

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE


Farm Service Agency  
Washington, DC 20250

Notice PM-2720

**For:** FSA Federal and County Employees

**2009 New Leader Program (NLP)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Management



**1 Overview**

**A Program Announcement**

HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for FY 2009 NLP that is sponsored by the USDA Graduate School. NLP:

- is a 6-month program designed to develop future leaders by providing assessment, experiential learning, and individual development opportunities
- provides solid, developmental training in leadership skills and team building that are enhanced by FSA developmental experiences
- is announced to permanent full-time Federal and County employees at the GS-7 through GS-11 levels or equivalent who have recently entered leadership positions or have a high potential for leadership.

**B Purpose**

This notice provides:

- information about the nomination and selection processes for NLP
- a description of NLP (Exhibit 1).

**Note:** To complete NLP, participants will be required to attend three 1-week residential seminars, a 1-week shadowing assignment, and a 30-day developmental assignment within FSA, outside of their position of record. These assignments can be counted as either calendar days or actual workdays. Participants **must** finish **all** program components within **6 months**. No exceptions will be made. Additional work time will be needed to complete some activities and to meet other requirements that must be accomplished. **Carefully consider these time requirements with the first-line supervisor before submitting a nomination package.**

**Disposal Date**

October 1, 2009

**Distribution**

All FSA Federal and County employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice PM-2720

### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### C Contact

If there are questions about this notice, contact Tanya Coram-Howard, HRD, TDB, NLP Program Coordinator at 202-205-3782.

### 2 Nomination Process

#### A Nomination Procedure

Eligible employees may apply for NLP by submitting a nomination package containing the following:

- completed AD-2014 (Exhibit 2), including supervisory signature (**mandatory**)
- completed New Leader Program Application (Exhibit 3), including supervisory signature

**Notes:** Union officials on 100 percent official time do **not** need supervisory concurrence and signature.

AD-2014 is available from the FFAS Employee Forms/Publications Online Website at <http://intra3.fsa.usda.gov/dam/ffasforms/forms.html>.

- written statement, 1 page minimum, addressing how the following abilities or competencies are supported in their current position:
  - leadership
  - initiative
  - interpersonal communication (people skills)
  - oral communication
  - written communication
  - technical competence

**Note:** Each ability or competency should be addressed separately. The applicant's written statement **must** be signed by their first-line supervisor.

- current OF-612, SF-171, **or** resume signed and dated by the applicant with current home address
- list of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years

**Note:** Do **not** submit a completed SF-182 until the nominee is notified of selection for NLP.

## 2 Nomination Process (Continued)

### A Nomination Procedure (Continued)

- business case, 1 page minimum, written and signed by the first-line supervisor or the appropriate FSA official:
  - stating how NLP will benefit the employee and FSA
  - assessing the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

**Note:** Only employees who follow FSA's nomination procedures in this notice will be considered for selection to participate in NLP. **Do not apply directly to the USDA Graduate School.** FedEx all nomination packages to Tanya Coram-Howard (subparagraph B).

### B Where to Send Nomination Package

Application packages **must** include the original and 3 copies of the completed nomination package. Because of major mail delays, applicants must submit their application package by either of the following options:

- FedEx or UPS to:

Tanya Coram-Howard  
USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB  
1280 Maryland Ave SW  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 490  
Washington DC 20024  
Telephone: 202-205-3782

- USDA Courier Service or hand deliver to:

Tanya Coram-Howard  
USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB  
Portals Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 490  
1280 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington DC 20024.

**Note:** FAXed copies of nomination packages will **not** be accepted.

### C Deadline

All nominations must be **received** in HRD, TDB by **COB June 1, 2009**. Nominations received after this date will **not** be considered. Substitution of nomination items will **not** be permitted after the deadline.

### 3 Selection Process

#### A Participants

FSA may support up to 30 nominees.

