

For: State Offices and Service Centers

Preparing for Farm Loan Program Application Software

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

FLP application software is being migrated from the AT&T 3B2 platform to the IBM A/36 platform. Application software systems for the A/36 platform will soon be deployed nationwide. It is vital to FSA's mission that SED's ensure that technical resources are deployed and that employees are adequately trained.

B Purpose

This notice instructs SED's to:

- provide an A/36 terminal, model 3179, model 3180, or interfaced PC, at the desk of each:
 - State Office FLP Specialist (SOFLPS)
 - Farm Loan Manager (FLM)
 - Farm Loan Officer (FLO)
 - FLP Technician (FLPT)
- ensure that FLM's, FLO's, and FLPT's have received instructions on basic operation of the A/36 computer in the USDA Service Center where they are headquartered
- ensure that SOFLPS's have received instructions on basic operation of the A/36 computer
- ensure that A/36 printers are connected and accessible to all USDA Service Center staff.

This notice also establishes minimum guidelines for the knowledge, skills, and abilities that FLM and/or FLO should possess to be successful operating the A/36 suite of FLP application software.

Disposal Date

December 1, 1999

Distribution

State Offices; State Offices relay to Service Centers, DD's, FLM's, FLO's, and FLPT's

Notice IRM-293

2 Actions

A Service Center Action

SED, through DD, shall ensure that all of the following items are accomplished by **April 30, 1999**:

- identify the Administrative Program Technician (APT) accountable for computer operations in the Service Center where FLM and/or FLO is headquartered
- inform FLM and/or FLO of the APT's accountability
- plan and arrange APT's, FLM's and/or FLO's work schedule to allow APT to accomplish basic A/36 training

Note: If the program technician with primary responsibility for FLP does not have the prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities specified in paragraph 3, DD's shall schedule FLPT for basic A/36 training also.

- verify when the training assignment is completed
- verify that FLM's, FLO's, and FLPT's are assigned logon ID's and passwords to A/36
- verify that adequate A/36 terminal access is provided to FLM's, FLO's, and FLPT's at Type 1, 2, and 3 Offices, as defined in Notice AO-1164
- verify that A/36 printers are connected and accessible to accommodate the work flow of all USDA Service Center program functions. Reposition equipment as needed.

B State Office Action

SED's, through the Farm Loan Chief (FLPC), shall ensure that all of the following items are accomplished by **April 30, 1999**:

- plan and arrange FLPC's and SOFLPS's work schedule to allow an automation coordinator to accomplish basic A/36 training
- verify that training assignment is completed
- verify that FLPC's and SOFLPS's are assigned logon ID's and passwords to the A/36
- verify that adequate A/36 terminal access is installed.

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2 Actions (Continued)

C

A/36 Terminal Requests

State Offices shall request A/36 terminals according to Notice IRM-291.

Note: Notice IRM-291 was issued to State Offices only.

3 Prerequisite Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

A

Prerequisite Knowledge

A Service Center employee operating the FLP application software is expected to have a basic level of knowledge and understanding of 1-CM, Parts 8 through 13. An employee should understand the menu or screen options of the A/36:

- Primary Selection Menu FAX250
- Office Selection Menu FAX09002
- Application Selection Menu FAX07001
- Common Management Menu MA0000
- Name/Address Selection Menu MAB000.

FLM and/or FLO shall also be instructed by the APT on the local office conventions, policies, and practices that govern the A/36 operation. Examples of these conventions, policies, and practices include:

- who is accountable for establishing A/36 logon ID's and passwords, and how a request for a new user account is documented
 - who is authorized to answer system messages at the A/36 console
 - how to operate printers, including instruction on printer addresses, routing print jobs, and loading paper
 - timing of Start-of-Day and End-of-Day processing, and the availability of the A/36
 - procedures for A/36 IPL after hours, and/or when weekend usage is required.
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Notice IRM-293

3 Prerequisite Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (Continued)

B

Prerequisite Abilities

A Service Center employee operating the FLP application software will require a basic level of computer literacy and the ability to operate the A/36 computer, as follows:

- demonstrates a basic understanding of:
 - key operation; such as, enter versus field exit
 - command key usage
 - responding to system messages
 - screen printing
 - reset key usage
 - demonstrates the ability to navigate through the selection menus and add or maintain a name and address record for a new client of the Service Center.
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4 Ongoing Training and Developing FLM's and FLO's

A

Using Software to Train

APT's will demonstrate A/36 application software using the "Training County" option on Office Selection Menu FAX09002. FLM's and FLO's shall use this feature to complete future self-directed training, as needed.
