



January 18, 2024

To: Area Extension Agent and CEDs

From: Edward Martin, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President & Director
Arizona Cooperative Extension

RE: New required guideline for Area Assignments

For the Calendar year 2024, new guidelines will be in place to ensure communication and accountability for Area Agent assignments within UArizona Cooperative Extension.

I have instructed the County Extension Directors (CEDs) of Area Agent's home departments to meet with their Area Agent and the appropriate CED or Associate Director (AD) to discuss the current Position Description (PD) and confirm the information contained within. If a current Position Description is unavailable, one will be developed during the meeting and approved by the Agent, the CEDs, the appropriate AD, and the Associate Vice President and Director of Extension and placed on file.

Geographical Area Agents will meet with their home CED and the CED(s) of the counties assigned in their PD. Programmatic Area Agents will meet their home CED and the appropriate Associate Director (AD). During these meetings, the Agent, CEDs, and, if appropriate, the AD will discuss the expectations for that Area Agent Assignment.

An Ad hoc Committee of the County Extension Directors developed guidelines for Area Agent assignments. These guidelines will be used to assess Area Agent functionality. If, at any time, it is determined that an Area Agent is not meeting agreed-upon obligations and responsibilities, the Area Agent stipend will be removed, and the Area Agent will revert to County Agent status.

The guidelines are attached. These new policies help ensure better communication between Area Agents, CEDs, and ADs, allowing for a better understanding of how certain programs are being led throughout the state and the counties.

Area Agent Responsibilities

All Area Agents must have a documented and impactful Extension Program within area-assigned, whether Geographical or Programmatic.

What is a Program?

Multi-faceted series of activities and products designed to increase stakeholder awareness/knowledge, change behavior, and/or affect policy.

- Must include a show of need such as a needs assessment, advisory board recommendation, request from CED or administrations, etc.
- Identification of specific needs to address, planning, inputs & outputs, and outcomes/assessment
- Direct community engagement, which may include (but not be limited to) workshops, seminars, field days, call-ins, publications
- Applied research as appropriate to programming.

What a Program is not?

- Single event or activity
- Single lecture or presentation
- Sporadic expert call-in advice
- Solely contributing as a co-PI on a grant
- Listed as a PI on a grant that takes place outside your county

Each Area Agent Assignment must have an approved workload distribution in the signed Position description. This will be their percent time spent in a particular county(ies) or a percent time spent outside their home county working programmatically across the state at various locations. The percentage is based on annual time effort rather than weekly or monthly. Temporal variability of effort may be considerable.

Each Area Agent must submit a quarterly programming report to their home CED and each county CED for area assignment and contribute to the annual county report for each county. Programmatic Area Agents must submit quarterly reports to the appropriate Associate Director and their home CED.

Compensation

- Area-assignment stipends incur when the Agent begins area responsibility through initial hiring or coverage due to vacancy and need (i.e., resignation, retirement, etc.)
- The Associate Vice President and Director of Extension will revoke area-assignment stipends after the Agent ends area responsibility either through a new hire, resignation of area assignment, or performance based on CED or AD recommendations.

Reporting

Each Area Agent must submit quarterly reports to the relevant County Extension Directors (Geographical Assignments) or relevant Associate Director (Programmatic Assignments). An email with a link will be sent out every quarter as a reminder. The report should be short, no longer than 300 words, listing activities during the previous quarter.