

Handbook
for County, Region,
Area and State
Extension Agents and
Specialists

(Non-Tenure Track)

Revised, February 2017

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and community economic development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Handbook for County, Region, Area and State
Extension Agents and Specialists
(Non-Tenure Track)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 1
Chapter 1 - Governance and Organization.....2
1.1 UT Extension Personnel2
1.2 County Agricultural Extension Committee 5
Chapter 2 - Appointment, Promotion and Termination.....6
2.1 Criteria for Appointment and Promotion.....6
2.1.1 County Extension Personnel.....6
2.1.2 Area Extension Specialists 8
2.1.3 Region Extension Personnel9
2.1.4 State Extension Personnel 10
2.2 Search and Appointment Procedures 11
2.3 Probationary Period..... 11
2.4 Procedure for Promotion 11
2.5 Procedure for Termination..... 12
Chapter 3 - Complaint and Grievance Procedures 13
3.1 General Appeals Procedures 13
Chapter 4 - UT Extension Processes 15
4.1 Conflict of Interest and Disclosure of Outside Interests 15
4.2 Personnel Files and Release of Information 15

4.2.1 Activities Related to the Release of Clientele Information 16

4.3 Professional Conduct/Ethics..... 16

4.4 Professional Development 17

4.5 Policy for Living in Assigned County 18

Chapter 5 - Procedures for Handbook Update 19

5.1 Revisions 19

5.2 Proposals for Handbook Revision..... 19

INTRODUCTION

The University of Tennessee Extension is a comprehensive and diverse unit within the university charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing an educational program of outstanding quality for the people of the state. A crucial element of that responsibility consists of the application of knowledge through research, teaching and technical assistance to solve problems confronting today's ever-changing and increasingly complex society. Extension educators at the county, area, region and state levels are committed to the development and delivery of these program efforts.

The development of a truly strong Extension program is dependent to a large degree on a definite, objective career ladder with specific standards, requirements and titles for appointment and promotion of these professional educators.

Provisions of this Extension Handbook apply to employees of the Tennessee Extension who are appointed in the "Extension Professional Educator" category. The Extension Professional Educator category includes agents/specialists who are educators at the county, area, Region and state levels and whose primary assignment is to plan and implement sound educational programs to meet the predetermined needs of Extension's clientele. All persons covered under provisions of this Extension Handbook are also subject to the policies in the *UT Human Resources Policies and Procedures* and *UT Fiscal Policy*.

The Extension Handbook has been designed for use by agents/specialists (non-tenure track) of UT Extension, Institute of Agriculture, and is intended to be a general reference to University and Institute guidelines, policies, services and resources. In some instances, University-wide policies and procedures have been augmented with more specific requirements for Extension agents and/or specialists; and these more rigorous procedures shall apply.

Extension educators are expected to be innovative, creative and progressive in their work. They must foster cooperative working relationships with other faculty/staff and maintain knowledge of current educational information, research efforts and organizational agendas to produce effective programs. They must be knowledgeable of the changing external communications and/or information technology environment, as well as the needs and preferences of users of their services. They must then be able to incorporate their knowledge into effective educational program delivery. Extension agents/specialists should continuously advance in their field of expertise in order to create successful educational programs for UT Extension clientele. This is a unique and important role.

Chapter 1 Governance and Organization

1.1 UT Extension Personnel

The program of Tennessee Extension is conducted on a cooperative basis with federal, state and county governments.* The state headquarters for UT Extension is in Knoxville, and region administrative offices are located at Knoxville, Nashville and Jackson. Overall administration is the responsibility of the Dean of UT Extension, who is administratively responsible to the Chancellor of University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. State Extension specialists (non- professorial appointments) are responsible to department heads; and county Extension agents are responsible to county Extension directors who, in turn, are responsible to their respective Regional Directors. Area Extension agents/specialists are responsible to their respective Regional Director. The Regional Directors report directly to the Dean of UT Extension.

