

## 2026 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

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**PREFACE**

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2026 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the “Budget” is in regard to the 2026 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2023 and 2024, Full-Year Continuing Resolution levels for 2025, and the President’s Budget request for 2026. Amounts for 2025 estimated levels include: non-enacted amounts such as Full-Time Equivalent levels, fleet levels, information technology investment levels, recovery levels, transfers in and out, balances available end of year, and obligation levels.

Throughout this publication, the “2018 Farm Bill” is used to refer to the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. Most programs funded by the 2018 Farm Bill are funded through 2025, as extended by the American Relief Act, 2025 (P.L. 118-158, Division D). Amounts shown in 2025 and 2026 for most Farm Bill programs reflect those confirmed in the baseline.

Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, sequestration is included in the numbers for mandatory programs in 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026.

In tables throughout this document, amounts equal to zero (0) are displayed as dashes (-). Amounts less than 0.5 and greater than zero are rounded and shown as a zero (0). This display treatment is used to prevent the masking of non-zero amounts that do not round up to one (1).

**AGENCY-WIDE****PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) mission is to provide leadership and direction for the fair and equitable treatment of all USDA customers and employees while ensuring the delivery of quality programs and enforcement of civil rights. OCR seeks innovative methods to make progress toward meeting the regulatory standards for processing the Department’s Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and program complaints, as well as to become a more efficient and effective operation. OCR utilizes assigned staff and contract attorneys to assist with processing the final agency decision inventory. In addition, OCR utilizes contract services and detailed staff to assist with eliminating the program and EEO complaint inventory.

OCR reviews agency standard operating procedures and employee performance standards quarterly to ensure systems and workload analyses are in place to prevent future backlogs while maintaining a manageable complaint inventory to meet all regulatory processing timeframes. OCR focuses Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) efforts solely on EEO and program conflicts that could result in discrimination complaints. This focus resolves conflicts and disputes before they become discrimination complaints. Non-EEO conflicts are addressed outside of OCR; however, conciliation ensures that all parties manage conflicts in a healthy and productive manner. OCR provides periodic ADR orientations, updates, and targeted conflict management training to USDA Subcabinet officials, recognized employee organizations, agency civil rights directors, and headquarters and agency employees.

Headquarters of OCR is in Washington, D.C. as of September 30, 2024, there were 149 permanent full-time employees, 115 headquarters employees and 34 field employees.

**OIG AND GAO REPORTS*****Table OCR-1. Closed, Implemented OIG Reports***

| <b>ID</b>     | <b>Date</b> | <b>Title</b>                           | <b>Result</b>   |
|---------------|-------------|--|---|
| 50801-0006-12 | 7/9/2024    | SECURITY OVER USDA MOBILE APPLICATIONS | Recommendation 4 – OCR needs to mitigate the vulnerabilities identified in the scan assessment in accordance with Departmental regulations. |

**Table OCR-2. Closed, Implemented GAO Reports**

| ID         | Date      | Title   | Result  |
|------------|-----------|---|---|
| GAO-20-187 | 1/10/2024 | Sexual Harassment in STEM Research: Agencies Have Taken Actions, but Need Compliant Procedures, Overall Plans, and Better Collaboration | Recommendation 1 – GAO found that the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture should direct the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights to publicize promising practices for Title IX compliance on its websites for their university grantees.<br>Recommendation 16 – GAO found that the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture should establish goals and an overall plan to assess all the agency's sexual harassment prevention efforts for their university grantees, including methods to regularly monitor and evaluate its sexual harassment prevention policies and communication mechanisms (e.g. Title IX or sex discrimination websites). |

**AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTEs****Table OCR-3. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                         | 2023     |      | 2024     |      | 2025      |      | 2026      |      |
|------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
|                              | Actual   | FTEs | Actual   | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |
| Salaries and Expenses:       |          |      |          |      |           |      |           |      |
| Office of Civil Rights ..... | \$37,595 | 149  | \$37,000 | 149  | \$37,000  | 149  | \$20,000  | 102  |
| Total Obligations, OCR ..... | 37,595   | 149  | 37,000   | 149  | 37,000    | 149  | 20,000    | 102  |
| Total Available, OCR .....   | 37,595   | 149  | 37,000   | 149  | 37,000    | 149  | 20,000    | 102  |

\* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

**PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTEs****Table OCR-4. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs**

| Item           | 2023 |       |       | 2024 |       |       | 2025 |       |       | 2026 |       |       |
|----------------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                | HQ   | Field | Total | HQ   | Field | Total | HQ   | Field | Total | HQ   | Field | Total |
| SES .....      | 3    |       | 3     | 1    | -     | 1     | 3    | -     | 3     | 3    | -     | 3     |
| GS-15 .....    | 6    | 3     | 9     | 10   | 3     | 13    | 10   | 2     | 12    | 6    | 1     | 7     |
| GS-14 .....    | 14   | 8     | 22    | 14   | 6     | 20    | 14   | 6     | 20    | 9    | 5     | 14    |
| GS-13 .....    | 37   | 12    | 49    | 38   | 16    | 54    | 39   | 16    | 55    | 23   | 13    | 36    |
| GS-12 .....    | 7    | 4     | 11    | 18   | 9     | 27    | 21   | 9     | 30    | 16   | 7     | 23    |
| GS-11 .....    | 5    | 6     | 11    | 10   | -     | 10    | 6    | -     | 6     | 5    | -     | 5     |
| GS-9 .....     | 17   | 11    | 28    | 11   | -     | 11    | 11   | -     | 11    | 7    | -     | 7     |
| GS-8 .....     | 8    | 3     | 11    | 9    | -     | 9     | 9    | -     | 9     | 5    | -     | 5     |
| GS-7 .....     | 2    | -     | 2     | 2    | -     | 2     | 2    | -     | 2     | 1    | -     | 1     |
| GS-6 .....     | 1    |       | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     |
| GS-3 .....     | 2    | -     | 2     | 1    | -     | 1     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     |
| Total          |      |       |       |      |       |       |      |       |       |      |       |       |
| Permanent      | 102  | 47    | 149   | 115  | 34    | 149   | 116  | 33    | 149   | 76   | 26    | 102   |
| Total Perm. FT |      |       |       |      |       |       |      |       |       |      |       |       |
| EOY .....      | 102  | 47    | 149   | 115  | 34    | 149   | 116  | 33    | 149   | 76   | 26    | 102   |
| FTE .....      | 100  | 35    | 135   | 115  | 34    | 149   | 116  | 33    | 149   | 76   | 26    | 102   |

\* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

**SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS****Table OCR-5. Shared Funding Projects (thousands of dollars)**

| Item  | 2023<br>Actual | 2024<br>Actual | 2025<br>Estimated | 2026<br>Estimated |
|---|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Working Capital Fund:</b>                                |                |                |                   |                   |
| Administrative Services:                                    |                |                |                   |                   |
| AskUSDA.....  | \$13           | \$15           | \$15              | \$15              |
| General Counsel Legal Compliance.....                       |                |                | 3                 | 40                |
| Material Management Service.....                            | 19             | 20             | 19                | 20                |
| Mail and Reproduction Services.....                         | 446            | 524            | 455               | 460               |
| Integrated Procurement Systems.....                         | 58             | 50             | 47                | 47                |
| Personnel and Document Security.....                        | 6              | 7              | 7                 | 7                 |
| Procurement Operations Services.....                        | 142            | 176            | 206               | 203               |
| Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems.....          | 2              | 2              | 11                | 11                |
| Subtotal.....   | 686            | 794            | 763               | 803               |
| Communications:   |                |                |                   |                   |
| Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....                      | 46             | 46             | 44                | 26                |
| Finance and Management:                                     |                |                |                   |                   |
| National Finance Center.....                                | 32             | 40             | 43                | 44                |
| Financial Shared Services.....                              | 45             | 49             | 44                | 44                |
| Internal Control Support Services.....                      | -              | 13             | 11                | 11                |
| Subtotal.....   | 77             | 102            | 98                | 99                |
| Information Technology:                                     |                |                |                   |                   |
| Client Experience Center.....                               | 984            | 1,023          | 999               | 1,092             |
| Department Administration Information Technology Office.... | 593            | 507            | 501               | 501               |
| Digital Infrastructure Services Center.....                 | 594            | 620            | 1,219             | 1,219             |
| Enterprise Cybersecurity Services.....                      | 37             | 80             | 109               | 109               |
| Enterprise Data and Analytics Services.....                 | 424            | 483            | 663               | 663               |
| Enterprise Network Services.....                            | 41             | 172            | 91                | 108               |
| Subtotal.....   | 2,673          | 2,885          | 3,582             | 3,692             |
| Office of the Executive Secretariat.....                    | 63             | 66             | 67                | 47                |
| Total, Working Capital Fund.....                            | 3,545          | 3,893          | 4,554             | 4,687             |
| <b>Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:</b>                |                |                |                   |                   |
| Agency Partnership Outreach.....                            | 9              | 12             | 10                | 10                |
| Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility.....         | 2              | 4              | 1                 | -                 |
| Employee Experience.....                                    | 4              | 6              | 4                 | 4                 |
| Medical Service.....  | 34             | 42             | 38                | 38                |
| National Capital Region Interpreting Services.....          | 11             | 19             | 13                | 13                |
| Office of Customer Experience.....                          | 4              | 5              | 4                 | 4                 |
| Physical Security.....                                      | 6              | 7              | 8                 | 8                 |
| Security Detail.....  | 6              | 8              | 11                | 11                |
| Security Operations.....                                    | 8              | 12             | 10                | 10                |
| Talent Group.....   | 4              | 5              | 4                 | 4                 |
| TARGET Center.....  | 2              | 3              | 2                 | 2                 |
| Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs.....           | 90             | 123            | 105               | 104               |
| Agency Total.....   | 3,635          | 4,016          | 4,659             | 4,771             |

