



Title VI E-Newsletter

Title VI Program Staff: A Successful Team

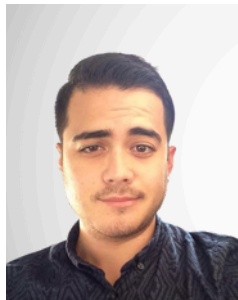
by Cynthia Howard



Pamela Sharp
Affirmative Action Officer II



James "Wes" White
Contract Compliance Officer III



Robert Edwards
Contract Compliance Officer II

The Civil Rights Division is proud to recognize the exceptional performance of its Title VI program staff, who have recently been recognized for their outstanding dedication and hard work. The team has exceeded its compliance review objectives, completing 473 compliance reviews and positioning itself well ahead of last year's pace.

This achievement is a testament to the staff's unwavering commitment to excellence, efficiency, and service. Their diligence ensures that TDOT's mission to provide a safe and reliable transportation system that supports economic growth and quality of life continues to thrive. The Title VI team plays a vital role in ensuring compliance across various projects and initiatives, and their efforts do not go unnoticed.

Following a recent Title VI compliance review, Muriel Nolen, Executive Director of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission, commented, "We commend Ms. Howard and her dedicated team for their exceptional record-keeping practices and their thorough preparedness throughout this process. The meticulous organization and attention to detail demonstrated by the team are a testament to your commitment to ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964."

With this momentum, the team is on track to exceed last year's case closures, setting a high standard for the rest of 2025. Their work strengthens TDOT's commitment to ensuring a transportation system that serves all Tennesseans.

Congratulations on a job well done! Your hard work, passion, and professionalism make a difference every day.

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For more information, contact the Title VI program staff at : 615.741.3681 or visit our website:

www.tn.gov/tdot/civil-rights/title-vi-program.html

Title VI Program Staff: Advancing Accountability in Transportation

by Robert Edwards



The Civil Rights Title VI program staff achieved significant milestones this year, reaffirming our commitment to ensuring equal access and nondiscrimination across all TDOT programs and activities. These efforts are guided by periodic reviews mandated under Title 49 CFR Section 21.11(a), which are critical for assessing compliance with federal laws and mandates. Compliance reviews play a vital role in maintaining transparency and fairness. Compliance reviews help to ensure adherence to civil rights requirements. By identifying and addressing potential deficiencies, these reviews uphold the principles of fairness, safeguard program integrity, and promote equal access for all beneficiaries.

Key Accomplishments in 2025

This year, TDOT's Passenger Transportation Division underwent a State Management Review by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in July. The review evaluated TDOT's Title VI program in key areas such as:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) planning,
- Complaint procedures,
- Subrecipient monitoring,
- Public notices and outreach,
- Data collection and analysis, and
- Title VI training.

The FTA review concluded with no findings, a testament to the Title VI program staff's diligence and commitment to compliance excellence. Building on this success, TDOT underwent its first-ever state compliance review conducted by the Tennessee Human Rights Commission (THRC) in November. This review focused on similar areas of compliance and concluded with no findings, highlighting TDOT's dedication to accountability and inclusivity.

Continuous Improvement and Future Plans

As the Title VI program staff prepares for an upcoming compliance review by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), staff remains committed to leveraging the insights gained from prior evaluations. These past successes have instilled confidence in our ability to meet and exceed compliance standards. In line with this momentum, staff recently revised the subrecipient online Title VI training to strengthen partnerships further and ensure that those receiving federal funds are effectively equipped to meet Title VI requirements.

Collaborative Efforts

The accomplishments of TDOT's Civil Rights Division and Title VI program staff underscore the importance of collaboration, effective communication, and an unwavering commitment to TDOT's mission and its services for all Tennesseans.

TDOT's Annual Employee Title VI Training

by Wes White



Title VI compliance requires that agencies receiving federal financial assistance to administer training on Title VI regulations. Annually, the TDOT Civil Rights Division Title VI program staff is tasked with providing training to TDOT staff statewide. The TDOT Title VI employee training is designed to help all staff understand their role and the purpose of Title VI, the protections covered by Title VI and best practices for compliance.

