

**For:** State and County Offices**2022 COC and Urban COC Nominations and Election****Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Field Operations**1 Overview****A Background**

COC and Urban COC elections provide farmers and ranchers the opportunity to run for and be elected to represent producers in their community on their local FSA COC. All farmers, ranchers, and urban growers are encouraged to consider running for COC seats.

Significant emphasis is placed on improving COC diversity. FSA continues to work diligently to increase targeted underserved representation on COC's through outreach activities. As a result of these efforts, State and County Offices have been able to place many more underserved candidates' names on ballots. Efforts must be continued and expanded to ensure that targeted underserved farmers and ranchers have every opportunity to be elected to COC's and participate in their local elections.

FSA must also continue to encourage voters to look to beginning farmers and ranchers as a source for COC nominees. COC members and County Office employees must reach out to beginning farmers and ranchers with information and encouragement to run for a seat on COC and encourage them to vote as well. Beginning farmer contacts should include, but **not** be limited to, county extension educators, high school and college instructors, beginning farmer training programs funded by USDA, FSA cooperative agreement holders, local stakeholder organizations, and membership-based farm organizations.

Publicity and outreach efforts must be directed to all producers, with additional emphasis on targeted underserved (ethnic minorities and women) farmers and ranchers and traditionally underserved (beginning) farmers and ranchers. Every means must be used to contact and inform organizations whose membership includes underserved (minorities and women) farmers and ranchers, as these organizations have the opportunity to nominate farmers and ranchers for candidacy to COC in addition to increasing producers' awareness of COC elections.

| Disposal Date              | Distribution                                         |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| January 1, 2023<br>5-10-22 | State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices |

## 1 Overview (Continued)

### A Background (Continued)

In addition to current COC members and County Office employees encouraging producers to submit FSA-669A's, producers must also be strongly encouraged to return their completed ballots. Approximately 2 million ballots are mailed annually, yet only approximately 13 percent of the ballots are returned. This means that even a small increase in the percent of ballots voted and returned can increase the opportunity for a candidate to be elected.

The election requirements, including the support of FSA programs and agricultural practices, is required for both traditional and Urban COC's. Urban COC's will focus on the support of urban and suburban agricultural practices, conducting outreach to urban producers and stakeholders, and providing feedback to FSA on the needs of urban producers.

**Note:** Urban COC's are being piloted in 11 counties throughout the United States. The terms "COC" and "COC election" refer to both urban and traditional COC's.

### B Purpose

This notice provides STC's, COC's, County Offices, Outreach Coordinators, and State Office staff responsible for COC elections with the following:

- instructions on carrying out the 2022 COC election
- minimum requirements for COC Outreach
- 2022 COC election schedule (Exhibit 1)
- sample postcard wording for information on obtaining FSA-669A (Exhibit 2)
- actions to report county outreach efforts made in Outreach Tracking Information System (OTIS) (Exhibit 3).

## 1 Overview (Continued)

### C Contacts

If there are questions about this notice, contact the following.

| IF the question is for...                     | THEN contact...                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2022 COC election                             | Cherie Moore, DAFO, by either of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>email to <b>cherie.moore@usda.gov</b></li> <li>telephone at 202-941-8659.</li> </ul>                       |
| COC election outreach or OTIS entries for COC | Jennifer Perez-Cole, Outreach Office (OO), by either of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>email to <b>fsaoutreach@usda.gov</b></li> <li>telephone at 202-515-6864.</li> </ul> |
| Urban COC election outreach                   | Jenna Segal, OO, by either of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>email to <b>fsaoutreach@usda.gov</b></li> <li>telephone at 202-981-1054.</li> </ul>                           |

## 2 COC and County Office Outreach Coordinator (COOC) Action

### A County Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen

SED's and STC's will ensure that all County Offices complete the County Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen on the COC Election website, according to subparagraph 3 C, and according to the timeframe in Exhibit 1. The Postcard Information Report will be available in the State AO Reports to allow State Offices to provide the oversight to ensure that County Offices have entered their postcard information and LAA's chosen to receive postcards.

**Note:** Locations with an Urban COC will need to complete postcard information for both their traditional COC and for their Urban COC.

