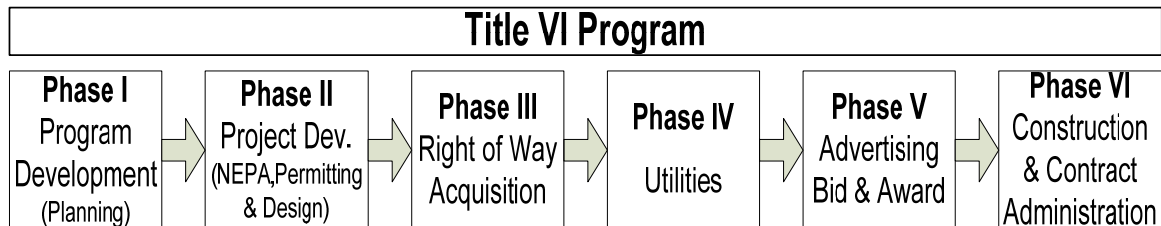


In order to meet the requirements of the [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), both non-certified and certified local agencies are required to develop one of the following items:

- a Title VI Program Plan or
- a Nondiscrimination Agreement

Title VI issues must be considered from the very start of program development through the entire project process, to closure of the project.



## **A. Background**

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and subsequent federal nondiscrimination statutes such as the [Federal-Aid Highway Act](#), the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), the [Age Discrimination Act of 1975](#), the [Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987](#), [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(ADA\)](#), [Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations](#), and [Executive Order 13166 – Limited English Proficiency](#), prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, economic status, disability and sex (gender) in the provision of benefits and services in programs and activities receiving federal funds.

In 1969, the passage of The National Environmental Policy Act ([NEPA](#)) aimed to provide "all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically pleasing surroundings," and required the use of a "systematic, interdisciplinary approach" so environmental and community factors would be considered in decision-making processes.

Starting with President Clinton signing [Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations](#) in 1994, a series of orders then followed requiring the incorporation of Environmental Justice principles into federal programs and policies.

Environmental Justice is intended to ensure that the process of transportation planning is consistent with the provisions of [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act](#). Environmental Justice

focuses on enhanced public involvement and an analysis of the distribution of benefits and impacts. Consistent with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order on Environmental Justice, disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations should be mitigated where possible, if not totally avoided. Beyond this mitigation requirement, there is no presumed distribution of resources to sustain compliance with the Environmental Justice provisions. The intent is to ensure that no person is denied benefits based on race, color, or national origin.

Additional information can be found at FHWA's [Title VI](#) website.

## **B. Overview**

All local agencies that receive federal funds through ODOT are required to have a Title VI Program Plan for their transportation projects. Alternatively, local agencies may adopt [ODOT's Title VI Plan](#). In addition, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) or Transportation Management Areas (TMA's) may also adopt [ODOT's Title VI Plan](#). Refer to the [FHWA Memorandum "Implementing Title VI Requirements in Metropolitan and Statewide Planning"](#) for additional information.

Agencies may use an abbreviated Title VI Plan, otherwise known as a Nondiscrimination Agreement. USDOT's implementing regulations are contained in [49 CFR Part 21](#) and [23 CFR 200](#). These regulations require the following:

- Affirmative Action and
- recipients to execute Title VI Assurances as a condition of federal-aid.

These federal regulations require ODOT to ensure that all local agencies, receiving USDOT funds administered by ODOT, are in compliance with these regulations, see [23 CFR 200.9\(b\)\(7\)](#), [49 CFR 21.3](#) & [21.7](#) for reference.

The [Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987](#) broadened the scope of Title VI coverage by expanding the definition of the terms "programs and activities" to include all programs and activities of federal-aid recipients, sub recipients, and contractors, whether or not such programs and activities are federally funded.

All ODOT construction projects reference Title VI requirements in [Oregon Standard Specifications Section 170.62](#). This section states:

**00170.62 Labor Nondiscrimination** - The Contractor shall comply with all Laws concerning equal employment opportunity, including without limitation those prohibiting discrimination because of race, religion, color, sex, disability, or national origin.

The following language contained in ODOT's Standard Provisions for Intergovernmental Agreements also references civil rights laws, rules and regulations, including Title VI.

The Local Agency agrees to comply with all applicable civil rights laws, rules and regulations, including Title V and Section 504 of the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(ADA\)](#), and [Titles VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#).

## **C. Title VI Program Plan**

Title VI Program Plans are intended to prevent discrimination in the provision of programs and services on federally funded highway programs and activities. The Title VI Program Plan is a system of policies and procedures designed to monitor agency (and sub recipient agency) compliance, address complaints, and eliminate discrimination when found to exist. A Title VI Program Plan is also a legal document that imposes individual legal liabilities to the signatory agency that are not transferable.

The local agency's Title VI Program Plan must be presented to ODOT's Title VI Officer for review and approval. ODOT's Title VI Officer will perform annual reviews. See ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights Title VI](#) website for additional information.

