

**EEOC FORM**  
**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**  
**FEDERAL AGENCY ANNUAL EEO PROGRAM STATUS REPORT**

**MD-715**  
**Parts A Through E**

**Part A - Department or Agency Identifying Information**

Agency	Second Level Component	Address	City	State	Zip Code (xxxxx)	Agency Code (xxxx)	FIPS Code (xxxx)
US Department of Agriculture	Farm Service Agency	1400 Independence Ave, SW, Stop 0509	Washington	DC	20250	AGFA4881	11001

**Part B - Total Employment**

Total Employment	Permanent Workforce	Temporary Workforce	Total Workforce
Number of Employees	3136	317	3453

**Part C.1 - Head of Agency and Head of Agency Designee**

Agency Leadership	Name	Title
Head of Agency	Sonny Purdue	Secretary
Head of Agency Designee	Richard Fordyce	Administrator

**Part C.2 - Agency Official(s) Responsible for Oversight of EEO Program(s)**

EEO Program Staff	Name	Title	Occupational Series (xxxx)	Pay Plan and Grade (xx-xx)	Phone Number (xxx-xxx-xxxx)	Email Address
Principal EEO Director/Official	Emily H. Su	Director, FPAC Office of Civil Rights	0260	SES	202-401-7197	<a href="mailto:Emily.su@usda.gov">Emily.su@usda.gov</a>
Affirmative Employment Program Manager	Darlene Thompson	Deputy Director, Office of Civil Rights	0260	GS-14	202-401-7154	<a href="mailto:Darlene.thompson@usda.gov">Darlene.thompson@usda.gov</a>
Complaint Processing Program Mgr	Sandra McWhiter	Team Lead	0260	GS-14	301-504-2198	<a href="mailto:Sandra.McWhiter@usda.gov">Sandra.McWhiter@usda.gov</a>

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<b>EEO Program Staff</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Occupational Series (xxxx)</b>	<b>Pay Plan and Grade (xx-xx)</b>	<b>Phone Number (xxx-xxx-xxxx)</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Diversity & Inclusion Officer	Dr. Sherry Dixon	Director, Workforce Strategy Division	0201	GS/15	202-720-8276	<a href="mailto:Sherry.Dixon@usda.gov">Sherry.Dixon@usda.gov</a>
Hispanic Program Manager (SEPM)	Rick Tafoya	NHEPM	0201	GS/13	830-249-2821	<a href="mailto:Rick.Tafoya@usda.gov">Rick.Tafoya@usda.gov</a>
Women's Program Manager (SEPM)	Catherine Pruss	NWPM	0457	GS/12	208-480-3035	<a href="mailto:Catherine.Pruss@usda.gov">Catherine.Pruss@usda.gov</a>
Disability Program Manager (SEPM)	Michelle Jordan / Demitrice Boozer	NDEPM / NDEPM	0201	GS/13 GS/14	202-401-0019 / 301-504-3784	<a href="mailto:Michelle.Jordan@usda.gov">Michelle.Jordan@usda.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:Demitrice.Boozer@usda.gov">Demitrice.Boozer@usda.gov</a>
Special Placement Program Coordinator (Individuals with Disabilities)	Michelle Jordan / Demitrice Boozer	NDEPM / NDEPM	0201	GS/13 GS/14	202-401-0019 / 301-504-3784	<a href="mailto:Michelle.Jordan@usda.gov">Michelle.Jordan@usda.gov</a> / <a href="mailto:Demitrice.Boozer@usda.gov">Demitrice.Boozer@usda.gov</a>
Reasonable Accommodation Program Manager	Colette Ross	Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator	0201	GS/13	202-720-8805	<a href="mailto:Colette.Ross@usda.gov">Colette.Ross@usda.gov</a>
Anti-Harassment Program Manager	Richard Fordyce	Administrator		SES	202-720-3467	<a href="mailto:Richard.Fordyce@usda.gov">Richard.Fordyce@usda.gov</a>
ADR Program Manager	Darlene Thompson	OCR, Deputy Director	0260	GS-14	202-401-7154	<a href="mailto:Darlene.thompson@wdc.usda.gov">Darlene.thompson@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Principal MD-715 Preparer	Donald Wright	EEO Specialist	0260	GS-13	202-401-7206	<a href="mailto:Donald.wright@wdc.usda.gov">Donald.wright@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Other EEO Staff						

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## Part D.1 – List of Subordinate Components Covered in this Report

Please identify the subordinate components within the agency (e.g., bureaus, regions, etc.).

☒ If the agency does not have any subordinate components, please check the box.

Subordinate Component	City	State	Country (Optional)	Agency Code (xxxx)	FIPS Codes (xxxxx)

## Part D.2 – Mandatory and Optional Documents for this Report

In the table below, the agency must submit these documents with its MD-715 report.

Did the agency submit the following mandatory documents?	Please respond Yes or No	Comments
Organizational Chart	Yes	
EEO Policy Statement	Yes	
Strategic Plan	Yes	
Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures	Yes	
Reasonable Accommodation Procedures	Yes	
Personal Assistance Services Procedures	Yes	
Alternative Dispute Resolution Procedures	NO	Pending completion

In the table below, the agency may decide whether to submit these documents with its MD-715 report.

Did the agency submit the following optional documents?	Please respond Yes or No	Comments
Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) Report	No	
Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) Report	No	
Operational Plan for Increasing Employment of Individuals with Disabilities under Executive Order 13548	No	
Diversity and Inclusion Plan under Executive Order 13583	No	

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<b>Did the agency submit the following optional documents?</b>	<b>Please respond Yes or No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Diversity Policy Statement	Yes	
Human Capital Strategic Plan	Yes	
EEO Strategic Plan	Yes	
Results from most recent Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey or Annual Employee Survey	Yes	

## **Part E – Executive Summary**

FSA plays a crucial role in supporting rural prosperity, improving the environment, eliminating hunger internationally, and contributing to U.S. national security by helping to ensure a safe and abundant food supply;

Comparing FY 2019 with 2018, the finding was a decrease in the total workforce population for males and females due mainly to the establishment of the Farm Production and Conservation – Business Center (FPAC-BC), a new USDA agency which was created to reduce what was seen as “redundancies and inefficiencies” in the management of three USDA divisions: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) and moved employees in various fields from the three agencies the total workforce population of most protective groups reflected a lower net change than their respective groups in the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). Hispanic males and females were underrepresented in the agency relative to their ethnic group in the CLF. Black males and females were underrepresented, Asian males and females were underrepresented, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders males were underrepresented, and males and females of Two or More races were also underrepresented; and the total workforce profile for Persons with Targeted Disabilities was 1.63% which is lower than the 2.46% from last year and lower than the 2.00% EEOC Federal goal.

No barriers identified for elimination and program deficiencies that require correction and what has been accomplished from these activities (Parts E.8 and E.9); and

No description of action items and plans to be implemented by the agency during the upcoming year (Part E.10).

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## **Part E.1 - Executive Summary: Mission**

**Mission:** Our mission is to serve our nation's farmers and ranchers professionally, efficiently, equitably, and in a manner that is customer, taxpayer, and employee friendly.

**Vision:** "We keep America's agriculture growing."

**Core Values:**

- ◆ Quality Service – Provide fair, equitable, and quality service to our customers.
- ◆ Continuous Improvement – Evaluate and improve program delivery on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ Inclusiveness – Respect the individual differences and diversity of our workforce and our customers.
- ◆ Fiscal Stewardship – Manage taxpayers' dollars wisely.
- ◆ Teamwork – Work collaboratively at all levels of the Agency to deliver effective and efficient programs.
- ◆ Transparency – Open the Agency's operations so that the public can learn what FSA does and how it manages its programs.

**Farm Service Agency (FSA) Strategic Plan for FY 2016 – 2018 (Extended) 2019**

FSA traces its roots to the Great Depression when the Farm Security Administration was established. The Agency's name and mission has changed over the years, but FSA's commitment to America's farmers and ranchers has remained constant. Today, FSA plays a crucial role in supporting rural prosperity, improving the environment, eliminating hunger internationally, and contributing to U.S. national security by helping to ensure a safe and abundant food supply.

FSA's strategic goals are to:

1. Provide a financial safety net for America's farmers and ranchers to sustain economically viable agricultural production (Goal 1);
2. Increase stewardship of America's natural resources while enhancing the environment (Goal 2);
3. Ensure commodities are procured and distributed effectively and efficiently to increase food security (Goal 3);
4. Accomplish our mission by effectively managing people and service capabilities (Goal 4).

The first three goals address the Agency's major programmatic policies and cover the programs and services that FSA provides. Goal 4 emphasizes FSA's plan to achieve the agency's mission through engaged workforce development and expanded business efficiencies.

Performance measures will track progress in attaining certain key objectives as well as overarching strategic goals. Measures specify baseline information and long-term performance targets. Strategies describe the actions necessary to accomplish the agency's goals and objectives. The external factors highlight the potential risks and challenges that may influence the accomplishment of goals and objectives.

## **Part E.2 - Executive Summary: Essential Element A - F**

FSA maintains an effective EEO complaints program that ensures complaints of discrimination are fairly and thoroughly investigated and final actions are taken in a timely manner. The EEO office implemented a number of proactive initiatives that benchmark against the EEOC statutory guidelines.

These benchmarks ensured the EEO program performed better than the minimum time frames for processing pre-complaints and formal complaints of discrimination; thereby ensuring that all major components of the complaints program were well within the established program performance metrics of "Amber."

Area Requiring Improvement:

Establish and implement procedures to ensure Departmental complaint investigations are completed ahead of the standardized timelines by the EEOC.

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### **Part E.3 - Executive Summary: Workforce Analyses**

In FY 2019, the Agency's total federal workforce consisted of 3453 employees: 2819 permanent and 317 temporary employees, across the United States and US Territories. The total workforce profile was 40.47% (1269) for males and 59.53% (1867) for females. Comparing FY 2019 with FY 2018, the finding was a decrease in the total workforce population for males and females due mainly to the establishment of the Farm Production and Conservation – Business Center (FPAC – BC), a new USDA agency which was created to reduce what was seen as "redundancies and inefficiencies" in the management of three USDA divisions: Farm Services Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) and moved employees in various fields from the three (3) agencies. The total male workforce decreased by 357, with a ratio change of -1.14%, while the total female workforce decreased by 415, with a ratio change of 1.14%. In summation, the total workforce population of most protective groups reflected a lower net change than their respective groups in the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). Hispanic males and females were underrepresented in the Agency relative to their ethnic group in the CLF. Black males and females were underrepresented, Asian males and females were underrepresented, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders males were underrepresented, and males and females of Two or More races were also underrepresented. White females' representation at the official and manager level were above the CLF at 34.03%. White females at the First Level represented 37.78%, at the Executive/Senior Level 33.33%, and at the Mid-Level 24.92%. However, White males at the official and manager level are reflected as overrepresented, especially at the Mid-Level at 62.62% and First Level at 50.57% in comparison to the CLF (38.33%). The White males at the Executive/Senior Level are at 42.86%. The total workforce profile for Persons with Targeted Disabilities was 1.63%, which is lower than the 2.46% from last year and lower than the 2.00% EEOC Federal goal.