The Dean of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Chancellor or University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. The primary responsibilities of the dean are to provide leadership and to administer Extension programs, resources, finances and personnel to meet Extension goals and policies. The dean ensures that Extension programs at the state, department, region and county levels meet the needs of eligible participants regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion or veteran status; recruits and manages personnel; directs all units in the implementation of the Tennessee Extension Equal Employment Opportunity Program at the state, department, region and county levels; coordinates program efforts with other units of the Institute and the University; and provides liaison with the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) of USDA and other state Cooperative Extension Services.

The Associate/Assistant Dean for Agriculture and Natural Resources & Community Economic Development of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension. The primary responsibility of the associate/assistant dean is to assist the dean in administration of all Extension programs. In addition, the associate/assistant dean provides leadership and direction for staff activities related to planning, developing, implementing and evaluating agricultural and resource development programs for adults and youth. The associate/assistant dean also assists in the development of administrative policies and procedures related to agriculture and natural resources and resource development; coordinates programs with departments, county and region staff; and maintains effective working relationships with other agencies and organizations in matters related to agriculture and natural resources and resource development programs.

* The University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to carry out Extension work in the state of Tennessee in accordance with Section 1444 of Public Law 95-113, Food and Agriculture Act of 1977, which requires that a single comprehensive program of Extension be developed for the state. To provide for effective administration of a single comprehensive state program, the two universities further entered into a Memorandum of Understanding, No. 80-00124 dated August 31, 1978, outlining procedures for mutual cooperation in carrying out a statewide Extension program.

Associate/Assistant Dean for Family and Consumer Sciences of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension. The primary responsibility of the associate/assistant dean is to assist the dean in administration of all Extension programs. In addition, the associate/assistant dean provides leadership and direction for staff activities related to planning, developing, implementing and evaluating adult and youth family and consumer sciences programs. The associate/assistant dean also assists in the development of administrative policies and procedures related to family and consumer sciences programs; coordinates programs for staff development; coordinates programs with department, county and region staffs; and maintains effective working relationships with other agencies and organizations in matters related to Extension family and consumer sciences programs.

The Associate/Assistant Dean for Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication/4-H Youth Development of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension regarding 4-H Youth Development program administration and to the Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources regarding ALEC program administration. The primary responsibility of the associate/assistant dean is to assist the dean in administration of all 4-H Youth Development programs. In addition, the associate/assistant dean provides leadership and direction for staff activities related to planning, developing, implementing and evaluating 4-H Youth Development programs for youth and teen/adult volunteers. The associate/assistant dean also assists in the development of administrative policies and procedures related to 4-H Youth Development; coordinates programs with departments, 4-H Center managers, county and region staff; and maintains effective working relationships with other agencies and organizations in matters related to 4-H Youth Development programs.

The Chief Business Officer of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension. The director has responsibility for the overall administration of fiscal programs of UT Extension. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: budget development and monitoring; grant and contract administration; purchasing and accounts payable coordination; and the accounting operation.

The Director, Evaluation & Staff Development of UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension. Responsibilities in the area of personnel involve recruitment of county Extension agents, screening applicants, maintaining a suitable applicant pool, and the record-keeping and reporting related to these activities. The assistant to the dean also serves as the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Officer for UT Extension. Additional duties include Civil Rights programs and training, and Program Evaluation and Staff Development. The assistant to the dean performs other duties as assigned by the Dean of UT Extension.

The Extension Regional Director in UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Dean of UT Extension. The Regional Director is responsible for the overall supervision of region Extension programs, activities, personnel and facilities. The Regional Director handles personnel appointments, terminations, transfers and other personnel actions; serves as the liaison person with county agricultural Extension committees; secures sponsorship of regional Extension programs; assists in orientation and in-service training for county personnel; and manages and controls region funds, equipment, supplies and facilities.