#### B Participant Selection

An HRD, TDB specialist will assemble an Assessment Panel consisting of at least 2 members who occupy positions at a grade level not lower than the full performance level of the Long-Term Training Program (LTTP) being filled. There will be an EEO (nonvoting) observer present and there may be a union (nonvoting) representative observing during this process.

#### C Panel Membership

The Assessment Panel:

- will review and rank employee nominations using criteria established FSA-wide for LTTP's
- has the final responsibility for determining best-qualified candidates based on valid LTTP-related criteria and employee's application package.

**Note:** The Assessment Panel refers best-qualified candidates to the Administrator or designee for approval for the allotted number of spaces approved. **No panel will be held if the number of nominations received does not exceed the number of slots available.**

#### D USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

FSA provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be on a case-by-case basis.

The work of candidates while on official time, performing labor relations representational functions, must be viewed with neutrality.

### **3 Selection Process (Continued)**

#### **E Labor-Management Obligation**

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

#### **F Program Costs**

Tuition for FY 2009 NLP is \$2,995 per participant.

**Notes:** Tuition, travel, lodging costs, and per diem for FSA Federal and County Office employees shall be coded to their originating office. Tuition cost should be absorbed within their office allotment. Offices may request travel reimbursement up to \$10,000 from BUD once travel expenses have been incurred. FSA Federal and County Offices will be responsible for funding any additional travel costs over \$10,000 within their travel budgets. Submit requests to BUD using the allotment change request forms.

Travel and a minimum of 3 trips (various locations) are required.

Upon notification that a County Office employee has been selected, SF-182's should have an appropriation/fund in block 21 for County Offices using a 14-digit line of accounting, such as "987SSCCC010000". See 98-FI, Exhibit 13 for County Office organization codes.

#### **G Accommodation**

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this training should contact Tanya Coram-Howard at 202-205-3782.

**Note:** Some accommodation services, such as a sign language interpreter, require at least 3 workdays notice to schedule.

#### **H Selection Notification**

HRD, TDB will notify employees whose names are forwarded to the USDA Graduate School for consideration. The USDA Graduate School will send selectees written notification of their acceptance.

**Description of 2009 NLP****PROGRAM DESIGN**

The New Leader Program (NLP) is a 6-month program open to women and men at the GS-7 through GS-11 levels. This program is designed for nonsupervisors with less than 1 year's supervisory experience during their careers within the Federal government.

The program is tailored to each participant's developmental needs, focusing on the USDA Graduate School's Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI) for leadership/managerial skills and personality assessment. In addition to LEI, other program components include the following:

- personal development action plan
- leadership development team activity and presentation
- developmental work assignments
- shadowing assignments
- executive interviews
- management readings
- management book reviews.

**PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

NLP is structured around three 5-day residential seminars held within a 250-mile radius of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. During residential sessions, participants attend a different seminar each day with topics reflecting core leadership competencies. In addition to the core classroom curriculum, individual developmental assignments will need to be completed outside of the participant's normal work hours. Classroom learning and individual assignments allow participants to tailor the program to specifically meet their developmental needs.

**Orientation Session**

Participants will begin with a 1-week orientation session to establish a working relationship between other participants and program staff. Held at a residential training site, this session will outline program requirements, policies, expectations, and opportunities.

**Practical Applications for New Leaders**

The Practical Applications for New Leaders Session is a 1-week residential seminar that will apply various team development concepts and skills within their respective organizations, understand how emotional intelligence impacts leadership, learn and apply principles of problem solving and decision-making, become culturally competent in the workplace, apply techniques to improve interpersonal communication, gain insight and practical tools to achieve competency in managing conflicts, and apply new skills and practice using different conflict modes.

**Description of 2009 NLP (Continued)****PROGRAM CURRICULUM (Continued)****Managing Transition, Team Presentations, Closeout, and Graduation**

The Managing Transition, Team Presentations, Closeout and Graduation Session is a 1-week residential seminar where participants will develop individual skills and leadership competencies, and will reinforce classroom learning. These activities are designed to give participants insight into their agency's mission, culture, and organizational structure. In addition, these developmental activities provide exposure to other perspectives and methods for accomplishing work.

