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## Partner Agency Civil Rights Training for Volunteers

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### Know your client's civil rights

Thank you for your partnership in the fight against hunger. You are making a difference in the lives of those in need in our community who need assistance to keep nourishing food on the table.

The Houston Food Bank is grateful that our volunteers serve each client with the dignity they deserve. We are required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that all agency clients are informed and aware of their civil rights while they are being served.

You can be our eyes and ears by helping us identify any instances in which a client is subject to harassment or discrimination. The Houston Food Bank will not tolerate harassment or discrimination by any individual.

What is discrimination? Discrimination is the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people.

USDA prohibits discrimination based on these things:

- Race
- Disability
- Color
- Age
- National origin
- Reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity
- Sex

Information on filing a complaint of discrimination can be found at this website: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html)

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

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

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) e-mail: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.