

§ 7.24

(2) Direct outreach activities to reach and inform socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers of all programs and county committee election processes;

(3) Follow official instructions to review, approve, and certify forms, reports, and documents requiring such action;

(4) Recommend to the State committee needed changes in boundaries of local administrative areas;

(5) Make available to farmers, ranchers, and the public information concerning the objectives and operations of the programs administered through the county committee;

(6) Make available to agencies of the Federal Government and others information with respect to the county committee activities in accordance with official instructions issued;

(7) Give public notice of the designation and boundaries of each local administrative area within the county prior to the election of county committee members;

(8) Direct the giving of notices in accordance with applicable regulations and official instructions;

(9) Recommend to the State committee desirable changes in or additions to existing programs;

(10) Conduct such hearings and investigations as the State committee may request; and

(11) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the State committee.

§ 7.24 Chairperson of the county committee duties.

The chairperson of the county committee or the person acting as the chairperson will preside at meetings of the county committee, certify such documents as may require the chairperson's certification, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the State committee.

§ 7.25 County executive director duties.

(a) The county executive director will execute the policies established by the county committee and be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the county office.

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(b) The county executive director will:

(1) In accordance with standards and qualifications furnished by the State committee, employ the personnel of the county office. There must be no employment discrimination due to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. An employee may not be removed under this paragraph for advocating or carrying out the Department's policy on equal opportunity and civil rights, including the equal employment policy. In the event it is claimed that the dismissal is for such reason, the dismissal will not become effective until the State committee and the Deputy Administrator have determined that dismissal was not because of such reason;

(2) Receive, dispose of, and account for all funds, negotiable instruments, or property coming into the custody of the county committee.

§ 7.26 Private business activity and conflicts of interest.

(a) No county committee member, alternate to any such office, or county office employee, may at any time use such office or employment to promote any private business interest.

(b) County committee members, alternates, and any person employed in the county office will be subject to the official instructions issued with respect to conflicts of interest and proper conduct.

§ 7.27 Political activity.

Permitted and prohibited political activities, with respect to any State committee member, county committee member, county executive director, or any other county employee, will be determined in accordance with applicable policies specified in FSA handbooks and directives.

§ 7.28 Removal from office or employment for cause.

(a) Adverse personnel actions involving any county committee member or alternate member, county executive director, or other county office employee will be taken for failing to perform the

duties of their office, impeding the effectiveness of any program administered in the county, violating official instructions, or for misconduct.

(b) Any person whom FSA proposes to suspend or remove from office or employment must be given advance written notice of the reason for such action and must be advised of the right to reply to such a proposal and any right of further review and appeal if the person is removed or suspended.

§ 7.29 Delegation of authority to Deputy Administrator.

(a) Notwithstanding the authority vested by this part to a State committee, a county committee, and the county executive director, the Deputy Administrator has the authority to take adverse personnel actions involving any county committee member or alternate member, county executive director, or other county office employee for failing to perform the duties of their office or for misconduct.

(b) Any person whom FSA proposes to suspend or remove from office or employment must be given advance written notice of the reason for such action and must be advised of the right to reply to such a proposal and any right of further review and appeal if the person is removed or suspended.

§ 7.30 Custody and use of books, records, and documents.

(a) All books, records, and documents of or used by the county committee in the administration of programs assigned to it, or in the conduct of elections, will be the property of FSA or the United States Department of Agriculture, as applicable, and must be maintained in good order in the county office.

(b) Voted ballots must be placed into and remain in sealed containers, such containers not being opened until the prescribed date and time for counting. Following the counting of ballots, the ballots must be placed in sealed containers and retained for 1 year unless otherwise determined by the Deputy Administrator.

(c) The books, records, and documents referred to in paragraph (a) of this section must be available for use and examination:

(1) At all times by authorized representatives of the Secretary, the Administrator, or a designee of the Administrator.

(2) By State and county committee members, and authorized employees of the State and county office in the performance of duties assigned to them under this part, subject to instructions issued by the Deputy Administrator;

(3) At any reasonable time to any program participant insofar as such person's interests under the programs administered by the county committee may be affected, subject to instructions issued by the Deputy Administrator; and

(4) To any other person only in accordance with instructions issued by the Deputy Administrator.

§ 7.31 Administrative operations.

The administrative operations of county committees including, but not limited to, the following, must be conducted, except as otherwise provided in this part, in accordance with official instructions issued: Annual, sick, and other types of employee leave; the calling and conduct of elections; and the maintenance of records of county committee meetings.

§ 7.34 Retention of authority.

(a) Nothing in this part will preclude the Secretary, the Administrator, or the Deputy Administrator from administering any or all programs, or exercising other functions delegated to the county committee, State committee, or any employee of such committees.

(b) In exercising this authority, the Secretary, the Administrator, or the Deputy Administrator may designate for such period of time as deemed necessary a person or persons of their choice to be in charge with full authority to carry out the programs or other functions without regard to the normal duties of such committees or employees.

PART 8—4-H CLUB NAME AND EMBLEM

Sec.

8.1 Policy.

8.2 Delegation of authority.

8.3 Definitions.