\*This table is based on a preliminary 2026 estimate, which will be adjusted at a later date to reflect the Department's updated posture and footprint.

\*\*In alignment with the current Administration's priorities, the 2025 amounts reflect expenses incurred prior to January 20, 2025.

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**ACCOUNT 1: OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS****APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE**

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored):

Office of Civil Rights

For necessary expenses of the Office of Civil Rights, \$20,000,000.

**LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT****Table OCR-6. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (In dollars)**

| Item                         | Amount       |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Enacted, 2025                | \$37,000,000 |
| Change in Appropriation..... | -17,000,000  |
| Budget Estimate, 2026 .....  | 20,000,000   |

**PROJECT STATEMENTS****Table OCR-7. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                        | 2023<br>Actual | FTEs | 2024<br>Actual | FTEs | 2025<br>Actual | FTEs | 2026<br>Estimated | FTEs | Inc. or Dec. | FTE<br>Inc. or Chg<br>Dec. | Key |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|-------------------|------|--------------|----------------------------|-----|
| Discretionary Approp:       |                |      |                |      |                |      |                   |      |              |                            |     |
| Office of Civil Rights..... | \$37,595       | 149  | \$37,000       | 149  | \$37,000       | 149  | \$20,000          | 102  | -\$17,000    | -47                        | (1) |
| Total Appropriation .....   | 37,595         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 20,000            | 102  | -17,000      | -47                        |     |
| Total Obligations           | 37,595         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 20,000            | 102  | -17,000      | -47                        |     |

**Table OCR-8. Project Statement on Basis of Obligations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                        | 2023<br>Actual | FTEs | 2024<br>Actual | FTEs | 2025<br>Actual | FTEs | 2026<br>Estimated | FTEs | Inc. or Dec. | FTE<br>Inc.<br>or<br>Dec. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|-------------------|------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Discretionary Obligations:  |                |      |                |      |                |      |                   |      |              |                           |
| Office of Civil Rights..... | \$37,595       | 149  | \$37,000       | 149  | \$37,000       | 149  | \$20,000          | 102  | -\$17,000    | -47                       |
| Total Obligations           | 37,595         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 20,000            | 102  | -17,000      | -47                       |
| Total Appropriation .....   | 37,595         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 37,000         | 149  | 20,000            | 102  | -17,000      | -47                       |

**JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGES****Office of Civil Rights**

The base funding allocated to OCR continues to sustain Department-wide endeavors, encompassing the facilitation of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program, the formulation of equal opportunity policies, the enforcement of civil rights, the orchestration of comprehensive analyses and adjudications, the provision of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and meticulous adherence to compliance standards. OCR's purview encompasses providing services to all USDA agencies, undertaking Equal Employment Opportunity investigations, issuing final agency decisions, and managing conflict of interest cases.

