



Avoid Scams Related to USDA Financial Assistance for Farmers Facing Discrimination

(Check <https://www.farmers.gov/22007> for updates.)

Overview

Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides \$2.2 billion in financial assistance for farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination in USDA's farm lending programs prior to January 1, 2021.

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. Note that application forms for this program are **not** yet available and the application filing period has **not** started.

You can get up-to-date information about this program at [farmers.gov/22007](https://www.farmers.gov/22007), a USDA website.

Protect Yourself from Potential Scams!

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 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 [farmers.gov/22007](https://www.farmers.gov/22007). Before the application process opens, the National Administrator of this program will provide a webpage you can go to for helpful information; it will be linked from [farmers.gov/22007](https://www.farmers.gov/22007).

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

- ◆ You will **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 will be **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 USDA OIG hotline complaint can be accessed online at <https://usdaoig.oversight.gov/hotline>; OIG's phone number is (800) 424-9121.