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS****Individual Needs Assessments**

Before attending the orientation session, participants will complete LEI to assess their level of strengths and developmental needs.

**Leadership Development Action Plan**

Each participant will design a Personalized Leadership Development Action Plan (PDAP), which will act as a blueprint and road map throughout the course of the program. This plan will be tailored to individual needs and consist of customized developmental objectives and experiences that will assist the participant's growth and utilize the program's integrated approach to leadership development. PDAP should include all program requirements and other continual learning activities.

**Leadership Development Team Activity**

During the orientation session, participants will be assigned to Leadership Development Teams. These teams are designed to strengthen team building and interpersonal skills, stimulate commitment to personal development and continued learning, and provide a forum to explore current issues facing managers/executives in the Federal workplace. Each team will design and deliver a 1-hour presentation on 3 of the 22 LEI components. This presentation will be conducted during the Close-Out Week Activity.

**Developmental Assignments**

Developmental Assignments are designed to prepare participants for the nature and scope of responsibilities they are likely to assume and to strengthen their competence to perform well in another position. At a minimum, participants will complete one 30-day developmental assignment outside of their position of record; however inside of the participant's agency. These assignments can be counted as either calendar or actual workdays. Assignments must be completed during the program year.

**Description of 2009 NLP (Continued)****PROGRAM COMPONENTS (Continued)****Shadowing Assignment**

Each participant will complete a 5-day (1-week) assignment “shadowing” a Federal manager/executive at the GS-13 level to Senior Executive Service (SES) level. By observing managers/executives in action, participants will gain exposure to managerial duties, responsibilities, and approaches. Participants will observe how the concepts learned in the program are applied in real-world situations

**Executive Interview**

Participants will interview 1 Federal manager employee from the GM/GS-13 through SES level. The Executive Interview will provide opportunities for personal interaction with high-level executives to strengthen interpersonal skills.

**Management Book Reviews**

Participants will read and review 2 books on leadership and management issues. This component will enhance each participant’s sensitivity to management environment issues, trends, and managerial concepts that may impact effectiveness as managers and supervisors, and strengthening analytical skills. A management reading list is provided at the orientation session.

**Program Impact Paper**

The purpose of the Program Impact Paper is to provide participants an opportunity to reflect on the year’s experiences. The Program Impact Paper must be a minimum of 3 pages.

**Close-Out Week Activities**

During the final week of NLP, participants will participate in the following activities to round out their program experience.

- Leadership In the New Millennium is an opportunity to learn from experts and executives on the future of leadership in the Federal government.
- Leadership Development Team Presentations where each team will conduct a 1-hour presentation based on 3 of the 22 LEI competencies.
- Graduation Ceremony where agency program coordinators, supervisors, agency officials, and guests are invited to celebrate each participant’s success.

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

**Orientation:** August 2 - 7, 2009 – Virginia Beach, VA

**Session 2:** November 1 – 6, 2009 – Valley Forge, PA

**Graduation:** January 31 – February 5, 2010 – Hunt Valley, MD



## AD-2014, 2009 New Leader Program for FSA Employees Nomination Form

Following is an example of AD-2014.

