

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice AO-1640

For: FSA State Offices

State Outreach and Communication Duties

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

Program outreach and communications are mandatory for promoting participation in FSA programs and services.

Through the years, several employees in each State Office have been assigned to perform the collateral duties of:

- State Outreach Coordinator (SOC)
- StrikeForce Coordinator
- Bridges to Opportunity Manager
- People's Garden Initiative
- Farm Loan Marketing Coordinator
- Communications Coordinator
- Public Relations/Affairs Specialist
- GovDelivery Coordinator
- Web Manager.

There are also various initiatives that are completed for a short time that tap into these areas. In some states, these duties have been assigned to as many as 7 employees, or to as few as one. This has resulted in significant inefficiencies in the coordination of the collateral duties including, but not limited to miscommunication, overlooked communication, duplication of efforts and missed opportunities.

In the past ten years, several reports and audits have concluded the lack of outreach coordination and efforts. To increase program activity, improve FSA program education and public relations, the agency has identified the need to have dedicated staff in each State to manage these functions.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2016	State Offices
12-16-15	

1 Overview (Continued)

B Purpose

This notice directs State Offices to establish no greater than 2 assigned positions to serve as SOC and State Communications Coordinator (CC) (the primary duties), and to perform the collateral duties according to subparagraph A, to establish greater efficiencies for the agency in each State.

C Contact

If there are questions about the notice contact either of the following:

- J. Latrice Hill, DAFO, Director of Outreach by:
 - e-mail to **latrice.hill@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-690-1700
- Kent Politsch, OEA Chief, Public Affairs by:
 - e-mail to **kent.politsch@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-7163.

2 General

A Outreach Duties

The role of SOC is part of the FSA program delivery system to assist FSA to better serve all farmers and ranchers. SOC's work collaboratively with CC's, Farm Programs and Farm Loan Divisions to educate and promote programs to existing and potential customers of the FSA. Detailed responsibilities for SOC's are listed in 22-AO.

The following collateral positions should be merged and included in the duties of SOC's. Department Initiatives and/or Agency Program Outreach, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Farm Loan Marketing Coordinator
- Farm Program Marketing Outreach
- StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity
- Bridges to Opportunity
- Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2)
- People's Garden Initiative.

2 General (Continued)

B Communications Duties

The role of the State CC is part of the FSA program delivery system to assist FSA in publicizing and promoting the agency externally, including all materials used for external communications. State CC's work collaboratively with SOC's to publicize and promote programs to existing and potential FSA customers. Detailed responsibilities for State CC's are listed in Notice INFO-61.

The following collateral positions should be included in the duties of the CC:

- Public Information Programs – This includes, but is not limited to:
- Communications and Media Coordinator
- GovDelivery Coordinator
- Web Manager.

C Action

Effective **April 1, 2016**, no more than two persons should serve in all duties described. Duties should be listed in the employee's position descriptions.

SED's should do the following:

- identify one person to serve as:
 - SOC to perform duties identified in subparagraph 2 A, and the responsibilities provided in 22-AO
 - CC to perform duties identified in subparagraph 2 B
- provide names of employees serving in each role to DAFO by April 8, 2016, by e-mail to **fsaoutreach@wdc.usda.gov**.

Note: One person can serve full time in both SOC and CC capacity.