

For: State and County Offices

**National DD Mentoring Program (Program)**

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

The Program has been established to provide new DD's a developmental partnership. The role of the DD position is critical to FSA's mission and one-on-one training in their roles and responsibilities would be highly beneficial.

**B Purpose**

This notice:

- announces the Program
- provides information about the mentor's role, required qualifications, responsibilities, and selection process
- provides information about the mentee's role and responsibilities.

**C Contact**

Questions about:

- the Program shall be directed to Tanya Coram-Howard, HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) by either of the following:
  - telephone at 202-205-3782
  - e-mail at [tanya.coram-howard@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:tanya.coram-howard@wdc.usda.gov)
- mentors or mentees shall be directed to Trina Brake, DAFO by either of the following:
  - telephone at 202-720-0258
  - e-mail at [trina.brake@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:trina.brake@wdc.usda.gov).

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
January 1, 2009	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice PM-2653

### 2 Program Announcement and Objectives

#### A Program Announcement

HRD, TDB and a DD Task Force have developed the Program to assist newly hired DD's with transitioning to the management and policy requirements of their position.

The Program is mandatory for **all** DD's hired **after** January 1, 2008. Participation in the Program is optional for DD's hired before January 1, 2008.

**Note:** The Program requirements will be incorporated in 6-PM.

#### B Program Objectives

The Program creates the opportunity for an experienced DD to be teamed with a new DD and assist the new DD through the beginning of their assigned duties. The objectives of the Program are to:

- increase efficiency and consistency during the job transitional period
- instill an understanding of the expectations, responsibilities, and central role of DD's
- provide new DD's a source of professional advice, counsel, and exposure to new perspectives
- help new DD's successfully navigate through the FSA organization
- help build the new DD's knowledge, confidence, and leadership abilities.

### 3 Becoming a National DD Mentor

#### A Mentor Qualifications

Strong mentors are needed to make the Program a success. Participation as a mentor is on a voluntary basis with the approval of the mentor's SED. Mentors will be selected from a pool of DD applicants. DD's selected to be mentors **must** have:

- at least 5 years experience as DD
- completed the course, "Leading from the Center: Advanced Leadership Skills for the District Director"
- a history of positive working relationships with a broad scope of individuals in FSA and other agencies
- effective:
  - communication skills
  - interpersonal skills
  - leadership skills
  - organizational skills.

#### B Mentor Responsibilities

Formal mentoring interaction with the mentee is expected to last between 18 months and 2 years. In addition to the time commitment, mentors shall:

- serve as an unbiased confidant and advisor with whom the new DD may discuss work-related concerns
- provide information to assist the new DD in managing their district
- make suggestions on how the new DD may improve proficiency and productivity on the job
- participate in **all** mentoring program activities, including, but **not** limited to:
  - establishing the mentor/mentee relationship
  - assessing new DD needs, including selecting appropriate Tool Kit "modules"
  - developing IDP
  - facilitating new DD learning experiences
  - promoting new DD continuous development
- attend a 2-day "Train-the-Mentor" training session to be coordinated by HRD, TDB
- complete and submit FSA-1058 (Exhibit 1) to their SED for recommendation of approval

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### 3 Becoming a National DD Mentor (Continued)

#### B Mentor Responsibilities (Continued)

- maintain weekly contact with the new DD, either face-to-face, by telephone, or e-mail
- provide regular feedback about the mentoring program progress with the new DD's SED
- assist the new DD with understanding the Program
- guide and coach the new DD while encouraging the development of their own style and methods
- maintain confidentiality
- **not** assume supervision of the new DD or act as a mediator or advocate for the new DD between the new DD and his/her supervisor
- **not** be assigned more than 2 mentees at the same time.

#### C Mentor Selection Process

Upon receiving this notice, interested DD's may submit FSA-1058 to their respective SED for recommendation and approval to become a DD mentor. SED's will forward all approved FSA-1058's to DAFO by:

- e-mail at [trina.brake@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:trina.brake@wdc.usda.gov)
- FAX at 202-720-5900, Attention: Trina Brake.

The deadline to submit FSA-1058's to DAFO for final approval is **COB July 15, 2008**.

**Note:** FSA-1058 is available on the FFAS Employee Forms/Publications Online web site at <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa/>.

The following are the number of DD mentors that will be selected per area and will participate in the Program's 2-day "Train-the-Mentor" training session.

**Note:** DAFO will keep the remaining mentor applications in a pool for future use.

Area	Number of DD Mentors
Midwest	5
Northeast	3
Northwest	4
Southeast	6
Southwest	7

**3 Becoming a National DD Mentor (Continued)**

**D Train-the-Mentor Training Session**

Selected DD mentors will be notified by DAFO of the training session details, such as dates, location, etc.

**E DAFO Responsibilities**

DAFO will:

- review all approved FSA-1058's and make the final decision on DD mentor selections
- provide a list of final approved DD mentors to HRD, TDB
- notify SED's of the DD mentors selected for the 2-day "Train-the Mentor" training session
- assign DD's a mentor within 20 workdays of receiving FSA-1059
- team-up mentor and mentee based on factors such as the following:
  - complimentary skill sets
  - scope of programs managed
  - similarity in types of producers
  - geographical proximity
- resolve conflicts or disputes between mentors and mentees.

