

Exclusive Benefits for NASCOE Members

Exclusive access to Working Advantage discount network.

This allows you to save up to 60% on purchases such as:

- Theme Parks (Six Flags, Disney, etc.)
- Movie Tickets (Cinemark, Regal, etc.)
- Ski Tickets
- Hotels, Travel and Car Rentals
- Broadway Theatre Tickets
- Sporting Events
- Health and Fitness
- Museums and City Passes
- Merchant Gift Certificates
- Online Shopping

Check it out at [WorkingAdvantage.com!](http://WorkingAdvantage.com)

You must have the NASCOE Company ID.

Other Benefits Include:

- Legal Services for NASCOE Members
- Various scholarships and awards are available, and more!

Visit the NASCOE website for specific details.



NASCOE's Past, Present, and Future

AN INSIDE LOOK AT YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

www.NASCOE.org

What is NASCOE?

In 1958 county office employees organized state associations to work for employee benefits. In early 1959, the State Associations formed the National Association of County Office Employees. NASCOE is the national affiliate of the various state associations. It is governed by a Board of Directors composed of two members from each state. An executive committee is the executive arm of the Board of Directors. Dues are nominal and are paid through an individual's state association.

Our objectives are to assist in every way possible to assure successful operation of FSA and the attainment of FSA's objectives, to cooperate with other groups and organizations, to conserve and improve our soil resources, to secure equitable salaries, working conditions, and retirement provisions for all county office employees and to promote the professionalism of our employees.

Since 1962, NASCOE has been granted exclusive recognition to represent full-time county office employees in negotiation with management on terms of employment and working conditions.

Associate Membership

Many state office employees, county committee persons, District Directors, temporary employees and retired employees choose to participate in and support NASCOE as an Associate Member. Associate Members share in many of the same benefits available to regular members and reap the rewards of NASCOE's active legislative work on federal employee issues.

Future Goals of NASCOE

- Strive to protect and improve benefits that employees currently have.
- Continue to work toward PT and CED upgrades and other benefits with a priority on those who have waited the longest on these improvements.
- Emphasize the need for training to improve the image and ability of FSA & NASCOE people to serve the national agriculture community.
- Work for and actively pursue good working relationships among employees of all USDA agencies.
- Seek benefits and privileges that are equal to those enjoyed by other federal employees.
- Continue to work with and support the County Committee System and the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees (NAFEC).
- Continue to work and support Commodity Groups in promoting agriculture throughout the nation.
- Keep NASCOE members and potential members informed about NASCOE activities.
- Strive to attain proper staffing levels for the county offices.
- Strive for 100% Membership of FSA employees in NASCOE

Since the beginning NASCOE has accomplished much through Negotiation & Consultation with FSA Management

During the 1960's

- Government Life Insurance
- Civil Service Retirement
- Severance Pay
- Increased Leave Earnings
- Transfer Employment into USDA without loss of grade, leave or tenure
- Pay Increases – Timed with Civil Service's

During the 1970's

- Reclassification of CED's and PA's
- Secured "Saved Grades" where grade were reduced due to reduction in workload/reclassification.
- Credit for past County Office experience in lieu of education for CED training positions.
- Vacancies in jobs above the County Office level now released to the County Office.
- Secured a Washington consultant to represent interest of County Committee employees.

During the 1980's

- NASCOE Scholarship Program
- Legislative Fund
- Advertising Program Assistant vacancies to County Offices within the state
- Passage of Transfer Bill
- Supplemental Insurance on payroll withholding
- Upgrading of PA job description
- Negotiated for a significant increase in number of Grade 12 offices.

During the 1990's

- PT reclassification approved
- CED reclassification approved
- CPT reclassification eligible for upgrades
- Lead PT grade increase in shared management offices
- Compressed work schedule made available
- ASCS/FSA Awards Program increased 500%
- Donor Leave Program Implemented
- Grievance procedure reintroduced in handbook procedure
- Appeals procedure information made available
- NASCOE Scholarship program increased
- Legislative program improved
- Maxi-flex Implemented

