



**County of Blount  
341 Court St  
Maryville TN 37804**

## **Title VI Implementation Plan Report**

**Submitted by  
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## **Section 1 Overview:**

The purpose of the Title VI Compliance Program is to verify that all state governmental entities that are recipients of Federal financial assistance comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. State governmental entities that are subject to the requirements of Title VI must submit annual compliance reports and implementation plan updates to The Tennessee Human Rights Commission by October 1, 2010, and each October 1 thereafter. The Tennessee Human Rights Commission will effectively monitor for Title VI compliance by developing a statewide Title VI implementation plan, publishing reports of its findings and recommendations concerning compliance for distribution to the governor and the general assembly, and serving as the central coordinating agency for the executive branch departments and agencies for technical assistance, consultation and resources.

Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that:

*“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, or be subjected to discrimination under any program activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” 42 U.S.C. §2000(d).*

## **Structure and Operations:**

Blount County Government is made up of Elected Officials under a four (4) year term and maybe reelected. These consist of Circuit Court Clerk; Clerk & Master (appointed); County Commission; County Clerk; County Mayor; District Attorney General; Highway Superintendent; Property Assessor; Public Defender; Register of Deeds; Sheriff and Trustee. Blount County also provides other public service such as Animal Control; Agriculture; Election Commission; Health Department; Public Library; Soil Conservation; Veteran’s Affair; Planning/Zoning/Building Codes and Environmental Health. The Blount County Commission serves as the legislative branch of Blount County Government. Blount County is divided into 10 Commission districts, with a total of 21 Commissioners serving the 10 districts. County Commissioners are elected by the voters in their district for four-year terms in the August General Election coinciding with the election of the governor. After being qualified to hold office, members take office on the following September 1. Some of the general requirements for county commissioner include: he/she must be 18 years old and over, a citizen of the Unites States and Tennessee, and certain residency requirements must be met. The County Commission Chairman is elected annually by a majority of the Commissioners. The County Commission adopts an annual county budget, sets the county government property tax rate, makes certain appointments, and adopts ordinances and resolutions.

At least four regular meetings per year must be held. The Blount County Commission meets regularly on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Room 430 at the Blount County Courthouse. The meetings are open to the public with opportunity provided for input from the public.

## **Section 2 Federal Programs or Activities:**

Currently Blount County Government receives multiple grants for several different departments.

## **Section 3 Organization of Title VI Coordinator:**

1. A Title VI Coordinator must complete and return the self-survey by Oct 1 of every year.
2. Disseminate Title VI information to employees, constituents and applicants concerning their rights and responsibilities under the act.
3. A Title VI Coordinator must receive, record and respond to all Title VI complaints.
4. Display a public notice that states the provisions of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Right Act and includes the name, address and telephone number of the coordinator.
5. Maintain permanent records of all Title VI complaints.

## **Section 4 Data Collection:**

The total number of complaints open or closed for the following reasons:

Administratively- no complaints open or closed

Failure to meet a prima facie case- no complaints open or closed

Settlement and/or resolution reached- no complaints open or closed

There were no lawsuits filed alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin under any federally funded program or activity.

## **Section 5 Definitions:** NA

## **Section 6 Discriminatory Practices:**

Blount County Government complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This Act requires that agencies receiving federal money develop and implement plans to ensure that no one receiving benefits under a federally funded program is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin. To report any complaints or to receive additional information about Title VI, contact the Compliance Coordinator at 865-273-5780.

## **Section 7 Complaint Procedures:**

### **NONDISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

These procedures apply to all complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, relating to any program or activity administered by The Tennessee Human Rights Commission or its sub-recipients, 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 level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI Program Director may be utilized for resolution, at any stage of the process. The Title VI Program Director will make every effort to pursue a resolution of the complaint. Initial interviews with the complainant and the respondent will request information regarding specifically requested relief and settlement opportunities.

## **Procedures**

1. Any individual, group of individuals, or entity that believes they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI nondiscrimination provisions may file a written complaint with the Tennessee Human Rights Commission Title VI Program Director. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrence or when the alleged discrimination became known to the complainant. The complaint must meet the following requirements.
  - a. Complaint shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s).
  - b. Include the date of the alleged act of discrimination (date when the complainant(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct).
  - c. Present a detailed description of the issues, including names and job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the complained-of incident.
  - d. Allegations received by fax or e-mail will be acknowledged and processed, once the identity (ies) of the complainant(s) and the intent to proceed with the complaint have been established. The complainant is required to mail a signed, original copy of the fax or e-mail transmittal for the Tennessee Human Rights Commission to be able to process it.
  - e. Allegations received by telephone will be reduced to writing and provided to complainant for confirmation or revision before processing.

A complaint form will be forwarded to the complainant for him/her to complete, sign, and return to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission for processing.

2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Program Director will determine its jurisdiction, acceptability, and need for additional information, as well as investigate the merit of the complaint. In cases where the complaint is against one of the Tennessee Human Rights

Commission sub-recipients of Federal funds, the Tennessee Human Rights Commission will assume jurisdiction and will investigate and adjudicate the case. Complaints against the Tennessee Human Rights Commission will be referred to the appropriate Federal Agency for proper disposition pursuant to their procedures.

3. 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 occurrence or when the alleged discrimination became known to the complainant.
  - b. The allegation(s) must involve a covered basis such as race, color, national origin.
  - c. The allegation(s) must involve a program or activity of a Federal-aid recipient, sub-recipient, or contractor.
  
4. 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 addition information needed to process the complaint.
  - c. The complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts.
  
5. Once the Tennessee Human Rights Commission decides to accept the complaint for investigation, the complainant and the respondent will be notified in writing of such determination within seven calendar days. The complaint will receive a case number and will then be logged into the Tennessee Human Rights Commission records identifying its basis and alleged harm.
  
6. In cases where the Tennessee Human Rights Commission assumes the investigation of the complaint, the Tennessee Human Rights Commission will provide the respondent with the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing. The respondent will have 10 calendar days from the date of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission written notification of acceptance of the complaint to furnish his/her response to the allegations.
  
7. The Tennessee Human Rights Commission final investigative report and a copy of the complaint will be forwarded to appropriate Federal Agency and affected parties within 60 calendar days of the acceptance of the complaint.
  
8. The Tennessee Human Rights Commission will notify the parties of its final decision.
  
9. If complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation of the alleged discrimination and practices the complainant will be advised of the right to appeal to appropriate Federal Agency.

**Section 8 Compliance Reviews:** NA

**Section 9 Compliance and Noncompliance Reporting: NA**

**Section 10 Title VI Training:**

Title VI Training is completed electronically for all employees within Blount County Government on an annual basis. For employees without e-mail access, Title VI training is completed in person. To create Title VI awareness within the Public Notice poster is posted and easily accessible. During new hire orientation, Title VI is discussed and employees have to sign an acknowledgement form. The Title VI Coordinator is trained annually via webinars and online training modules.

**Section 11 Public Notice and Outreach: NA**

**Section 12 Evaluation Procedures: NA**

**Section 13 Responsible Officials:**

The current Title VI Coordinator is the Human Resources Specialist for Blount County Government. As they serve as the responsible person charged with ensuring that Blount County Government complies with Title VI. Currently the Human Resource Specialist is Misty Guge. Our mailing address is 397 Court St, Maryville TN 37804.

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Misty Guge  
Human Resources Specialist