### B County Offices That Do Not Receive Any FSA-669A's

SED's and STC's will closely monitor each County Office to ensure that at least one FSA-669A is received for each LAA up for election **before** the end of the nomination period.

If a County Office has received no FSA-669A's by **July 18, 2022**, SED's and STC members will review the County Office's outreach efforts and provide assistance with obtaining a nominee by making personal contact with the following:

- eligible producers to encourage nomination of themselves or others
- partner organizations to enlist their assistance in providing an eligible nominee.

## 2 COC and COOC Action (Continued)

### B County Offices That Do Not Receive Any FSA-669A's (Continued)

**Note:** Elections held in the wrong LAA's result in added expenses in time and money for FSA. It is the joint responsibility of CED and COC in **every** County Office to accurately identify the correct LAA's up for election each year. See 15-AO, subparagraph 79 A for guidance.

## 3 COC and County Office Employee Action

### A Correct LAA's Are Holding Elections

COC's and/or employees will ensure that:

- FSA-669A's are available at the counter for producers
- all eligible voters listed in LAA's that will be conducting elections are notified of nomination and election dates and procedure
- maps are posted in the Service Center and in public locations that clearly identify LAA boundaries and LAA's that will be conducting elections
- provide the <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/county-committee-elections/index> website address for COC election materials to the public and inform the public that for:
  - FSA-669A, scroll down to the links under "2022 Election Materials" and CLICK "2022 Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election" or "2022 Nomination Form for Urban Agriculture County FSA Committee Election"
  - fact sheets, scroll down to the links under "Fact Sheets".

### B Eligible Voters

The **Eligible Voters List** contains the names of all producers identified as eligible to vote in each LAA. The **Eligible Voters Mailing List** includes the mailing address (residing in Business Partner) for each of the producers listed. Ballots are mailed to all producers listed on the Eligible Voters List for LAA's up for election in each County Office. The **Producers Not Associated With a COC/LAA List** contains the names of all producers that are not associate with LAA.

COC's and County Office employees are responsible for ensuring that:

- producer mailing addresses are up-to-date in Business Partner
- Eligible Voters List is reviewed

### 3 COC and County Office Employee Action (Continued)

#### B Eligible Voters (Continued)

- Producers Not Associated With a COC/LAA List is reviewed
- voting eligibility has been updated as needed in the COC Election website, “Producer Election Data” file.

#### C Postcard Information Screens

Postcards will be mailed to eligible voters in LAA’s holding an election instead of mailing FSA-669A’s to eligible voters according to 15-AO, subparagraph 107 B. Postcards will be mailed by a printing company at no expense to State Offices. CED’s **must** ensure that the County Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen on the COC Election website is completed correctly to generate postcard mailings to eligible voters in LAA’s holding an election. If these steps are **not** completed, or the wrong LAA’s are selected, **County Offices will be responsible for conducting their own postcard mailing, including postage expenses.**

**Note:** See Exhibit 2 for an example of the wording to be used on postcards.

The County Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen on the COC Election website:

- will be displayed with the message, “According to the Current COC Directory the Following COC and LAA Up For Election this Year”, at the top of the County Committee (COC) Election Screen
- requires selecting COC and LAA’s up for each election in 2022
- will be available to County Offices from **May 2 through May 11, 2022.**

If COC and LAA up for election according to the COC Directory are **not** the same as COC and LAA identified by COC and CED nominated for election, then:

- **COC and CED will follow guidance in 15-AO, subparagraph 79 A to ensure that the correct LAA is selected**
- State Office will be contacted if assistance is needed.

3 COC and County Office Employee Action (Continued)

C Postcard Information Screens (Continued)

| IF COC and LAA up for election according to the COC Directory are... | THEN...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| correct                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select the same COC and LAA from the choices on the County Committee (COC) Election Screen</li> <li>• CLICK “<b>Submit</b>” to display the message, “Transaction Completed”</li> <li>• <b>print</b> the County Committee (COC) Election Screen with the message, “<b>Transaction Completed</b>”, and save.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| incorrect                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select the correct COC and LAA on the County Committee (COC) Election Screen from the choices in the drop-down lists</li> <li>• CLICK “Submit” and the message, “Transaction Completed”, will be displayed</li> <li>• print the County Committee (COC) Election Screen with the message, “<b>Transaction Completed</b>”, and save</li> <li>• update the COC Directory Report with the correct term and years left in term.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> If an office consolidation took place this election year, employees will need to update the control table in the COC software for COC 1 and 2 before updating the Directory Report.</p> |

### 3 COC and County Office Employee Action (Continued)

#### D FSA-669A's and COC Slate

Individuals who want to file FSA-669A's may nominate themselves or other eligible candidates. Eligible candidates may be nominated by organizations representing underserved (minorities and women) farmers and ranchers, or by any eligible producer whose records are administered in the same COC jurisdiction.