The Extension Region Program Leader for Agriculture and Natural Resources & Community Economic Development in UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Extension Regional Director. The program leader for agriculture and natural resources & community economic development is responsible for the planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting of county and region agriculture and natural resources & community economic development programs for adults and 4-H youth. In addition, the program leader coordinates orientation training and in-service training programs for Extension agriculture and natural resources & community economic development agents, handles county requests for specialists in agriculture and natural resources & community economic development and assists in interviewing and appraising prospective agriculture and natural resources and/or community economic development agents.

The Extension Region Program Leader for Family and Consumer Sciences in UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Regional Director. The program leader for family and consumer sciences is responsible for planning, developing, implementing, evaluating and reporting of county and region adult and youth family and consumer sciences programs. The program leader for family and consumer sciences also coordinates orientation training and in-service training programs for Extension family and consumer sciences agents, handles county requests for specialists in family and consumer sciences and assists in interviewing and appraising prospective family and consumer sciences agents.

The Extension Agent and County Director in UT Extension is administratively responsible to the Regional Director. The county director has the primary responsibility for the overall administration of Extension programs at the county level. The county director manages and supervises county staff, programs, facilities and equipment; maintains liaison and consults with the county agricultural Extension committee and county officials on budgets, employment, termination of personnel and development and operation of county Extension programs; provides leadership for resource development programs; schedules and conducts staff training; maintains liaison with agencies, organizations and firms; and secures sponsorships for county functions. The county director represents all areas of county programming and involves other county staff in working with the county agricultural Extension committee as needed.

Extension State Specialists and Extension Assistants (non-professorial appointments) are responsible to the department head for providing statewide leadership in planning, coordinating, implementing and evaluating program efforts in their specific program area. State specialists should assist with staff support and training in their assigned area of expertise.

Extension Area Specialists are administratively responsible to the Regional Director in their respective region for planning, coordinating, implementing and evaluating program efforts and assessing impact in their specific program area. Area specialists have a departmental affiliation depending on their expertise, and are programmatically responsible to the department head and work closely with other subject-matter specialists to ensure a coordinated statewide program. The Regional Director works with department heads to assess program impact. Area specialists should assist with staff support and training in their assigned area of expertise, depending on region, state and departmental needs.

Extension Agents are responsible to the county Extension director for providing leadership in planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting county programs, either in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, community economic development for the youth or adult audience or 4-H Youth Development audiences. Extension agents work cooperatively with agents in other program areas.

1.2 County Agricultural Extension Committee

The County Agricultural Extension Committee is elected by the county legislative body and is a valuable resource in determining each county's program needs. The county agricultural committee meets on a regular basis with Extension representatives to provide advice and counsel on the programs needed by the county and the effectiveness of Extension in assisting the county. *

The county committee also cooperates with Extension in the employment and/or removal of personnel receiving funds from county Extension appropriations and in formulating the county Extension budget. The committee serves as the liaison between Extension and the county legislative body on financial and other matters relating to Extension work.

* The County Agricultural Extension committee does not replace the need to have one or more program advisory committees as it is not possible for the group to be demographically representative of the total county makeup.

Chapter 2 Appointment, Promotion and Termination

2.1 Criteria for Appointment and Promotion - also see [*Tennessee Extension Promotion Guidelines for County and Area Extension Educators \(revised February 21, 2017\)*](#)

2.1.1 County Extension Personnel

Extension Agent in Training: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* with a balanced curriculum from an accredited college or university; an academic record that will qualify for admission to graduate study (currently a 2.7 grade point average on a 4-point scale); evidence of ability to plan, organize, develop, implement and evaluate educational programs; demonstrated qualities of leadership, drive and initiative; effective oral and written communication skills; and a sincere desire to work with people, including the disadvantaged and minorities. This is a six-month appointment provided primarily for minorities.

