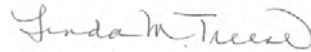


For: State and County Offices

Revoking Bridges to Opportunity (Bridges) Partner Agreements

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

The Bridges Partner Agreement was developed as a way to formalize the relationship between FSA and a “Bridges Partner” in the delivery of the Bridges service. Bridges Partners worked closely with FSA to enhance service to customers by providing resources, receiving referrals, and collaborating with other Bridges Partners.

The Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) portal and *Farmers.gov* initiative includes incorporating the Bridges service and its enabling software application into the new platform. As a result, the scope of the Bridges service is changing, and the change requires immediate action by State and County Offices, as applicable.

On January 31, 2018, Bridges Partners and FSA employees were informed of the end of the referral component of the Bridges service, effective February 9, 2018, as an initial step in the transition of Bridges to the FPAC portal platform. Bridges Partners must now be notified that the agreement they signed is being revoked by FSA as part of the transition.

B Purpose

This notice provides State and County Offices:

- guidance for issuing agreement revocation notification to Bridges Partners
- suggested notification language
- a deadline for issuing notifications (May 1, 2018).

C Contact

Please direct questions to Glenn Schafer, Program Manager, by either of the following:

- e-mail to bridges2opportunity@fsa.usda.gov
- telephone at 202-236-4983.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2018	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 Revoking Bridges Partner Agreements

A Notifying Bridges Partners

Written notification by the party seeking to revoke the agreement is required at least 15 calendar days in advance of the identified end date according to Section VI of the agreement.

Because agreements are established with State and local partners, notification must come from the office that initiated the agreement with the Bridges Partner. The FSA representative, or their successor, who signed the agreement on behalf of FSA shall notify the Bridges Partner that the agreement is being revoked. Notification shall be issued using the letterhead from the respective office.

Notification may be delivered to the partner by regular mail or e-mail. If e-mail is used, the notification letter shall be converted to PDF format and attached to the e-mail message. The letter shall also be uploaded and attached to the Bridges Partner's account record within The Bridge for future reference. Receipt confirmation is not required; however, a courtesy phone call to the Bridges Partner as a follow-up to the written notification is recommended to answer any questions.

B Responsibilities

Designated State and County Bridges Coordinators and Resource Managers, or their successors, are responsible for identifying and notifying the Bridges Partners of the revocation of the agreements for their respective State or County Office by the date specified in subparagraph 3 B. State Bridges Coordinators are responsible for notifying the National Office that the notification process has been completed as specified in subparagraph 3 D.

3 Required Action

A Identifying Notification Recipients

Bridges Partners may be identified by selecting "Organizations" on the main menu in The Bridge, and then selecting the "Bridges Partner Organizations" view from the drop-down menu. The list can be sorted and filtered by any of the column headings to view Bridges Partners associated with the respective State or County Office, or by creating a "New View."

Additionally, hardcopies of the agreements should have been filed in OUTF 2 files according to paragraph 36 of the Bridges Guide, 32-AS, and 32-AS Supplement. Electronic copies should have also been uploaded to the respective Bridges Partner account record in The Bridge according to the Guide, subparagraph 36 C.

Note: USDA Agencies and Public Partners do **not** require an agreement.

B Notification Deadline

Bridges Partners shall be notified of agreement revocation **no later than May 1, 2018**.

3 Required Action (Continued)

C Suggested Language

The following suggested language shall be used to notify the Bridges Partner of the agreement revocation. The language may be modified, as appropriate, for unique situations.

Dear Bridges Partner:

We appreciate your collaboration with the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) as a Bridges Partner in the delivery of the Bridges to Opportunity (Bridges) service. You may be aware that USDA recently launched a new initiative called "Farmers.gov" under the new Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area. This initiative is an effort to enhance customer service provided by FPAC agencies, with elements of the Bridges service incorporated into the Farmers.gov service.

As a result, the Bridges Partner Agreement (agreement) you signed that formalized your partnership with FSA as a Bridges Partner is being revoked effective June 1, 2018. The agreement provides that either party may revoke the agreement with a 15-calendar day written notification to the other party.

FSA values your partnership and wants to continue to work with you to enhance service to our agricultural community. Although Bridges is changing, there will be new opportunities for partnerships with USDA made available through the Farmers.gov initiative in the near future.

Thank you for your contribution to delivering the Bridges service. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Respectfully,

*Employee Name
Employee Title
State/County Office Name*

D Informing the National Office of Notification

Designated State Bridges Coordinators shall inform the National Office that all Bridges Partners have been notified for their State:

- by e-mail to **Bridges2Opportunity@fsa.usda.gov**
- no later than **May 4, 2018**.