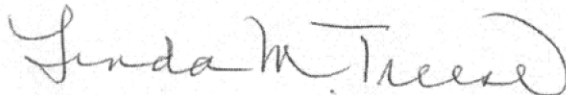


For: FSA Federal and County Employees

**2020 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians Development Program**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



**1 Overview**

**A Program Announcement**

DAFO is accepting applications for the FY 2020 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians (PT Leadership) development program. PT Leadership program:

- is announced for Federal (GS) and County (CO) Program Technicians (PT) at the GS/CO-7 level or higher
- is a competency-based leadership development program designed to elevate PT's into more effective leaders in their current position or help them acquire leadership skills to advance their career path with the Agency
- uses an integrated approach to leadership development through self-assessment, learning exercises, role-play experiences, and cohort team activities
- is a 9-month development program.

**B State Submissions**

There is no limit to the number of applications a State may submit to DAFO.

All applications must be approved (signed) by the SED. If the SED does not approve an application, then the SED must provide the PT with a reason for the decision in writing.

Disposal Date	Distribution
October 1, 2020	All FSA Federal and County employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice AO-1739

### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### C Purpose

This notice provides:

- the application and selection processes for the PT Leadership program
- a description of the PT Leadership program (Exhibit 1).

**Note:** To complete the PT Leadership program, participants will be required to:

- attend 2 virtual instructor-led training sessions (January 28, 29, or 30, 2020, and September 15, 16, or 17, 2020)
- attend 3 live instructor-led training sessions (March, May, and July)
- complete developmental assignment between training sessions (additional work time outside the office may be needed to complete assignments)
- finish **all** program components within **the specified timeframe**, no exceptions will be made
- carefully consider these time requirements with their first-line supervisor before submitting an application package.

#### D Contact

For questions about this notice, contact Teresa Martin, DAFO, by either:

- telephone at 202-690-0431
- e-mail to [teresa.martin@usda.gov](mailto:teresa.martin@usda.gov).

### 2 Application Process

#### A Applicant Qualifications

Applicants for the PT Leadership program must:

- be full-time, permanent GS or CO PT's
- be at the GS/CO-7 level or higher
- demonstrate leadership potential
- have completed the "Program Technician: Skills for Success" training.

## Notice AO-1739

### 2 Application Process (Continued)

#### B Application Procedure

Eligible employees may apply for the PT Leadership program by submitting an application package containing the following:

- FSA-509, 2020 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians Application Form (Exhibit 2), including supervisor and SED signature

**Note:** FSA-509 is available from the FSA Employees Forms/Publications Online Website at <https://inside.fsa.usda.gov>.

- business case statement, written and signed by the applicant's first-line supervisor, stating how the PT Leadership program will benefit the applicant, their office and FSA.

**Note:** Only applicants who follow the application procedure in this notice will be considered for selection to participate in the PT Leadership program.

#### C Submitting the Application Package

The contents of the application package **must** include:

- FSA-509
- business case statement signed by the applicant's supervisor.

Submit completed application packages to both of the following by email:

- Teresa Martin at [teresa.martin@usda.gov](mailto:teresa.martin@usda.gov)
- Jean Knight at [jean.knight@usda.gov](mailto:jean.knight@usda.gov).

### 2 Application Process (Continued)

#### D Deadline

All application packages must be **received** in DAFO by **COB December 11, 2019**. Application packages received after this date will **not** be considered.

### 3 Selection Process

#### A Participants

FSA may support up to 30 participants per class, and up to 3 classes per year.

#### B Participant Selection

Participants will be selected by an Assessment Panel who have a complete understanding of PT roles and responsibilities.

#### C Assessment Panel Duties

The Assessment Panel:

- will review and rank the applications using criteria established by DAFO
- has the final responsibility for determining best-qualified candidates based on the application package
- refers the best-qualified candidates to DAFO for approval.

#### D USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at **How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint** and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**3 Selection Process (Continued)**

**E Program Costs**

Travel, lodging costs, and per diem for FSA GS and CO employees will be covered by Washington-directed travel funds, except for the shadowing assignment which will be funded by State travel funds.

**F Reasonable Accommodations**

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this training program should contact Teresa Martin, DAFO, by:

- telephone at 202-690-0431
- e-mail to [teresa.martin@usda.gov](mailto:teresa.martin@usda.gov).

**G Selection Notification**

DAFO will notify all applicants, their supervisor, and SED, if they were or were not selected for the program, no later than January 17, 2020.

**Description of 2019 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians**

Following is a description of 2019 leadership excellence for program technicians.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians (PT Leadership) is a 9-month development program open to all Program Technicians (PT) both Federal (GS) and County (CO) at the GS/CO-7 level and above. This development program builds upon the “Program Technician Skills for Success” training.

The program is tailored to the development needs of PT’s, focusing on leadership skills necessary to become a more effective leader in place, or prepare for career advancement opportunities.

Program components include the following:

- Leadership development team activities
- Self-assessment activities
- Development work assignments such as:
  - employee interviews and shadowings
  - leadership readings and book reviews
  - cohort team projects.