Extension Agent I: Requires a bachelor's or master's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* with a balanced curriculum from an accredited college or university; an academic record that will qualify for admission to graduate study (currently a 2.7 grade point average on a 4-point scale); evidence of ability to plan, organize, develop, implement and evaluate educational programs; demonstrated qualities of leadership, drive and initiative; effective oral and written communication skills; and a sincere desire to work with people, including the disadvantaged and minorities. A willingness to establish residence in the county where employed is strongly encouraged. An earned master of science degree is preferred and will supplant the requirement for a 2.7 GPA. **Applicants holding a bachelor's degree outside of Agriculture and Natural Resources or Family and Consumer Sciences will be considered for positions with adult responsibilities if: transcripts indicate a "balanced curriculum" in Agriculture or FCS subject matter areas; or, if a prior Extension appointment included substantial responsibility for educational programs in the applicable areas.**

Extension Agent II: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* with a balanced curriculum from an accredited college or university; an academic record which will qualify for admission to graduate study (currently a 2.7 grade point average on a 4-point scale) and normally a minimum of seven years** at the rank of Extension Agent I with satisfactory or better ratings in competence, performance, attitude and cooperativeness; or a master's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* and normally a minimum of four years** at the rank of Extension Agent I with satisfactory or better ratings in competence, performance, attitude and cooperativeness.

* UT Extension will employ individuals with degrees other than Agriculture and Natural Resources or Family and Consumer Sciences, for county 4-H youth development positions.

** Prior experience is evaluated by the dean's office during the initial hiring process. Credit for experience is given when the salary is set by the Extension Service administration. Unless the letter of appointment states when the employee will be considered for promotion, the above stated guidelines should be followed. Years in rank must be Tennessee Extension experience unless otherwise stated in the letter of appointment from the Dean.

Extension Agent III: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* with a balanced curriculum from an accredited college or university; an academic record that will qualify for admission to graduate study (currently a 2.7 grade point average on a 4-point scale) and normally a minimum of eight years** at the rank of Extension Agent II with satisfactory or better ratings in competence, performance, attitude and cooperativeness; or a master's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* and normally a minimum of six years** at the rank of Extension Agent II with satisfactory or better ratings in competence, performance, attitude and cooperativeness. The agent at this rank should have demonstrated high competence in the development, implementation and impact evaluation of needs-based educational programs.

Extension Agent and County Director: Requires a master's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences* with a balanced curriculum from an accredited college or university; an academic record that will qualify for admission to graduate study (currently a 2.7 grade point average on a 4-point scale). The county director will hold the rank of Extension Agent I, II, or III. Successful candidates should demonstrate exemplary skills in administration; including leadership, management and programmatic abilities. The county director role is re-evaluated every three years for appointments made after July 1, 2001. Continuation in the county director role for an additional three years is dependent upon willingness of the county director to continue and satisfactory or better performance in the county director role for the past three-year period.

* UT Extension will employ individuals with degrees other than Agriculture and Natural Resources or Family and Consumer Sciences, for county 4-H youth development positions.

** Prior experience is evaluated by the dean's office during the initial hiring process. Credit for experience is given when the salary is set by the Extension Service administration. Unless the letter of appointment states when the employee will be considered for promotion, the above stated guidelines should be followed. Years in rank must be Tennessee Extension experience unless otherwise stated in the letter of appointment from the Dean.

2.1.2 Extension Area Specialists

Extension Area Specialist I: Requires a master's degree in the discipline or equivalent training and experience appropriate to the particular appointment; evidence of ability to plan, organize, develop, implement and evaluate educational programs; demonstrated qualities of leadership, drive and initiative; effective oral and written communication skills; a sincere desire to work with people, including the disadvantaged and minorities; and a willingness to establish residence in the area where employed.

Extension Area Specialist II: Requires a master's degree in the discipline or equivalent training and experience appropriate to the particular appointment and a minimum of four years* Extension experience at the rank of Extension Area Specialist I with satisfactory or better performance ratings. The Extension area specialist must show promise in training, research, Extension and/or service in alignment with his/her area of appointment; have initiated promising creative activities; have participated in or have shown interest in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching and research; and show evidence of ability to work well with supervisors, colleagues and clientele.