FSA-669A:

- must be date-stamped and completed after it is received in the County Office
- provides a "Signature" block for individuals or organizations that are using FSA-669A to nominate an eligible candidate other than themselves

**Note:** It is the nominator's responsibility to obtain the nominee's certification and signature **before** returning FSA-669A to the County Office.

- includes a check (✓) in the "Nominee's Certification" block to identify write-in candidates after election results are known.

There is **no** required minimum number of eligible nominees for a COC's slate, unless there are **no** FSA-669A's filed for an LAA election. If no FSA-669A's are received, see 15-AO, paragraph 108. A separate FSA-669A **must** be used for each individual nomination. Names will **not** be added to COC slates after the nomination period closes, if at least 1 candidate files FSA-669A. If no FSA-669A's are received in a County Office with 4 or more LAA's, COC **must** consider a reduction in LAA's **before** the next election to increase the pool of potential candidates.

**There must be at least 1 candidate in each LAA holding an election.** However, it is in the best interest of each COC to **actively solicit more than 1 nominee:**

- to increase voter interest and participation
- so that an alternate will be available to serve in the event the LAA's regular member becomes unavailable for any reason.

The nomination of eligible producers by voters or community-based organizations is the **only** method used to obtain candidates for COC elections. COC's and County Office employees are responsible for ensuring that all producers are knowledgeable about the COC nomination process.

Candidate **names will not be added by COC's to FSA-669A's** after the end of the nomination period. Every effort **must** be made to obtain at least 1 nomination **before** the end of the nomination period.

### 3 COC and County Office Employee Action (Continued)

#### E Mailing FSA-669A's

Name and address records of eligible voters in Business Partner and the COC Election website are provided to the printing company by Kansas City. This database is used by the printer to mail FSA-669A's to eligible voters in LAA's chosen by County Office users. COC's and County Offices are responsible for ensuring that the information provided is correct. The deadline for updating this information is **September 20, 2022**. No changes or updates may be made after this date, including removing or adding nominee names.

FSA-669A's will be mailed to eligible voters **on November 7, 2022**, by the printing company.

### 4 CED Action

#### A LAA

CED's will ensure that the correct LAA is identified for holding an election in 2022.

#### B Eligible Voters and Nominees

CED's will:

- ensure that producer mailing addresses are up to date in Business Partner
- ensure that voting eligibility has been updated as needed in the COC Election website, "Producer Election Data" file
- ensure that Eligible Voters List is reviewed
- ensure that Producers Not Associated With a COC/LAA List is reviewed
- **ensure that all nominees listed on FSA-593 are recorded in Business Partner as individuals, and are flagged "Eligible to Vote" and listed in the correct COC and LAA in the Producer Election Data File according to 15-AO, subparagraph 109 C, before attempting to enter the ballot information and nominee names into the COC Election website**

**Note:** Particular attention **must** be given to nominees who are members of entities, such as trusts, estates, corporations, limited partnerships, and limited liability corporations. **Only** the eligible voting member may be a candidate. This individual **must** have an Individual Profile Record established in Business Partner according to 15-AO, paragraph 93. Nominees **must** be on the ballot using their name **only** with no other business or entity identifier.

**Example:** John Smith, Jr. or Sue L. Smith will **not** be entered as John Smith, Jr./DBA Smith Farms, or Sue L. Smith Farms.