### **Part E.4 - Executive Summary: Accomplishments**

FSA is fully committed to the federal goals of Equal Employment Opportunity and embracing diversity for all employees and applicants regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status, or protected genetic information.

The Agency demonstrated leadership through the issuance of written policy statements, ensuring a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. Additionally, the Agency issued policies requiring commitment and accountability to Civil Rights policies, procedures and practices as well as a commitment to EEO and particularly Cultural Diversity. The Agency also ensured that employees were trained in EEO, Civil Rights, and Diversity through mandatory training requirements. The Agency also continues to develop, present, and attend Special Emphasis Program awareness training.

### **Part E.5 - Executive Summary: Planned Activities**

FSA will ensure senior management officials are included during agency deliberations prior to decisions regarding EEO complaints and workforce changes.

The agency will seek to offer consideration to employees or applicants who might be negatively impacted prior to making human resource decisions such as reassignments, re-organizations and/or re-alignments.

Sufficient personnel resources have been allocated to support the EEO Program to ensure agency self-assessments and self-analyses (as outlined in MD-715) and will be conducted annually and to maintain an effective complaint processing system. Vacated positions will be back filled when practical. Additional resources will be established to conduct a thorough barrier analysis, which includes the provision of over adequate data collection and tracking systems.

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CERTIFICATION of ESTABLISHMENT of CONTINUING  
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMSI, Emily Su, Director, 0260, SES am the

(Insert name above)

(Insert official title/series/grade above)

Principal EEO

Director/Official for

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

(Insert Agency/Component Name above)

The agency has conducted an annual self-assessment of Section 717 and Section 501 programs against the essential elements as prescribed by EEO MD-715. If an essential element was not fully compliant with the standards of EEO MD-715, a further evaluation was conducted and, as appropriate, EEO Plans for Attaining the Essential Elements of a Model EEO Program, are included with this Federal Agency Annual EEO Program Status Report.

The agency has also analyzed its work force profiles and conducted barrier analyses aimed at detecting whether any management or personnel policy, procedure or practice is operating to disadvantage any group based on race, national origin, gender or disability. EEO Plans to Eliminate Identified Barriers, as appropriate, are included with this Federal Agency Annual EEO Program Status Report.

I certify that proper documentation of this assessment is in place and is being maintained for EEOC review upon request.

  
Signature of Principal EEO Director/Official

Certifies that this Federal Agency Annual EEO Program Status Report is in compliance with EEO MD-715.

Date

12/31/19

Signature of Agency Head or Agency Head Designee

Date

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**MD-715 - PART G**  
**Agency Self-Assessment Checklist**

The Part G Self-Assessment Checklist is a series of questions designed to provide federal agencies with an effective means for conducting the annual self-assessment required in Part F of MD-715. This self-assessment permits EEO Directors to recognize, and to highlight for their senior staff, deficiencies in their EEO program that the agency must address to comply with MD-715's requirements. Nothing in Part G prevents agencies from establishing additional practices that exceed the requirements set forth in this checklist.

All agencies will be required to submit Part G to EEOC. Although agencies need not submit documentation to support their Part G responses, they must maintain such documentation on file and make it available to EEOC upon request.

The Part G checklist is organized to track the MD-715 essential elements. As a result, a single substantive matter may appear in several different sections, but in different contexts. For example, questions about establishing an anti-harassment policy fall within Element C (Management and Program Accountability), while questions about providing training under the anti-harassment policy are found in Element A (Demonstrated Commitment from Agency Leadership).

For each MD-715 essential element, the Part G checklist provides a series of "compliance indicators." Each compliance indicator, in turn, contains a series of "yes/no" questions, called "measures." To the right of the measures, there are two columns, one for the agency to answer the measure with "Yes", "No", or "NA;" and the second column for the agency to provide "comments", if necessary. Agencies should briefly explain any "N/A" answer in the comments. For example, many of the sub-component agencies are not responsible for issuing final agency decisions (FADs) in the EEO complaint process, so it may answer questions about FAD timeliness with "NA" and explain in the comments column that the parent agency drafts all FADs.

A "No" response to any measure in Part G is a program deficiency. For each such "No" response, an agency will be required in Part H to identify a plan for correcting the identified deficiency. If one or more sub-components answer "No" to a particular question, the agency-wide/parent agency's report should also include that "No" response.





## MD-715 - PART G

### Agency Self-Assessment Checklist





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	§ 1614.102(b)(7)]			
<b>A.2.b.2</b>	Written materials concerning the EEO program, laws, policy statements, and the operation of the EEO complaint process? [see 29 C.F.R § 1614.102(b)(5)]	Yes		A.2.c
<b>A.2.b.3</b>	Reasonable accommodation procedures? [see 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3)(i)] If so, please provide the internet address in the comments column.	Yes	<a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/HRD/pdfs/31-pm_reasonable_accommodation_program.PDF">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/HRD/pdfs/31-pm_reasonable_accommodation_program.PDF</a>	A.3.c
<b>A.2.c</b>	Does the agency inform its employees about the following topics:			
<b>A.2.c.1</b>	EEO complaint process? [see 29 CFR §§ 1614.102(a)(12) and 1614.102(b)(5)] If “yes”, please provide how often.	Yes	Quarterly	A.2.a
<b>A.2.c.2</b>	ADR process? [see MD-110, Ch. 3(II)(C)] If “yes”, please provide how often.	Yes	Quarterly	New
<b>A.2.c.3</b>	Reasonable accommodation program? [see 29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(7)(ii)(C)] If “yes”, please provide how often.	Yes	Quarterly	New
<b>A.2.c.4</b>	Anti-harassment program? [see EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (1999), § V.C.1] If “yes”, please provide how often.	Yes	Quarterly	New
<b>A.2.c.5</b>	Behaviors that are inappropriate in the workplace and could result in disciplinary action? [5 CFR § 2635.101(b)] If “yes”, please provide how often.	Yes	Quarterly	A.3.b
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>A.3 – The agency assesses and ensures EEO principles are part of its culture.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>  <b>New Compliance Indicator</b>	
<b>A.3.a</b>	Does the agency provide recognition to employees, supervisors, managers, and units demonstrating superior accomplishment in equal employment opportunity? [see 29 CFR § 1614.102(a) (9)] If “yes”, provide one or two examples in the comments section.	Yes	Recent recipients of the Cash Spot Awards outlining their accomplishments in EEO.	New
<b>A.3.b</b>	Does the agency utilize the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey or other climate assessment tools to monitor the perception of EEO principles within the workforce? [see 5 CFR Part 250]	Yes		New
<b>Essential Element B: INTEGRATION OF EEO INTO THE AGENCY’S STRATEGIC MISSION</b>				



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<b>This element requires that the agency's EEO programs are structured to maintain a workplace that is free from discrimination and support the agency's strategic mission.</b>				
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.1 - The reporting structure for the EEO program provides the principal EEO official with appropriate authority and resources to effectively carry out a successful EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>B.1.a</b>	Is the agency head the immediate supervisor of the person ("EEO Director") who has day-to-day control over the EEO office? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(b)(4)]	Yes		B.1.a
<b>B.1.a.1</b>	If the EEO Director does not report to the agency head, does the EEO Director report to the same agency head designee as the mission-related programmatic offices? If "yes," please provide the title of the agency head designee in the comments.	Yes		New
<b>B.1.a.2</b>	Does the agency's organizational chart clearly define the reporting structure for the EEO office? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(b)(4)]	Yes	EEO Director is sub-subordinate to agency head	B.1.d
<b>B.1.b</b>	Does the EEO Director have a regular and effective means of advising the agency head and other senior management officials of the effectiveness, efficiency and legal compliance of the agency's EEO program? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(1); MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		B.2.a
<b>B.1.c</b>	During this reporting period, did the EEO Director present to the head of the agency, and other senior management officials, the "State of the agency" briefing covering the six essential elements of the model EEO program and the status of the barrier analysis process? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I] If "yes", please provide the date of the briefing in the comments column.	Yes	June 4, 2019	B.2.b
<b>B.1.d</b>	Does the EEO Director regularly participate in senior-level staff meetings concerning personnel, budget, technology, and other workforce issues? [see MD-715, II(B)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.2 – The EEO Director controls all aspects of the EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments New Compliance Indicator</b>	
<b>B.2.a</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for the implementation of a continuing affirmative employment program to promote EEO and to identify and	Yes		B.3.a

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	eliminate discriminatory policies, procedures, and practices? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(III)(A); 29 CFR §1614.102(c)]			
<b>B.2.b</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for overseeing the completion of EEO counseling [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(4)]	Yes		New
<b>B.2.c</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for overseeing the fair and thorough investigation of EEO complaints? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(5)] [This question may not be applicable for certain subordinate level components.]	N/A	In 2013 USDA centralized all formalized all EEO case processing functions. OASCR will prepare and process all conflict of interest cases, prepare and process employment investigation complaints, and final agency decisions, arising from allegations of discrimination.	New
<b>B.2.d</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for overseeing the timely issuing final agency decisions? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(5)] [This question may not be applicable for certain subordinate level components.]	N/A		New
<b>B.2.e</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for ensuring compliance with EEOC orders? [see 29 CFR §§ 1614.102(e); 1614.502]	Yes		F.3.b
<b>B.2.f</b>	Is the EEO Director responsible for periodically evaluating the entire EEO program and providing recommendations for improvement to the agency head? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(2)]	Yes		New
<b>B.2.g</b>	If the agency has subordinate level components, does the EEO Director provide effective guidance and coordination for the components? [see 29 CFR §§ 1614.102(c)(2) and (c)(3)]	N/A		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.3 - The EEO Director and other EEO professional staff are involved in, and consulted on, management/personnel actions.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>B.3.a</b>	Do EEO program officials participate in agency meetings regarding workforce changes that might impact EEO issues, including strategic planning, recruitment strategies, vacancy projections, succession planning, and selections for training/career development opportunities? [see MD-715, II(B)]	Yes		B.2.c & B.2.d
<b>B.3.b</b>	Does the agency's current strategic plan reference EEO / diversity and inclusion principles? [see MD-715, II(B)] If "yes", please identify the	Yes	<b>Strategy 2: Enhance Diversity and Inclusion and Ensure Equal</b>	New