Extension Area Specialist III: Requires a master's degree in the discipline or to have equivalent training and experience appropriate to the particular appointment and a minimum of six years* Extension experience at the rank of Extension Area Specialist II with satisfactory or better performance ratings. The Extension area specialist must show accomplishments in training, research, Extension and/or service in alignment with his/her appointment; have established an excellent record of creative achievement; have participated with promise in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching and research; and have demonstrated clearly the ability to work well with supervisors, colleagues and clientele.

* Service in a related field may be used to fulfill a portion of the experience requirements at the discretion of the Region Extension Director and Dean. Unless the letter of appointment states when the employee will be considered for promotion, the above-stated guidelines will be followed. Years in rank must be Tennessee Extension experience unless otherwise stated in the letter of appointment from the Dean.

2.1.3 Region Extension Personnel

Extension Program Leader I: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences and a master's degree in agriculture, extension education, curriculum and supervision or closely related area of education. The program leader must show the ability to plan, organize, develop, implement and evaluate educational programs; demonstrate qualities of leadership, drive and initiative; and exhibit effective oral and written communication skills.

Extension Program Leader II: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences; a master's degree in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, Extension education, curriculum and supervision or a closely related area of education; and, normally, a minimum of four years* successful experience as Extension Program Leader I or other appropriate experience with satisfactory or better performance ratings. Significant impacts from coordination of programs and Extension agent training should be evident.

Extension Program Leader III: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences; a master's degree in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, Extension education, curriculum and supervision or a closely related field; and, normally, service as an Extension Program Leader II for a minimum of six years* (four years with a doctorate) with satisfactory or better performance ratings. A personal record of academic pursuit beyond the master's degree is highly preferred. The Extension Program Leader III should have demonstrated exemplary skills in program leadership, mentoring and professional development in addition to program and personnel training impact; and should have a reputation for state and/or regional program excellence.

Extension Regional Director: Requires a bachelor's degree in agriculture or family and consumer sciences and a master's degree in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, Extension education or closely related field of study. An earned doctorate in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, education or closely allied field of study is preferred. Extension leadership experience preferred, but other experience appropriate for the assignment will be considered. A candidate for Regional Director should have excellent performance ratings in competence, performance, attitude and cooperation. The Regional Director must have a thorough understanding of Extension education; methods of employee selection, evaluation, motivation and discipline; and management of budgets and facilities. He/she must demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and an ability to work with various levels of state and county government.

* Service in related field may be used to fulfill a portion of experience requirements at the discretion of the Dean.

2.1.4 State Extension Personnel (non-tenure track)

Extension Assistant I: Requires a bachelor's degree in the discipline. Extension Assistant I must show a clear interest in teaching, Extension and/or service in alignment with appointment; show a clear interest in the creative art and characteristics of teaching or scholarly activities; have an excellent scholastic record; and show promise in the ability to work well with colleagues and clientele. He/she must show interest in professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching and/or technical Extension work.

Extension Assistant II: Requires a master's degree in the discipline. Extension Assistant II must be a capable teacher and/or technical specialist; have established a good record of creative achievements and growth in skills and responsibilities; and have participated in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching and/or technical work. The Extension Assistant II normally will have served as an Extension Assistant I for at least three years, have satisfactory or better performance ratings, and show evidence of ability to work well with colleagues and clientele. After completing five years as an Extension Assistant II, if otherwise qualified, he/she may be eligible to apply for Extension Specialist I positions.

Extension Specialist I: Requires a master's degree in the discipline; skills in teaching, Extension and/or service in alignment with appointment; activity in creative professional work or scholarly activities; an effective record in program and organizational support; participation in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching; and normally, five years work experience or an earned doctorate. The Extension Specialist I will show promise in creative professional work or scholarly activities, establish an effective record in program and organizational support, participate or show interest in professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching, and show evidence of ability to work well with colleagues and clientele.