TDOT's CRD and Human Resources Division are collaborating to ensure TDOT's compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and other non-discrimination authorities. The 2025 annual Title VI training will be available through TDOT's Learning Network beginning April 1, 2025, and continuing through June 30. Prior to April 1, all employees will receive an e-mail announcement and invitation to the training. This e-mail contains a link directly to the training. Please ensure you are completing the training titled "Title VI Training 2025" through TDOT Learning Network.

Employees are encouraged to complete the training as early as possible. Should you need assistance, your divisional Title VI Liaisons and Title VI program staff will be available. **(See Title VI Liaison Roster on page 6.)**

President Trump Has Issued New Executive Orders (EOs)

by Cynthia Howard

President Trump has issued new Executive Orders (EOs) that affect TDOT's current Title VI program.

1. EO 14173 – Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity - signed January 21, 2025
2. EO 14224 - Designating English as the Official Language of The United States – signed March 1, 2025

The DOJ reminds recipients of federal financial assistance of their obligation to "comply with Title VI, all applicable Title VI implementing regulations, all applicable federal civil rights laws and nondiscrimination provisions. Recipients of federal financial assistance also have a continuing obligation under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to ensure that their communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others and may need to provide qualified sign language interpreters for individuals who are deaf. Recipients of federal financial assistance, including subrecipients, are reminded that the denial of language assistance services can be evidence of discrimination on the basis of national origin or disability under certain circumstances."

CRD is Administering Two National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI) Programs in 2025

by Cynthia Howard



2024 NSTI Students, MTSU Counselors, and Program Director



TDOT's Civil Rights Division (CRD) is pleased to announce we are now accepting applications for the 2025 NSTI program. The program promotes the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) disciplines in transportation education and career opportunities among middle and high school students. TDOT is administering two programs that will be hosted by Tennessee State and Middle Tennessee State Universities.

The CRD needs your assistance in sharing this information with students who have demonstrated a passion for learning and have indicated a desire for higher education. This is a great opportunity for your student to participate in a summer program that offers educational enhancements with a fun mix of hands-on activities, field trips, industry speakers, SAT prep, and activities that promote self-awareness. The students selected will receive a full scholarship covering room and board, lab materials, and books.

If you know of someone who would be a good candidate for the program, please have them submit an online application. Should you have questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Pamela Sharp at Pamela.Sharp@tn.gov or 615-253-1074.

To apply online, please scan the QR codes provided below.

Middle Tennessee State University's Application



4-week, residential (no weekends)
July 7 - August 1, 2025

Tennessee State University's Application



4-week, residential
June 9 - July 3, 2025

Biannual Title VI Liaison and Advisory Meeting

by Wes White

Each division within TDOT has an assigned Liaison to Title VI. The Title VI Division Liaison program serves to assist the Civil Rights Division's Title VI program to ensure compliance with Title VI and its mandates within their respective divisions. The Title VI Liaisons play an important role in disseminating information to the various regions, divisions, and departments throughout TDOT. Additionally, they serve as the point of contact to assist the Civil Rights Division's Title VI program with ensuring Title VI and related federal and state nondiscrimination mandates are followed in all TDOT's programs and activities.

The CRD Title VI program staff will hold its biannual Title VI Liaison meeting on March 24, 2025. In this meeting, the Title VI team will discuss the upcoming 2025 Employee Training to be held from April 1st to June 31, 2025. Other topics to be discussed include Limited English Proficiency usage and data collection as well as general housekeeping items such as maintaining proper Title VI notifications statement postings in common areas of each division. Please find the Title VI Liaisons listing below with the divisions and regions they represent.

