



# USDA: About the mandatory unconscious bias training

January 6, 2023

Colleagues,

As part of our commitment to making USDA the best place to work, we continue to focus our efforts to fostering a culture of civil rights, diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, transparency and accountability. We are also dedicated to becoming a learning organization – one that encourages and supports employee professional growth and continuous improvement. One of the key tools we have at USDA to support these goals is [AgLearn](#), which

complements agency and staff office-level learning, training and professional development resources. Every year, we also receive important training that must be taken to meet specific requirements, such as the annual Civil Rights Training, USDA Section 508 Training and others. Although an online course cannot make any one of us an expert, these courses provide a foundation to help us understand our obligations in making the workplace safer, more efficient, productive and more inclusive, as well as USDA programs more equitable and accessible.



This year, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, in coordination with our Office of Human Resource Management and our acting chief diversity and inclusion officer, designed the [Unconscious Bias Training](#) (due Jan. 18). This training is our annual civil rights training, and along with the [USDA Section 508 training](#) (due Jan. 24), it is mandatory. The information you learn in these online courses will better support your learning and efforts as you perform your duties and how you make work-related decisions. As with all training, life experiences and putting into practice what we learn is what truly makes a difference in the workplace experience.

I challenge each agency to have 100% completion by the due dates for these trainings. We are currently at 53% for the Unconscious Bias training and we must do better. Our top agencies are OIG, 60%; FSA, OCIO and OCFO, 61%; FSIS, 69%; NAD, 74%; and RMA, 84%. It's a race to the top. Let's see who gets there first.

There have been reports that AgLearn is not always capturing and providing credit for completed courses. To ensure that you receive credit for Unconscious Bias and other courses, please download your certificate of completion and reach out to your agency's [AgLearn point of contact](#) for assistance. Agencies and staff offices also continue to work with OHRM to ensure AgLearn reflects current employees. For front-line employees or other employees who do not have access to a computer, please coordinate with your [AgLearn point of contact](#) for access to a paper/hard-copy training.

The deputy and I are committed to ensuring all employees have access to training and learning opportunities, and we continue to consider the critical feedback we received through the various townhalls, listening session and the FEVS. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to USDA.

Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack