

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

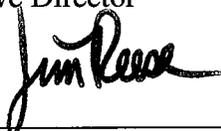
Farm Service Agency
100 USDA Suite 102
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074-2653

OK Notice AO-1046

For: County Offices

Supplemental Ethics Regulations - Reminders

Approved by: State Executive Director



1 Overview

A

Background

The Department of Agriculture with concurrence of the Office of Government Ethics issued regulations for USDA employees that supplement the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch. More extensive regulations were implemented for employees of the Farm Service Agency relative to outside employment activities and certain financial interests. These regulations, codified as chapter LXXIII of 5 CFR, part 8301, were effective March 24, 2000.

B

Purpose

This Notice provides a brief summary of the supplemental ethics regulations for FSA employees.

2 Applicability

A

Federal Employees

The Supplemental Regulations apply to all federal employees with limited exceptions and waiver provisions.

B

COC Employees

Regulations were extended to include non-Federal county employees with similar exceptions and waiver provisions.

Disposal Date: January 1, 2004

Distribution: Oklahoma FSA Offices

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3 Regulations

A

Other Employment Every FSA employee, except State and County Committee members, must obtain prior approval from the Agency before engaging in any outside employment with a person or firm that may be directly affected by decisions made by the office in which the employee serves. Requests for approval are to be submitted to the immediate supervisor who will forward the request to the Administrative Officer.

B

Direct Loans All federal and non-federal employees (except committee members), their spouses and minor children are prohibited from receiving direct loans. Exceptions include any direct loan obtained before March 24, 2000 or before the individual became an employee of FSA. Employees with pre-existing loans or whose spouse or minor child had a pre-existing loan must submit to the State Executive Director a written disqualification from taking any official action on any such loan.

C

Guaranteed Loans All committee members, federal, and non-federal employees are eligible for guaranteed loans.

D

Real Estate No FSA employee, or spouse, or minor child of an FSA employee may directly or indirectly purchase real estate held in the FSA inventory. Waivers may be granted by the State Executive Director with concurrence of the FSA headquarters ethics advisor.

E

Transactions No FSA employee, spouse, or minor child of an FSA employee may directly or indirectly purchase, sell or lease real property to or from, a FSA program participant. Waivers for employees may be granted in advance by the State Executive Director. Though committee members are excluded from this restriction, leasing from FLP borrowers or applicants is discouraged. (See 16-AO, par. 137 C.) Waivers for county committee members may be granted by the State Committee.

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4 Reminders

A Ethics Official

The Administrative Officer, Marty Alberts, is the Designated Agency Ethics Official for Oklahoma.

B Approval Requests

Requests for approval of outside employment are to include:

- Employee name, headquarters, title, grade and salary
- Description of outside employment duties/services
- Description of relationship to official duties
- Name and address of employer and location of work
- Estimated time devoted to the outside employment
- Statement if work will be performed outside duty hours
- Method or basis of compensation
- Statement if compensation is from any USDA funding
- Statement if employer is seeking relationship with USDA

C Waiver Requests

For purchase of real estate from FSA inventory, a joint waiver request by the program participant and the FSA employee must be submitted to the State Executive Director.

5 Action

A CEDs and FLMs

County Executive Directors and Farm Loan Managers shall ensure employees they supervise are aware of these supplemental regulations.