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	EEO principles in the strategic plan in the comments column.		<p><b>Employment Opportunities (EEO)</b></p> <p>FSA has redesigned its Special Emphasis Program including engagement and training of Special Emphasis Coordinators in the field and seeks to identify best practices in observances and related activities at all levels of the Agency. Further, FSA will raise employee awareness of the importance of diversity and multicultural range to demonstrate its commitment to be a model EEO workplace. This strategy ensures FSA's workforce functions as a unified group that acknowledges the differences that identify backgrounds as unique and appreciates similarities that allow a strengthened commitment to working together. FSA's Civil Rights and Human Resource offices collaborate to ensure that employees and potential employees overall are afforded equal opportunities in employment, promotion, recognition, training, and development. A Human</p>	
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			Capital Strategic Plan is in place and will be enhanced by the Agency's Human Capital Operational Plan that clearly reflects civil rights/ EEO representation including fostering a highly-skilled workforce engaged in continuous learning. While EEO complaint filings serve as a check-and-balance on how well the Agency is meeting its civil rights and EEO obligations, continuing efforts will focus on preventing EEO complaints at the source by making sure there is equal opportunity for all who seek employment and advancement across the Agency.	
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.4 - The agency has sufficient budget and staffing to support the success of its EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>B.4.a</b>	Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(1), has the agency allocated sufficient funding and qualified staffing to successfully implement the EEO program, for the following areas:			
<b>B.4.a.1</b>	to conduct a self-assessment of the agency for possible program deficiencies? [see MD-715, II(D)]	Yes		B.3.b
<b>B.4.a.2</b>	to enable the agency to conduct a thorough barrier analysis of its workforce? [see MD-715, II(B)]	Yes		B.4.a
<b>B.4.a.3</b>	to timely, thoroughly, and fairly process EEO complaints, including EEO	Yes		E.5.b





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	counseling, investigations, final agency decisions, and legal sufficiency reviews? [see 29 CFR § 1614.102(c)(5) & 1614.105(b) – (f); MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(D) & 5(IV); MD-715, II(E)]			
<b>B.4.a.4</b>	to provide all supervisors and employees with training on the EEO program, including but not limited to retaliation, harassment, religious accommodations, disability accommodations, the EEO complaint process, and ADR? [see MD-715, II(B) and III(C)] If not, please identify the type(s) of training with insufficient funding in the comments column.	Yes		B.4.f & B.4.g
<b>B.4.a.5</b>	to conduct thorough, accurate, and effective field audits of the EEO programs in components and the field offices, if applicable? [see 29 CFR § 1614.102(c)(2)]	Yes		E.1.c
<b>B.4.a.6</b>	to publish and distribute EEO materials (e.g. harassment policies, EEO posters, reasonable accommodations procedures)? [see MD-715, II(B)]	Yes		B.4.c
<b>B.4.a.7</b>	to maintain accurate data collection and tracking systems for the following types of data: complaint tracking, workforce demographics, and applicant flow data? [see MD-715, II(E)]. If not, please identify the systems with insufficient funding in the comments section.	Yes		New
<b>B.4.a.8</b>	to effectively administer its special emphasis programs (such as, Federal Women's Program, Hispanic Employment Program, and People with Disabilities Program Manager)? [5 USC § 7201; 38 USC § 4214; 5 CFR § 720.204; 5 CFR § 213.3102(t) and (u); 5 CFR § 315.709]	Yes		B.3.c, B.3.c.1, B.3.c.2, & B.3.c.3
<b>B.4.a.9</b>	to effectively manage its anti-harassment program? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I); EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (1999), § V.C.1]	Yes		New
<b>B.4.a.10</b>	to effectively manage its reasonable accommodation program? [see 29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(4)(ii)]	Yes		B.4.d
<b>B.4.a.11</b>	to ensure timely and complete compliance with EEOC orders? [see MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		New
<b>B.4.b</b>	Does the EEO office have a budget that is separate from other offices within the agency? [see 29 CFR § 1614.102(a)(1)]	Yes		New
<b>B.4.c</b>	Are the duties and responsibilities of EEO officials clearly defined? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(III)(A), 2(III), & 6(III)]	Yes		B.1.b
<b>B.4.d</b>	Does the agency ensure that all new counselors and investigators, including contractors and collateral duty employees, receive the required 32 hours of training, pursuant to Ch. 2(II)(A) of MD-110?	Yes		E.2.d
<b>B.4.e</b>	Does the agency ensure that all experienced counselors and investigators, including contractors and collateral duty employees, receive the required 8 hours of annual refresher training, pursuant to Ch. 2(II)(C) of MD-110?	Yes		E.2.e

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 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.5 – The agency recruits, hires, develops, and retains supervisors and managers who have effective managerial, communications, and interpersonal skills.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments  New Indicator</b>	
<b>B.5.a</b>	Pursuant to 29 CFR § 1614.102(a)(5), have all managers and supervisors received training on their responsibilities under the following areas under the agency EEO program:			
<b>B.5.a.1</b>	EEO Complaint Process? [see MD-715(II)(B)]	Yes		New
<b>B.5.a.2</b>	Reasonable Accommodation Procedures? [see 29 C.F.R. § 1614.102(d)(3)]	Yes		A.3.d
<b>B.5.a.3</b>	Anti-Harassment Policy? [see MD-715(II)(B)]	Yes		New
<b>B.5.a.4</b>	Supervisory, managerial, communication, and interpersonal skills in order to supervise most effectively in a workplace with diverse employees and avoid disputes arising from ineffective communications? [see MD-715, II(B)]	Yes		New
<b>B.5.a.5</b>	ADR, with emphasis on the federal government's interest in encouraging mutual resolution of disputes and the benefits associated with utilizing ADR? [see MD-715(II)(E)]	Yes		E.4.b
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>B.6 – The agency involves managers in the implementation of its EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments  New Indicator</b>	
<b>B.6.a</b>	Are senior managers involved in the implementation of Special Emphasis Programs? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		New
<b>B.6.b</b>	Do senior managers participate in the barrier analysis process? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		D.1.a
<b>B.6.c</b>	When barriers are identified, do senior managers assist in developing agency EEO action plans (Part I, Part J, or the Executive Summary)? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		D.1.b
<b>B.6.d</b>	Do senior managers successfully implement EEO Action Plans and incorporate the EEO Action Plan Objectives into agency strategic plans? [29 CFR § 1614.102(a)(5)]	Yes		D.1.c



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<b>Essential Element C: MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY</b>				
<b>This element requires the agency head to hold all managers, supervisors, and EEO officials responsible for the effective implementation of the agency's EEO Program and Plan.</b>				
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.1 – The agency conducts regular internal audits of its component and field offices.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>C.1.a</b>	Does the agency regularly assess its component and field offices for possible EEO program deficiencies? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(2)] If "yes", please provide the schedule for conducting audits in the comments section.	Yes	Quarterly	New
<b>C.1.b</b>	Does the agency regularly assess its component and field offices on their efforts to remove barriers from the workplace? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(2)] If "yes", please provide the schedule for conducting audits in the comments section.	Yes	Quarterly	New
<b>C.1.c</b>	Do the component and field offices make reasonable efforts to comply with the recommendations of the field audit? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.2 – The agency has established procedures to prevent all forms of EEO discrimination.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b> <b>New Indicator</b>	
<b>C.2.a</b>	Has the agency established comprehensive anti-harassment policy and procedures that comply with EEOC's enforcement guidance? [see MD-715, II(C); Enforcement Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (Enforcement Guidance), EEOC No. 915.002, § V.C.1 (June 18, 1999)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.a.1</b>	Does the anti-harassment policy require corrective action to prevent or eliminate conduct before it rises to the level of unlawful harassment? [see EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (1999), § V.C.1]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.a.2</b>	Has the agency established a firewall between the Anti-Harassment Coordinator and the EEO Director? [see EEOC Report, Model EEO Program Must Have an Effective Anti-Harassment Program (2006)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.a.3</b>	Does the agency have a separate procedure (outside the EEO complaint process) to address harassment allegations? [see Enforcement	Yes		New



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	Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (Enforcement Guidance), EEOC No. 915.002, § V.C.1 (June 18, 1999)]			
<b>C.2.a.4</b>	Does the agency ensure that the EEO office informs the anti-harassment program of all EEO counseling activity alleging harassment? [see Enforcement Guidance, V.C.]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.a.5</b>	Does the agency conduct a prompt inquiry (beginning within 10 days of notification) of all harassment allegations, including those initially raised in the EEO complaint process? [see <i>Complainant v. Dep't of Veterans Affairs</i> , EEOC Appeal No. 0120123232 (May 21, 2015); <i>Complainant v. Dep't of Defense (Defense Commissary Agency)</i> , EEOC Appeal No. 0120130331 (May 29, 2015)] If "no", please provide the percentage of timely-processed inquiries in the comments column.	Yes		New
<b>C.2.a.6</b>	Do the agency's training materials on its anti-harassment policy include examples of disability-based harassment? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(2)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.b</b>	Has the agency established disability reasonable accommodation procedures that comply with EEOC's regulations and guidance? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(3)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.b.1</b>	Is there a designated agency official or other mechanism in place to coordinate or assist with processing requests for disability accommodations throughout the agency? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(3)(D)]	Yes		E.1.d
<b>C.2.b.2</b>	Has the agency established a firewall between the Reasonable Accommodation Program Manager and the EEO Director? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(A)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.b.3</b>	Does the agency ensure that job applicants can request and receive reasonable accommodations during the application and placement processes? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(1)(ii)(B)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.b.4</b>	Do the reasonable accommodation procedures clearly state that the agency should process the request within a maximum amount of time (e.g., 20 business days), as established by the agency in its affirmative action plan? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(3)(i)(M)]	Yes		New
<b>C.2.b.5</b>	Does the agency process all accommodation requests within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If "no", please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests in the comments column.	Yes		E.1.e
<b>C.2.c</b>	Has the agency established procedures for processing requests for personal assistance services that comply with EEOC's regulations, enforcement guidance, and other applicable executive orders, guidance, and standards? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(6)]	Yes		New



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<b>C.2.c.1</b>	Does the agency post its procedures for processing requests for Personal Assistance Services on its public website? [see 29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(5)(v)] If "yes", please provide the internet address in the comments column.	Yes	<a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/HRD/pdfs/personal_assistance_services_reasonable_accomodation_program.PDF">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/HRD/pdfs/personal_assistance_services_reasonable_accomodation_program.PDF</a>	New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.3 - The agency evaluates managers and supervisors on their efforts to ensure equal employment opportunity.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments  New Indicator</b>	
<b>C.3.a</b>	Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(5), do all managers and supervisors have an element in their performance appraisal that evaluates their commitment to agency EEO policies and principles and their participation in the EEO program?	Yes		New
<b>C.3.b</b>	Does the agency require rating officials to evaluate the performance of managers and supervisors based on the following activities:			
<b>C.3.b.1</b>	Resolve EEO problems/disagreements/conflicts, including the participation in ADR proceedings? [see MD-110, Ch. 3.I]	Yes		A.3.a.1
<b>C.3.b.2</b>	Ensure full cooperation of employees under his/her supervision with EEO officials, such as counselors and investigators? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(b)(6)]	Yes		A.3.a.4
<b>C.3.b.3</b>	Ensure a workplace that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		A.3.a.5
<b>C.3.b.4</b>	Ensure that subordinate supervisors have effective managerial, communication, and interpersonal skills to supervise in a workplace with diverse employees? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		A.3.a.6
<b>C.3.b.5</b>	Provide religious accommodations when such accommodations do not cause an undue hardship? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(7)]	Yes		A.3.a.7
<b>C.3.b.6</b>	Provide disability accommodations when such accommodations do not cause an undue hardship? [ see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(8)]	Yes		A.3.a.8
<b>C.3.b.7</b>	Support the EEO program in identifying and removing barriers to equal opportunity. [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
<b>C.3.b.8</b>	Support the anti-harassment program in investigating and correcting harassing conduct. [see Enforcement Guidance, V.C.2]	Yes		A.3.a.2
<b>C.3.b.9</b>	Comply with settlement agreements and orders issued by the agency, EEOC, and EEO-related cases from the Merit Systems Protection	Yes		New