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### 3 Becoming a National DD Mentor (Continued)

#### F State Office Responsibilities

State Offices will:

- submit FSA-1059 (Exhibit 2) for each DD hired in their State from January 1, 2008, through July 31, 2008, to DAFO by **August 1, 2008**

**Notes:** For DD's hired:

- **after** July 31, 2008, the State Office will submit FSA-1059 to DAFO within 45 calendar days of date of hire
- **before** January 1, 2008, the State Office may submit FSA-1059 to DAFO at any time.
- develop IDP and establish estimated timeframes for completing the Program
- submit travel expenses incurred for Program participation activities through the State Office budget contact person on a budget allotment change request form, to BUD with a copy to DAFO by FAX at 202-720-1096.

**Note:** Any travel to occur in a subsequent FY should be included in the State Office travel allotment request for that FY.

### 4 Mentee Information

#### A Mentee's Role and Responsibilities

All DD's hired after January 1, 2008, will participate in the Program. Formal mentoring interaction with the mentor is expected to last between 18 months and 2 years. In addition to the time commitment, mentees shall:

- complete and submit FSA-1059 to SED
- be open-minded to constructive criticism
- participate in **all** mentoring program activities, including, but **not** limited to:
  - establishing the mentee/mentor relationship
  - self assessment to assist with selecting appropriate Tool Kit "modules"
  - developing IDP
  - facilitating learning experiences
- complete recommended Tool Kit "modules" at an acceptable proficiency level
- maintain weekly contact with mentor, either face-to-face, by telephone, or e-mail.

## 5 Completing the Program

### A Program Requirements

The formal Program is complete when mentee has successfully completed the following:

- recommended Tool Kit “modules”
- activities identified on IDP
- the course, “Leading from the Center: Advanced Leadership Skills for the District Director”.

It is anticipated that communication, guidance, and advice will continue informally between mentor and mentee throughout DD’s career.

Example of FSA-1058

This form is available electronically.

**FSA-1058**  
(06-06-08)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Farm Service Agency

**NATIONAL DISTRICT DIRECTOR MENTORING PROGRAM  
MENTOR APPLICATION FORM**

**PART A – APPLICANT INFORMATION**

1. Applicant's Name	2A. Applicant's Office Telephone Number <i>(Include Area Code)</i>
	2B. Applicant's Office Cellular or Blackberry Number <i>(Include Area Code)</i>
3. Applicant's Position Title	4. Applicant's Job Series/Grade
5. Applicant's Office Address <i>(Include Zip Code)</i>	6. Applicant's E-mail Address
7. Number of Years as a District Director	8. Date Completed Leading from the Center Advance Leadership Skills for the District Director Course

**PART B – BRIEF NARRATIVE**

9. Why do you want to be a Mentor?

**PART C - BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

10. Prior Mentoring/Instructor Experience *(Check All that Apply)*

Current Mentor     
  Former Mentor     
  Instructor Experience     
  N/A

Other *(Explain):* \_\_\_\_\_

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Example of FSA-1058

<b>FSA-1058</b> (06-06-08)		Page 2
<b>PART D – APPLICANT’S SKILLS ASSESSMENT</b>		
	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Strong</b>
11. Communication		
12. Leadership		
13. Organization		
14. Team Building		
15. Decision Making		
16. Interpersonal Skills		
17. Conflict and Resolution Management		
18. Creative Thinking		
19. Budget and Human Resource Management		
20. Application Software/IT/Computer Skills		
21. Administrative/Office Management		
22. Performance Management and Evaluation		
23. Commodity Operations		
24. Farm Programs		
25. Farm Loan Programs		
<b>PART E - STATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION</b>		
26. Comments:		
27A. State Executive Director's Name	27B. State Executive Director's Signature	27C. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
<b>PART F - FAX</b>		
State Office FAX to: Deputy Administrator for Field Operations Attention: Trina Brake FAX Number: 202-720-5900		

Example of FSA-1059

This form is available electronically.

<b>FSA-1059</b> (06-06-08)	<b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE</b> Farm Service Agency			
<b>NATIONAL DISTRICT DIRECTOR MENTORING PROGRAM</b> <b>MENTEE APPLICATION FORM</b>				
<b>PART A – APPLICANT INFORMATION</b>				
1. Applicant's Name	2A. Applicant's Office Telephone Number <i>(Include Area Code)</i>  2B. Applicant's Office Cellular or Blackberry Number <i>(Include Area Code)</i>			
3. Applicant's Position Title	4. Date Hired as District Director <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>			
5. Applicant's Office Address <i>(Include Zip Code)</i>	6. Applicant's Job Series/Grade  7. Applicant's E-mail Address			
<b>PART B – APPLICANT'S SKILLS ASSESSMENT</b>				
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;"></td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;"><b>Moderate</b></td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center;"><b>Strong</b></td> </tr> </table>		<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Strong</b>
	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Strong</b>		
8. Communication				
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16. Budget and Human Resource Management				
17. Application Software/IT/Computer Skills				
18. Administrative/Office Management				
19. Performance Management and Evaluation				
20. Commodity Operations				
21. Farm Programs				
22. Farm Loan Programs				
<b>PART C - STATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION</b>				
23. Comments:				
24A. State Executive Director's Name	24B. State Executive Director's Signature			
24C. Date <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>				
<b>PART D - FAX</b>				
State Office FAX to: Deputy Administrator for Field Operations Attention: Trina Brake FAX Number: 202-720-5900				

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