

Title VI Plan

Agency Name: Allegan County Transportation

Date Adopted: June 2, 2009

I. Plan Statement

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

Allegan County Transportation (ACT) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.A.

This plan was developed to guide the ACT in its administration and management of Title VI-related activities.

Title VI Coordinator Contact information

Allegan County Transportation, Transportation Director

II. Title VI Information Dissemination

Title VI information posters shall be prominently and publicly displayed in the ACT facility and on their revenue vehicles. The name of the Title VI coordinator is available on the ACT's website, at www.allegancounty.org. Additional information relating to nondiscrimination obligation can be obtained from the ACT Title VI Coordinator.

Title VI information shall be disseminated to ACT employees annually via the Employee Education form (see Appendix A) in payroll envelopes. This form reminds employees of the ACT's policy statement, and of their Title VI responsibilities in their daily work and duties.

During New Employee Orientation, new employees shall be informed of the provisions of Title VI, and the ACT's expectations to perform their duties accordingly.

All employees shall be provided a copy of the Title VI Plan and are required to sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt (see Appendix B).

III. Subcontractors and Vendors

All subcontractors and vendors who receive payments from ACT where funding originates from any federal assistance are subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended.

Written contract shall contain non-discrimination language, either directly or through the bid specification package which becomes an associated component of the contract.

IV. Record Keeping:

The Title VI Coordinator will maintain permanent records, which include, but are not limited to, signed acknowledgements of receipt from the employees indicating the receipt of the of ACT Title VI Plan, copies of Title VI complaints or lawsuits and related documentation, and records of correspondence to and from complainants, and Title VI investigations.

V. Title VI Complaint Procedures

How to file a Title VI Complaint?

The complainant may file a signed, written complaint up to one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged discrimination. The complaint should include the following information:

- Your name, mailing address, and how to contact you (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.)
- How, when, where and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names and contact information of any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant

The Title VI Complaint Form (see Appendix C) may be used to submit the complaint information. The complaint may be filed in writing with ACT at the following address:

*Allegan County Transportation
750 Airway Drive
Allegan, MI 49010*

NOTE: ACT encourages all complainants to certify all mail that is sent through the U.S. Postal Service and/or ensure that all written correspondence can be tracked easily. For complaints originally submitted by facsimile, an original, signed copy of the complaint must be mailed to the Title VI Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than 180 days from the alleged date of discrimination.

What happens to the complaint after it is submitted?

All complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color or national origin in a service or benefit provided by ACT will be directly addressed by ACT. ACT shall also provide appropriate assistance to complainants, including those persons with disabilities, or who are limited in their ability to communicate in English. Additionally, ACT shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

A letter of acknowledging receipt of complaint will be mailed within seven days (Appendix D). Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.

How will the complainant be notified of the outcome of the complaint?

ACT will send a final written response letter (see Appendix E or F) to the complainant. In the letter notifying complainant that the complaint is not substantiated (Appendix F), the complainant is also advised of his or her right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of the final written decision from ACT, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the FTA. Every effort will be made to respond to Title VI complaints within 60 working days of receipt of such complaints, if not sooner.

In addition to the complaint process described above, a complainant may file a Title VI complaint with the following offices:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

VI. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

Upon request you may be provided a copy of the ACT approved LEP plan

VII. Community Outreach

Community Outreach is a requirement of Title VI. Recipients and subrecipients shall seek out and consider the viewpoints of minority and low-income populations in the course of conducting public outreach. Recipients have wide latitude to determine what specific measures are most appropriate and should make this determination based on the composition of the affected population, the public involvement process, and the resources of the recipient.

As an agency receiving federal financial assistance, we have made the following community outreach efforts:

The following paragraphs are samples of community outreach and if used need to be tailored to fit into your agency's situations:

ACT has engaged the public in its planning and decision-making processes, as well as its marketing and outreach activities. Between 2005-2009, the public was invited to participate in these activities:

Coordinated Pubic Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan). Federal transit law, as amended by Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users of 2005 (AFETEA-LU), requires that projects selected for under the Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (Section 5316), and New Freedom Program (Section 5317) be derived from a coordinated plan. Describe your plan development process which involved the public participation.