This form is available electronically.		
<b>AD-2014</b> (05-14-09)		
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency		
<b>2009 NEW LEADER PROGRAM FOR FSA EMPLOYEES</b> <b>NOMINATION FORM</b> <b>Note: Deadline June 1, 2009</b>		
<b>Important Notice: Tuition, travel, lodging costs and per diem will be funded by the employee's office budget.</b>		
<b>PART A – GENERAL INFORMATION</b>		
1. If completed by field office, employees should enter name of State and County of Applicant:		
STATE: _____ COUNTY: _____		
2. Applicant's Name and Home Address <i>(Include ZIP Code)</i>	4. Division/Staff <i>(Include Office Address and ZIP Code)</i>	5. Room No. and STOP Code
3. Home Telephone No. <i>(Include Area Code)</i>	6. Work Telephone No. <i>(Include Area Code)</i>	7. Work FAX No. <i>(Include Area Code)</i>
8. Title of Present Position	9. Grade <i>(GS or CO and Grade)</i>	10. Are you a Career Employee? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Supervisory signature is <b>required</b> before submitting your name for consideration for this training. Supervisor shall sign to indicate that they have reviewed your nomination package. <b>NOTE:</b> Union officials on 100% official time do not need supervisory concurrence and signature.		
11A. Supervisor Print Name	11B. Supervisor's Signature	11C. Date <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>
11D. State Executive Director Print Name <i>(Required for all FSA State and County Federal and Non-Federal Employees)</i>	11E. State Executive Director's Signature	11F. Date <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## AD-2014, 2009 New Leader Program for FSA Employees Nomination Form (Continued)

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**PART B - INSTRUCTIONS**

12. Required information to be included with this nomination form:

A. Provide a written statement 1 page minimum addressing how the following abilities or competencies are supported in your current position (*Note: When providing the written statements, address the following abilities or competencies individually*):

- Leadership
- Initiative
- Interpersonal Communication (People Skills)
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication
- Technical Competence

Your written statement must be signed by your first line supervisor.

B. (*PART C*) A business case 1 page minimum written and signed by your first line supervisor or the appropriate Agency official stating how the program will benefit the employee and their agency. The business case should also assess the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

C. Current OF-612 or resume signed and dated by the applicant with current home address.

Please submit this nomination form and information listed in Items 9A through 9E including the original and three (3) copies. All completed nomination packages must be received in the Training and Development Branch by **COB June 1, 2009**.

**PART C - BUSINESS CASE**

The business case must be 1 page minimum written and signed by the applicant's first line supervisor or the appropriate Agency official stating how the program will benefit the employee and their agency. The business case should also assess the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

Statements for the Business Case are as follows:

1. How will this program benefit the applicant?
2. How will the applicant's completion of this program benefit your office?
3. How will the applicant's completion of this program benefit the agency?

13A. Supervisor Print Name	13B. Supervisor's Signature	13C. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

**14. Please send the original and three (3) copies of the completed nomination package using either of the methods listed below:**

If sending by Regular U.S. Mail, send to:

Tanya Coram-Howard  
USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB  
STOP 0574  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250-0574

OR

If sending by USDA Courier Service, FED-EX, UPS, or Hand Deliver to:

Tanya Coram-Howard  
USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB  
1280 Maryland Ave, SW 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Suite 490  
Washington, DC 20024

TELEPHONE: 202-205-3782

TELEPHONE: 202-205-3782

**NOTE: FAXED COPIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED.**

## USDA Graduate School NLP Application

**New Leader Program Application**

(To Be Completed by the Applicant)

**PART A: Applicant Information**

Name	
Position Series, Grade and Title	
Email Address	
Home Address	
Work Address	
Work Phone	
Work Fax	
Home Phone	
Educational Level	
Social Security Number	
Total Government Employment (years)	
Total Other Employment (years)	

**PART B: Applicant's Immediate Supervisor**

Name	
Position Series, Grade and Title	
Email Address	
Work Address	
Work Phone	

**PART C: Program Coordinator**

Name	Tanya Coram-Howard
Position Series, Grade and Title	Human Resources Specialist
Email Address	<a href="mailto:Tanya.Coram-Howard@usda.gov">Tanya.Coram-Howard@usda.gov</a>
Work Address	FedEX: 1280 Maryland Ave., SW, Suite 490, Washington, DC 20024
Work Phone	202-205-3782

## USDA Graduate School NLP Application (Continued)

**PART D: Purpose for Applying**

To Be Completed by the Applicant: Please state your purpose for applying and how your participation in the **New Leader Program** will support your career goals.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**PART E: Evaluation of Performance**

To Be Completed by the Applicant's Supervisor: Please summarize the applicant's current performance.

Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_