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	Board, labor arbitrators, and the Federal Labor Relations Authority? [see MD-715, II(C)]			
<b>C.3.c</b>	Does the EEO Director recommend to the agency head improvements or corrections, including remedial or disciplinary actions, for managers and supervisors who have failed in their EEO responsibilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(2)]	Yes		New
<b>C.3.d</b>	When the EEO Director recommends remedial or disciplinary actions, are the recommendations regularly implemented by the agency? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(c)(2)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.4 – The agency ensures effective coordination between its EEO programs and Human Resources (HR) program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>C.4.a</b>	Do the HR Director and the EEO Director meet regularly to assess whether personnel programs, policies, and procedures conform to EEOC laws, instructions, and management directives? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(2)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.b</b>	Has the agency established timetables/schedules to review at regular intervals its merit promotion program, employee recognition awards program, employee development/training programs, and management/personnel policies, procedures, and practices for systemic barriers that may be impeding full participation in the program by all EEO groups? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		C.2.a, C.2.b, & C.2.c
<b>C.4.c</b>	Does the EEO office have timely access to accurate and complete data (e.g., demographic data for workforce, applicants, training programs, etc.) required to prepare the MD-715 workforce data tables? [see 29 CFR §1614.601(a)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.d</b>	Does the HR office timely provide the EEO office have timely access to other data (e.g., exit interview data, climate assessment surveys, and grievance data), upon request? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.e</b>	Pursuant to Section II(C) of MD-715, does the EEO office collaborate with the HR office to:			
<b>C.4.e.1</b>	Implement the Affirmative Action Plan for Individuals with Disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d); MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.e.2</b>	Develop and/or conduct outreach and recruiting initiatives? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.e.3</b>	Develop and/or provide training for managers and employees? [see MD-	Yes		New





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	715, II(C)]			
<b>C.4.e.4</b>	Identify and remove barriers to equal opportunity in the workplace? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
<b>C.4.e.5</b>	Assist in preparing the MD-715 report? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.5 – Following a finding of discrimination, the agency explores whether it should take a disciplinary action.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>C.5.a</b>	Does the agency have a disciplinary policy and/or table of penalties that covers discriminatory conduct? 29 CFR § 1614.102(a)(6); see also <u>Douglas v. Veterans Administration</u> , 5 MSPR 280 (1981)	Yes		C.3.a.
<b>C.5.b</b>	When appropriate, does the agency discipline or sanction managers and employees for discriminatory conduct? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(6)] If “yes”, please state the number of disciplined/sanctioned individuals during this reporting period in the comments.	Yes	3	C.3.c
<b>C.5.c</b>	If the agency has a finding of discrimination (or settles cases in which a finding was likely), does the agency inform managers and supervisors about the discriminatory conduct? [see MD-715, II(C)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>C.6 – The EEO office advises managers/supervisors on EEO matters.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>C.6.a</b>	Does the EEO office provide management/supervisory officials with regular EEO updates on at least an annual basis, including EEO complaints, workforce demographics and data summaries, legal updates, barrier analysis plans, and special emphasis updates? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I] If “yes”, please identify the frequency of the EEO updates in the comments column.	Yes	Bi-monthly Leadership meetings	C.1.a
<b>C.6.b</b>	Are EEO officials readily available to answer managers’ and supervisors’ questions or concerns? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		New
<b>Essential Element D: PROACTIVE PREVENTION</b> <b>This element requires that the agency head make early efforts to prevent discrimination and to identify and eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity.</b>				





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 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>D.1 – The agency conducts a reasonable assessment to monitor progress towards achieving equal employment opportunity throughout the year.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>D.1.a</b>	Does the agency have a process for identifying triggers in the workplace? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		New
<b>D.1.b</b>	Does the agency regularly use the following sources of information for trigger identification: workforce data; complaint/grievance data; exit surveys; employee climate surveys; focus groups; affinity groups; union; program evaluations; special emphasis programs; reasonable accommodation program; anti-harassment program; and/or external special interest groups? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		New
<b>D.1.c</b>	Does the agency conduct exit interviews or surveys that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(1)(iii)(C)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>D.2 – The agency identifies areas where barriers may exclude EEO groups (reasonable basis to act.)</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>  <b>New Indicator</b>	
<b>D.2.a</b>	Does the agency have a process for analyzing the identified triggers to find possible barriers? [see MD-715, (II)(B)]	Yes		New
<b>D.2.b</b>	Does the agency regularly examine the impact of management/personnel policies, procedures, and practices by race, national origin, sex, and disability? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(3)]	Yes		B.2.c.2
<b>D.2.c</b>	Does the agency consider whether any group of employees or applicants might be negatively impacted prior to making human resource decisions, such as re-organizations and realignments? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(3)]	Yes		B.2.c.1
<b>D.2.d</b>	Does the agency regularly review the following sources of information to find barriers: complaint/grievance data, exit surveys, employee climate surveys, focus groups, affinity groups, union, program evaluations, anti-harassment program, special emphasis programs, reasonable	Yes	Employee Climate survey, Exit Surveys & Departmental Barrier Analysis.	New



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	accommodation program; anti-harassment program; and/or external special interest groups? [see MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I] If “yes”, please identify the data sources in the comments column.			
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>D.3 – The agency establishes appropriate action plans to remove identified barriers.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments  New Indicator</b>	
<b>D.3.a.</b>	Does the agency effectively tailor action plans to address the identified barriers, in particular policies, procedures, or practices? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(a)(3)]	Yes	Departmental Analysis	New
<b>D.3.b</b>	If the agency identified one or more barriers during the reporting period, did the agency implement a plan in Part I, including meeting the target dates for the planned activities? [see MD-715, II(D)]	Yes		New
<b>D.3.c</b>	Does the agency periodically review the effectiveness of the plans? [see MD-715, II(D)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>D.4 – The agency has an affirmative action plan for people with disabilities, including those with targeted disabilities</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments  New Indicator</b>	
<b>D.4.a</b>	Does the agency post its affirmative action plan on its public website? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(4)] Please provide the internet address in the comments.	Yes	<a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/Civil-Rights/pdfs/affirmativeactionplanfinal2019.pdf">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/AboutFSA/Civil-Rights/pdfs/affirmativeactionplanfinal2019.pdf</a>	New
<b>D.4.b</b>	Does the agency take specific steps to ensure qualified people with disabilities are aware of and encouraged to apply for job vacancies? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(1)(i)]	Yes		New
<b>D.4.c</b>	Does the agency ensure that disability-related questions from members of the public are answered promptly and correctly? [see 29 CFR 1614.203(d)(1)(ii)(A)]	Yes		New
<b>D.4.d</b>	Has the agency taken specific steps that are reasonably designed to increase the number of persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities employed at the agency until it meets the goals? [see 29 CFR	Yes		New

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1614.203(d)(7)(ii)]				
<b>Essential Element E: EFFICIENCY</b>				
<b>This element requires the agency head to ensure that there are effective systems for evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the agency's EEO programs and an efficient and fair dispute resolution process.</b>				
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>	<b>E.1 - The agency maintains an efficient, fair, and impartial complaint resolution process.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
 <b>Measures</b>				
<b>E.1.a</b>	Does the agency timely provide EEO counseling, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.105?	Yes		E.3.a.1
<b>E.1.b</b>	Does the agency provide written notification of rights and responsibilities in the EEO process during the initial counseling session, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.105(b)(1)?	Yes		E.3.a.2
<b>E.1.c</b>	Does the agency issue acknowledgment letters immediately upon receipt of a formal complaint, pursuant to MD-110, Ch. 5(l)?	Yes		New
<b>E.1.d</b>	Does the agency issue acceptance letters/dismissal decisions within a reasonable time (e.g., 60 days) after receipt of the written EEO Counselor report, pursuant to MD-110, Ch. 5(l)? If so, please provide the average processing time in the comments.	Yes	43 Days	New
<b>E.1.e</b>	Does the agency ensure all employees fully cooperate with EEO counselors and EEO personnel in the EEO process, including granting routine access to personnel records related to an investigation, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.102(b)(6)?	Yes		New
<b>E.1.f</b>	Does the agency timely complete investigations, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.108?	N/A	Not an Agency Function	E.3.a.3
<b>E.1.g</b>	If the agency does not timely complete investigations, does the agency notify complainants of the date by which the investigation will be completed and of their right to request a hearing or file a lawsuit, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.108(g)?	N/A	This is a function of the Departmental HQ	New
<b>E.1.h</b>	When the complainant does not request a hearing, does the agency timely issue the final agency decision, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.110(b)?	Yes		E.3.a.4
<b>E.1.i</b>	Does the agency timely issue final actions following the receipt of the hearing file and the administrative judge's decision, pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.110(a)?	Yes		E.3.a.7
<b>E.1.j</b>	If the agency uses contractors to implement any stage of the EEO complaint process, does the agency hold them accountable for poor	NA	This is a function of the Departmental HQ	E.2.c





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	work product and/or delays? [See MD-110, Ch. 5(V)(A)] If “yes”, please describe how in the comments column.			
<b>E.1.k</b>	If the agency uses employees to implement any stage of the EEO complaint process, does the agency hold them accountable for poor work product and/or delays during performance review? [See MD-110, Ch. 5(V)(A)]	Yes		New
<b>E.1.l</b>	Does the agency submit complaint files and other documents in the proper format to EEOC through the Federal Sector EEO Portal (FedSEP)? [See 29 CFR § 1614.403(g)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>E.2 – The agency has a neutral EEO process.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments Revised Indicator</b>	
<b>E.2.a</b>	Has the agency established a clear separation between its EEO complaint program and its defensive function? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(D)]	Yes		New
<b>E.2.b</b>	When seeking legal sufficiency reviews, does the EEO office have access to sufficient legal resources separate from the agency representative? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(D)] If “yes”, please identify the source/location of the attorney who conducts the legal sufficiency review in the comments column.	N/A	This is a function of the Departmental HQ	E.6.a
<b>E.2.c</b>	If the EEO office relies on the agency’s defensive function to conduct the legal sufficiency review, is there a firewall between the reviewing attorney and the agency representative? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(D)]	Yes		New
<b>E.2.d</b>	Does the agency ensure that its agency representative does not intrude upon EEO counseling, investigations, and final agency decisions? [see MD-110, Ch. 1(IV)(D)]	Yes		E.6.b
<b>E.2.e</b>	If applicable, are processing time frames incorporated for the legal counsel’s sufficiency review for timely processing of complaints? EEOC Report, <i>Attaining a Model Agency Program: Efficiency</i> (Dec. 1, 2004)	Yes		E.6.c
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>E.3 - The agency has established and encouraged the widespread use of a fair alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>E.3.a</b>	Has the agency established an ADR program for use during both the			E.4.a