## **D. Title VI Plan Development**

Each local agency must develop a Title VI Program Plan or a Nondiscrimination Agreement that reflects its individual federal-aid highway program structure.

### **1. TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Technical support for local agency Title VI Program Plan or Nondiscrimination Agreement development is available through ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#).

### **2. PROGRAM PLAN SCOPE**

The Title VI Program Plan describes how recipients of federal financial assistance will develop and comply with the requirements under Title VI and how complaints may be filed.

### **3. PROGRAM PLAN FORMAT**

The prescribed sample format is contained in the [USDOT - Preventing Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Program Reference Notebook](#). Local agencies should use this sample to prepare their program plan. Such local agency program plans must contain the categories listed in [Item 5](#) below, "Key Points in Developing a Title VI Plan"

### **4. NONDISCRIMINATION AGREEMENT**

A sample agreement can be found in the [USDOT - Preventing Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Program Reference Notebook](#) in appendix C.

Additional information regarding resources, training, effective practices and case studies can be found at the [FHWA Environmental Justice](#) website.

If there are questions on these examples, please contact the Title VI Officer in ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#) or the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#).

Local agencies having a Title VI Program Plan already approved for a different federally funded program have the option to submit the existing Title VI Program Plan for approval or create a new one. Local agencies should submit their plans through the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#) for review by ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#). The Office of Civil Rights will review the plan in accordance with federal requirements. If necessary, supplemental information will be requested prior to approval.

## **5. KEY POINTS IN DEVELOPING A TITLE VI PROGRAM PLAN**

As noted previously, each local agency must develop a Title VI Program Plan. Such local agencies should consider the following points in developing a Title VI Plan. Refer to ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan](#) for example information. For local agencies with a Nondiscrimination Agreement, these points are incorporated in the Nondiscrimination Agreement.

### **a. Policy statement**

The policy statement reflects the local agency's commitment to Title VI compliance, including all related federal laws and regulations, and is signed by the local agency's Chief Executive Officer.

### **b. Authorities**

This section cites all relevant federal statutes, regulations, executive orders and other legislation.

### **c. Organization and Staffing**

This section identifies the Title VI Coordinator and program area Title VI Specialists within the organization directly responsible for the management and administration of the Title VI Program. The Program Plan is to include an organization chart that describes the reporting relationship between the designated Title VI Specialists within each program emphasis area and the designated local agency Title VI Coordinator.

### **d. Program Emphasis Areas**

This section describes the federal-aid highway program emphasis areas (i.e., Planning, Research, Design, Education and Training, Right of Way, Construction, Maintenance, etc.), addresses the program areas' legal/operational authorities, and indicates the Title VI compliance monitoring responsibilities of each program emphasis area.

**e. Title VI Standard Assurances and Appendices (DOT 1050.2)**

The USDOT 1050.2 Standard Title VI Assurances are placed by reference in every contract, grant or property regardless of its funding source. See the [US Department of Justice Title VI Legal Manual](#) for additional information.

**f. Complaint Procedures**

This section outlines the process for filing complaints and the investigative process. It also identifies the local agency staff positions responsible for this process, and the time limits to submit complaints and complete investigations (60 days per [23 CFR 200.9\(b\)\(3\)](#)).

**g. Table of Contents**

This section enables the reader to quickly locate particular sections of the Title VI Program Plan.

## **E. Reporting Requirements**

Local agencies are to provide the following reports and data to ODOT.

### **1. ANNUAL TITLE VI ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT**

All agencies with approved Title VI Program Plans or Nondiscrimination Agreements are to annually prepare a report of their Title VI Program Plan implementation compliance activities. This describes the activities that occurred during the State of Oregon's fiscal year that ends on June 30. The Annual Title VI Accomplishment Report is to be completed by each agency and forwarded no later than August 15 to the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#), who will forward it to ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#) for review and approval. A *Title VI Program Review Worksheet* found on ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#) website assists agencies in addressing Title VI compliance for each area of their federal-aid highway program.

### **2. REVISIONS TO THE LOCAL AGENCY'S TITLE VI PROGRAM PLAN OR NONDISCRIMINATION AGREEMENT**

The Title VI Program Plan shall be regularly updated with current information including names and titles of staff, organizational charts and any other updates as needed. Agencies must submit substantive revisions as noted below, to their Title VI Program Plan or Nondiscrimination Agreement to the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#), who will forward it to ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#) for review and approval. Such revisions include but are not limited to the following items

- The filing of the local agency's new Chief Executive Officer's signature.
- Administrative changes in the local agency's Title VI Program Plan administrative structure and staffing.
- Changes to the Title VI Program Plan's complaint procedures, etc.