## 4 CED Action (Continued)

### B Eligible Voters and Nominees (Continued)

- send completed FSA-593 to the State Office no later than September 7, 2022
- enter ballot and nominee information into the COC Election website according to dates provided in Exhibit 1
- review the current COC Member Information Report with COC's to ensure that the correct LAA is identified for holding an election in 2022
- take an active role in contacting representatives of targeted underserved groups to solicit nominations on FSA-669A's and ensure that these groups fully understand COC's role
- be available to meet with targeted underserved farmer and rancher groups, and groups whose membership includes beginning farmers, to fully explain COC nomination and election procedures
- locally reproduce FSA-669A's, fact sheets, and posters from the FSA Internet at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/county-committee-elections/index> and post them in public locations in COC jurisdictions
- distribute information to eligible producers on how to obtain FSA-669A's by completing the County Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen on the COC Election website according to subparagraph 3 C

**Note:** Postcards with this information will be mailed to producers in identified LAA's by a printing company at no expense to State Offices.

- ensure that all producers are informed of all election information, including LAA's holding an election, and where to obtain FSA-669A's
- work with COC's to ensure that information and meetings are thoroughly publicized through all available means.

## 5 Outreach

### A State Offices

SED's, STC's, and State Outreach Coordinators (SOC's) will work together to ensure that all State and local organizations, including Tribal Governments, whose members include targeted underserved farmers and ranchers, are contacted and informed of the upcoming COC nominations and elections, and are provided with COC nomination forms, fact sheets, and posters.

5 Outreach (Continued)

A State Offices (Continued)

SOC's will monitor each county's planned outreach activities entered in OTIS and provide a report to SED by **June 28, 2022**. SED and SOC will review and approve each county's activity plan for inclusion of targeted outreach activities to obtain nominees from underrepresented groups.

SOC's will:

- ensure that all non-media related SED, STC, and State Office-conducted COC activities are recorded in OTIS
- ensure that County Offices enter all non-media related activities and partner organization contacts for COC election outreach in OTIS no later than June 15, 2022
- provide summary status of each county's COC Election Outreach Plan and 22-AO outreach compliance to SED by June 28, 2022
- collaborate with the State Communications Coordinator and Web Manager to ensure that information is shared with targeted media sources and shared on the State's Internet site.

**Note:** States with Federally recognized tribes are required to have tribal outreach plans. SOC's in these States should certify that specific COC sessions are held with tribes explaining the COC nomination and election process. SOC's will be required to report these efforts in OTIS and as part of their end-of-year outreach accomplishment report.

B County Offices

CED's, COC's, and COOC's will immediately develop an election outreach plan that ensures that all local organizations, tribal councils, grower groups, and community-based organizations, whose members include targeted underserved farmers and ranchers, are contacted and informed of the upcoming COC nominations and elections, and are provided with COC nomination forms, fact sheets, and posters.

County Outreach Coordinators will:

- collaborate with CED and COC to upload planned office outreach meetings, teleconferences, and webinars related to COC election into OTIS by June 15, 2022
- inform all producers of the upcoming COC nomination and election processes and dates through external affairs materials (press releases, public service announcements, and GovDelivery bulletins)

**Note:** GovDelivery bulletins, press releases, newsletter articles, mailings, or media-based actions should not be loaded into OTIS.

**5 Outreach (Continued)**

**B County Offices (Continued)**

- conduct informational meetings to explain the COC nomination and election processes to the public
- work with the Communications Coordinator to identify and ensure that information about elections is widely communicated using traditional and nontraditional media outlets that reach underserved communities
- partner with local organizations, associations, clubs, conservation districts, and others that serve underrepresented producers to obtain eligible underserved farmers and ranchers as nominees for COC. Efforts should be made to give underserved minorities opportunities to serve as regular voting members, not deferred to minority advisor positions after the nomination period is over and need is determined. COC's will reflect the agricultural communities that they serve.

Planned COC election outreach activities must specifically promote COC elections. After activities are entered, the COC Election Outreach Plan will be populated with the activities and will be available from the OTIS "Generate a Report" section. County Offices are instructed to review the COC Election Outreach Report to ensure that the planned activities provide a complete and accurate description of COC elections outreach efforts for the year for their office. The report should be kept on file in the local "OUTR" folder for the office.

