency has lawful authority to bind the County Agency to the terms of this civil rights Assurance.

7/19/16
Date


County Attorney's Signature

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CIVIL RIGHTS ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE FOR COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES
(Nondiscrimination in State and Federally Financed Programs)

County Agency: Blue Earth

ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973; TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972; AGE DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 1975; CURRENT VERSION OF USDA'S FNS INSTRUCTION 113-1/CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT, NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE; ALL OTHER FEDERAL NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE; AND THE MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The County Agency provides this assurance in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to operate the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Minnesota on behalf of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

THE COUNTY AGENCY AGREES THAT IT WILL COMPLY WITH:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC §2000d et seq., as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15, Subpart A and Subpart C. In accordance with Title VI and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the County Agency receives Federal financial assistance from USDA/DHS.
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973, 29 USC § 794, as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15b. In accordance with Section 504 of that Act and the Regulation, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her/his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the County Agency receives Federal financial assistance from USDA/DHS.
3. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC § 1681 et seq., as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15a. In accordance with Title IX of that Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity for which the County Agency receives Federal financial assistance from USDA/DHS.
4. Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 USC §§ 6101-6107, as amended and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 45 CFR Part 91. In accordance with the Age Discrimination Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the County Agency receives Federal financial assistance from USDA/DHS.
5. Current version of USDA's FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities, Food and Nutrition Service, issued November 8, 2005. The purpose of Instruction 113-1 is to establish and convey policy and provide guidance and direction to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and its recipients and customers and ensure compliance with and enforcement of the prohibition against

discrimination in all FNS nutrition programs and activities, whether federally funded in whole or not. FNS Instruction 113-1 incorporates the above Federal legal authorities.

- 6. Minnesota Human Rights Act found at Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363A, specifically § 363A.11, Public Accommodations and § 363A.12, Public Services. In Minnesota, it is an unfair discriminatory practice to deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of a place of public accommodation because of race, color, creed, religion, disability, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or sex. Additionally, it is an unfair discriminatory practice to discriminate against any person in the access to, admission to, full utilization of or benefit from any public service because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or status with regard to public assistance.

THE COUNTY AGENCY AGREES THAT BY ACCEPTING THIS ASSURANCE, it will compile data, maintain records, and submit reports, as required, to permit effective enforcement of the nondiscrimination laws and permit authorized USDA personnel and other authorized personnel, such as DHS personnel, during normal working hours to review such records, books, and accounts as needed to ascertain compliance with the nondiscrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, USDA shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. This assurance is binding on the County Agency and its successors, transferees, and assignees, as long as they receive Federal financial assistance or retain possession of any assistance from DHS/USDA.

THE COUNTY AGENCY AGREES THAT BY ACCEPTING THIS ASSURANCE, it will obtain a written statement of assurance from its SNAP-related contractors and vendors assuring that they will also operate in compliance with all of the stated nondiscrimination laws, regulations, instructions, policies, and guidance.

The person whose signature appears below is authorized to sign this assurance and commit the County Agency to the above provisions.

11-8-16
Date

PHIL CLAUSSEN Dir. of HUMAN SERVICES Phil Claus
Name and Title of Authorized Official (please print) Signature of Authorized Official

Blue Earth County Human Services
Name of County Agency

410 S 5th Street, Mankato, MN 56001
Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

Please deliver Assurance to:
Civil Rights Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Human Services, Equal Opportunity and Access Division
P.O. Box 64997, St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
joann.dasilva@state.mn.us

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CIVIL RIGHTS ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE FOR CONTRACTORS/VENDORS
(Nondiscrimination in State and Federally Financed Programs)

CONTRACTOR/VENDOR: MRCI WorkSource

ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973; TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972; AGE DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 1975; CURRENT VERSION OF USDA'S FNS INSTRUCTION 113-1/CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT, NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE; ALL OTHER NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES, INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE; AND THE MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Contractor/Vendor provides this assurance in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to operate the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Minnesota.

THE CONTRACTOR/VENDOR AGREES THAT IT WILL COMPLY WITH:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC §2000d et seq., as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15, Subpart A and Subpart C. In accordance with Title VI and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Contractor/Vendor receives Federal financial assistance.
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973, 29 USC § 794, as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15b. In accordance with Section 504 of that Act and the Regulation, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her/his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Contractor/Vendor receives Federal financial assistance.
3. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC § 1681 et seq., as amended, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 7 CFR Part 15a. In accordance with Title IX of that Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity for which the Contractor/Vendor receives Federal financial assistance.
4. Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 USC §§ 6101-6107, as amended and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the regulation at 45 CFR Part 91. In accordance with the Age Discrimination Act and the Regulation, no person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Contractor/Vendor receives Federal financial assistance.
5. Current version of USDA's FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities, Food and Nutrition Service, issued November 8, 2005. The purpose of Instruction 113-1 is to establish and convey policy and provide guidance and direction to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and its recipients and customers and ensure compliance with and enforcement of the prohibition against discrimination in all FNS nutrition

programs and activities, whether federally funded in whole or not. FNS Instruction 113-1 incorporates the above Federal legal authorities.

- 6. Minnesota Human Rights Act found at Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363A, specifically § 363A.11, Public Accommodations and § 363A.12, Public Services. In Minnesota, it is an unfair discriminatory practice to deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of a place of public accommodation because of race, color, creed, religion, disability, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or sex. Additionally, it is an unfair discriminatory practice to discriminate against any person in the access to, admission to, full utilization of or benefit from any public service because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or status with regard to public assistance.

THE CONTRACTOR/VENDOR AGREES THAT BY ACCEPTING THIS ASSURANCE, it will compile data, maintain records, and submit reports, as required, to permit effective enforcement of the nondiscrimination laws and permit authorized USDA personnel and other authorized personnel, such as DHS and county agency personnel, during normal working hours to review such records, books, and accounts as needed to ascertain compliance with the nondiscrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, DHS may withhold financial assistance and DHS/USDA shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. This assurance is binding on the Contractor/Vendor and its successors, transferees, and assignees, as long as they receive Federal financial assistance or retain possession of any assistance from DHS/USDA.

The person whose signature appears below is authorized to sign this assurance and commit the Contractor/Vendor to the above provisions.

Nov. 11th, 2016
Date

MARCIA Highum, VP of Public Support PROGRAMS
Name and Title of Authorized Contractor/Vendor (please print)

Marcia Highum
Signature of Authorized Contractor/Vendor

421 E. Hickory St, Suite 400, Mankato, MN 56001
Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

Blue Earth County
Name of Contractor's/Vendor's County Human Service Agency

Contractor/Vendor: Please deliver this Assurance of Compliance to your county human service agency.