



National Association of FSA County Office Employees

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Stronger Together: The Power of NASCOE Membership

On behalf of nearly 4,700 members, I would like to introduce you to the **National Association of FSA County Office Employees (NASCOE)**. NASCOE is not a union – we are a trade Association, better known as an employee association, made up of dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to advance the interests and well-being of **ALL** FSA county office employees.

Legacy of NASCOE - In 1958, county office employees across the nation began forming state associations to advocate for better working conditions and employee benefits. A year later, those state associations united to form NASCOE. Before that time, County Office (CO) employees did not receive the same pay and benefits as their General Schedule (GS) counterparts. In 1962, NASCOE was granted exclusive recognition to represent full-time county office employees in discussions with management about employment terms and working conditions. Since then, NASCOE has been a strong and diligent voice ensuring CO employees receive fair and equitable treatment.

Our Unique Employment Status - CO employees, Title 7 employees, under the direction of the USDA Secretary of Agriculture, while GS employees are Title 5 employees under the direction of the Executive Branch. Benefits passed by Congress typically apply first to Title 5 employees, and CO employees only receive those benefits once extended by the Secretary. NASCOE plays a key role in monitoring legislation and advocating for those extensions on behalf of our members and all CO employees.

How NASCOE Works - NASCOE is governed by a Board of Directors, with two representatives from each state association in good standing. The Executive Committee (EC) is composed of elected volunteers, which serves as the executive arm of the Board. These individuals devote countless hours, non-paid hours, to advance our mission and represent employee interests nationwide. The Executive Committee consists of four officers and five area executives who are elected annually.

Our Objectives - NASCOE's purpose is to:

- Support the successful operations and mission of FSA
- Cooperate with other agricultural and employee organizations
- Advocate for equitable salaries, benefits and working conditions
- Promote professionalism and recognition of county office employees
- Support the County Committee system

Why Membership Matters - Membership in NASCOE begins at the state association level - joining your state association (in good standing) automatically enrolls you in NASCOE. A portion of the state dues are paid to NASCOE for use on behalf of all members. Currently, NASCOE represents about 72% of county office employees, which is historically low. The percentage is likely to change once we review and determine the

effects of DRP and VERA. The stronger our membership, the louder our collective voice when meeting with FSA management, USDA leadership, Congress and Stakeholder Organizations. Every member strengthens our ability to protect and advance employee interests.

Your Voice in Action - NASCOE has exclusive rights to represent all county office employees in consultations and negotiations with FSA and USDA management. Through our annual negotiations process, members submit ideas and concerns for consideration. The NASCOE negotiation team considers items and sits down with FSA and USDA management to discuss these items, and showcase the reason these changes will benefit programs, employees and the farmers and ranchers we serve. One recent success—the Program Technician (PT) Reclassification and creation of the Program Analyst position in 2024—was achieved after a decade of persistent advocacy.

Legislative Representation - NASCOE has a legislative consultant in Washington, DC who monitors congressional actions affecting employee benefits, Farm Bill provisions, USDA funding, and more. He helps NASCOE stay up-to-date and determine action necessary to help advocate on proposals from Congress that adversely impact employees and programs. He works closely with the Ag Appropriations and Ag Committees to help secure desperately needed funding and this type of representation has been critical in protecting CO employees and preserving the County Committee (COC) system.

Stay Connected and Informed – To learn more, visit www.nascoe.org for detailed information on NASCOE's work, our team and the benefits of joining. Members also have access to the [NASCOE App](#), which offers exclusive updates and communication tools that provides additional information on the benefits of joining NASCOE.

Join Us - I encourage every county office employee to join their state and NASCOE. Get involved – whether by serving in a representative capacity or sharing your ideas for improvement. Together, as a unified force, we can continue to strengthen FSA, and the future of all county office employees. We truly are stronger TOGETHER!

Sincerely,



NASCOE President