Extension Specialist II: Requires a master's degree in the discipline (doctorate preferred); evidence of accomplishments in teaching, Extension and/or service in alignment with appointment; an excellent record of creative and scholarly achievement; an effective record of program and organizational support; participation with promise in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching; and, normally, service as an Extension Specialist I for at least six years (four years with a doctorate) with satisfactory or better performance ratings. The Extension Specialist II will be respected as an expert in his/her field, can demonstrate pro-active educational programming, activity in applicable research and appropriate extramural funding; and demonstrates the ability to work well with colleagues and clientele.

Extension Specialist III: Requires a master's degree in the discipline (doctorate preferred); evidence of accomplishments in teaching, Extension and/or service in alignment with appointment; an excellent record of creative and scholarly achievement; an effective record of program and organizational support; participation with promise in the professional activities of the discipline in ways other than teaching; and, normally, service as an Extension Specialist II for at least eight years (six years with a doctorate) with satisfactory or better performance ratings. The Extension Specialist III is expected to have significant impact in his/her field,

including regional and perhaps national recognition for innovative educational programs, applied research, funding base and publications appropriate to the assignment. He/she will have demonstrated the ability to work well with colleagues and clientele and acted as an assigned or voluntary mentor for a junior specialist.

2.2 Search and Appointment Procedures

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or veteran status. This policy applies to recruitment, employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, compensation, training, benefits and other conditions of employment.

For information related to Extension's search and appointment procedures see:

University of Tennessee Office of Equity & Diversity

<http://oed.utk.edu>

2.3 Probationary Period

As a condition of initial employment, an Extension agent/specialist will serve a probationary period of six months. Except for gross violations of university work rules, a minimum of 30 days notice will be given if individual is not to be continued in service. (See UT Human Resources Policy HR0135 – Probationary Period (rev. 9/2002) http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0135/ and Section 2.5 below)

2.4 Procedures for Promotion

Each candidate for promotion will be evaluated primarily on the basis of performance of assigned and budgeted duties. Thus, each nomination must be accompanied by a complete job description that outlines the general duties in the assigned position. The candidate will also be expected to have made significant progress in his/her professional area. This growth can be documented by publications, association honors, awards, fellowships and grants, as well as by outstanding service in professional associations as an officer, director or committee chair. Each job category of UT Extension has specific criteria and procedures for individuals within their assigned job area. *See [Tennessee Extension Promotion Guidelines for County and Area Extension Educators \(revised February 21, 2017\)](#) for these specific criteria and procedures.*

2.5 Procedure for Termination

When termination of employment becomes necessary, whether employee or employer initiated, proper procedures must be followed to assure equitable treatment of all parties.

An employee will be terminated on his/her last working day except when termination occurs while the employee is on leave of absence without pay (see UT Human Resources Policy 355, Leave of Absence) or if the exceptions as stated in UT Human Resources Policy 320, Days of Administrative Closing; UT Human Resources Policy 338, Family and Medical Leave; and UT Human Resources Policy 350, Holidays, apply. If appropriate, unused annual leave, not to exceed the allowable maximum, will be paid as a lump sum in the employee's last pay check. There are several categories of termination recognized by the University. For additional information see:

The University of Tennessee - Human Resources Policy HR0160 – Termination of Employment (rev. 2/1998)

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0160/

Chapter 3 Complaint and Grievance Procedures

3.1 General Appeals Procedures

Each employee is entitled to a fair, impartial and honest resolution of problems that may arise in relation to employment. Accordingly, the university subscribes to certain principles and follows specific practices that ensure such resolutions occur judiciously and within a reasonable period of time.

For grievances based on allegations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion or veteran status, an appeal may be filed with the Office of Equity and Diversity. <http://oed.utk.edu>

Informal Appeal:

The informal appeal should be resolved through the immediate supervisor or one of Extension's designated counselors. The names of individuals serving as counselors for Tennessee Extension personnel may be found in the [Program for Equal Employment Opportunity in the University of Tennessee Extension](#) (revised 2009). Additional information is available by contacting Dr. Shirley W. Hastings, 212-D Morgan Hall, (865) 974-7245 or Dr. Delton C. Gerloff, 121 Morgan Hall, (865) 974- 7114.

