

Title VI

Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc. (FOEC) Transportation Programs Title VI Complaint Procedures

This section outlines the Title VI complaint procedures related to providing programs, services, and benefits. However, it does not deny the complainant the right to file formal complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Federal Transit Administration, Texas Department of Transportation or seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination, intimidation or retaliation of any kind that is prohibited by law.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal financial assistance.

GENERAL

Any person who believes that he or she, individually, or as a member of any specific class of persons, has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin as noted below may file a written complaint with the Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc. Title VI Director, 705 Commerce, P. O. Box 791, Palacios, TX 77465. Complainants have the right to complain directly to the appropriate federal agency. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints. The option of informal meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI Director may be utilized for resolutions. The Title VI Director will notify the Executive Director of all Title VI related complaints as well as all resolutions.

PROCEDURE

1. The Complaint must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Complaint shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s). In cases where Complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint may be made. The Title VI Director will interview the Complainant and assist the person in converting verbal complaints to writing. All complaints must, however, be signed by the Complainant or his/her representative.
 - b. Include the date of the alleged act of discrimination date when the Complainants became aware of the alleged act of discrimination; or the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of conduct.
 - c. Present a detailed description of the issues, including names and job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the complaint.
 - d. Federal and state law requires complaints be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged incident.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Director will determine the need for additional information, and will investigate the merit of the complaint.
3. The Complainant will be provided with a written acknowledgement that GCRPC has either accepted or rejected the complaint.
4. A complaint must meet the following criteria for acceptance:
 - a. The Complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence.
 - b. The allegation must involve a covered basis such as race, color or national origin.

- c. The allegation must involve a GCRPC Transportation Service or one of its Federal-Aid subcontractor, or contractor.
5. A complaint may be dismissed for the following reasons:
 - a. The Complainant requests the withdrawal of the complaint.
 - b. The Complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.
 - c. The Complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts.
6. Once FOEC's Title VI Director decides to accept the complaint for investigation, the Complainant will be notified in writing of such determination. The complaint will receive a case number and will be tracked on a log that will identify the complainants name, basis, alleged harm, race, color and national origin of the Complainant.
7. Once FOEC's Title VI Director completes the investigation a report will be submitted to the Executive Director within 90 calendar days from the date of the acceptance of the complaint. The report will include a narrative description of the incident, identification of persons interviewed, findings and recommendations for disposition.
8. The report and its findings will be reviewed by the Title VI Director, and the Executive Director and in some cases may be reviewed by FOEC's Legal Counsel. The Report will be modified as needed.
9. The Executive Director will make a determination on the disposition of the complaint. Dispositions will be stated as follows:
 - a. In the event FOEC is in non-compliance with Title VI regulations remedial actions will be listed.
10. Notice of the Executive Director's determination will be mailed to the Complainant. Notice shall include information regarding appeal rights of Complainant and instructions for initiating such an appeal. Notice of appeals are as follows:
 - a. FOEC will reconsider this determination, if new facts, come to light.
 - b. If Complainant is dissatisfied with the determination and/or resolution set forth by GCRPC, the same complaint may be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for investigation. Complainant will be advised to contact the Title VI Program Coordinator, Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, East Building, 5 Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590 at 1-888-446-4511.
11. A copy of the complaint and FOEC's investigation report/letter of finding and Final Remedial Action Plan, if appropriate will be issued to FTA within 120 days of the receipt of the complaint.
12. A summary of the complaint and its resolution will be included as part of the Title VI updates to the FTA.

RECORDINGKEEPING REQUIREMENT

The Title VI Director will ensure that all records relating to FOEC's Title VI Complaint Process are maintained with transportation department records.

Records will be available for compliance review audits.