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	pre-complaint and formal complaint stages of the EEO process? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(b)(2)]	Yes		
<b>E.3.b</b>	Does the agency require managers and supervisors to participate in ADR once it has been offered? [see MD-715, II(A)(1)]	Yes		E.4.c
<b>E.3.c</b>	Does the agency encourage all employees to use ADR, where ADR is appropriate? [see MD-110, Ch. 3(IV)(C)]	Yes		D.2.a
<b>E.3.d</b>	Does the agency ensure a management official with settlement authority is accessible during the dispute resolution process? [see MD-110, Ch. 3(III)(A)(9)]	Yes		New
<b>E.3.e</b>	Does the agency prohibit the responsible management official named in the dispute from having settlement authority? [see MD-110, Ch. 3(I)]	Yes		E.4.d
<b>E.3.f</b>	Does the agency annually evaluate the effectiveness of its ADR program? [see MD-110, Ch. 3(II)(D)]	Yes		New
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>E.4 – The agency has effective and accurate data collection systems in place to evaluate its EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>E.4.a</b>	Does the agency have systems in place to accurately collect, monitor, and analyze the following data:			
<b>E.4.a.1</b>	Complaint activity, including the issues and bases of the complaints, the aggrieved individuals/complainants, and the involved management official? [see MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		E.5.a
<b>E.4.a.2</b>	The race, national origin, sex, and disability status of agency employees? [see 29 CFR §1614.601(a)]	Yes		E.5.c
<b>E.4.a.3</b>	Recruitment activities? [see MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		E.5.f
<b>E.4.a.4</b>	External and internal applicant flow data concerning the applicants' race, national origin, sex, and disability status? [see MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		New
<b>E.4.a.5</b>	The processing of requests for reasonable accommodation? [29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(4)]	Yes		New
<b>E.4.a.6</b>	The processing of complaints for the anti-harassment program? [see EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (1999), § V.C.2]	Yes		New
<b>E.4.b</b>	Does the agency have a system in place to re-survey the workforce on a regular basis? [MD-715 Instructions, Sec. I]	Yes		New





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 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>E.5 – The agency identifies and disseminates significant trends and best practices in its EEO program.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>E.5.a</b>	Does the agency monitor trends in its EEO program to determine whether the agency is meeting its obligations under the statutes EEOC enforces? [see MD-715, II(E)] If “yes”, provide an example in the comments.	Yes	Monitor data entry and validate violation information to ensure that data tracking system (iComplaints) contains accurate information.	E.5.e
<b>E.5.b</b>	Does the agency review other agencies’ best practices and adopt them, where appropriate, to improve the effectiveness of its EEO program? [see MD-715, II(E)] If “yes”, provide an example in the comments.	Yes	The creation of an OCR Pamphlet and disseminated Agency wide following a year-long Lean Sig Sigma analysis	E.5.g
<b>E.5.c</b>	Does the agency compare its performance in the EEO process to other federal agencies of similar size? [see MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		E.3.a
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Essential Element F: RESPONSIVENESS AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE</b>  <b>This element requires federal agencies to comply with EEO statutes and EEOC regulations, policy guidance, and other written instructions.</b></p>				
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>F.1 – The agency has processes in place to ensure timely and full compliance with EEOC Orders and settlement agreements.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>F.1.a</b>	Does the agency have a system of management controls to ensure that its officials timely comply with EEOC orders/directives and final agency actions? [see 29 CFR §1614.102(e); MD-715, II(F)]	Yes		F.1.a
<b>F.1.b</b>	Does the agency have a system of management controls to ensure the timely, accurate, and complete compliance with resolutions/settlement agreements? [see MD-715, II(F)]	Yes		E.3.a.6
<b>F.1.c</b>	Are there procedures in place to ensure the timely and predictable processing of ordered monetary relief? [see MD-715, II(F)]	Yes		F.2.a.1
<b>F.1.d</b>	Are procedures in place to process other forms of ordered relief promptly? [see MD-715, II(F)]	Yes		F.2.a.2

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<b>F.1.e</b>	When EEOC issues an order requiring compliance by the agency, does the agency hold its compliance officer(s) accountable for poor work product and/or delays during performance review? [see MD-110, Ch. 9(IX)(H)]	Yes		F.3.a.
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>F.2 – The agency complies with the law, including EEOC regulations, management directives, orders, and other written instructions.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>  Indicator moved from E-III Revised	
<b>F.2.a</b>	Does the agency timely respond and fully comply with EEOC orders? [see 29 CFR §1614.502; MD-715, II(E)]	Yes		C.3.d
<b>F.2.a.1</b>	When a complainant requests a hearing, does the agency timely forward the investigative file to the appropriate EEOC hearing office? [see 29 CFR §1614.108(g)]	Yes		E.3.a.5
<b>F.2.a.2</b>	When there is a finding of discrimination that is not the subject of an appeal by the agency, does the agency ensure timely compliance with the orders of relief? [see 29 CFR §1614.501]	Yes		E.3.a.7
<b>F.2.a.3</b>	When a complainant files an appeal, does the agency timely forward the investigative file to EEOC's Office of Federal Operations? [see 29 CFR §1614.403(e)]	Yes		New
<b>F.2.a.4</b>	Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.502, does the agency promptly provide EEOC with the required documentation for completing compliance?	Yes		F.3.d (1 to 9)
 <b>Compliance Indicator</b>  <b>Measures</b>	<b>F.3 - The agency reports to EEOC its program efforts and accomplishments.</b>	<b>Measure Met? (Yes/No/NA)</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>F.3.a</b>	Does the agency timely submit to EEOC an accurate and complete No FEAR Act report? [Public Law 107-174 (May 15, 2002), §203(a)]	Yes		New
<b>F.3.b</b>	Does the agency timely post on its public webpage its quarterly No FEAR Act data? [see 29 CFR §1614.703(d)]	Yes		New

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**MD-715 – Part H**  
**Agency EEO Plan to Attain the Essential Elements of a Model EEO Program**

Please describe the status of each plan that the agency has implemented to correct deficiencies in the EEO program.

☐ If the agency did not address any deficiencies during the reporting period, please check the box.

**Statement of Model Program Essential Element Deficiency**

Type of Program Deficiency	Brief Description of Program Deficiency

**Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan**

Date Initiated (mm/dd/yyyy)	Objective	Target Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Modified Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Date Completed (mm/dd/yyyy)

**Responsible Official(s)**

Title	Name	Performance Standards Address the Plan? (Yes or No)

**Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective**

Target Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Planned Activities	Sufficient Funding & Staffing? (Yes or No)	Modified Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Completion Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

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**Report of Accomplishments**

Fiscal Year	Accomplishments

## Barrier Analyses Workshop: a OneUSDA Approach to Identifying EEO Priorities for FY19

### Executive Summary 12/10/2018

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights led a barrier analyses workshop on Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup> with 40 representatives from each mission area. The purpose of the workshop was to jointly analyze and discuss the EEO data tables in the EEOC MD-715 Report, to identify common areas of concern at the agency and Department level, and to establish priority areas to partner in addressing in FY19. The workshop yielded a total of 240 hours devoted to the systematic and integrated analysis of workforce demographic data tables from an equal employment opportunity (EEO) perspective. Agencies and HQ will be incorporating these priorities into the EEOC MD715 Report for FY18. The USDA civil rights community will collaborate in addressing these priorities under the OneUSDA initiative in FY19.

### **2019 Civil Rights OneUSDA Priorities**

#### *1) Career Development*

Do retention rates improve with better access to career development?

Possible metrics to track: diversity profiles for training, promotions, selections/hiring, details, CDP and other leadership development programs

#### *2) EEO/HR Partnerships*

Strengthen communication with HR at the USDA and subcomponent levels to support each other's role in implementing, evaluating and reporting on initiatives impacting protected classes. Possible areas of joint interest include:

- Reminding employees to check their demographic designations in the NFC Employee Personal Page and updating them if necessary. These reminders typically yield good results but need to be done early in the FY to have an impact.
- Discussing how to evaluate participation rates from women, minorities and persons with disabilities in training programs.
- HR participates in joint training and strategic planning with EEO staff.

#### *3) Anti-Harassment*

Harassment (hostile work environment) was cited in 7 out of 10 complaints in FY18.

The workshop raised awareness of shared challenges and successes in analyzing demographic patterns, as well as the role of position management and retention in establishing an inclusive environment. The group discussed short- and long-term strategies to address shared areas of concern in FY19.

## Workshop Notes

### Workshop Raised Corporate Awareness of

- Shared demographic patterns for minority men and women suggest a need to recruit and retain minorities in core occupations and a need to diversify supervisory and executive positions. A corporate approach is needed to improve the participation rate of minority men in various segments of the workforce. The approach could include outreach/recruitment, cultural awareness, retention and benchmarking. Regarding minority women, the approach could include retention, selections in core occupations, and SES positions.
- Position Management – the current position management model was designed for a public workforce as it was 50+ years ago. To remain competitive in the modern environment, a different approach to position management is needed, one that leverages technology and reassesses the location of positions and whether certain position could be virtual.
- Retention – women and minorities are separating at higher rates than they are being hired. Some agencies cannot hire due to freezes. Factors likely impacting retention include
  - Inclusion - whether employees feel they are part of a team.
  - Special emphasis programs play a role in raising cultural awareness and promoting inclusive practices.
  - Workplace flexibilities, such as the telework policy also play a role.
  - Terms and conditions of employment may also be a factor (this category is the third most frequently-cited issue in EEO complaints in FY18).

### Possible Short-Term Actions

- Follow up on FEVS elements that have a civil rights connotation
- Provide training on hiring authorities to selecting officials
- Provide unconscious bias training
- Implement a campaign illustrating the features and benefits of working for USDA. It would help with recruitment and retention.
- Strengthen CR/EEO partnership with HR.

### Possible Ling-Term Actions

- Engage in workforce planning with HR
- Benchmark best practices
- Assess whether disciplinary actions are impacting retention
- Enhance performance management



Past successes in using data effectively in the EEO program

- Using data to convey business case to head of agency and get buy in
- Using data to identify under-represented groups

Past challenges in using data effectively in the EEO program

- Not sure what baseline to use
- Accuracy of applicant flow data
- Identifying the exact barrier to be addressed
- Hiring and retaining people with disabilities and targeted disabilities

## Group Reports

Table A1

### Asian Males

2010 CLF = Baseline (1.97) (1.96)

AM attrition rate is good

- Lost some but demographics have changed
- Increased by 0.1
- Second best growth in the USDA

### Outreach

- Adopt other agencies' strategies across all demographics
- 

Hispanic Males: lost 3 in FY18

In Agency 1.8 vs CLF 5.2

### Hispanic males

Large net ration change of 15.8. largest ratio change across the board.

