



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**Natural Resources Conservation Service**

**MASSACHUSETTS/RHODE ISLAND CIVIL  
RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

By-laws December 2013

## **PURPOSE**

In accordance with GM 230 Part 400, the Massachusetts/Rhode Island Civil Rights Committee will advise the state conservationists of Massachusetts and Rhode Island on matters related to program delivery and equal opportunity. The work of the committee will be conducted consistent with NRCS and USDA program delivery and employment policies, procedures and practices.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Membership on this committee will be selected from the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Membership is open to all employees. Appointments will be made by the State Conservationists from each of the participating states.

In accordance with GM 230 Part 404.1, consideration for membership will be given to having a committee that reflects the makeup of the workforce in the two states. Where possible, the committee will be comprised of individuals representing all genders, races, national origins, disabilities and disciplines of the Natural Resources Conservation Service workforce of the two states.

The two state conservationists and all special emphasis program managers will serve on the committee. Other members will be nominated by one or more state conservationists and concurred in by the other state conservationists. The chairperson will be selected by the two state conservationists.

One advisor will be the two-state Administrative Officer. The other advisor will be the two-state Human Resource Specialist.

All effort will be made such that no more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to 1/2 of the Civil Rights Advisory Committee membership shall be replaced each year. While there will be no firm limits for membership term, consideration will be giving to rotating membership every three years as opportunities arise.

This agreement is entered into for the above stated purpose. If, at any time, the purpose of the agreement is not fulfilling the needs of either state, the agreement may be rescinded. The agreement will become null and void if one of the states chooses to withdraw. Either state can withdraw membership provided they notify the committee chair at least 30 days prior to their withdrawal.

## **ROLE OF COMMITTEE**

In accordance with GM 230 Part 404.3, the Committee serves as an advisory body to the two state conservationists by:

- 1) Identifying and bringing to management's attention any trends, problems, issues or concerns;
- 2) Focusing the attention of management on specific personnel practices or problems of an EEO nature that are producing or could produce dissension and dissatisfaction among employees (e.g., merit promotion and procedures; selection for training and assignments; criteria, nomination, and distribution of awards, etc.);
- 3) Monitoring the policies and overall effectiveness of the Affirmative Employment and Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Programs with regard to recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention;
- 4) Identifying and providing training resources for various workshops, seminars and meetings;
- 5) Acting as a forum for an exchange of ideas and action proposals on sensitive issues, matters or concerns of a civil rights nature;
- 6) Encouraging, supporting, or assisting in the development of projects or activities associated with civil rights needs or opportunities;
- 7) Contributing to the development and implementation of strategies designed to improve and increase awareness of and participation in NRCS programs and activities by underserved groups, individuals, and communities;
- 8) Promoting and communicating the efforts of management to achieve and operate a realistic and ongoing civil rights program; and
- 9) Promoting and communicating the efforts of outreach to underserved communities for employment opportunities as well as NRCS Programs.

**Approval**

**MASSACHUSETTS:**

Signed:

Christine S. Clarke  
Massachusetts State Conservationist

12/17/12  
Date

**RHODE ISLAND:**

Signed:

Kevin Farmer  
Rhode Island State Conservationist  
KEVIN FARMER  
ACTING FOR

12/19/12  
Date

**Massachusetts/Rhode Island Civil Rights Committee**

Signed:

Keenan J. Shaws  
Chair, Civil Rights Committee

12/20/12  
Date