Transit Improvement Plan (TIP). The TIP is a fiscally constrained three-year planning document that addresses transportation projects and programs including: federal, state and local highways, transit, ridesharing, bike paths and pedestrian facilities. If an item we wish to purchase is not in the TIP, it cannot be funded. The TIP process includes public hearings and public comment periods.

Board Meetings. The County Board of Commissioners holds two meetings monthly and the public is invited to attend.

Public Meetings. When new service is proposed information is disseminated to the neighborhoods affected and public meetings are scheduled.

Travel Training Class. ACT has developed a travel training program to reach out to community groups (senior centers, senior facilities, the disabled community) to conduct travel training classes. Travel Training classes are ongoing as well as outreach to these populations.

Customer Complaint Process. Citizens may call our Guest Services Department at ----- to lodge a complaint or comment. All complaints/comments are input into a database and then distributed to the relevant manager who researches the complaint and responds back to the citizen. ACT complaint process was updated in 2009.

Bilingual Outreach. ACT Guest Services group provides Spanish-speaking guests with information on public transit services in Spanish. Guest Services assistance is utilized in outreach programs and offered for programs and public meetings.

We submit to the Michigan Department of Transportation annually an application for funding. The application requests funding for both capital and operating assistance. Part of the annual application is a public notice, which includes a 30-day public comment period.

Appendix A

Employee Annual Education Form

Title VI Policy

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

All employees of the Allegan County Transportation are expected to consider, respect, and observe this policy in their daily work and duties. If a citizen approaches you with a question or complaint, direct him or her to *Title VI Coordinator*.

In all dealings with citizens, use courtesy titles (i.e. Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss) to address them without regard to race, color or national origin.

Appendix B

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Title VI Plan

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the Allegan County Transportation Title VI Plan. I have read the plan and am committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.A.

Your signature

Print you name

Date

**DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT AGAINST ACT
TITLE VI AND RELATED STATUTES**

Contact Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Email: _____

Discrimination Complaint

Name of Staff Person that You Believe Discriminated Against You: _____

Date of Alleged Incident: _____

- You were discriminated because of:
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race | <input type="checkbox"/> Color |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retaliation | <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin (Language) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> Age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Familial Status | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Explain as briefly and clearly as possible what happened and how you were discriminated against. Indicate who was involved. Be sure to include how other persons were treated differently than you. Also attach any written material pertaining to your case:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Letter Acknowledging Receipt of Complaint

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Dear Ms. Doe:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your complaint against Allegan County
Transportation alleging _____.

An investigation will begin shortly. If you have additional information you wish to
convey or questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact this office by
telephoning 269-686-4529, or write to me at 750 Airway Drive, Allegan, MI 49010.

Sincerely,

Name
Title VI Coordinator

APPENDIX E

Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Substantiated

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your letter of _____ (date) against the *Agency's Name* alleging Title VI violation has been investigated.

(An/Several) apparent violation(s) of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including those mentioned in your letter (was/were) identified. Efforts are underway to correct these deficiencies.

Thank you for calling this important matter to our attention. You were extremely helpful during our review of the program. ***(If a hearing is requested, the following sentence may be appropriate.)*** You may be hearing from this office, or from federal authorities, if your services should be needed during the administrative hearing process.

Sincerely,

Name
Title VI Coordinator

APPENDIX F

Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Not Substantiated

Today's Date

Ms. Jo Doe
1234 Main St.
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your complaint of _____ (date) against the *Agency's Name* alleging _____ has been investigated.

The results of the investigation did not indicate that the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, had in fact been violated. As you know, Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

The *Agency's Name* has analyzed the materials and FACT pertaining to your case for evidence of the city's failure to comply with any of the civil rights laws. There was no evidence found that any of these laws have been violated.

I therefore advise you that your complaint has not been substantiated, and that I am closing this matter in our files.

You have the right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of this final written decision from *ACT*, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the Federal Transit Administration at

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor - TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Thank you for taking the time to contact us. If I can be of assistance to you in the future, do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Name
Title VI Coordinator

APPENDIX G

Samples of Narrative to be included in Posters to be Displayed in Revenue Vehicles and Facilities

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

ACT is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.A. **If you feel you are being denied participation in or being denied benefits of the transit services provided by ACT, or otherwise being discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, you may contact our office at *Title VI Coordinator's Contact Information*.**

For more information, visit our website at _____