**Justification of Changes:**

- (1) A decrease of \$17,000,000 in salaries and expenses and 47 full-time equivalents (FTEs) for the Office of Civil Rights programs (\$37,000,000 and 149 FTEs available in 2025).
  - A) A decrease of \$13,000,000 in salaries and 47 full-time positions. In pursuit of streamlining workforce efforts, facilities, and other government efficiencies, OCR has reduced staff from 149 to 102 FTEs. This decision demonstrates a strategic focus on OCR's core strengths and commitment to maintaining high-quality service delivery. The transition offers an opportunity to reinforce agility, collaboration, and accountability among team members. By prioritizing efficiency, OCR remains well-positioned to meet its mission and uphold compliance responsibilities. OCR is also prepared to sustain performance and drive continued impact.
  - B) A decrease of \$4,000,000 in non-personnel expenses. OCR remains committed to supporting essential programs. This funding level will enable OCR to focus and build on the progress in key areas such as case management, data processing, data integrity, and workflow automation. This progress directly supports our core mission to enforce civil rights programs, as outlined in 7 CFR Section 2.25 (Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights) and 29 CFR 1614 (Federal Sector Employment Opportunity) and aligns with the Secretary's strategic priorities, which focuses on enforcement, risk management, accountability, and effective governance. These efforts continue to advance standardization and improve the operational efficiency of our civil rights enforcement work.



**GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTEs****Table OCR-9. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs for Office of Civil Rights  
(thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| State/Territory/Country    | 2023   |      | 2024   |      | 2025      |      | 2026      |      |
|----------------------------|--------|------|--------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
|                            | Actual | FTEs | Actual | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |
| Alabama .....              | \$505  | 2    | \$497  | 2    | \$497     | 2    | \$196     | 1    |
| Arizona .....              | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| California.....            | 757    | 3    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| Delaware .....             | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | -         | -    |
| District of Columbia ..... | 9,336  | 37   | 16,389 | 66   | 26,074    | 111  | 14,904    | 76   |
| Florida .....              | 1,009  | 4    | 993    | 4    | 993       | 4    | 588       | 3    |
| Georgia.....               | 1,262  | 5    | 745    | 3    | 745       | 3    | 588       | 3    |
| Illinois.....              | 505    | 2    | 497    | 2    | 497       | 2    | 196       | 1    |
| Kansas.....                | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | -         | -    |
| Kentucky .....             | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| Maryland.....              | 13,120 | 52   | 9,685  | 39   | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Mississippi .....          | 505    | 2    | 497    | 2    | 497       | 2    | 392       | 2    |
| Missouri .....             | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| Nevada .....               | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| New Jersey .....           | 757    | 3    | 497    | 2    | 497       | 2    | 196       | 1    |
| New York .....             | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| North Carolina.....        | 505    | 2    | 497    | 2    | 497       | 2    | 196       | 1    |
| Ohio .....                 | 757    | 3    | 497    | 2    | 497       | 2    | 392       | 2    |
| Pennsylvania.....          | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | -         | -    |
| Texas.....                 | 1,766  | 7    | 1,987  | 8    | 1,987     | 8    | 980       | 5    |
| Utah .....                 | 252    | 1    | 248    | 1    | 248       | 1    | 196       | 1    |
| Virginia .....             | 4,289  | 17   | 1,738  | 7    | 1,738     | 1    | -         | -    |
| West Virginia .....        | 252    | 1    | -      | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Obligations.....           | 37,595 | 149  | 37,000 | 149  | 37,000    | 149  | 20,000    | 102  |
| Total, Available.....      | 37,595 | 149  | 37,000 | 149  | 37,000    | 149  | 20,000    | 102  |

**CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS****Table OCR-10. Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)**

