



# FILING AN EEO COMPLAINT

*Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)*

## Initiating Contact with an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor

**Discrimination is unlawful.** Individuals who believe they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), age, mental or physical disability, protected genetic information, marital or familial status, political beliefs, or reprisal for prior EEO activity, **MUST** contact an EEO Counselor prior to filing a formal EEO complaint in order to attempt to resolve the matter informally.

**Who Can Initiate Contact with an EEO Counselor?** Any employee, former employee, or applicant for employment with the FSIS may initiate contact with an EEO Counselor to make claim of employment discrimination.

**Timeframe for Initiating an Informal EEO Complaint:** It is the responsibility of the aggrieved person to seek EEO counseling in a timely manner. An aggrieved person **MUST initiate contact with an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days** of the date of the alleged discriminatory matter, or in the case of a personnel action, within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the action. An aggrieved person has the option to pursue informal resolution through Alternative Dispute Resolution or Traditional Counseling. These options are discussed during the initial counseling session.

**If you believe you have been subjected to employment discrimination on any basis(es), contact the FSIS Civil Rights Staff at:**

USDA, FSIS, Office of the Administrator  
Civil Rights Staff  
5601 Sunnyside Ave, 1-2260  
Mail Drop 5261  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5000

Phone: (301) 504-7755  
(Washington, DC/ Metro Area)  
Toll Free: (800) 269-6912  
(Outside of the Washington, DC/ Metro Area)  
Fax: (301) 504-2141

*Employees may also initiate a complaint electronically at:  
<https://usda-efile.icomplaints.com/efile-usda-prod/login/>*

