

SEPTA



## TITLE VI COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

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This section outlines the Title VI complaint procedures related to providing programs, services, and benefits. However, it does not deny the complainant the right to file formal complaints with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, Federal Transit Administration, or seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination, intimidation or retaliation of any kind that is prohibited by law.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal financial assistance.

### GENERAL

Any person who believes that he or she, individually, or as a member of any specific class of persons, has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin as noted below may file a written complaint with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action & Employee Relations Department, 1234 Market Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Complainants have the right to complain directly to the appropriate federal agency. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints. The option of informal meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI Director/Coordinator may be utilized for resolutions. The Director EEO/AA & Employee Relations will notify SEPTA's General Manager of all Title VI related complaints as well as all resolutions.

### PROCEDURE

1. The complaint must meet the following requirements:
  - a. Complaint shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s). In cases where Complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint may be made. The EEO Specialist will interview the Complainant and assist the person in converting verbal complaints to writing. All complaints must, however, be signed by the Complainant or his/her representative.
  - b. Include the date of the alleged act of discrimination date when the Complainants became aware of the alleged act of discrimination; or the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of conduct
  - c. Present a detailed description of the issues, including names and job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the complaint.

- d. Federal and state law requires complaints be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged incident.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Director of EEO/AA & Employee Relations will determine its jurisdiction, acceptability, need for additional information, as well as assign the complaint to an EEO Specialist to investigate the merit of the complaint.
3. The Complainant will be provided with a written acknowledgement that SEPTA has either accepted or rejected the complaint.
4. A complaint must meet the following criteria for acceptance:
  - a. The Complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence.
  - b. The allegation must involve a covered basis such as race, color or national origin.
  - c. The allegation must involve a SEPTA service of a Federal-aid recipient, sub-recipient or contactor.
5. A complaint may be dismissed for the following reasons:
  - a. The Complainant requests the withdrawal of the complaint.
  - b. The Complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.
  - c. The Complainant can not be located after reasonable attempts.
6. Once SEPTA's EEO/AA & Employee Relations Department decides to accept the complaint for investigation, the Complainant will be notified in writing of such determination. The complaint will receive a case number and will then be logged in a database identifying: Complainant's name, basis, alleged harm, race, color and national origin of the Complainant.
7. In cases where SEPTA's EEO/AA & Employee Relations Department assumes the investigation of the complaint, within 90 calendar days of the acceptance of the complaint, SEPTA's EEO Specialist will prepare an investigative report for review by the Director, EEO/AA & ER Department. The report shall include a narrative description of the incident, identification of persons interviewed, findings and recommendations for disposition.
8. The investigative report and its findings will be reviewed by the Director, EEO/AA & ER and in some cases the investigative report and findings will be reviewed by SEPTA's Legal Counsel. The report will be modified as needed.
9. The Director EEO/AA & Employee Relations/Legal Counsel will make a determination on the disposition of the complaint. Dispositions will be stated as follows:

- a. In the event SEPTA is in noncompliance with Title VI regulations remedial actions will be listed.
10. Notice of Director's determination will be mailed to the Complainant. Notice shall include information regarding appeal rights of Complainant and instructions for initiating such an appeal. Notice of appeals are as follows:
    - a. SEPTA will reconsider this determination, if new facts, come to light.
    - b. If Complainant is dissatisfied with the determination and/or resolution set forth by SEPTA, the same complaint may be submitted to the FTA for investigation. Complainant will be advised to contact the Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, 1760 Market Street, Suite 500, Philadelphia, PA 19103, Telephone 215-656-7100.
  11. A copy of the complaint and SEPTA's investigation report/letter of finding and Final Remedial Action Plan, if appropriate will be issued to FTA within 120 days of the receipt of the complaint.
  12. A summary of the complaint and its resolution will be included as part of the Title VI updates to the FTA.

#### **RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENT**

The Director Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action and Employee Relations will ensure that all records relating to SEPTA's Title VI Complaint Process are maintained with department records.

Records will be available for compliance review audits.