If satisfaction is not received at the supervisor or counselor level, the employee may proceed through the supervisory channels to the next higher level. When an informal appeal is received by a designated counselor, a memorandum shall be forwarded by the counselor to the coordinator advising him/her of the appeal, the circumstances of the appeal and a discussion of attempts to resolve the appeal. If the appeal was satisfactorily handled, the counselor should so state; if further action appears necessary, he/she should so advise.

Formal Appeal:

If the disagreement is not resolved through the informal appeal procedure, or if the informal procedure is not chosen, the employee may make a formal appeal through appropriate channels. To file a formal appeal, the employee should follow the procedures spelled out in the [Program for Equal Employment Opportunity in the University of Tennessee Extension](#) (revised 2009).

For performance evaluation and other grievances unrelated to allegations of discrimination, please see The University of Tennessee - Human Resources Policies:

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/

The University of Tennessee Human Resources Policy HR0525 – Disciplinary Action
(rev. 7/2005)

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0525/

The University of Tennessee Human Resources Policy HR0580 – Code of Conduct
(rev. 7/2016)

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0580/

Chapter 4 UT Extension Processes

4.1 Conflict of Interest and Disclosure of Outside Interests by Extension Employees

Employees of The University of Tennessee Extension are subject to all policies pertaining to the employees of The University of Tennessee regarding conflict of interests. These policies are designed to help all employees avoid situations where their outside financial interests place them in conflict with performing university duties and responsibilities. Employees of The University of Tennessee Extension are required to disclose any outside interests that may represent real, apparent or potential conflicts of interests with their university responsibilities.

Further information on conflict of interests as it pertains to University of Tennessee employees can be found in:

1. The University of Tennessee Fiscal Policy FI0125, General Policies on Conflict of Interests (rev. 08/2012)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/fiscal_policy/fi0125/
<http://budget.utk.edu/fiscal-policy/conflict-interest/>
Outside Interests Disclosure Form
<https://app.perfectforms.com/player.htm?f=dW6igAcJ>
Instructions for Outside Interests Disclosure Form
<http://budget.utdev4.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2015/08/COI-2015-16.pdf>
2. The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Request for Authorization for Outside Work for Pay (rev. 05/2016)
https://ag.tennessee.edu/Documents/Faculty%20and%20Staff/outsideworkforpay_rev2016.pdf
3. The University of Tennessee Human Resources Policies and Procedures, HR0122, Employment of University Employees by Other University Personnel
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0122/
4. The University of Tennessee Fiscal Policy FI0420, Contractors and Conflict of Interests (rev. 03/2016)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/fiscal_policy/fi0420/

4.2 Personnel Files and Release of Information

To assure that accurate and complete personnel data are maintained, individual employees are afforded an opportunity to see that their records reflect such standards, and the release of information from personnel files is adequately monitored.

For additional information related to personnel files and release of information see:

The University of Tennessee Human Resources Policies and Procedures, HR0130, Personnel Files and Release of Information

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0130/

4.2.1 Activities Related to the Release of Clientele Information

Providing Mailing Lists:

Occasionally Extension agents are asked to furnish mailing lists of clientele groups and others. It is against the policy of UT Extension to provide such lists to any person, firm or association. It is, however, permissible for a person making such a request to inspect and make copies of such lists. If uncertainty arises in complying with such requests, the case should be submitted to the assistant/associate dean or dean for a ruling.

Endorsement of Commercial Products:

It is against the policy of UT Extension to endorse any commercial product. County Extension agents should be careful not to endorse one product over another, including the use of the 4-H Club emblem or the names or pictures of 4-H Club winners in advertisements of commercial products.

4.3 Professional Conduct/Ethics

Each employee of The University of Tennessee is an integral participant in the university's mission of excellence in teaching, research and public service. Each member of the university community is expected to exhibit a high degree of professionalism and personal integrity consistent with the pursuit of excellence in the conduct of his/her responsibilities.