Outreach for Urban COC's will require proactive steps to recruit eligible producers to be potential voters and nominees. Many urban producers have never applied for an FSA program and may not currently be in the FSA system. Urban producers may have limited knowledge on USDA programs and FSA committees. State and County Offices should increase awareness for USDA programs and encourage members of the urban communities to participate. Continue to work with the State Office, County Office, Communications Coordinator, Outreach Coordinator, NRCS colleagues, and other stakeholders to solicit and educate eligible voters and nominees.

Urban COC's outreach should include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- urban growers
- gardeners and partners
- municipal entities
- non-profits
- representatives from an institution of higher education
- Extension Services
- individuals who represent business and economic development
- individuals with supply chain experience that may include a food aggregator
- wholesale food distributors and food hubs
- individuals who have direct-to-consumer market experience
- Tribal Governments located in designated urban areas.

All other requirements for COC as expected by COOC's can be found in 22-AO.

## 5 Outreach (Continued)

### C OTIS Entries for COC Outreach

Activity types for State and County Offices to upload into OTIS include, but are **not** limited to, the following.

- **Group Meeting** is when an FSA employee participates in a stakeholder or partner meeting in which general information of COC is shared with the audience. This can occur by teleconference and/or webinar.
- **Technical Assistance** is providing in-depth one-on-one assistance outside of the office, in completing nomination forms on how to serve or vote for COC nominations and elections. For example, having a one-on-one producer table at a conference where producers visit with staff one-on-one for assistance.
- **Workshop** is when an FSA employee hosts or conducts a presentation to a group to provide in-depth information on COC. This can occur by webinar.

All activities entered in OTIS for COC Outreach **must**:

- associate National Goal #4 to conduct targeted outreach to underserved producers for serving on locally led committees
- have the FSA Program “COC Election Outreach” selected.

Before adding a new partner organization to OTIS, a search from the list of existing organizations is required to ensure that it is not already in the system. Another employee may have added the same organization with a slightly different name. It is also important to double check for typographical errors before submitting a partner organization’s information.

**Note: Partner organizations are different from a COC outreach contact.** Offices should have an established relationship with organizations entered into OTIS as a partner organization. Do not enter churches, Post Offices, and organizations that are on the office’s “mailing list” as a partner organization. Those should instead be added as a COC contact. See 22-AO for further details on partners.

## 2022 COC Election Schedule

The following provides the 2022 COC election schedule.

| Date                   | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 1, 2022          | <p>COC's and County Offices will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that the correct LAA's are identified for holding an election in 2022 by reviewing the current COC Member Information Report in the COC Election website, "Reports" section and FSA-668</li> <li>complete a review of LAA boundaries</li> <li>send all LAA boundary determinations on FSA-582 to STC for approval.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> COC's will document reviews and determinations of LAA's up for election and LAA boundaries in COC minutes.</p>                                                                                                                                                          |
| May 2 through 11, 2022 | <p>County Offices will complete the County Office Committee (COC) Election Postcard Information Screen on the COC Election website with LAA's up for election. Producers in LAA's holding an election will receive postcards with information on obtaining FSA-669A.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| May 31, 2022           | <p>STC's will complete FSA-582 reviews, approve FSA-582's, and notify County Offices.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> STC's will document reviews and determinations about LAA boundaries in STC minutes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| June 1, 2022           | <p>COC materials are updated on the COC Election website at <a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/county-committee-elections/index">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/county-committee-elections/index</a>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| June 1, 2022           | <p>COC's and County Offices will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the current COC Member Information Report to ensure accuracy of LAA's holding elections</li> <li>review eligible voter lists and verify accuracy as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>remove check (✓) from the "Eligible to Vote" field in the Producer Election Data File for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>voters for whom no valid address can be obtained</li> <li>any entries of "Unknown"</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The "Receive Mail" indicator is overridden for COC elections. All producers' names on the Eligible Voters List will be sent a ballot.</p> |