### Hispanic Females

Low in all three MCO, low compared to CLF

Agency 3.1 vs CLF 4.8

### Strategies

- Analyze across series and GS levels for trends (awards, promotions)
  - Analyze exit interviews
  - Analyze separations
  - Continue to build pipeline in light of continued hiring freeze
- 

Total Men Baseline 2010 CLF

3 trends

- HM, WM, NHM – Perm WF are below CLF
  - NHM distribution needs attention. Conditions: promotions, separations, transfers
  - Strategies: HR recruitment efforts, learn demographics, learn skill sets, outreach, management training on cultural awareness
-

Female 42.39% / 48.14%  
Grade distribution (A4) GS15-SES  
Mission Critical (A6), 0462  
Strategies: recruitment, training, promotion

---

Black Male (Perm)

4.70 v 5.49 CLF

131 in current FY

Declined by 0.01% in current FY

4.70% same fir current and prior year

Strategies:

- Analyze voluntary and involuntary separations
  - Analyze hiring data
  - Analyze exit survey results
- 

Baseline CLF (2010)

+/- 2 percentage points of perm workforce

Total WF

Male CLF 51.86%

Actual 35.57%

Hispanic CLF 5.17%

Actual 2.24%

Net changes

Hispanic males – 9.09

Black males -8.09

Total agency males -5.75

---

Table A1 34.03% Benchmark CLF  
WF 23.17%

Table A8 WF (p) 31.65%  
WF (t) 18.68%

Table A14 WF (t sep) 28.96%

Table A6 MOC

16.45% BF over CLF

HM – 9.60% declines

HF – 12.99%

- 1) WF under-represented in comparison to CLF (34.03%)
- 2) WF have high entry (31.65%) and high exit (28.96%) rate
- 3) WF under-represented in 4 major occupations in comparison to CLF (34.03%)
  - a. 1862: 20.68%
  - b. 1863: 19.60%
  - c. 0701: 31.87%
  - d. 0696: 32.40%

Table A8
----------

Highest Selection Rate

White Males 49.40%

All groups lower than 80%

- Location of positions
  - Cultural mindset
  - Are positions being declined
- 

Gp with highest selection: WM

GP that met adverse impact: ALL

Condition that needs attention:

- Hiring freeze
- Lack of money
- Unconscious bias

Strategies to address matter:

- Targeted recruitment
  - Training/Awareness on hiring authorities
  - Training for selecting officials
  - Put an EEO/CR rep on hiring panels
- 

Group with highest selection rate (perm) = BM (.32)

No adverse impact BW (.91)

Greatest adverse impact HM (.47) and HF (.50)

Group with highest selection rate (temp) = HM (.85)

No adverse impact

---

Permanent

Highest Selection Rate WM (.83)

Adverse Impact HM (.60), BM (.60), BF (.54)

RD has field/N.O. structure

Where were these duty stations?

Virtual v traditional

---

A13

QSI

RNO

8 groups were below 80%

2 met the condition for adverse impact

BM (63%)

AM (63%)

Most impacted

- QSI are not common (rare)
- Criteria: outstanding, meets MCO, majority located, limited opportunities
- Strategies
  - Career development
  - Tuition reimbursement
  - Resume writing courses, including verbiage in standards to explain how to get above “meets” (outstanding)

Table A14

Voluntary Separations

Asian Females 17.92%

HM, AM, NHOPIM TOMRF: Met/Exceeded. All others met condition for adverse impact.

- Location
- Lack of opportunities (training, promo)
- Lack of benefits (TW, AWS)
- Ultimatums

Other
-------

	CLF	WF	4,022
HM	5.17%	4.43	2.762
HF	4.79%	3.04	

#### TRENDS

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EEOC could be more customer-service oriented and being prepared with their part.

---

#### RD FEVS

- Questions with highest scores
  - Q7 – willing to put in extra effort
  - Q13 – the work I do is important
- Questions with lowest scores
  - Q33 – Pay raises depend on merit
  - Q23 – Steps are taken to deal with a poor performer

## MD-715 – Part J

### Special Program Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To capture agencies' affirmative action plan for persons with disabilities (PWD) and persons with targeted disabilities (PWTD), EEOC regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(e)) and MD-715 require agencies to describe how their plan will improve the recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of applicants and employees with disabilities. All agencies, regardless of size, must complete this Part of the MD-715 report.

#### Section I: Efforts to Reach Regulatory Goals

EEOC regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(7)) require agencies to establish specific numerical goals for increasing the participation of persons with reportable and targeted disabilities in the federal government.

1. Using the goal of 12% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWD)	Yes <span style="color: red;">X</span>	No 0
b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD)	Yes 0	No <span style="color: red;">X</span>

The Human Resources Division (HRD) provides high quality, mission-driven, and customer-focused human resources services to support the FPAC mission area. HRD services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
  - Recruiting, Retention, Internship Programs and Data Analytics
- Talent Acquisition Branch (TAB)
  - Recruiting, Hiring
- Leadership and Employee Development Branch (LEDB)
  - Advancement

**HCSPIB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative and is aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPIB examines the Agency's quarterly activities

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against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.

HCSPIB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program is to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 - GS 15. The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

**TAB Response:** The staff acquisition system, eRecruit and the SF-256 are the triggers utilized by the Talent Acquisition Branch to improve the recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goals and the objectives executed to meet those goals are managed by the Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB).

During the new employee orientation, the Talent Acquisition Branch allows each new employee to voluntarily disclose their disability status within the SF-256 form. If the new employee records a targeted disability, the information collected is processed and recorded within the Agency's National Finance Center database

The staff acquisition system, eRecruit, allows applicants to provide information related to qualifying conditions. Hiring managers are able to submit requests and to specify within the applicant pool area of consideration the inclusion of eligibility under hiring authorities specific to individuals with disabilities. Hiring managers are regularly advised of the benefits of non-competitive appointment available through these authorities. At the time of initial appointment, employees are provided the opportunity to submit their disability information.

2. Using the goal of 2% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- |                                 |              |             |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWTD) | Yes <b>X</b> | No 0        |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWTD)  | Yes 0        | No <b>X</b> |

The Human Resources Division (HRD) provides high quality, mission-driven, and customer-focused human resources services to support the FPAC mission area. HRD services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding



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recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
  - Recruiting, Retention, Internship Programs and Data Analytics
- Talent Acquisition Branch (TAB)
  - Recruiting, Hiring
- Leadership and Employee Development Branch (LEDB)
  - Advancement

**HCSPIB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative are aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPIB examines the Agency's quarterly activities against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.

HCSPIB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program is to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 - GS 15. The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

**TAB Response:** The staff acquisition system, eRecruit and the SF-256 are the triggers utilized by the Talent Acquisition Branch to improve the recruitment and hiring of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goals and the objectives executed to meet those goals are managed by the Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB).

During the new employee orientation, the Talent Acquisition Branch allows each new employee to voluntarily disclose their disability status within the SF-256 form. If the new employee records a targeted disability, the information collected is processed and recorded within the Agency's National Finance Center database

The staff acquisition system, eRecruit, allows applicants to provide information related to qualifying conditions. Hiring managers are able to submit requests and to specify within the applicant pool area of consideration the inclusion of eligibility under hiring authorities specific to individuals with disabilities. Hiring managers are regularly advised of the benefits of non-competitive appointment available through these

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authorities. At the time of initial appointment, employees are provided the opportunity to submit their disability information.

3. Describe how the agency has communicated the numerical goals to the hiring managers and/or recruiters.

**Business Partners (BP) Response:** As an integral part of monthly engagement meetings and strategic workforce planning consultations with program managers, risk assessments related to positions and skills gaps are conducted and discussed. The identification of these gaps is then used to identify targeted recruitment opportunities to include PWD and PWTD applicant pools that possess the skills needed to accomplish mission and close gaps.

As part of the workforce planning process conversations with program managers in reference to current and upcoming recruitment needs are also conducted. In context to those consultations we assist program managers in the identification of positions and skills that can be used to strategize the timing and use of appointment authorities specific to PWD and PWTD.

A part of the initial and ongoing workforce planning consultations we provide program managers with a Workforce Profile. A specific component of that Profile is a snapshot and graphical depiction of the percent of total employment that is encumbered by PWD and PWTD. In addition to the snapshot graphical depiction we also provide historical data in terms of the losses and hires of PWD and PWTD over the last 5 years. This historical data allows for trend analysis that can be used to influence the commitment to the utilization of PWD and PWTD appointment authorities in order to reach or maintain the goals for recruitment, hiring and retaining PWD and PWTD as a percentage of total FSA permanent workforce.

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## Section II: Model Disability Program

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1), agencies must ensure sufficient staff, training and resources to recruit and hire persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities, administer the reasonable accommodation program and special emphasis program, and oversee any other disability hiring and advancement program the agency has in place.

### **A. PLAN TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT & COMPETENT STAFFING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM**

1. Has the agency designated sufficient qualified personnel to implement its disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to improve the staffing for the upcoming year.

Yes **X**      No 0

The Disability Employment Program is sufficiently staff with qualified personnel. Specifically, the program is manned by a full time Disability Program Manager, a Disability Program Specialist (75% of their time is spent on the program) and with a Pathways Intern (50% of their time is spent on the program). In addition, two recruiters who actively recruit for individuals with disabilities.

2. Identify all staff responsible for implementing the agency’s disability employment program by the office, staff employment status, and responsible official.

Disability Program Task	# of FTE Staff by Employment Status			Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office, Email)
	Full Time	Part Time	Collateral Duty	
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	2	1		Marvin Jones, Disability Employment Manager, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov">Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Darlene Andrew, Disability Employment Specialist, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov">Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov</a>

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				Breon Johnson, Disability Employment Assistant, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Breon.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov">Breon.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	4			Marvin Jones, Disability Employment Manager, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov">Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Darlene Andrew, Disability Employment Specialist, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov">Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Shannon Logan, Veterans Disability Program Manager, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Shannon.Logan@wdc.usda.gov">Shannon.Logan@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Keisha Jones, Student Program Manager, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Keisha.Jones@wdc.usda.gov">Keisha.Jones@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	2	1		Marvin Jones, Disability Employment Manager, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov">Marvin.jones@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Darlene Andrew, Disability Employment Specialist, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov">Darlene.Andrew@wdc.usda.gov</a>  Breon Johnson, Disability Employment Assistant, HCSPiB <a href="mailto:Breon.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov">Breon.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov</a>
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance			3	Steve Barnes, Bernard Evans, and Count Branham
Program compliance and quality assurance and policy guidance			4	Count Branham, Jennifer Zaremba, and Yolanda Provost

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3. Has the agency provided disability program staff with sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities during the reporting period? If “yes”, describe the training that disability program staff have received. If “no”, describe the training planned for the upcoming year.