For an Extension agent/specialist in The University of Tennessee Extension, there must always be a clear distinction between activities undertaken by an individual on behalf of the university, and those activities that are purely personal with no connection to the institution. The use of an individual's position or title in connection with the expression of purely personal, unofficial views is unacceptable. University resources, equipment or facilities, including stationery, computers and telephones, must not be used for personal or financial reasons, nor to promote private, extramural or personal ideas.

Extension agents/specialists have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars and do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of colleagues. In the exchange of criticism and ideas, they should respect the opinions of others, acknowledge credit, refrain from plagiarism and strive to be objective in their professional judgments. As members of an academic institution, agents/specialists should strive to be effective educators and scholars.

As members of the community, Extension agents/specialists have the rights and obligations of other citizens and measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their discipline, to their constituents, to their profession and to their institution. When agents/specialists speak or act as private persons, they should avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for the college, division, UTIA or UT.

For additional information, see:

The University of Tennessee-Human Resources Policies

1. HR0505 – Attendance (rev. 7/1985)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0505/
2. HR0515 – Collection of Debts Owed to the University by Employees (rev. 7/1998)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0515/
3. HR0525 – Disciplinary Action (rev. 7/2005)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0525/
4. HR0530 – Garnishments, (rev. 8/1997)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0530/
5. HR0580 – Code of Conduct (rev. 7/2016)
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0580/

4.4 Professional Development

The University of Tennessee Extension is committed to enabling all Extension employees to achieve their fullest potential, both as individuals and as members of the Extension community.

HR Policy HR0128 strongly encourages all University of Tennessee employees to obtain a minimum of 32 hours of professional development annually. Professional development accomplishments and plans for the coming year should be evaluated during the Annual Performance appraisal conference. Extension agents/specialists are expected to grow in their profession and continually maintain a “cutting edge” state of knowledge that includes technical, interpersonal and process knowledge and skills. UT Extension will offer guidance, growth opportunities, time and some financial support, when appropriate and reasonable, for the professional development of employees. The types of professional development opportunities offered and supported by Extension include areas such as new employee orientation training, subject matter updates, graduate education opportunities and support. Also, membership in Extension professional associations is encouraged, along with association-provided/sponsored professional development activities.

HR0128 – Human Resources Development (rev.01/2005)

http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0128/

4.5 Policy for Living in Assigned County

County and area agents/specialists are strongly encouraged to live within their assigned areas and become a part of their community. This enables Extension personnel to develop rapport with clientele and community leaders, providing opportunities which contribute to becoming an effective Extension educator.

Chapter 5 Procedures for Handbook Update

5.1 Revisions:

Every five years, or as deemed necessary by the Dean of Extension, this Extension Handbook will be reviewed for correctness and recommended changes. An Extension Review Committee, appointed by the dean, shall consist of no less than five members who represent Extension non-tenured and/or non-tenure-track personnel. The committee members will elect a chairperson who will coordinate the activities of the committee and provide recommendations for revisions to the dean. The committee has the responsibility to suggest revisions to the handbook regarding policy/procedure changes or updates or other actions as identified by the dean or his/her administrative staff.

The Dean of UT Extension and Chancellor of University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture must grant final approval for the Extension Handbook and subsequent amendments. The Dean of UT Extension will determine the urgency and timing for suggested amendments and make recommendations to the Chancellor of University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.

5.2 Proposals for Handbook Revision

Suggestions for revisions to this Extension Handbook may be proposed by any individual(s) covered by the policies/guidelines of the handbook. Suggestions for revisions will be forwarded, in writing, to the Dean of UT Extension. All requests will be reviewed, discussed and considered by the Extension Review Committee.

The Chancellor of University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, or other members of the administrative staff, may propose revisions directly to the Dean of UT Extension or the Extension Review Committee, if this committee has been appointed.

The Handbook for County, Region, Area and State Extension Agents and Specialists, and any subsequent changes, become effective only after approved by the Dean of UT Extension and the Chancellor of University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.

