
What will the agency do with my complaint?

Once a complaint is filed, it will be forwarded to the appropriate party for review. If TDEC has jurisdiction to investigate the issues you have raised, TDEC's Complaint Officer will investigate all allegations and attempt to resolve the complaints. If negotiations to correct a violation are unsuccessful, enforcement proceedings may be instituted.

Who can provide Title VI information?

The Tennessee Human Rights Commission:

The Tennessee Human Rights Commission coordinates for the monitoring and enforcement of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights.

- Central Office: 615-741-5825

TDEC Title VI Coordinator:

TDEC has a Title VI Complaint Officer and a Title VI Coordinator. The Coordinator provides general information, training and monitoring of TDEC Title VI compliance.

- Kendra Abkowitz: 615-866-7412

The U.S. Department of Justice, under Executive Order 12250, coordinates the enforcement of Title VI and related statutes by all federal agencies that administer federally assisted programs.

- Civil Rights Division: 202-514-4609

For Further Information on TDEC Title VI Compliance Contact:

Kendra Abkowitz
Environmental Justice/Title VI Coordinator
312 Rosa L. Parks Blvd., 2nd Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
615-866-7412



Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Authorization No. 327209, 1500 copies. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.11 per copy. November 2007.



Your Rights Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

“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.”

**Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
1-888-891-TDEC (8332)**

What is Title VI?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the federal law that protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin in programs that receive federal financial assistance. Federal assistance includes the distribution of funds and/or the services they provide.

What programs are covered by Title VI?

Approximately 30 federal agencies provide federal financial assistance in the form of funds, training, and technical and other assistance to state and local governments, and non-profit and private organizations. These recipients of federal assistance, in turn, operate programs and deliver benefits and services to individuals (known as “beneficiaries”) to achieve the goals of the federal legislation that authorizes the programs.

Federally assisted programs address such broad and diverse areas as:

- elementary, secondary, and higher education
- health care, social services, and public welfare
- public transportation
- parks and recreation
- natural resources and the environment
- housing and community development
- law enforcement and the administration of justice
- agriculture and nutrition

What is not covered by Title VI?

- It covers all forms of aid except federally funded contracts of insurance and guaranty.
- It does not cover employment, except where employment practices result in discrimination against program beneficiaries or where the purpose of federal assistance is to provide employment. Nor does it apply to discrimination based on age, sex, geographical locale, or wealth.

There are many forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, or national origin that can limit the opportunity of persons to gain equal access to services and programs. Among other things, in operating a federally assisted program, a recipient cannot, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, either directly or through contractual means:

- Deny program services, aids, or benefits;
- Provide a different service, aid, or benefit, or provide them in a manner different than they are provided to others; or
- Segregate or separately treat individuals in any matter related to the receipt of any service, aid, or benefit.

How can I file a discrimination complaint?

A signed, written complaint should be filed with the TDEC Title VI Coordinator within 180 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory act. It should describe:

- Your name, address, and telephone number. Your complaint must be signed. If you are filing on behalf of another person, include your name, address, telephone number, and your relation to that person (e.g., friend, attorney, parent, etc.)
- The name and address of the agency, institution, or department you believe discriminated against you.
- How, why, and when you believe you were discriminated against. Include as much background information as possible about the alleged acts of discrimination. Include names of individuals whom you allege discriminated against you, if you know them.
- The names and contact information of any persons, if known, that the investigating agency could contact for additional information to support or clarify your allegations.

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What discrimination is prohibited by Title VI?