



Title VI Complaint Procedures

Introduction

These procedures apply to complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, relating to any program and/or activity administered by Lexington County or its subrecipients, consultants, and/or 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 for complaints alleging discrimination. These procedures are part of an administrative process that does not provide for remedies that include punitive damages or compensatory remuneration for the complainant.

Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest possible level. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the investigator may be utilized for resolution, at any stage of the process. Lexington County will make every effort to pursue a resolution of the complaint. Initial interviews with the complainant and the respondent will include requests for information regarding specific relief and settlement options.

Filing

Any person who believes that he, she, or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by Civil Rights authorities, based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complain to Lexington County's Title VI Coordinator. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrence or when the alleged discrimination became know to the complainant. The complaint must meet the following requirements:

- Complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant(s).
- Complaints must include the name, address, and telephone number of each complainant.
- Complaints must include the date of the alleged act(s) of discrimination (date when the complainant(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or the date on which the conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct).
- Complaints must present a detailed description of the issues, including names, job titles, and addresses of those individuals perceived as parties in the action complained against.

Receipt and Acceptance

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will determine its jurisdiction and any need for additional information. The complaint will be forwarded to the County's Title VI Planning Committee for a determination of acceptability. The Title VI Coordinator will notify the complainant, in writing, within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint.

In order to be accepted, a complaint must meet the following criteria:

- a. The complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrences or when the alleged discrimination became know to the complainant.

- b. The allegation(s) must involve a covered basis such as race, color, gender, age, income, disability, or national origin.
- c. The allegation(s) must involve a program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance.

Lexington County will assume responsibility for investigating complaints against any of its subrecipients. Complaints in which Lexington County is named as the Respondent shall be forwarded to the appropriate Federal agency for proper disposition, in accordance with their procedures.

Dismissal

A complaint may be recommended for dismissal for the following reasons:

- a. The complainant requests withdrawal of the complaint.
- b. The complainant fails to respond to three requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.
- c. The complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts.

Investigation of Complaints

In cases where Lexington County assumes responsibility for investigation, the County will provide the respondent with the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing. The County's Title VI Planning Committee will be responsible for investigating and evaluating the complaint, developing an investigative plan, conducting interviews, collecting and analyzing evidence, and preparing an investigative report.

Lexington County's final investigative report will be submitted to the County Administrator within 60 days of completion of the investigation. The County Administrator will issue a final agency decision (FAD) and provide written notification of the decision to the complainant and respondent.

Appeals

If the County Administrator concludes that the respondent is in compliance with laws/regulations and the complainant disagrees, the complainant may, if dissatisfied, file an action in the appropriate U.S. District Court.

Please submit your complaint to:

County of Lexington

Community Development

Attention: Title VI Coordinator

212 South Lake Drive, Suite 401

Lexington, SC 29072

Phone: 803-785-8121

Fax: 803-785-8188