

JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

TITLE VI- NON -DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND PLAN

Policy Statement:

The County values diversity and welcomes input from all those who are interested, regardless of culture, identity, background, or income levels. The county believes that the best programs and services result from very careful consideration of the needs of all its citizens and desires that they be involved in the decision making process. Jackson County does not tolerate discrimination in any of its programs, services, or activities. Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.) and other federal and state authorities, Jackson County will not exclude from participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability*, religion, sexual orientation, source of income, marital or family status, as required by these federal and state laws.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:

Jackson County has established a discrimination complaint procedure and will take prompt action to investigate any discrimination when found. Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability*, religion, sexual orientation, source of income, marital or family status in any of the County's programs, services or activities, may file a complaint with the County Title VI, Non-Discrimination Coordinator (see Appendix A for contact information) within thirty (30) calendar days and will take reasonable steps to resolve the matter of the act of alleged discrimination. If the complaint is not resolved, Jackson County will forward the complaint, along with a record of its disposition, to the appropriate District of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

If possible, the complaint should be submitted in writing and contain the identity of the complainant and contact information; the name and address of the county department allegedly engaging in the discrimination; the basis for the allegations (e.g., race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability*, sexual orientation, source of income, or marital or family status); and a description of the alleged discrimination with the date of the occurrence. The complaint must be signed and dated. If the complaint cannot be submitted in writing, the complainant should contact the County's Title VI, non-discrimination Coordinator for assistance.

The County is not obligated to investigate a complaint that is frivolous, has no apparent merit, or where other good cause is present, such as a pending lawsuit. If an investigation is warranted, it will include interviews of the complainant, county staff, as well as witnesses.

If the Coordinator finds no violation after an investigation, he or she must notify the complainant in writing of the findings. If a violation has likely occurred, he or she will also notify the complainant, in writing, of any decision and the County will take reasonable steps to resolve the issue. If the coordinator is unable to satisfactorily resolve a complaint, the coordinator will forward the complaint, along with a record of its disposition, to the County Administrator. The Coordinator will have "easy access" to the Administrator and is not required to obtain approval to discuss discrimination issues with the County Administrator. If the complainant is unable or unwilling to complain to the county, the written complaint may be submitted directly to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). FDOT will serve as a clearing house, forwarding the complaint to the appropriate state or federal agencies.

ADA/504 Statement:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and related federal and state laws and regulations forbid discrimination against those with disabilities*. These laws also require federal aid recipients and other government entities to take affirmative steps to reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities* and ensure their needs are equitably represented in County programs, services and activities.

Jackson County will make every effort to ensure that its facilities, programs, services and activities are accessible to those with disabilities*. The County will make every effort to ensure that its advisory committees, public involvement activities and all other programs, services and activities include representations by the disabled community and disability service groups.

The County encourages the public to report any facility, program, service or activity that appears inaccessible to those who are disabled*. Furthermore, the County will provide reasonable accommodation to disabled* individuals who wish to participate in County public meetings or events or who require special assistance to access facilities, programs, services, or activities. Providing reasonable accommodation may require outside assistance, organization, or resources; therefore, the County asks that requests be made at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the need for accommodation. Questions, concerns, comments, or requests for accommodations should be made to the County's ADA Coordinator, see appendix "A" for contact information.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) GUIDANCE:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and various directions from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) require federal aid recipients to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs, services, and activities by those who do not speak English proficiently. To determine the extent to which LEP services are required and in which languages, the law requires the analysis of four factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the County's programs, services or activities;
 - The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities;
 - The nature and importance of the programs, services or activities to people's lives; and
 - The resources available to the County and the likely costs of the LEP services.
1. Using census data, Jackson County has determined that LEP individuals speaking English represent less than 3.4% of the community. The County realizes that such statistical data can be outdated or inaccurate. Based on this data the county reasons that a relatively small portion of its service population are LEP speakers of Spanish or Hispanic origin.
 2. The County has not received any requests for translation or interpretation of its programs, services, or activities into any other language.
 3. The County believes that transportation is of critical importance to its public, as access to health care, emergency services, employment and other essentials would be nearly impossible without reliable transportation systems. Due to this need, the County will make available hard copies of this policy at our main Administrative office and place it in each of the Departments with the County. The County will also place it on the County website so that the public will have access to its Non-discrimination and public involvement policies.
 4. The County plans are to use a language service company that can be reached twenty four (24) hours a day and will be able to interpret most language translations. This will be dependent upon budgetary constraints; once a service is obtained, this policy will be updated and disseminated to all personnel. Qualified individuals who have been trained to interpret and translate the Spanish language will be used to provide service when needed.

The analysis of the four factors suggests that LEP services are not strongly required at this time. Therefore, the county has committed to the following:

- Distributing lists of employees who have regular contact with citizens who are willing to provide translation and/or interpretation services.
- Provide notification in the local newspaper and on the county website of the availability of LEP assistance in public meeting notices.
- Work with LEP churches, and other organizations, and citizens to develop agreements for the provision of oral and written LEP services with reasonable notification.

Jackson County understands that the County population and the profile of its citizens may change, and the four-factor analysis may reveal the need for more or varied LEP services sometime in the future. Because of this reason, the LEP plan will be evaluated at least every three (3) years to make sure that it remains reflective of the community's needs. Persons who require special language services should contact the County's Title VI Non-Discrimination Coordinator. (See Appendix "A")

Public Involvement

In order to plan for efficient, effective, safe, equitable and reliable transportation systems, the County must have input from the public. The County staff and financial resources in furtherance of this goal will strongly encourage the participation of the entire community. The county offers events designed to gather public input on project planning and construction. Furthermore, the County attends and participates in other community events to promote its programs and services to the public. Finally, Jackson County is constantly seeking ways of measuring the effectiveness of its public involvement.

Persons wishing to request special presentations by the County; volunteer in any of its activities or offer suggestions for improvement of County public involvement may contact the County. (See Appendix A)

**Disability: A disabled individual is defined as anyone who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.*

APPENDIX A

County Contact Information

Jackson County Board of County Commissioners-Administration Office 2864 Madison St.

Marianna, FL 32448

Telephone: (850) 482-9633 Fax: (850)482-9643

County- Administrator

Wilanne Daniels

Phone: (850) 482-9633

Fax: (850) 482-9643

Hearing Impaired: 1-800-955-8771 (TTY) Email: info@jacksoncountyfl.gov

Title VI and ADA Coordinator

Judy Austin, Human Resources Director

2864 Madison St. Marianna, FL 32448

Email: austinj@jacksoncountyfl.gov Phone: (850) 482-9865

Fax: (850) 482-9643

Hearing Impaired: call {800} 955-8771 (TTY) or e-mail adarequest@jacksoncountyfl.com

Building Accessibility for ADA Compliance

Abraham Johnson, Maintenance Director

E-Mail: johnsona@jacksoncountyfl.gov Phone: (850) 557-9124

FAX: (850) 482-9643