| TDOT Title VI Liaisons - 2025 | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| Department | 2024 Liaison | Contact Phone | Location | E-mail | Director |
| Aeronautics | Oliver Ruff | 615-248-2618 | Region 3 | oliver.ruff@tn.gov | John Paul (JP) Saalwaechter |
| Alternative Delivery | Clayton Markham | 615-350-8332 | 5 | clayton.markham@tn.gov | Clayton Markham |
| Asset Magement | Amy Canfield | 615-741-2027 | HQ | Amy.M.Canfield@tn.gov | Justin Underwood |
| Central Services | Richard Vaughn | 615-507-6777 | 8 | richard.vaughn@tn.gov | Vacant |
| Civil Rights Office | Wes White | 615-253-1076 | 18 | James.W.White@tn.gov | Jessica Starling |
| Community Relations Division | Amanda Tidwell | 615-532-3276 | 7 | Amanda.K.Tidwell@tn.gov | Beth Emmons |
| Environmental | Kimberly Brogan | 615-253-2476 | 9 | kimberly.brogan@tn.gov | Sharon Schutz |
| Finance | Teresa Rippetoe | 615-741-2109 | 8 | teresa.rippetoe@tn.gov | Kenitha Reed |
| HQ Construction | Blake Fulton | 615-741-3542 | 7 | Blake.Fulton@tn.gov | Gwen Whittaker |
| Human Resources | Mark Prange | 61-574-17486 | 4 | mark.prange@tn.gov | Delaine Linville |
| Information Technology | Debra Guerin | 615-741-3298 | 5 | Debra.Guerin@tn.gov | Jermaine Scales |
| Internal Audit | Vacant | | 18 | | |
| Legal Division | Brian Carroll | 615-335-8785 | 3 | brian.carroll@tn.gov | Leslie South |
| Local Programs & Community Investmen | Jonathan Rogers | 615-532-3045 | 10 | Jonathan.Rogers@tn.gov | Steve Allen |
| Maintenance Operations | Amy Canfield | 615-741-2027 | HQ | Amy.M.Canfield@tn.gov | Jamie Waller |
| Materials & Test | Erin Napier | 615-350-4103 | 1 | erin.napier@tn.gov | Heather Purdy |
| Occupational Health & Safety | Errol Christos | 615-741-0678 | 18 | Errol.Christos@tn.gov | Clay Culwell |
| Passenger Transportation, Rail and Freight | Nicky Moore | 615-741-3865 | 18 | Nicquayleeonntea.Moore@tn.gov | Dan Pallme |
| Planning | Janice Jenkins | 615-253-6301 | 10 | Janice.ShellingtonJenkins@tn.gov | Matt Meservy, P.E. |
| Procurement | Marty Weed | 615-532-3946 | 4 | Marty.Weed@tn.gov | Chris Yarbrough |
| Professional Services | Shaun Summers | 615-741-3835 | 12 | shaun.x.summers@tn.gov | Laura Doss |
| Program Operations | Chasity Bell | 615-741-2130 | 6 | chasity.bell@tn.gov | Ronnie Porter |
| Project Management | James Kelley | 615-253-7604 | HQ | james.d.kelley@tn.gov | James Kelley |
| Public Private Partnerships (P3) | John R. Davis | 615-687-7277 | HQ 7 | john.r.davis@tn.gov | Paige Heintzman |
| Region 1 | Randy Busler | 423-854-5022 | Region 1 | randy.busler@tn.gov | Steve Borden |
| Region 2 | Kellie Bridgeman | 423-892-3430 | Region 2 | Kellie.Bridgeman@tn.gov | Danny Oliver |
| Region 3 | Erin Brake | 615-350-4116 | Region 3 | erin.brake@tn.gov | Jay Norris |
| Region 4 | Natalie Douglass | 731-935-0162 | Region 4 | Natalie.Douglass@tn.gov | Jason Baker |
| Right Of Way | Aaron Kirkpatrick | 615-253-1115 | 6 | Aaron.Kirkpatrick@tn.gov | Jeff Hoge |
| Structures Divison | Rebecca Williamson | 615-532-4070 | 11 | Rebecca.Williamson@tn.gov | Ted Kniazewycz |
| Strategic Planning, Research & Innovatio | Jordan Rock | 615-770-1752 | 3 | jordan.rock@tn.gov | Julie Carmean |
| Traffic Design | Hannah Lewis | 615-253-5462 | HQ | Hannah.O.Lewis@tn.gov | Andy Barlow |
| Traffic Operations | Hannah Lewis | 615-253-5462 | 18 | Hannah.O.Lewis@tn.gov | Joshua Brown |