

*The USDA is committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect. No student or family should be forced to go hungry due to discrimination. On May 5, 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it is taking steps to prevent LGBTQI+ individuals from experiencing discrimination when they access federally funded food and nutrition services. In practice, this means state and local agencies, program operators, and sponsors that receive funds from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) must review allegations of discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. Those organizations must also update their non-discrimination policies, informational materials and websites to include prohibitions against discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. The change gives recourse for LGBTQI+ individuals who experience discrimination by or within a FNS program. If discrimination does occur, that person can now file a complaint of sex discrimination.*

*For example, someone who identifies as LGBTQI+ should be able to get assistance from or volunteer with a food bank that participates in USDA's The Emergency Food Assistance Program without fear of rejection or discrimination. Similarly, a student who identifies as LGBTQI+ should be able to participate in the National School Lunch Program. If discrimination does occur, the individual can now file a complaint of sex discrimination.*

*USDA has established processes to review civil rights compliance in the programs under its purview. USDA's goal during any investigation or compliance related action is to work with state and local agencies and other program recipients to resolve the complaint at the lowest possible level to ensure benefits and services continue without interruption. Please be assured that our shared goal is that all persons have equal access and an opportunity to participate in USDA's Food programs.*

*For additional information regarding our policy, please review the updated guidance memorandum [here](#). For additional information regarding our complaint process, please review the [Civil Rights - FAQs | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#).*