

USDA Information Quality Guidelines for Programs and Services Information

Programs and services information comprises information about the programs and services that USDA agencies and offices provide to their customers. As such, this information must be customer driven and meet customers' needs.

Guidelines

- **Information should be comprehensive.**

Information describing the programs and services available from USDA agencies should include all pertinent information customers need to effectively use the programs and services and obtain benefits. Examples of this information include a description of the program's objectives, the benefits it provides, criteria for eligibility, how and where to apply, how acceptance and amount of benefits are determined. The information also should include instructions for contacting national, regional, and/or local personnel directly. Pertinent deadlines should be clearly cited and set to afford customers sufficient time to respond.

- **Information should be accurate and current.**

The information should be accurate, timely, and reflect the most current information available.

- **Information sources should be documented.**

Where appropriate, provide users with additional documentation or with method(s) to access supporting documentation by reference (e.g., citations) or by electronic means (e.g., "links").

- **Information should comply with applicable public laws, rules, regulations, and departmental directives, instructions and guidelines.**

All information should comply with current departmental policies and guidelines that govern information dissemination to the public. The information also should comply with the requirements of applicable public laws and implementing rules and regulations issued under the authority of such laws.

- **Information should be presented clearly.**

Present the information clearly and completely so that the intended audience can easily understand it. Keep language as simple as the subject permits. Provide a point of contact to which clients may refer questions.

- **Information should be accessible.**

Make the information available in media-print, electronic, audio, video, etc.-appropriate to the client population of the program or service. As appropriate and necessary, make

the information available in languages other than English. Documents disseminated on agency websites should be accessible to persons with visual disabilities pursuant to the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

[Link to the Information Quality Guidelines main page](#)

We welcome your comments and suggestions about these pages. For information related to the USDA Quality Information Guidelines, please contact [Dr. Bette Fugitt](#), USDA Records Officer. For comments regarding the site itself: ociowebmaster@ociofc.usda.gov

http://www.ocio.usda.gov/irm/qi_guide/program.html

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