

# A QUICK GUIDE TO CIVIL RIGHTS

To ensure equal access WIC **MUST** ensure:

## 1. That staff tell parents and the public how to apply for the Program and how to file a Civil Rights complaint:

- Place the “And Justice for All” poster where it can easily be seen.
- Use the Nondiscrimination Statement on all materials and Web sites that mention Program eligibility and/or benefits.
- Notify parent/participants in writing about the right to file a complaint of discrimination; (*this is part of the rights and responsibilities*), provide civil rights or program information upon request.
- Ensure that a Public Service Announcement is submitted to a local media annually.

## 2. Identify and accommodate language needs:

- Find out what languages are spoken in your service area.
- Make sure that *everyone* knows what to do when a Limited English Proficient (LEP) parent needs help in completing the WIC appointment.
- Provide translated materials if there are many people who speak another language. Spanish is **Required**.
- Local agencies should hire bilingual staff when possible; otherwise, use professional interpreters or Language Lines to serve LEP providers.
- Do not ask parents/providers to bring their own interpreters for appointments.
- Do not use children under the age of 18 to translate.

## 3. Data on race and ethnicity *must* be collected:

- Provide an explanation to parents that collecting the data is required by law; it will not affect their eligibility or benefits, and will help to prevent discrimination.
- Allow clients to self-identify their race and ethnicity.
- If the client declines to identify the information, the person taking the application must do so visually.

## 4. If an applicant/participant states that he/she has been treated differently because of race, color, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity & sexual orientation, or disability):

- Encourage applicants/participants to resolve issues as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that all applicants/participants know who the Civil Rights/ADA contact is or refer a complainant to the address provided on the And Justice For All poster.
- Offer the applicant/participant a civil rights complaint form to complete or staff can record the complaint in writing and send it to the State WIC office immediately.

**TREAT EVERYONE AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED**