Yes **X**      No 0

**HCSPIB Response:** The agency has provided the disability program staff with sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities during the reporting period. The following training was provided:

- Staffing Training
- American Sign Language
- Flash Mentoring Monthly activities
- Gallaudet Internship Fair
- Personal Assistance Services
- Monthly Disability Employment Training Meetings
- Active Shooter Preparedness Training (Deaf)
- Section 501 Training
- 501 Affirmative Action Plans
- Disability within the Senior Executive Service
- Overcoming the Challenges of Vision Loss

**B. PLAN TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM**

Has the agency provided sufficient funding and other resources to successfully implement the disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to ensure all aspects of the disability program have sufficient funding and other resources.

Yes **X**      No 0

HCSPIB manages the Disability Employment Program and ensured that the agency designated sufficient funding and other resources to successfully implement the disability program during the reporting period.

## Section III: Plan to Recruit and Hire Individuals with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(1)(i) and (ii), agencies must establish a plan to increase the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities. The questions below are designed to identify outcomes of the agency's recruitment program plan for PWD and PWTD.

### **A. PLAN TO IDENTIFY JOB APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES**

1. Describe the programs and resources the agency uses to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

**TAB Response:** The Talent Acquisition Branch (TAB) in the Human Resources Division is responsible for position classification, merit and delegated examining staffing, pay setting, and other employment services for the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The TAB provides policies, products and services that support business efforts to identify, recruit, hire and advance a workforce with the competencies necessary to achieve current and future organizational performance goals. Technology and re-engineering are leveraged to improve delivery of products and services.

**TAB Response:** The staff acquisition system, eRecruit and the SF-256 are the resources utilized by the Talent Acquisition Branch to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

During the new employee orientation, the Talent Acquisition Branch allows each new employee to voluntarily disclose their disability status within the SF-256 form. If the new employee records a targeted disability, the information collected is processed and recorded within the Agency's National Finance Center database

The staff acquisition system, eRecruit, allows applicants to provide information related to qualifying conditions. Hiring managers are able to submit requests and to specify within the applicant pool area of consideration the inclusion of eligibility under hiring authorities specific to individuals with disabilities. Hiring managers are regularly advised of the benefits of non-competitive appointment available through these authorities. At the time of initial appointment, employees are provided the opportunity to submit their disability information.

FSA vacancies are distributed to over 600 potential applicants every two weeks. Recipients are given instructions on how to apply, tips to navigate USAJobs and encouraged to contact us with any additional questions.

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2. Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(a)(3), describe the agency's use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A) to recruit PWD and PWTD for positions in the permanent workforce.

**TAB Response:** Hiring managers are able to submit requests and to specify within the applicant pool area of consideration the inclusion of eligibility under hiring authorities specific to individuals with disabilities. Hiring managers are regularly advised of the benefits of non-competitive appointment available through these authorities. At the time of initial appointment, employees are provided the opportunity to submit their disability information.

**Business Partners Response:** As part of the workforce planning process conversations with program managers in reference to current and upcoming recruitment needs is also conducted. In context to those consultations we assist program managers in the identification of positions and skills that can be used to strategize the timing and use of appointment authorities specific to PWD and PWTD.

As an integral part of the succession planning process and consultations, program officials are given a table of available appointment authorities and hold discussions in reference to the utilization of alternative appointment authorities that are available for their use in finding PWD and PWTD applicants who have the commensurate mission critical skills necessary to successfully accomplish program priority workload.

These discussions include the appointment authorities associated with PWD and PWTD and includes the authority, purpose, type of appointment, eligible candidates, and the processes for use in finding qualified applicants

**HCSPB Response:** FSA executes aspects of its recruitment strategy which includes providing a network of professional support, providing appropriate agency contact information to disabled veterans, amending marketing materials which describes important aspects of the disability and veteran programs, and used local and nationwide hiring events to reach a wide range of potential candidates. These efforts helped ensure that the veteran community and individuals with disabilities receive equal treatment in all aspects of employment and career opportunities. Through strategies listed below, FSA is able to recruit and retain a well-qualified and diverse workforce fully committed to improving the lives of disabled applicants.

- Promote veteran third party programs (Operation Warfighter, Non-Paid Work Experience Program, Department of Army Intern Program) — FSA utilizes three third-party programs to help Veterans acclimate into civilian careers.
- Created veteran specific brochures — the brochures provide information on 5 hiring authorities specifically for disabled veterans and information on the FSA Veteran Employment Program via links within the document

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- Provide FSA vacancy announcements to veteran transition coordinators and veteran employment coordinators
- Provide guidance, webinars, alearn trainings, literature to hiring managers and executive leadership regarding veteran and schedule A hiring authorities.

3. When individuals apply for a position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account (e.g., Schedule A), explain how the agency (1) determines if the individual is eligible for appointment under such authority and (2) forwards the individual's application to the relevant hiring officials with an explanation of how and when the individual may be appointed.

**TAB Response:** Vacancy announcements open to applicants eligible under non-competitive hiring authorities include “how to apply” and “required documentation” language, consistent with department-wide policy. Candidates who meet hiring authority eligibility and minimum qualifications requirements are referred non-competitively to the hiring manager for consideration. Hiring managers also have the option to request referral lists for eligible candidates directly from agency program managers.

When recruiting outside of the agency (Government Wide), the announcements contains language targeting persons with disabilities

The Staffing Specialist rates and ranks (qualification analysis) those persons eligible within the non-competitive certs and forwards the non-competitive certs to the Hiring Managers for review

The staff acquisition system, eRecruit, allows applicants to provide information related to qualifying conditions. Hiring managers are able to submit requests and to specify within the applicant pool area of consideration the inclusion of eligibility under hiring authorities specific to individuals with disabilities. Hiring managers are regularly advised of the benefits of non-competitive appointment available through these authorities. At the time of initial appointment, employees are provided the opportunity to submit their disability information.

4. Has the agency provided training to all hiring managers on the use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A)? If “yes”, describe the type(s) of training and frequency. If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to provide this training.

Yes **X**      No 0      N/A 0



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**Business Partners Response:** A part of the initial and ongoing workforce planning consultations we provide program managers with a Workforce Profile. A specific component of that Profile is a snap shot and graphical depiction of the percent of total employment that is encumbered by PWD and PWTD. In addition to the snapshot graphical depiction we also provide historical data in terms of the losses and hires of PWD and PWTD over the last 5 years. This historical data allows for trend analysis that can be used to influence the commitment to the utilization of PWD and PWTD appointment authorities in order to reach or maintain the goals for recruitment, hiring and retaining PWD and PWTD as a percentage of total FSA permanent workforce.

The Hiring Managers were provided a two-day training regarding the overall recruitment process from initiating the recruitment request, the advantages of the available hiring authorities to include persons with disabilities and targeted disabilities, and how each candidate is processed within our EmpowHR system. This training is also provided within the agency's Aglearn system and mandated for all new supervisors.

Executive Order 13518, Veterans Employment Initiative, mandates that training is provided on veterans' employment for USDA employees every year. To meet this requirement, the "Veterans Employment training for Supervisors and HR Specialists" is assigned through AgLearn by the Department annually.

**B. PLAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Describe the agency's efforts to establish and maintain contacts with organizations that assist PWD, including PWTD, in securing and maintaining employment.

The purpose of the Reasonable Accommodation Program is to ensure the agency implements Executive Order 13164 (July 26, 2000), which instructs Federal agencies, including the Farm Service Agency to "establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees and applicants with disabilities."

The Disability Employment Program within the Farm Service Agency has developed an action plan with quarterly outreach activities to establish and maintain contacts with organizations that assist PWD, including PWTD, in securing and maintaining employment.

The Disability Employment Program has established partnerships with both the DC Disability Office and the Maryland Veterans Disability Employment Center to maximize

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our quarterly recruiting efforts as well as ensure that the Farm Service Agency is the agency of choice for the prescribed targeted group.

The following are a listing of scheduled partnerships and career activities to ensure we meet and/or exceed our FY18 recruiting goals.

- Harry Brooks (Cordia Arthur) Prince George's County
  - 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 120, Largo, MD 20774
  - Outreach event: March, May, July
- All Faith Consortium, National Headquarters
  - 2000 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009
  - Outreach event: May, July
- DC Office of Disability Rights
  - 441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 729 North
  - Outreach event: February, March, May

### **C. PROGRESSION TOWARDS GOALS (RECRUITMENT AND HIRING)**

1. Using the goals of 12% for PWD and 2% for PWTD as the benchmarks, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires in the permanent workforce? If "yes", please describe the triggers below.

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD)  | Yes <span style="color: red;">X</span> | No 0 |
| b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWTD) | Yes <span style="color: red;">X</span> | No 0 |

The Human Resources Division (HRD) provides high quality, mission-driven, and customer-focused human resources services to support the FPAC mission area. HRD services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding recruitment and hiring of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
  - Recruiting, Internship Programs and Data Analytics

**HCSPIB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative and is aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPIB examines the Agency's quarterly activities against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.

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HCSPIB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

2. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If "yes", please describe the triggers below.

a. New Hires for MCO (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

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The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

3. Using the relevant applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the qualified *internal* applicants for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If "yes", please describe the triggers below.

- |  |       |      |
|--|-------|------|
| a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD)  | Yes 0 | No 0 |
| b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) | Yes 0 | No 0 |

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HCSPIB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report

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and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among employees promoted to any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below.

a. Promotions for MCO (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

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HCSPIB manages the agency’s Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

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and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

## Section IV: Plan to Ensure Advancement Opportunities for Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R §1614.203(d)(1)(iii), agencies are required to provide sufficient advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. Such activities might include specialized training and mentoring programs, career development opportunities, awards programs, promotions, and similar programs that address advancement. In this section, agencies should identify, and provide data on programs designed to ensure advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities.

### **A. ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM PLAN**

Describe the agency's plan to ensure PWD, including PWTD, have sufficient opportunities for advancement.

No triggers currently exist.

### **B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Please describe the career development opportunities that the agency provides to its employees.

Triggers do not exist for career development programs. All FSA employees are encouraged to participate in every opportunity and there are no disability selection criteria associated with our programs.

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2. In the table below, please provide the data for career development opportunities that require competition and/or supervisory recommendation/approval to participate. [Collection begins with the FY 2019 MD-715 report, which is due on February 28, 2020.]

Career Development Opportunities	Total Participants		PWD		PWTD	
	Applicants (#)	Selectees (#)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)
Internship Programs	89	37	0	0	0	0
Fellowship Programs	25	17	0	0	0	0
Mentoring Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coaching Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Detail Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Career Development Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0

3. Do triggers exist for PWD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWD) Yes 0 No **X**  
b. Selections (PWD) Yes 0 No **X**

Triggers do not exist for career development programs. All FSA employees are encouraged to participate in every opportunity and there are no disability selection criteria associated with our programs.

