USDA ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER ADVISORY COUNCIL

CHARTER & BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - PREAMBLE

The Asian American & Pacific Islander Advisory Council (AAPIAC) of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) promotes a discrimination-free workplace in which employees of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent are treated fairly and equitably in every respect, as prescribed and guided in the U.S.A. Constitution, laws and regulations, and USDA's non-discriminatory policies. The AAPIAC also promotes improving the quality of life of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders through increased participation in Federal programs where they may be underserved.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The AAPIAC will provide leadership and take actions to support USDA Diversity Council's strategic goal of making USDA a discrimination-free and service-for-all organization, So that, all AAPI employees and customers are treated fairly, with dignity and respect. The AAPIAC serves the USDA Secretary and management as the focal point for advice and input on AAPI issues and topics. AAPIAC will:

2.1 Ensure that AAPI employees in USDA achieve fair and deserved professional growth and career advancement.

2.2 Promote that more AAPIs are recruited and their talents and skills are fully utilized to serve the mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

2.3 Assist the USDA management to ensure that the development and implementation of policy and programs effectively and consistently address the needs and cultural value sensibility of AAPI employees and customers.

2.4 Promote and foster mutual understanding and trust between AAPI employees and management/other employees.

2.5 Recommend outreach programs to increase AAPI customer opportunities to participate in USDA programs (e.g., contract and services, education and research, employment, and career development).

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership

The AAPIAC voting members shall include the Co-Chairs, the AAPIAC program manager, one representative from each USDA Mission Area, and up to two at-large representatives selected by the Co-Chairs.

3.2 Membership Appointment

A. The USDA Secretary appoints the AAPIAC Co-Chairs.

B. The Under Secretary of each Mission Area appoints two names, one as the Mission representative and one as the alternate.

C. The AAPIAC Co-Chairs select two at-large members to represent agencies/offices that are not under the USDA mission areas, and to represent USDA employee organizations that are interested in the AAPIAC activities. At least one of the two at-large member must be the employee organization representative.

D. The member can be reappointment once consecutively.

3.3 Length of Membership terms

The AAPIAC membership terms shall be for two years. In order to ensure continuity of the work, the terms shall be staggered according to a policy established formally by the AAPIAC members.

3.4 Membership Turnover

When a member's position is vacant, the Co-Chairs will use the established membership appointment process to fill the vacant position.

ARTICLE IV – RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Co-Chairs

- Shall chair AAPIAC meetings, provide leadership and be the official spokesperson for the Council.
- When not available, appoint alternate to chair AAPIAC meetings.
- Shall, with the concurrence of other AAPIAC Members, have the authority to sign and execute agreements, obligations, and financial documents on behalf of the AAPIAC.
- Shall select up to two at-large AAPIAC voting members.

- Shall invite Resource Advisors to serve the AAPIAC.
- Shall appoint AAPIAC task force leaders.
- Shall exercise supervision and provide leadership over all affairs of the AAPIAC.

4.2 AAPIAC Program Manager

- Shall be responsible for the recording of the proceedings at all AAPIAC meetings.
- Shall maintain and distribute all AAPIAC official documents and correspondence including the minutes of all AAPIAC meetings.
- Shall be responsible for the logistics of all AAPIAC meetings.
- Shall perform other functions called for by the AAPIAC Co-Chairs.

4.3 Other Voting Members

- Shall be responsible for keeping respective Mission Area Under Secretary, agencies or AAPI employee groups informed of all AAPIAC proposals, plans, and activities.
- Shall be responsible for advancing AAPI issues of respective Mission Area, agencies and AAPI employee groups to the AAPIAC.
- Shall monitor progress and make reports to the AAPIAC concerning relevant action item progress within the respective Mission Area, agencies and AAPI employee groups.
- Shall communicate and work with pertinent Department and agency Special Emphasis Program Managers.

4.4 Task Force Leaders

- Shall be responsible for leading a designated task force to accomplish a specific task defined by the AAPIAC.

- Shall be responsible for taking guidance from and reporting back to the AAPIAC.

4.5 Resource Advisors

- Shall serve the AAPIAC at the invitation of the Co-Chairs.

- Shall provide expert advice and guidance to the AAPIAC in areas of specific interest to the AAPIAC members.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

5.1 AAPIAC Meetings will be held once every two months and more often as deemed necessary by the Co-Chairs. All USDA employees can participate in all AAPIAC discussion and meetings.

5.2 The Co-Chairs will call special meetings only for voting-members, as necessary.

5.3 To make voting decisions, there should be presence of at least a half (1/2) of the official AAPIC total voting members at the meeting.

5.4 Any voting member who misses 3 consecutive meetings for inexcusable reasons should lose his/her membership.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENT

6.1 Amendments to this AAPIAC Charter and Bylaws shall be approved by two-third (2/3) of the total voting members.

ARTICLE VII - EXPENSES AND COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Times and Travel

Each AAPIAC member's respective agency agrees to reimburse expenses incurred for travel and allow official time for members attending officially approved AAPIAC programs/activities or special meetings called by the Co-Chairs and/or the USDA Secretary.

7.2 Facilities and Services

The AAPIAC may use the following USDA services:

A. Meeting rooms.

B. Designated bulletin boards.

C. Internal and external communication technology including access to the Web server.

D. Distribution of printed material such as flyers, posters, or newsletters through the internal mail and messenger service. The following types of material may not be

sent through the internal mail or messenger service or otherwise distributed within USDA.

- Material which directly or indirectly attacks or adversely reflects on the integrity of character of Members of Congress, the Judiciary, the President, Members of the President's Cabinet, Government official in a similarly responsible position or any other Government employee.

- Material that does not conform to USDA Civil Rights policies.

- Material that directly or indirectly condemns or criticizes the policies of any Government Department or Agency.

Submitted by:

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Approved by:

Ann M. Veneman, Secretary