

**FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION**

<b>Policy Number:</b>	IM 25- 13
<b>Policy Title:</b>	Customer Rights and Responsibilities
<b>Release Date:</b>	March 5, 2025
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately Upon Receipt.
<b>Approved By:</b>	Augustin Ntabaganyimana Executive Director Family Investment Administration
<b>Revision Date(s):</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Originating Office:</b>	Office of Programs Office of Nutrition Assistance Programs
<b>Required Actions:</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Key Words:</b>	Rights, Responsibilities, Discrimination, Complaint
<b>Related Federal Law</b>	<a href="#">7 CFR § 271.6</a> ; <a href="#">7 CFR § 272.6</a>
<b>Related State Laws</b>	Not applicable.
<b>COMAR</b>	Not applicable.
<b>State Plan Implications?</b>	No.



**Maryland**  
 Department of  
 Human Services  
 Department of Human Services  
 25 S Charles Street  
 Baltimore MD 21201

**FAMILY INVESTMENT  
 ADMINISTRATION (FIA)  
 INFORMATION MEMO**

**Control Number: # 25-13**

**Effective Date: Immediately**

**Issuance Date: March 5, 2025**

**TO: LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES (LDSS)  
 DIRECTORS, LDSS DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR  
 FAMILY INVESTMENT, FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND  
 ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

**FROM: AUGUSTIN NTABAGANYIMANA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**RE: SNAP MANUAL SECTION 403 CUSTOMER RIGHTS  
 AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
 PROGRAM (SNAP)**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS**

**Summary**

The purpose of this Information Memo is to alert staff to updates made to [SNAP Manual Section 403 Customer Rights and Responsibilities](#). These updates do not change policy or procedures outlined in [AT 23-13 Civil Rights Compliance](#). Rather the changes align the SNAP Manual with the required timeline and the role of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in handling complaints of discrimination detailed in the Civil Rights Guide 2023 (within AT 23-13 Civil Rights Compliance).

**Policy**

The following information has been added to SNAP Manual Section 403 Customer Rights and Responsibilities:

- A. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is responsible for investigating SNAP related complaints of discrimination.
- B. **Within five business (5) days** of a customer submitting a [Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) to a Local Department of Social Services (LDSS), the Customer Access Coordinator (CAC) must email the form to [FNSCIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov](mailto:FNSCIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov).

The CAC shall copy (cc) the DHS Office of Employment and Program Equity at [thr.oepe@maryland.gov](mailto:thr.oepe@maryland.gov) and the FIA Ombudsman at [fia.ombudsman@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.ombudsman@maryland.gov) on the email sending the completed Form AD-3027 to FNS Civil Rights Complaints.

## Procedure

The overall policy and procedure for applying Civil Rights has not changed and is detailed in the [Civil Rights Guide 2023](#) (within AT 23-13 Civil Rights Compliance). [SNAP Manual Section 403.7](#) now aligns with the Civil Rights Guide 2023, stating that individuals have the right to file a written complaint when they feel they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Any complaint of discrimination must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination unless otherwise extended by the USDA.

- A. Department of Human Services (DHS) employees to whom a complaint is made will advise the customer of the following:
  1. The right to file a complaint in writing;
  2. To whom to address the complaint; and
  3. The information required to facilitate the investigation (which will be completed by FNS, **NOT** the LDSS or DHS).

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete Form AD-3027, available online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf> or by calling (833) 620-1071. Complaints can also be submitted in the form of a letter. The letter must include the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a detailed description of the alleged discriminatory action, including the nature and date of the civil rights violation, to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR).

The completed AD-3027 form or letter should be submitted to the following:

**Mail:** United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
1320 Braddock Place, Room 334  
Alexandria, VA 22314

**Fax:** 833-256-1665 or 202-690-7442

**Email:** [FNSCIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov](mailto:FNSCIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov)

B. If requested, a CAC will assist the complainant in submitting the discrimination complaint to the USDA. Instruction on how a CAC might submit a complaint on behalf of a customer is described in the in the policy section of this memo.

### **Attachments**

[SNAP Manual Section 403 Customer Rights and Responsibilities](#)  
[AT 23-13 Civil Rights Compliance](#)

### **Inquiries**

Please direct policy questions to FIA Policy by completing the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#). Montgomery County staff may submit their policy questions via email at [fia.policy@maryland.gov](mailto:fia.policy@maryland.gov).

cc: DHS Executive Staff  
FIA Management Staff  
Constituent Services  
DHS Help Desk  
Office of Administrative Hearings