## 2022 COC Election Schedule (Continued)

| Date                        | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 1, 2022<br>(Continued) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>add eligible voters' names by checking (✓) the "Eligible to Vote" field in the Producer Election Data File</li> <li>ensure that all eligible voters are associated with the correct COC and LAA</li> <li>make an eligibility determination for producers listed on the Producers Not Associated With a COC/LAA List with a date last updated in FY 2020 through 2022 that can be associated with COC and LAA</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This will remove their names from this list and place them on the eligible voters list or ineligible voters list, as designated. It is expected that there will always be names remaining on the Producers Not Associated With a COC/LAA List that cannot be associated with COC and LAA. County Offices that already removed all names that were on the list will apply this guidance to names added in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>issue public notice of election and LAA boundaries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> COC's and CED's will review LAA's holding elections and eligible voter lists for accuracy and record their determinations in COC minutes.</p> |
| June 15, 2022               | Postcards with information on how to obtain nomination forms will be mailed by the printing company to producers in LAA's holding an election, according to LAA's selected by the County Office user.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| June 15, 2022               | <p>COC's and County Offices will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have all planned COC Outreach activities loaded into OTIS</li> <li>complete and print eligible voters list</li> <li>make eligible voter lists available to the public on request.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| June 28, 2022               | SOC's will monitor each County Office's planned outreach activities entered into OTIS and provide a report to SED. SED and SOC will review and approve each county's activity plan for inclusion of targeted outreach activities to obtain nominees from underrepresented groups.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| July 18, 2022               | SED's and STC's will ensure that all County Offices have received at least one FSA-669A and provide assistance in obtaining at least 1 nominee where necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| August 1, 2022              | Final date for County Offices to receive FSA-669A's or for FSA-669A's to be post-marked. County Offices will begin reviewing FSA-669A's.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| August 5, 2022              | Final date for County Office to notify State Office if no FSA-669A's were received for an election.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

## 2022 COC Election Schedule (Continued)

| Date                        | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 10, 2022             | Final date for State Offices to notify DAFO that no FSA-669A's were received in any County Offices.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| September 7, 2022           | <p>Final date for County Offices to mail congratulation letters to nominees. County Offices will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• each nominee is in Business Partner as an individual (first name, possibly middle initial, and last name only; no entities or DBA's)</li> <li>• Business Partner matches the race, ethnicity, and gender information on FSA-669A</li> <li>• the correct determination codes for race, ethnicity, and gender have been selected for each nominee in Business Partner</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> If the nominee has entered the race, ethnicity, and gender on FSA-669A, the determination codes in Business Partner will be updated accordingly and show "Customer Declared".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• each nominee is flagged "Eligible to Vote" and in the correct COC and LAA in the Producer Election Data File.</li> </ul> |
| September 7, 2022           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Offices will enter nominee and ballot data in the COC Election website according to 15-AO, subparagraph 109 D. State Offices will monitor closely to ensure that all elections are entered timely.</li> <li>• Deadline for County Offices to send completed FSA-593 to the State Office.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| September 20, 2022          | <p>Deadline for changes in the following to be included in data provided to the printing company:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name and address</li> <li>• voter eligibility.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| September 26, 2022          | Compile biographies on all approved candidates using the template in 15-AO, Exhibit 5. The biographies will be featured in the October and/or November County Office newsletters and/or bulletins.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| November 7, 2022            | FSA-669 to be mailed by the printing company to each producer on eligible voter lists for LAA's holding an election.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| November 21, 2022           | Reminder to vote postcards will be mailed by the printing company to producers in LAA's holding an election.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| December 5, 2022            | Voted FSA-669's or FSA-669B's to be returned to the County Office or post-marked.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| December 19, 2022           | Final date for COC's and County Offices to count FSA-669's and FSA-669B's.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| December 5 through 20, 2022 | The COC Elections website is available for County Offices to enter election results. County Offices will enter election results.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

**Example of Postcard Wording**

The following is an example of the wording used on postcards according to subparagraph 3 C.

| <b>FSA County Committee (COC) Election</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>June 15 through August 1, 2022, is the period for nominating farmers and ranchers as candidates for the local COC election. FSA encourages all eligible producers to nominate themselves, or another eligible producer, to run for office. Nomination forms (FSA-669A's) are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• at <a href="http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections">http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections</a>, scroll down to the links under "Election Materials" and CLICK "<b>2022 Nomination Form</b>"</li><li>• by picking up FSA-669A at your local FSA office</li><li>• by calling your local office and requesting FSA-669A be sent to you.</li></ul> |
| <b>NOMINATE AND VOTE!</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## Outreach Information