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

PT Leadership program is as follows:

- Session-1: January 28, 29, or 30, 2020, 2-hour Virtual Instructor-Led Training, from the PT’s duty station.
- Session-2: March 2020, live 2-day Instructor-Led Training (with travel 4-days away from duty station). Participants will be given development assignments to be completed prior to the next training session. The sessions will take place at the USDA Beacon Building in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of March 9, 2020.
- Session-3: May 2020, live 3-day Instructor-Led Training (with travel 5-days away from duty station). Participants will be given development assignments to be completed prior to the next training session. The sessions will take place at the USDA Beacon Building in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of May 4, 2020.
- Session-4: July 2020, live 3-day Instructor-Led Training (with travel 5-days away from duty station). Participants will be given development assignments to be completed prior to the next training session. This session will take place at the USDA South Building in Washington, D.C., the week of July 20, 2020.
- Session-5: September 15, 16, or 17, 2020, 2-hour Virtual Instructor-Led Training, from the PT’s duty station.

**Description of 2019 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians (Continued)**

<p><b>Leadership Development Plan</b></p> <p>Each participant will design a Personalized Leadership Development Plan. This plan will be tailored to the participant’s individual needs and consist of customized developmental objectives and experiences that will assist the participant’s growth and use the program’s integrated approach to leadership development.</p>
<p><b>Cohort Team Activities</b></p> <p>During Session 2, participants will be assigned to a small group within their Cohort Team. Throughout the rest of the program, each small group will explore program-related issues and provide feedback and support on team activities. This Cohort concept is designed to strengthen leadership and interpersonal skills, stimulate commitment to personal development, value and increase the understanding of diversity, and explore current issues facing PT leaders in the workplace.</p>
<p><b>Shadowing Assignment</b></p> <p>Between Session 2 and 4, participants are required to complete a 1- or 2-day job shadowing. The participant will select a person in a position at least 1 grade level above their own, to observe leadership and interpersonal skills that the PT can learn to advance their own skills. The person being shadowed can be an FSA or sister Agency employee. Participant will do a write-up on the shadowing experience.</p>
<p><b>Employee Interviews</b></p> <p>Participants will conduct two informal interviews with an employee/manager in a position different from their own (Key, Lead, or Chief PT, Loan Analyst, Program Specialist, Program Chief, AO/EO, FLS, FLM, CED, DD, National Office DAFO, FLP or FP, Sister Agency, etc.) between Sessions 2 and 3, and between Sessions 3 and 4. These interviews will provide participants an opportunity to have visibility at a career level that may require leadership and interpersonal skills different from their own. Participant will do a write-up on the interviews.</p>
<p><b>Developmental Readings</b></p> <p>To broaden knowledge of leadership skills, and to strengthen analytical and interpersonal skills, participants will be required to read and write a report on 1 book on leadership prior to Session 4.</p>

**FSA-509, 2020 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians Development Program – Application Form**

Following is an example of FSA-509.

This form is available electronically.

<b>FSA-509</b> (11-21-19)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency	
<b>2020 LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE FOR PROGRAM TECHNICIANS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - APPLICATION FORM</b>			
<b>NOTE: Deadline to apply: <u>December 11, 2019</u></b>			
<b>Important Notice.</b> Travel, lodging costs and per diem will be funded by the National Office Washington Directed Travel funds.			
<b>PART A – GENERAL INFORMATION</b>			
1. Employees should enter name of their State and County:			
STATE: _____		COUNTY: _____	
2. Applicant's Name	3. Office Address	4A. Work Telephone No. (Include Area Code)	
		4B. Additional Telephone No. (Include type, Cell or home) <input type="checkbox"/> Cell <input type="checkbox"/> Home	
5. Title of Present Position	6. Grade (GS or CO and Grade)	7. Number of years as a Program Technician	
8. Supervisor's signature is <b>required</b> indicating they have reviewed and approve your application package. State Executive Director signature is <b>required</b> before submitting your application.			
9A. Applicant's Signature		9B. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
10A. Supervisor Print Name	10B. Supervisor's Signature	10C. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
10D. State Executive Director Print Name (Required for all FSA State and County, Federal and Non-Federal Employees)	10E. State Executive Director's Signature	10F. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.*

*To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*



FSA-509, 2020 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians Development Program – Application Form (Continued)

FSA-509 (11-21-19)

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**PART B - INSTRUCTIONS**

All completed application packages must be **received** in the office of the **Deputy Administrator for Field Operations** by **COB Wednesday, December 11, 2019**, to be considered.

**PART C - BUSINESS CASE (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SUPERVISOR)**

The business case statement must be signed by the applicant's first line supervisor or the appropriate Agency official, stating how the program will benefit the employee, their office and the agency. The business case should also assess the applicant's potential gain from this leadership 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?

**PART D - PURPOSE FOR APPLYING (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)**

Please state your purpose for applying and how your participation in the **Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians Development Program** will support your career goals. (do not attach additional pages)

**PART E – PLEASE SEND THE COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKAGE BY EMAIL TO:**

The office of Deputy Administrator for Field Operations:

**Teresa Martin** and **Jean Knight**  
[teresa.martin@usda.gov](mailto:teresa.martin@usda.gov) and [jean.knight@usda.gov](mailto:jean.knight@usda.gov)

**All questions should be directed to:**

Teresa Martin, Program Manager for:  
 Leadership Excellence for Program Technicians  
 Office of Deputy Administrator for Field Operations  
**Telephone:** 202-690-0431