

TO: Cooperative Extension County Staff
Area Extension Directors
FROM: Shelley King-Curry, Director of Diversity and Inclusion
Deans Office
DATE: March 22, 2018

RE: Partnerships and Collaborations with other organizations and agencies

The most successful Cooperative Extension programs often demonstrate partnerships and collaborations with other organizations and agencies. Such partnerships allow for dialogue and discussion about how to reach all populations within the area(s) of service. This includes both underserved and underrepresented populations for which the program is intended. Partnership opportunities allow Cooperative Extension to educate partners and collaborators about the requirements by federal and state laws that UWEX, Cooperative Extension must design, develop and deliver programs that are intended to reach all audiences without discrimination. Furthermore, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Office of Civil Rights Compliance has established a standard for all state extension units. This standard is that we have “established procedures that guide staff in ensuring that education assistance is not provided to any organization or group that exclude individuals because of their race, ethnicity or gender.”

- a) To assure that these partnerships and collaborations recognize the importance of non-discrimination, each county will facilitate discussions on reaching underserved and underrepresented audiences to be served with intended programs developed jointly. Following such discussions the partner or collaborator must agree sign a non-discrimination assurance statement if the partnership/collaboration is to continue.
- b) Prior to providing significant programming assistance to partners/collaborators, Cooperative Extension educators will ensure non-discrimination by having the partner/collaborator sign a non-discrimination assurance statement which will be retained in the files of the county units and renewed every three years.
Find at: <https://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/civilrightsleadership/yourcivilrightsfiles/>
- c) Signed non-discrimination statements are also required from partners or collaborators that are private or public entities with a specific mission for and providing service to specific populations. We are allowed to continue these partnerships and collaborations if this allows us to make special efforts to reach out to and expand access to groups protected by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These populations are:
 - i. Women
 - ii. People with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
 - iii. Veterans
 - iv. People with disabilities
 - v. Hispanics/Latinos
 - vi. African Americans
 - vii. American Indians/Native Americans
 - viii. Asians
 - ix. Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders
 - x. People of two or more races

Please note: All programming that is done in collaboration with these partners cannot limit Cooperative Extension’s ability to reach all audiences without discrimination.