### A Resources and Other Suggested Outreach Tools

The following table provides resources and other suggested outreach tools.

| Resources                                                                                                          | Suggested Usage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PowerPoint for FSA County Committee Election (on the <b>Outreach Intranet page</b> under <b>Program Toolkits</b> ) | Use for presentations at group meetings, workshops, and slide shows at any other events.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| FSA County Committee Fact Sheet (on the <b>Outreach Intranet page</b> under <b>Program Toolkits</b> )              | Use at group meetings, workshops, handouts for fairs, and at Service Center counters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| FSA County Committee Election Brochure (on the <b>Outreach Intranet page</b> under <b>Program Toolkits</b> )       | Use at group meetings, workshops, handouts for fairs, and at Service Center counters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit (on the <b>Outreach Intranet page</b> under <b>Program Toolkits</b> )               | Share materials with stakeholders and organizations that conduct outreach to underserved groups. Ensure that they are aware these resources were created for them to use during their meetings or when talking to members. Toolkit also includes guidance on how stakeholders can use their social media outlets to spread awareness of COC. |
| Submit success stories of impact from successful outreach efforts to diversify COC.                                | <p>Examples of success stories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning farmer joining FSA to become involved and feels that they are impacting their community in a positive way</li> <li>females or minorities who were elected to COC after several years of trying.</li> </ul>                                          |

**Outreach Information (Continued)****B Common Questions for COC****1. How do I pull the report per County for SED review?**

- a. To view 1 county at a time, along with the partner information for partners that are involved in the activity, select the report: COC Election Outreach Plan.
  - i. COC Election Outreach Plan: The COC Election Outreach Plan Report contains Service Center-level activities with “COC Elections Outreach” selected as the FSA program in the activity’s results or, if there are no results, in the activity’s plan. All activities and activity information are included in the report even if it is not approved by the State Outreach Coordinator. Also included is all partner organization information for all partners selected for the activities in the report.
- b. To view all county activities at a time, select the report: COC Election Outreach Demographics. You will be able to see the name of partners listed for each activity, but will be unable to see the partners’ detailed information.
  - i. COC Election Outreach Demographics: The COC Election Outreach Demographics Report contains Service Center-level activities with “COC Elections Outreach” selected as the FSA program in the activity’s results or, if there are no results, in the activity’s plan. All activities and activity information are included in the report even if it is not approved by the State Outreach Coordinator.

**2. I have some counties that are loading newsletters from GovDelivery, but I don’t believe that should count as outreach since it’s a part of their other job requirements. Is this correct?**

- a. That is correct. Media-related COC activities like GovDelivery newsletters will **not** be loaded into OTIS.

**3. When I print the COC Election Outreach Plan for the State Office, none of our State Office outreach activities are listed in the plan using the COC national goal. How can I make the State Office activities appear on the COC Election Outreach Report?**

- a. You will create an Ad Hoc Report. Select “**COC Elections Outreach**” from the FSA Program selection along with other information specific to your search.

**Outreach Information (Continued)****B Common Questions for COC (Continued)**

- 4. If our offices are back operational later in the year, would it be ok to hold workshops in the conference room of the County Office or do we need to try to hold them out in the county somewhere? If we need to hold them in the county, do I need to hold 4 of them in each LAA? For example, we are having an election in Lamar and Forrest County this time.**
  - a. There is no requirement on the number of meetings each county should host. However, when normal office operations resume, informational sessions should be planned to promote COC nominations. In this case, the workshops can include all LAA's up for election in those counties in each meeting topic. You can hold 2 meetings on 2 topics in the 1 county and 2 more meetings on the other topic in the other county, just as long as both are fairly accessible by both counties.
- 5. Because we are expected to do targeted underserved outreach, can you tell me the difference between "outreach" and "targeted underserved outreach"?**
  - a. Outreach means the process of expanding awareness and delivery of FSA programs and services to the widest possible customer base.
  - b. Targeted outreach means a process that provides and expands technical assistance, training, and delivering FSA programs and service to an ever-growing and diverse customer base including, but not limited to, youth, women, beginning, African American, Native American, Alaskan Native, Hispanic American, Asian or Pacific Islander, farm workers, limited resource, persons under the poverty level, veterans, and disabled farmers and ranchers.