

TITLE VI PROGRAM

OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Sept. 2021

MISSION

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is responsible for safe and efficient transportation of people and goods by roadway, rail, water, and air. WSDOT also partners with others to maintain and improve local roads, railroads and airports, as well as public transportation, bicycles and pedestrian programs. WSDOT works to assist Washington's transportation needs regardless of the user's race, color, and national origin including Limited English Proficiency.

WSDOT enforces all components of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related non-discrimination rules across all manners of transportation where WSDOT is involved, from planning to construction, on through maintaining these systems.

WHAT IS TITLE VI?

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 states:

"No person in the United States 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." (42 U.S.C. Sec 2000d)

Title VI along with other non-discrimination statutes prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin including limited English proficiency in any program, activity or service.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

As a recipient of federal funds, WSDOT is required to comply with a federal Executive Order on environmental justice. A major part is to include minority and low-income populations as voices in the agency's decision-making throughout the life of our projects and services.

There are three core principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate negative human health or environmental effects.
- To have full and fair participation of all individuals and communities in the transportation decision making process.
- To prevent the discrimination of minority and low-income populations in their access to our programs/ services.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

Individuals who do not speak English as their main language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or LEP. These individuals may be entitled to language assistance about our programs, services, and activities as directed since 2000 in Executive Order 13166.

This Executive Order prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating by failing to provide meaningful access to services to non-English speaking individuals. The Executive Order means WSDOT is required to share information in a language other than English upon request.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The primary goal of WSDOT's Title VI Program is to educate all WSDOT employees, contractors, local governments, and service beneficiaries of Title VI requirements and the responsibilities and monitor them for compliance.

WSDOT's Title VI Program is responsible for researching the potential social impact of projects and services on communities and people and evaluating that research throughout the planning and decision-making process.

WSDOT prohibits all discriminatory practices, which may result in:

- Denial any service, financial aid, or benefit provided under the program to which and individual may be entitled.
- Different standards or requirements for participation. Segregation or separate treatment in any part of the program.
- Distinctions in quality, quantity, or manner in which the benefit is provided.
- Discrimination in any activities conducted in a facility built in whole or part with federal funds.

To ensure compliance with Title VI, and related nondiscrimination authorities, WSDOT will:

- Educate the public of their Title VI rights
- Collect and analyze data to avoid or reduce harmful effects on minority and low-income populations.
- Encourage the full and fair participation by all including low-income and minority communities in the decision-making process.
- Prevent the denial of reduction in or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.
- Provide language services to LEP individuals to inform them about WSDOT's programs, services and activities.

When WSDOT distributes federal funds to a partner or business including, but not limited to towns, cities, counties, planning organization, contractor, supplier, or other party, they must also administer programs and activities without regard to race, color, or national origin including LEP.

WHO BEARS RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLY WITH TITLE VI?

All parties accepting federal funds are responsible. As a recipient of federal funds, the entire WSDOT organization must comply with all of Title VI, as well as any subrecipients of those federal funds. By accepting federal aid, the entire agency must

comply – every function of the agency – not just the part using the federal funds.

HOW CAN I FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT?

Any person or specific group who believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color and national origin, including limited English proficiency, may file a complaint with WSDOT OEO. Under Title VI, 'person' means citizens, noncitizens, visitors, exchange students, etc. A complaint must be filed with WSDOT OEO within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act.

For information on how to file a complaint, contact OEO by any of the following methods:

Attn: Complaint Investigations

Office of Equal Opportunity

Washington State Department of Transportation

PO Box 47314

Olympia, WA 985047314

Phone: 360-705-7090

Fax: 360-705-6018

Email: oeoecrbcomplaints@wsdot.wa.gov

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once a complaint is filed, it will be logged by WSDOT OEO. WSDOT forwards the complaint to Federal Highway Administration for processing. Retaliation is prohibited and will not be tolerated against any person who reports alleged discrimination, harassment or policy violations or participates as a witness in an investigation.

Additional Title VI information

<https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/EqualOpportunity/default.htm>

<https://www.lep.gov/>

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/

Applicable federal regulations

42USC 2000d – Civil Rights Act

Executive Order #13166 – LEP

Executive Order #12898 - EJ

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the Office of Equal Opportunity at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA(4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Title VI Notice to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin including limited English proficiency, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7090.