| Item No.                                   | Item   | 2023 Actual | 2024 Actual | 2025 Estimated | 2026 Estimated |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Personnel Compensation:</b>             |  |             |             |                |                |
|  | Washington D.C. ....   | \$10,972    | \$13,179    | \$14,502       | \$7,831        |
|  | Personnel Compensation, Field.....                           | \$5,128     | \$4,806     | \$5,793        | \$3,128        |
| 11   | Total personnel compensation.....                            | 16,100      | 17,985      | 20,295         | 10,959         |
| 12   | Personal benefits.....                                       | 5,692       | 6,781       | 7,250          | 3,915          |
| 13.0                                       | Benefits for former personnel.....                           | -           | 11          | 10             | 6              |
|  | Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....                     | 21,792      | 24,777      | 27,555         | 14,880         |
| <b>Other Objects:</b>                      |  |             |             |                |                |
| 21.0                                       | Travel and transportation of persons .....                   | 53          | 178         | 178            | 96             |
| 22.0                                       | Transportation of things.....                                | -           | -           | -              | -              |
| 23.1                                       | Rental payments to GSA.....                                  | -           | -           | -              | -              |
| 23.2                                       | Rental payments to others.....                               | 10          | -           | -              | -              |
| 23.3                                       | Communications, utilities, and misc. charges .....           | 582         | 542         | 542            | 293            |
| 24.0                                       | Printing and reproduction.....                               | 33          | 30          | 30             | 16             |
| 25   | Other contractual services.....                              | 3           | -           | -              | -              |
| 25.1                                       | Advisory and assistance services .....                       | 2,216       | 1,644       | 2,514          | 1,358          |
| 25.2                                       | Other services from non-Federal sources .....                | 257         | 293         | 161            | 87             |
| 25.3                                       | Other goods and services from Federal sources.....           | 16          | 16          | 15             | 8              |
| 25.4                                       | Operation and maintenance of facilities.....                 | 11,145      | 7,572       | 4,148          | 2,240          |
| 25.5                                       | Research and development contracts .....                     | 313         | 321         | 300            | 162            |
| 25.7                                       | Operation and maintenance of equipment .....                 | 1,158       | 1,409       | 1,192          | 644            |
| 26.0                                       | Supplies and materials.....                                  | 15          | 65          | 55             | 30             |
| 31.0                                       | Equipment .....  | 2           | 3           | 10             | 5              |
| 32.0                                       | Land and structures.....                                     | -           | -           | -              | -              |
| 33.0                                       | Investments and loans .....                                  | -           | -           | -              | -              |
| 41.0                                       | Grants, subsidies, and contributions .....                   | -           | -           | -              | -              |
| 42.0                                       | Insurance Claims and Indemnities.....                        | -           | 150         | 300            | 181            |
| 43.0                                       | Interest and Dividends.....                                  | -           | -           | -              | -              |
|  | Total, Other Objects .....                                   | 15,803      | 12,223      | 9,445          | 5,120          |
| 99.9                                       | Total, new obligations .....                                 | 37,595      | 37,000      | 37,000         | 20,000         |
|  | <b>DHS Building Security Payments</b> (included in 25.3) ... | \$3         | \$11        | \$11           | \$11           |
| <b>Information Technology Investments:</b> |  |             |             |                |                |
| Major Investment 1                         |  |             |             |                |                |
| Related Mission Area PPA #1                |  |             |             |                |                |
| 25.2                                       | Outside Services (Consulting) .....                          | \$1         | \$1         | \$1            | \$1            |
|  | Total IT Investments.....                                    | 1           | 1           | 1              | 1              |
| <b>Position Data:</b>                      |  |             |             |                |                |
|  | Average Salary (dollars), ES Position .....                  | \$213,070   | \$221,900   | \$226,338      | \$233,128      |
|  | Average Salary (dollars), GS Position .....                  | \$126,633   | \$133,692   | \$136,365      | \$140,457      |
|  | Average Grade, GS Position.....                              | 13.5        | 13.5        | 13.5           | 13.5           |

\* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

**STATUS OF PROGRAMS**

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) program activities include: 1) implementing six elements of a model EEO program; (Demonstrated commitment from OCR leadership, integration of EEO into the OCR's strategic mission, management and program accountability, proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination, efficiency, and responsiveness and legal compliance to include timely processing of EEO complaints); 2) managing compliance with civil rights in agricultural programs including timely processing of program complaints; 3) implementing proactive prevention measures including anti-harassment program and training, special emphasis programs, , overseeing the Limited English Proficiency Program; and providing EEO, policy, Alternate Dispute Resolution methodology, and compliance training; and 4) providing leadership and oversight to USDA Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices to ensure a unified approach to effectively managing EEO, civil rights and equal opportunity efforts throughout USDA.

In 2025, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) will launch an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program in line with Departmental Regulation 4710-001 (DR 4710-001). This initiative aims to raise awareness of ADR resources and proactively address workplace conflicts, including EEO complaints and program discrimination issues that will create a more harmonious workplace for all, by promoting early resolution.

**Selected Examples of Recent Progress**

**EEO Program** – The number of EEO complaints filed increased from 306 in 2023 to 358 in 2024. This slight increase is reflective of the Return to the Workplace initiative, where more employees have returned in person to their duty locations, resulting in employees filing EEO complaints regarding reasonable workplace accommodations. The average number of days to conduct an EEO investigation decreased slightly from 128 days to 126 days but remained under the 180-day regulatory requirement.