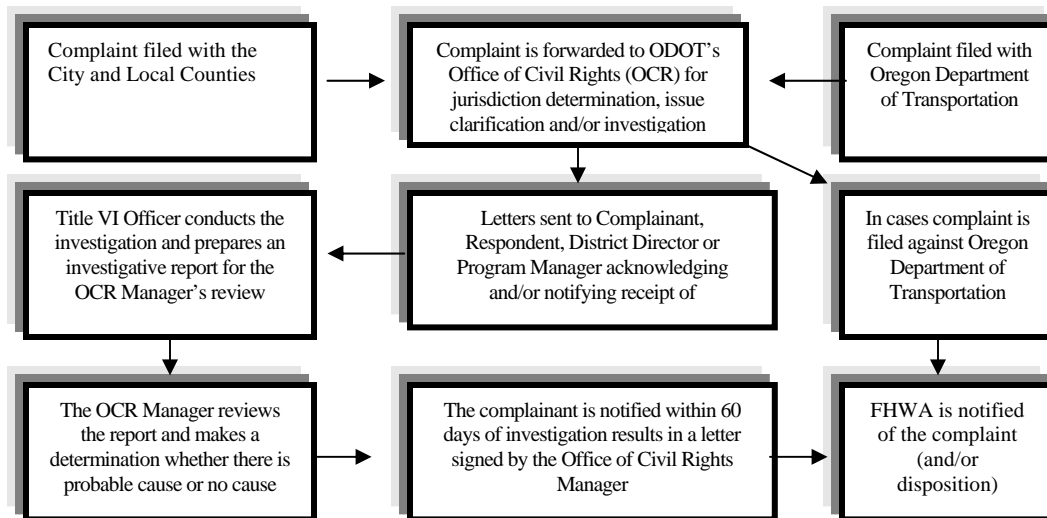
Local agencies only need to submit changes to the Title VI Program Plan or Nondiscrimination Agreement when substantive revisions such as the ones described above take place.

## **F. Title VI Complaint Investigations**

### **1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **a. ODOT**

ODOT is responsible for investigating all Title VI discrimination complaints occurring within the federal-aid highway program or its activities, unless the complaint filed is against ODOT. Complaints naming ODOT as a respondent shall be forwarded to the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#), and processed as depicted by the flow chart, from ODOT's Office of Civil Rights' *Title VI Program Plan*, below.



The procedures that the Office of Civil Rights will use to investigate such complaints can be found at ODOT's [Office of Civil Rights](#) website and are included in ODOT's Title VI plan.

All state level Title VI investigations are to be completed within 60 days of acceptance of a complaint.

#### **b. LOCAL AGENCY**

An annual Log of Complaints must be maintained by each local agency. The Log of Complaints must contain the following information for each complaint filed:

- the name and address of the person filing the complaint;
- the date of the complaint;
- the basis of the complaint;
- the disposition of the complaint; and
- the status of the complaint.

All findings from state investigations are preliminary and subject to the concurrence of [FHWA Office of Civil Rights](#). FHWA's Office of Civil Rights will render final decisions in all cases. There are no administrative appeal forums in Title VI complaints. Once FHWA issues its final agency decision, a complainant in disagreement with such determination may file an appeal with the appropriate U.S District Court.

## **G. Title VI Compliance Reviews**

ODOT/FHWA will conduct annual reviews of compliance (as required by FHWA) with Federal Title VI regulations as follows.

### **1. COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

The ODOT Title VI Coordinator will notify and work through the [Regional Local Agency Liaison](#) to make arrangements to conduct annual compliance reviews of local agencies with approved Title VI Program Plans. The compliance review will focus on how effectively the local agency has implemented its approved Title VI Program Plan and provide technical assistance to the local agency as needed. ODOT will gather documentation and interview individuals with Title VI responsibilities as part of the review process. ODOT will notify the local agency in writing of the scheduled date and the documents that will be required for the on-site review.

### **2. LOCAL AGENCY FOUND IN COMPLIANCE**

If no deficiencies are found during the on-site review, the local agency will be told at the conclusion of the review and be notified in writing that it is in compliance.

### **3. LOCAL AGENCY FOUND IN NON-COMPLIANCE**

If deficiencies are identified during the review, the local agency will be apprised of them at the conclusion of the review and be given 90 days to correct them. After the local agency corrects the deficiencies, it will be notified in writing that it is in compliance. If a local agency does not correct Title VI Program deficiencies identified by ODOT or FHWA, it may be subject to sanctions including the suspension of FHWA funding.

## **H. Other Nondiscrimination Statutes Related to Title VI**

### **1. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY – (LEP) ([Executive Order 13166](#))**

As noted above, one of the bases covered under Title VI is national origin. One type of national origin discrimination is discrimination based on a person's inability to speak, read, write, or understand English. The federal government and those receiving federal financial assistance (recipients, sub recipients, contractors) must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information those entities provide. This may require providing written and/or oral communications in a language other than English. More information regarding LEP

responsibilities can be found in the [USDOT LEP Guidance](#) document, and by contacting ODOT.'s Title VI staff in the [Office of Civil Rights](#).

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ([Executive Order 12898](#))**

Procedures for addressing environmental justice are contained in the FHWA document “An Overview of Transportation and Environmental Justice.” This document and additional Title VI information can also be found at the following websites:

- [FHWA Environmental Justice](#) and
- [FHWA Office of Civil Rights](#).