4. Do triggers exist for PWTD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs identified? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWTD) Yes 0 No 0

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b. Selections (PWTD)                      Yes 0                      No 0

Triggers do not exist for career development programs. All FSA employees are encouraged to participate in every opportunity and there are no disability selection criteria associated with our programs.

**C. AWARDS**

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for any level of the time-off awards, bonuses, or other incentives? If "yes", please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

**Benefits Response:** No triggers currently exist

**Policy and Accountability Branch Response:** No triggers currently exist

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for quality step increases or performance-based pay increases? If "yes", please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Pay Increases (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. Pay Increases (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

No triggers currently exist.

3. If the agency has other types of employee recognition programs, are PWD and/or PWTD recognized disproportionately less than employees without disabilities? (The appropriate benchmark is the inclusion rate.) If "yes", describe the employee recognition program and relevant data in the text box.

a. Other Types of Recognition (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0	N/A 0
b. Other Types of Recognition (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0	N/A 0

**Benefits Response:** No triggers currently exist.

**Policy and Accountability Branch Response:** No triggers currently exist



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## D. PROMOTIONS

1. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified *internal* applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

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- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
  - Recruiting, Internship Programs and Data Analytics

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HCSPiB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program is to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

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The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified *internal* applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

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The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

3. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. New Hires to GS-15(PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
d. New Hires to GS-13(PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

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services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding recruitment and hiring of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
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**HCSPIB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative and is aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPIB examines the Agency's quarterly activities against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.

HCSPIB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

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5. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified *internal* applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

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a. Executives

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

b. Managers

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

c. Supervisors

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

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6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified *internal* applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Executives

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

b. Managers

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

c. Supervisors

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
ii. Internal Selections (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

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The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

7. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. New Hires for Executives (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. New Hires for Managers (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0
c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD)	Yes 0	No 0

The Human Resources Division (HRD) provides high quality, mission-driven, and customer-focused human resources services to support the FPAC mission area. HRD services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding recruitment and hiring of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB)
  - Recruiting, Internship Programs and Data Analytics

**HCSPIB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPIB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative and is aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPIB examines the Agency's quarterly activities against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.



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HCSPiB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. New Hires for Executives (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0
c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD)	Yes 0	No 0

The Human Resources Division (HRD) provides high quality, mission-driven, and customer-focused human resources services to support the FPAC mission area. HRD services include: strategic planning, employee relations, policy, recruitment, and employee development. The following branches within the Human Resources Division ensures that we meet and/or exceed the aforementioned goals regarding recruitment and hiring of all applicants to include employees with disabilities:

- Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPiB)
  - Recruiting, Internship Programs and Data Analytics

**HCSPiB Response:** Human Capital Strategic Planning and Initiatives Branch (HCSPiB) utilizes the Hiring Excellence Milestone and Metrics report (formally known as the Cultural Transformation Initiative and is aligned to the Civilian Labor Force metrics (CLF)) and quarterly workforce profiles as triggers to improve the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities. The established goal aligns with the general population for each assigned basis to include gender, race, and disability. HCSPiB examines the Agency's quarterly activities against the CLF metrics to ensure we meet and/or exceed or course correct to meet the established goal by the fiscal year end.

HCSPiB manages the agency's Reasonable Accommodation Program. The core objectives of the program are to minimize the attrition and maximize the retention rate

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of both persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities within the agency.

The Cultural Transformation metrics and the Agency's quarterly workforce profiles did not track persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities by grade but overall percentages of each group during FY18 and previous years. The FY19 report and beyond will establish metrics to capture gender, race and grade levels GS1 – GS-15.

The agency does not classify and/or recruit for GS-10 grade levels. The recruitment and retention goals and activities for Senior Executive Service grade levels are executed at the Department level.

## Section V: Plan to Improve Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To be a model employer for persons with disabilities, agencies must have policies and programs in place to retain employees with disabilities. In this section, agencies should:

- (1) analyze workforce separation data to identify barriers retaining employees with disabilities;
- (2) describe efforts to ensure accessibility of technology and facilities; and
- (3) provide information on the reasonable accommodation program and workplace personal assistance services.

### **A. VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS**

1. In this reporting period, did the agency convert all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into the competitive service after two years of satisfactory service (5 C.F.R. § 213.3102(u)(6)(i))? If "no", please explain why the agency did not convert all eligible Schedule A employees.

Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0

**HCSPiB Response:** HCSPiB manages the agency's Schedule A Program. The core objectives of the program are to advise managers and increase hiring and retention of employees with disabilities. The Schedule A Program utilizes this special authority (Schedule A) to hire persons with disabilities without requiring them to compete for the job. The impacted (two-year time frame) period for expected conversions within FY19 are October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2019. There were three Schedule A Hires within that time frame, and the results were as follows:

DATE APPOINTED	NATURE OF ACTION CODE	DATE CONVERTED	NATURE OF ACTION CODE	COMMENTS
11/1/2015	570	8/23/2017	501	N/A

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1/24/2016	170	SEE COMMENTS	352	The employee was selected for another appointment with another Federal Agency on 11/4/2016, approximately a year prior to the two-year eligibility for conversion.
11/15/2015	170	SEE COMMENTS	317	The employee resigned on 9/30/2017, two months prior to the two-year eligibility.

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without disabilities? If "yes", describe the trigger below.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWD) Yes 0 No x  
b. Involuntary Separations (PWD) Yes 0 No x

--

3. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWTD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without targeted disabilities? If "yes", describe the trigger below.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Yes 0 No x  
b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Yes 0 No x

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4. If a trigger exists involving the separation rate of PWD and/or PWTD, please explain why they left the agency using exit interview results and other data sources.

No trigger exists for the separation rate of PWD and PWTD

## **B. ACCESSIBILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES**

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(4), federal agencies are required to inform applicants and employees of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794(b), concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151-4157), concerning the accessibility of agency facilities. In addition, agencies are required to inform individuals where to file complaints if other agencies are responsible for a violation.

1. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/accessibility-statement>

<http://www.section508.gov>.

[askfsa@usda.gov](mailto:askfsa@usda.gov).

How to file a complaint

[askfsa@usda.gov](mailto:askfsa@usda.gov).

[http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html).

2. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under the Architectural Barriers Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

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(<http://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/section-508/processing-complaints>).

3. Describe any programs, policies, or practices that the agency has undertaken, or plans on undertaking over the next fiscal year, designed to improve accessibility of agency facilities and/or technology.

**IT 508 Program response:** The FSA Section 508 Program was officially chartered by the CIO and HCAD in March 2014. The program is intended to create a diverse environment where individuals of all abilities can work, interact, and develop into leaders; fully integrate accessibility considerations into the process used in developing, procuring, maintaining, and using EIT; and to build workforce skills that support an environment where Section 508 accessibility requirements are understood, communicated, implemented, and enforced. The FSA has also issued multiple standards, mandates, and directives regarding accessibility and compliance with Section 508: IRM 324, the FSA SDLC, the FSA Style Guide, and a continuously updated online internal website that facilitates distribution and communication. The agency actively tests software deliverables as they are being developed and as part of user acceptance testing, and a remediation process for any issues that cannot be remediated before delivery; and all FSA workstations have software on them to facilitate producing accessible documents, with training that began in 2018. The FSA also implements the USDA AAR process, which documents the agency's efforts to ensure the compliance of acquisitions that are subject to Section 508. The FSA Section 508 Program Team guides the agency in incorporating all relevant standards - researches and utilizes industry practices when they are helpful, and partners with other agencies to assist in meeting Section 508 goals and objectives. They also research and provide tools to support staff in executing these processes.

### **C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM**

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3), agencies must adopt, post on their public website, and make available to all job applicants and employees, reasonable accommodation procedures.

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1. Please provide the average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations during the reporting period. (Please do not include previously approved requests with repetitive accommodations, such as interpreting services.)

The average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations is approximately six weeks. The customer is allowed three weeks to obtain the sufficient medical documentation to support their claim, and an additional two weeks regarding the interactive process with both the Requestor and the Decision Makers to draft and finalize an Accommodation Plan.

2. Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the agency's reasonable accommodation program. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests, timely providing approved accommodations, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring accommodation requests for trends.

Fiscal Year	Number of Actual Requests	Approved	Denied	Pending	Withdrawn	Requested Reconsideration
FY19 (FSA)	19	8	5	5	1	1
		42%	26%	26%	5%	5%

The effectiveness of the policies and procedures of the existing reasonable accommodation program are evident regarding the timeliness in processing and the percentage of approvals

FY19: 19 accommodation requests received, at an average timeline of six weeks per request, with an 42% approval rate.

The average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations is approximately four weeks upon the receipt of all the supporting medical documentation. The customer is allowed two weeks to obtain the sufficient medical documentation to support their claim, and an additional two weeks regarding the interactive process with both the Requestor and the Decision Makers to draft and finalize an Accommodation Plan.

**D. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKPLACE**

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(5), federal agencies, as an aspect of affirmative action, are required to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to employees who need them because of a targeted disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the agency.

Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the PAS requirement. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests for PAS, timely providing approved services, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring PAS requests for trends.

The PAS requirement was initiated in January 2018, and currently there hasn't been a case involving this requirement.

**Section VI: EEO Complaint and Findings Data**

**A. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING HARASSMENT**

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging harassment, as compared to the government-wide average?  
Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0
2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging harassment based on disability status result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?  
Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0
3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

**B. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging failure to provide a reasonable accommodation, as compared to the government-wide average?  
Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0

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2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging failure to provide reasonable accommodation result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination involving the failure to provide a reasonable accommodation during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

## Section VII: Identification and Removal of Barriers

Element D of MD-715 requires agencies to conduct a barrier analysis when a trigger suggests that a policy, procedure, or practice may be impeding the employment opportunities of a protected EEO group.

1. Has the agency identified any barriers (policies, procedures, and/or practices) that affect employment opportunities for PWD and/or PWTD?

Yes 0      No 0

2. Has the agency established a plan to correct the barrier(s) involving PWD and/or PWTD?

Yes 0      No 0      N/A 0

3. Identify each trigger and plan to remove the barrier(s), including the identified barrier(s), objective(s), responsible official(s), planned activities, and, where applicable, accomplishments.

Trigger 1				
Barrier(s)				
Objective(s)				
Responsible Official(s)		Performance Standards Address the Plan? (Yes or No)		
Target Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding (Yes or No)	Modified Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Completion Date (mm/dd/yyyy)



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Fiscal Year	Accomplishments

4. Please explain the factor(s) that prevented the agency from timely completing any of the planned activities.

--

5. For the planned activities that were completed, please describe the actual impact of those activities toward eliminating the barrier(s).

--

6. If the planned activities did not correct the trigger(s) and/or barrier(s), please describe how the agency intends to improve the plan for the next fiscal year.

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If the agency identified one or more barriers during the reporting period, did the agency implement a plan in Part I, including meeting the target dates for the planned activities? [see MD-715, II(D)]