



COLORADO

Office of Economic Security

Division of Food & Energy Assistance

MEMO

To: Colorado TEFAP and CSFP agencies

From: Kathy Underhill, FDP Manager

Date: 7/22/21

Re: Civil Right Complaint Processing

Purpose: CDHS Food Distribution Programs Unit ensures that every Civil Rights complaint is forwarded to the USDA within five business days.

Instructions: All *frontline* staff members, as defined by Food and Nutrition Service in [FNS Instruction 113-1](#), whether paid or volunteer, who comes into **direct** contact with applicants or recipients, must receive Civil Rights Training at least once (1 time) per year as demonstrated by the training logs at every Colorado entity with a TEFAP or CSFP agreement.

Complaint Process

- If a potentially eligible individual, applicant, and or recipient believes he or she has been discriminated against due to one of the six protected classes, please inform them they are welcome to file a complaint. They can do this in several ways directly to the USDA. All needed information can be found on the green “And Justice for All” poster your organization has prominently displayed in a client-visible area.
- They may submit a verbal complaint that your organization's staff or volunteers write down for them. *You must accept all complaints.*
- Any staff member may also file a complaint based on events they witness.
- If you receive an applicant or recipient's complaint directly, you must send it to cdhs_fdp@state.co.us within *one* business day. If applicable, your Regional Food Bank may also be notified.
- Remember, not every detail is necessary to file a complaint. During the investigation, USDA can learn the details.
- All entities with a TEFAP or CSFP agreement must follow this process.

What happens next? CDHS will forward all complaints to the USDA who must investigate. No one at the local or state levels is authorized to determine if a complaint is a Civil Rights violation.

If you have questions or concerns about this process, please email cdhs_fdp@state.co.us or call our office at 303-866-5106.

