

Title VI Complaint Resolution Procedure

City of Fairburn

Purpose, Scope, and Responsibilities

Purpose

This procedure covers all formal complaints and informal charges filed by an individual or group of individuals under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, relating to any program or activity administered by the City of Fairburn (CITY) as to sub-recipients, consultants, and contractors. Intimidation or retaliation of any kind is prohibited by law. These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel.

Definitions

An informal charge is defined as *any verbal or written communication received by customer service staff from members of the public referencing a general complaint regarding the inequitable distribution of benefits, services, amenities, programs or activities financed in whole or in part with federal funds.*

A formal complaint is defined as *any written complaint of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex filed by an individual or group; signed by the complaining party on CITY OF FAIRBURN's complaint form seeking to remedy perceived discrimination by facially neutral policies, practices or decisions, which have an adverse impact which resulted in inequitable distribution of benefits, services, amenities, programs or activities finance in whole or in part with federal funds.* Such complaints include, but are not limited to, allegations of:

- failing to provide comparable services
- policies and practices that act as arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to equal opportunity;
- denied opportunity for equitably participation
- provision of fewer services or benefits and/or inferior services or benefits to members of a protected group
- differential exposure of protected groups to environmental hazards
- patterns of disparate treatment
- disproportionate adverse effects on social and economic parameters (e.g. access to services, healthcare facilities, employment opportunities and community cohesion)

This procedure explains each stage of the complaint processing process for formal and informal Title VI charges, communicates the rights and responsibilities of the complainant, and states the responsibilities of CITY OF FAIRBURN.

Informal charges and formal complaints should be filed within 120 calendar days of the event which forms the basis of the claim; of if the concern is an ongoing one, the charge/complaint should be filed within 120 calendar days of the last occurrence.

This procedure does not preclude the right of any Complainant to file complaints directly with any other federal agency or regulatory authority, or to seek private legal representation.

The time required to process investigations will vary depending on the complexity of the issue; however, every effort will be made to ensure a speedy resolution of all complaints at the lowest possible level within 60 business days.

The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties may be utilized for resolution.

Compliance with Title VI is the responsibility of every CITY employee. The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office is responsible for compliance monitoring, reporting, investigation, and program administration.

Responsibility

The Human Resource Department is responsible for intake of informal Title VI charges and submission of those complaints to the Title VI Coordinator.

The Title VI Coordinator will forward complaints to the accountable Director who will forward to the appropriate party within their respective department to handle resolution, follow up to ensure that resolution/proposed resolution occurs, and communicate specifics of the resolution/proposed resolution to the EEO office.

The Title VI Coordinator is responsible for tracking the complaints to ensure that the affected department(s) have taken the recommended action to remedy any determination of discrimination and communicating findings to the Complainant. The Title VI Coordinator is also responsible for reporting trends, action plans, and non-compliance to the City Administrator. EEO will forward a copy of all formal complaints filed to the City Administration for their records.

PROCESSING INFORMAL CHARGES

Intake

Intake of an informal charge is generated through communication, generally presented verbally to CITY OF FAIRBURN staff.

Any CITY OF FAIRBURN employee who receives an inquiry or complaint of this type shall direct the Complainant to report the concern directly to the Human Resource Department by telephone 770-964-2244, or by mail to 56 Malone St., SW Fairburn, GA 30213.

The Human Resource Director/Title VI Coordinator, upon receipt of an informal charge shall record the charge in their database and assign a Complaint number to be used for tracking purposes. After input of the charge into its log, the Title VI Coordinator shall promptly identify the appropriate department(s) to resolve the issue and forward the charge directly to that department's Director, with a copy to the Title VI Coordinator who will ascertain proper jurisdiction and forward the charge to the Equity Administrator for processing. The Equity Administrator shall assign a charge tracking number, review the matter to determine Title VI applicability, enter the charge into EEO's Title VI Complaint database, investigate merits of alleged violations (if needed) and monitor response dates. If determination is made that the matter is outside the scope of Title VI, EEO will notify Customer Service and the affected department's Director within a reasonable period.

Processing of Charge and Resolution

If the matter is determined to be within the scope of Title VI, the affected department's Director, within 5 business days of receipt, will forward the charge to the staff member most appropriate to address the issue. The affected department will consult with EEO and offer a proposed resolution. Within 5 business days of receiving written notification of a proposed resolution, EEO representatives will offer suggestions, if any, to modify the proposed resolution. EEO or the affected department will communicate its written or verbal findings to the customer within 30 business days and explain any steps being taken to resolve the matter, and will forward copies of this communication to the affected department(s) and to Customer Service who will update their database to include this information.

Every effort shall be made to process and resolve informal charges within 30 business days.

Appeal

There is no right to appeal resolution of an informal charge. However, the party reserves the right to file a formal complaint within 120 business days.

PROCESSING FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Intake

Intake of formal complaints is generated through verbal or written communication of a concern presented to CITY OF FAIRBURN staff. Any CITY OF FAIRBURN employee who receives a complaint of this type will direct the complaint to the EEO Office. EEO staff will provide a formal complaint form to the Complainant. Complainant must sign and submit the completed complaint form to the Title VI Coordinator of EEO.

Processing

The Title VI Coordinator of EEO shall review the matter to determine Title VI jurisdiction, assign an investigator if it is determined that the matter merits investigation, and monitor response dates. The investigator shall assign a complaint tracking number and enter the complaint into the Title VI Complaint database.

Jurisdiction will be determined based upon information provided in the written complaint. A complaint shall be investigated unless:

- ***It fails to state facts which could establish intentional unequal treatment as described in the Definitions section of this procedure;***
- ***Complainant is not a primary beneficiary of the federal aid received by CITY OF FAIRBURN.***

If determination is made that the matter is outside the scope of Title VI, EEO will notify Customer Service and the affected department's Director in writing within a reasonable period.

Investigation, Determination, and Recommendation

If jurisdiction is determined to exist and investigation is warranted, the assigned investigator will take the following steps:

- ***identify the basis of the alleged unequal treatment;***
- ***ascertain when and where the alleged unequal treatment occurred;***
- ***identify and interview all relevant parties, review documents, and make site visits to obtain factual information.***

Upon conclusion of a thorough investigation, the investigator will prepare a report to summarize findings and suggest appropriate corrective action along with proposed resolution. The investigative report should be submitted to the Title VI Coordinator of EEO within 50 business days. EEO will maintain a record of all discussions and retain all documents relating to the investigation in a confidential file.

Communication of Findings and Complaint Resolution

The Title VI Coordinator of EEO will accept, reject, or modify the investigative report and consult with the affected department to convey the preliminary findings and develop a proposal for resolution. The Title VI Coordinator of EEO will prepare a written determination and submit the determination to the legal department for review and analysis of legal sufficiency. Once the final determination is ready for release, the Title VI Coordinator of EEO and a CITY OF FAIRBURN legal representative will meet with the Director of the affected department(s) to communicate the final determination and recommendations, if any, for corrective action. The Title VI Coordinator of EEO will provide written notification to the Complainant of the investigation findings and CITY OF FAIRBURN's proposed resolution, if any. EEO will forward copies of this communication to Customer Service and the affected department(s).

If cause is found to indicate a potential occurrence of non-compliance, the Title VI Coordinator of EEO will communicate this information to the executive management team before releasing its findings to the complainant.

Appeal

The Title VI Coordinator of EEO will explain to the Complainant their right to appeal to the Federal Transit Administration or seek private legal representation