- FSA agreed to establish a Classification Task Force to continue to work on a new method of classification where grades are based on knowledge, skills, ability and complexity instead of workload. To bring CED grades more in line with other similar management positions in USDA, the grade CO-10 was eliminated and all CO-10 CED's were upgraded to CO-11.
- FSA agreed to have a classification task force develop a new method of grade determination based on knowledge, skills, and ability.
- Requested that the CED job description be expanded to include Ag Credit responsibilities.
- With the Agency downsizing and budget constraints, NASCOE expressed the need for an employee buyout and/or early retirement options. The buyout was offered in 1996 and 1997.
- CED Classification system implemented removing management grades from being determined totally by the workload report. Most CO-9 CED's upgraded.
- With the changing environment of the agency, NASCOE requested that FSA rescind the rule requiring that a CED remain in their first county for 18 months.
- Requested and management agreed for cross-training of all FSA programs including FLP.
- Before 1998, GS and CO were treated differently when it came to awards and performance ratings. NASCOE fought to achieve parallel benefits between CO and GS with regards to awards and performance.
- NASCOE requested that Maxi-flex be implemented. FSA agreed to offer this alternative work schedule to CO employees.
- NASCOE requested and management agreed to allow two CPT's in large shared management counties.
- CED's in shared management office received laptops per NASCOE's request.

During the 2000's

- Accomplished a significant increase in CED upgrades including all remaining CO-9 CED's.
- Accomplished reconsideration of all county office closures.
- Negotiated that CO and GS employees be on a level playing field when competing for federal jobs.
- Negotiated for loan approval authority for CO employees who complete training.
- Negotiated with FSA to ensure that suspensions pending investigation will occur only when credible evidence is produced.
- Successful in NAP being added under the Program Variety element and Soybean/Oilseeds added under the Crop Production element in the CED Classification and Pay Plan.
- Negotiated that FSA employees, COC Members and their families would be eligible to apply for direct and guaranteed loans through FSA.
- Negotiated a new Adverse Action procedure giving CO employees more protection.

- Negotiated changes in Travel Overtime and Travel Comp Time.
- Scored 2 meetings per year with management, the Spring Negotiation Session and a follow-up session.
- Successfully requested the split of CRP General and Continuous Program for classification of PT grades.
- Established NASCOE Program Committee
- NASCOE Website established as an effective communication tool with membership
- NASCOE Emblems Online Storefront concept
- NASCOE Now publication developed
- NASCOEPAC established
- Moved to electronic communication and distribution of information to membership

In more recent years

- Planning has started for an Aspiring Leader Program for PT's. It will identify PT's with leadership potential and provide a training program to hone leadership skills.
- Pushing for equality and consistency in performance management determinations for all CO employees.
- Return of Time off Awards and Cash Awards
- Expansion of Key PT's to one per district for those states willing to embrace the opportunity.
- Returning GovDelivery back into the hands of the County Office to be able to make decisions when key outreach should take place.
- NASCOE chosen members are on more task forces than ever before and more PT's than ever!
- Building strong relationships with management quickly to address the needs of our members.
- Building relationships with the ACRSI team to input & monitor the future of acreage reporting.
- A legislative agenda that was effective in procuring and protecting CO staffing dollars above all other concerns.
- Having an effective NAFEC committee in place to support the only thing that makes FSA different than any other government agency, the County Committee system.
- Planning and implementing a NASCOE budget that has our organization in the black with re-stored monetary reserves to battle what might come our way.
- Reduction in PAC banking fees from a high of \$4855 per year in 2013 to a low of \$1661 projected for 2015 which leaves more funds to help candidates in the PAC.

Each Year

- Yearly cost of living and locality pay – Each year NASCOE must request that CO employees receive the COLA that other federal employees receive.

Recent Legislative Accomplishments

Secured Significant Funding Above the Budget Request for FSA Salaries & Expenses

Funding to operate and fill agency positions remains our top priority. Our team has avoided recent budget proposals that would have decreased salaries funding by up to \$60M. In addition, these funds have allowed the Department to lift the hiring freeze and add new employees.

Blocked Implementation of CBS Office Restructure/Closing Plan

Our organization's legislative efforts lead to bill language prohibiting the implementation of the Central, Branch and Satellite office restructuring plan. While we are willing to discuss restructuring options, the Department's leadership was unable to justify the consolidation through any workload or cost benefit analysis.

Secured Funding for Monthly COC Meetings

Our legislative team secured funding to ensure the continuation of regularly scheduled COC meetings.

Stopped the Transfer of Salaries & Expenses Toward IT Initiatives

Secured legislative language to ensure S&E funding is not transferred from personnel/staff accounts.

Worked to Maintain Employee Benefits

Worked with members of Congress to ensure the FERS annuity continues to be based on the employee's average high three rather than the proposed high five calculation. In addition, our team has blocked two straight years of proposed employee contribution increases related to retirement programs.

Prohibited Direct Reassignments of Staff

Our team included legislative language ensuring that FSA staff are not reassigned to various office locations for the purpose of meeting the two and twenty rule for closing office without Congressional notification.