

To: Child Nutrition Program Sponsors  
From: Brigitte Hires, Administrator, Office of Nutrition  
Date: April 3, 2019, Revised September 21, 2020, Revised October 4, 2024  
Re: Filing a Civil Rights Complaint

### **Purpose**

To outline the policy and process for filing civil rights complaints in a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sponsored child nutrition program.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (the Department), as the state agency, abides by all civil rights rules and regulations set forth by the USDA regarding child nutrition programs.

Discrimination is defined as different treatment that makes a distinction of one person or group of persons from others; either intentionally, by neglect, or by the actions or lack of actions from a program ([FNS Instruction 113-1](#)). The USDA prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

### **Policy**

If a participant in a child nutrition program has a complaint regarding a possible civil rights violation, the sponsor should contact the Department's [Office of Nutrition](#) or the [Department's Title IX](#) designated individual to log the complaint.

Complaints may be made by phone or email. The complainant should provide the following information:

- Name, address and phone number of complainant
- Name and address of agency/individual complainant is regarding, including the IRN number and corresponding child nutrition program
- Protective class(es) involved in the complaint
- Facts regarding the complaint
- Person taking the complaint

The complainant may remain anonymous if desired.

The Department will send the complaint to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Midwest Regional Office (MWRO) within five days of receipt. The FNS MWRO will follow up and conduct further investigation into the complaint.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. **fax:**  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**  
[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.