**Table OCR-11. Formal EEO Complaints (thousands of dollars)**

| <b>FORMAL EEO COMPLAINTS</b>        | <b>2023<br/>Actual</b> | <b>2024<br/>Actual</b> | <b>2025<br/>Estimate</b> | <b>2026<br/>Estimate</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Number of Formal EEO Complaints.... | 306                    | 358                    | 362                      | 370                      |
| Number of Amendments.....           | 92                     | 141                    | 150                      | 150                      |
| Number of Appeals.....              | 84                     | 122                    | 130                      | 130                      |
| Average Days: Investigation.....    | 128                    | 126                    | 128                      | 128                      |
| Average Days: Adjudication.....     | 117                    | 37                     | 40                       | 40                       |

**Civil Rights Program** - Strengthening civil rights in agricultural programs is the top priority for OCR. From 2023 to 2024, program complaints decreased by 21 percent, from 105 to 83. The average investigation time also dropped significantly, from 211 days to 107 days, through efforts from the program complaint task force. In 2025, OCR launched the Civil Rights Management System, a public website that enables users to submit new program discrimination complaints and track the status of existing ones. This system streamlines the process, reducing reliance on mail, email, fax, and phone inquiries.

**Table OCR-12. Civil Rights Program Complaints (thousands of dollars)**

| <b>PROGRAM COMPLAINTS</b>        | <b>2022<br/>Actual</b> | <b>2023<br/>Actual</b> | <b>2024<br/>Actual</b> | <b>2025<br/>Estimate</b> | <b>2026<br/>Estimate</b> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Number of Program Complaints ... | 293                    | 105                    | 83                     | 75                       | 75                       |
| Average Days: Investigation..... | 246                    | 211                    | 107                    | 120                      | 120                      |

**Conflict Complaint - EEO Program** – The number of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints decreased from 73 in 2023 to 58 in 2024, due to ongoing telework arrangements. The average time for EEO investigations of non-amended complaints is 157 days, which is within the regulatory timeframe.

**Table OCR-13. Informal EEO Program Conflict Complaint (thousands of dollars)**

| INFORMAL EEO COMPLAINTS FILED  | 2023<br>Actual | 2024<br>Actual | 2025<br>Estimate | 2026<br>Estimate |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Number of Complaints.....  | 73             | 58             | 76               | 76               |
| Counseling within 30 days .....                                      | 19             | 11             | 22               | 22               |
| Counseling within 90 days where individual participated in ADR ..... | 60             | 15             | 32               | 32               |
| Counseling within 31-90 that was untimely .....                      | 0              | 1              | 2                | 2                |

**Table OCR-14. Formal EEO Program Conflict Complaint (thousands of dollars)**

| FORMAL EEO COMPLAINTS FILED   | 2023<br>Actual | 2024<br>Actual | 2025<br>Estimate | 2026<br>Estimate |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Number of Complaints.....   | 44             | 41             | 41               | 41               |
| Number of complaints via investigation: within 180 days regulatory timeframe (Investigations) ..... | 19             | 26             | 24               | 24               |
| Average Number of days for processing complaints thru investigation.....                            | 153            | 154            | 157              | 157              |

#### **Special Emphasis Programs (SEP)**

- Successfully managed 13 departmental observances, engaging over 19,000 employees virtually and 1,900 in person.
- Speaker Engagement: Hosted 44 keynote speakers who provided innovative insights and personal perspectives to SEP events, enriching the overall impact.

#### **Mandatory Civil Rights Training:**

- NO FEAR Act Training: Achieved a 95 percent completion rate, certifying over 110,000 employees and reinforcing workplace rights and responsibilities.
- Anti-Harassment Training: Certified 97 percent of managers and supervisors and 92 percent of general employees, strengthening USDA's zero-tolerance policy for workplace harassment.
- Enhanced awareness of Reasonable Accommodation policies to improve service delivery to employees with disabilities.

#### **Compliance and Monitoring:**

- Conducted 10 virtual compliance interviews with Southern University and A&M College, providing critical feedback to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) on Title IX compliance.
- Addressed findings from GAO reports and implemented action plans to ensure ongoing adherence to federal civil rights guidelines.

#### **Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS):**

- Promoted participation, achieving a 78.5 percent response rate, a 3.5 percent improvement from 2023, which provided actionable insights to improve the USDA work environment.

**Innovative Program Management:**

- Digital Transformation: Led upgrades to the USDA Civil Rights Application to enhance usability, integrate real time event calendars, and provide timely updates to both internal and external stakeholders.
- Introduced AI-driven tools to create event materials, reducing production time and streamlining operations.