

# Information for Applicants



## **Financial Assistance for Producers Who Experienced Discrimination in USDA Farm Lending**

Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides \$2.2 billion for financial assistance for farmers and ranchers who experienced discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Loan Programs prior to January 1, 2021. The Discrimination Financial Assistance Program (DFAP) program is in addition to other assistance made possible through the IRA, including assistance for distressed borrowers.

### **Who Is Eligible for the Program**

This application is for individuals who experienced discrimination, prior to January 1, 2021, by USDA in its Farm Loan Programs, which are currently administrated by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and/or who are currently debtors with assigned or assumed USDA farm loan debt that was the subject of USDA discrimination that occurred prior to January 1, 2021. (This applies, for example, if you inherited the debt that was the subject of USDA farm lending discrimination.)

### **Timeline and How to Get Assistance**

The application filing period for this program will begin July 7, 2023, and will end January 13, 2024. USDA aims to distribute payments to impacted producers in early 2024. More information can be found at [www.22007apply.gov](http://www.22007apply.gov).

### **Find Your Local DFAP Assistance Offices**

Local DFAP Assistance Offices are brick and mortar locations where you can connect with live agents for technical assistance. A list of offices can be found at [www.22007apply.gov/local-assistance.html](http://www.22007apply.gov/local-assistance.html).

Team members are also available to provide telephone assistance **1-800-721-0970**. The call center is open during the hours of 8 a.m. ET to 8 p.m. PT.

## Beware of Scams

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USDA is aware of some lawyers and groups spreading misleading information about this process, pressuring people to sign retainer agreements, and asking people to fill out forms with private and sensitive information. Legal representation is not required to apply for and receive financial assistance through this program.

### 1. When in doubt, check it out.

- Avoid providing personal or financial information to unknown parties.
- Beware of solicitations by mail, email, or phone calls from individuals claiming to be connected to USDA. USDA nor the authorized vendors will not solicit you for information.
- There is no fee to apply for this financial assistance.
- The most current information on the process and timeline of this program can currently be found at **[www.22007apply.gov](http://www.22007apply.gov)**.

### 2. Beware of organizations seeking to file your application for a fee

- You do not need a lawyer to file an application for financial assistance under Section 22007 of the IRA. If you feel the need for legal advice, seek the assistance of a trusted, licensed attorney.
- Before the application process opens, USDA will publish a list of trusted community organizations located across the country; these organizations will provide free help completing applications.
- Filing an application is free.
- Beware of advance-fee scams or solicitations that promise a significant share of a large sum of money.

### 3. Report scams to the USDA Office of the Inspector General.

- Beware of scams involving fake settlement or cashier's checks followed by requests to wire part of the payment to an individual disguised as an attorney.
- If you believe there is an organization conducting a scam related to this process, please contact the USDA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) or any other appropriate authorities. The OIG complaint hotline can be accessed online at **<https://usdaoig.oversight.gov/hotline>**; OIG's phone number is **(800) 424-9121**.