Part One - Civil Rights and Your Program

The Workbook’s Concept and Purpose

This workbook has been developed to provide contractors operating one or more United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) “Special Nutrition Programs” (SNP), with basic guidance and information on civil rights issues inherent in the food service portion of these programs.

This workbook is prepared as a self-study course or a trainer's guide and meets the basic requirements for Civil Rights Training in the Special Nutrition Programs.

Equal Access to the Programs

As an administrator of one or more SNP programs, you are responsible for ensuring that everyone has equal access to the program.

You may not discriminate in program participation based on:

- Race,
- Color,
- National origin,
- Sex,
- Age, or
- Disability.

Organizations MUST strictly adhere to and enforce the provisions of the Civil Rights laws and regulations contained and described in this workbook.
Training Your Staff

You must give civil rights training to all levels of staff involved in any aspect of the SNP program you operate! This training must be given to all new staff before they begin working in the program and training must be given annually to all tenured staff.

In addition, you must document your training efforts as part of the documentation and record-keeping requirements.

Recommended Training Format

It is highly recommended that you conduct civil rights training as a group process. Facilitation of this material in a group setting increases the likelihood of group discussion and enhanced understanding of the material.

Civil Rights Questions and Resources

There may be occasions when you are unsure about a certain situation and how that situation relates to your program compliance with civil rights.

In these instances, you should contact:

- USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.