

## **EXTERNAL DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

These external discrimination complaint procedures apply to the Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization (CFRPO) and cover complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination authorities applicable to programs, services, or activities carried out by the CFRPO or its agents.

The CFRPO will make every effort to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. Complaints of alleged discrimination will be investigated by the appropriate authority. The option of informal mediation between the affected parties and the CFRPO staff may be utilized for resolution. Upon completion of each investigation, the CFRPO staff will inform every complainant of all avenues of appeal.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these discrimination complaint procedures is to describe the process used by the CFRPO for processing and investigating alleged complaints of discrimination.

### **Filing of Complaints**

- 1. Applicability** – The complaint procedures apply to the beneficiaries of the CFRPO programs, activities, and services, including the public and any consultants/contractors hired by the CFRPO.
- 2. Eligibility** – Any person or class of persons who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by any of the Civil Rights authorities, based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complaint with the CFRPO. The law prohibits intimidation or retaliation of any sort. The complaint may be filed by the affected individual or a representative and must be in writing.
- 3. Time Limits and Filing Options** – A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the following:
  - The date of the alleged act of discrimination; or
  - The date when the person(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or
  - Where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct.

Complaints may be submitted to the following entities:

- **Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization**, 1480 Harbour Drive, Wilmington, NC 28401; 910-395-4553
- **North Carolina Department of Transportation**, Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Services, External Civil Rights Section, 1511 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1511; 919-508-1830 or toll free 800-522-0453

- **US Department of Transportation**, Departmental Office of Civil Rights, External Civil Rights Programs Division, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590; 202-366-4070
- **Federal Highway Administration**, Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, E81-314, Washington, DC 20590; 202-366-0693 / 366-0752
- **Federal Highway Administration**, North Carolina Division Office, 310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410, Raleigh, NC 27601; 919-747-7010
- **US Department of Justice**, Special Litigation Section, Civil Rights Division, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530, 202-514-6255 or toll free 877-218-5228

**4. Format for Complaints** – Complaints shall be in **writing** and **signed** by the complainant(s) or a representative and include the complainant’s name, address, and telephone number. Complaints received by fax or e-mail will be acknowledged and processed. Allegations received by telephone or in person will be reduced to writing, may be recorded and will be provided to the complainant for confirmation or revision before processing. Complaints will be accepted in other languages including Braille.

**5. Complaint Basis** – Allegations must be based on issues involving race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The term “basis” refers to the complainant’s membership in a protected group category.

<b>Protected Categories</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Applicable Statutes and Regulations</b>
Race	An individual belonging to one of the accepted racial groups; or the perception, based usually on physical characteristics that a person is a member of a racial group	Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR Part 21; 23 CFR 200
Color	Color of skin, including shade of skin within a racial group	Black, White, brown, yellow, etc.	
National Origin	Place of birth. Citizenship is not a factor. Discrimination based on language or a person’s accent is also covered.	Mexican, Cuban, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese	
Sex	Gender	Women and Men	1973 Federal-Aid Highway Act
Age	Persons of any age	21 year old person	Age Discrimination Act of 1975
Disability	Physical or mental impairment, permanent or temporary, or perceived.	Blind, alcoholic, para-amputee, epileptic, diabetic, arthritic	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

## **Complaint Processing**

1. When a complaint is received by the CFRPO, a written acknowledgment and a Consent Release form will be mailed to the complainant within ten (10) business days by registered mail.
2. **The CFRPO cannot investigate Title VI complaints filed against itself**, but can investigate ADA complaints against itself. The CFRPO will consult with the NCDOT External Civil Rights Section to determine the acceptability and jurisdiction of all complaints received. (Note: If NCDOT has jurisdiction, the External Civil Rights Section will be responsible for the remainder of this process. The CFRPO will record the transfer of responsibility in its complaints log).
3. Additional information will be requested if the complaint is incomplete. The complainant will be provided 15 business days to submit any requested information and the signed Consent Release form. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.
4. Upon receipt of the requested information and determination of jurisdiction, the CFRPO will notify the complainant and respondent of whether the complaint has sufficient merit to warrant investigation.
5. If the complaint is investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of the CFRPO's jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
6. If the complaint does not warrant investigation, the notification to the complainant shall specifically state the reason for the decision.

## **Complaint Log**

1. When a complaint is received by the CFRPO, the complaint will be entered into the Discrimination Complaints Log with other pertinent information, and assigned a **Case Number**. (Note: All complaints must be logged).
2. The complaints log will be submitted to the NCDOT's Civil Rights office during Title VI compliance reviews. (Note: NCDOT may also be request the complaints log during pre-grant approval processes).
3. The **Log Year(s)** since the last submittal will be entered (e.g., 2012-2015, 2014-2015, FFY 2015, or 2015) and the complaints log will be signed before submitting the log to NCDOT.
4. When reporting **no complaints**, check the **No Complaints or Lawsuits** box and sign the log.

Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization  
**DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM**

Any person who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complaint with the Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization, within 180 days after the discrimination occurred.

Last Name:		First Name:		<input type="checkbox"/> Male
				<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Mailing Address:		City	State	Zip
Home Telephone:	Work Telephone:	E-mail Address		

Identify the Category of Discrimination:

RACE                       COLOR                       NATIONAL ORIGIN                       AGE

DISABILITY                       SEX/GENDER

Identify the Race of the Complainant

Black                       White                       Hispanic                       Asian American

American Indian                       Alaskan Native                       Pacific Islander                       Other \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of alleged discriminatory action(s). Please include earliest date of discrimination and most recent date of discrimination.

Names of individuals responsible for the discriminatory action(s):

How were you discriminated against? Describe the nature of the action, decision, or conditions of the alleged discrimination. Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe your protected status (basis) was a factor in the discrimination. Include how other persons were treated differently from you. **(Attach additional page(s), if necessary).**

The law prohibits intimidation or **retaliation** against anyone because he/she has either taken action, or participated in action, to secure rights protected by these laws. If you feel that you have been retaliated against, separate from the discrimination alleged above, please explain the circumstances below. Explain what action you took which you believe was the cause for the alleged retaliation.

Names of persons (witnesses, fellow employees, supervisors, or others) whom we may contact for additional information to support or clarify your complaint: (Attached additional page(s), if necessary).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____

**DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM**

Have you filed, or intend to file, a complaint regarding the matter raised with any of the following? If yes, please provide the filing dates. Check all that apply.

- NC Department of Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- Federal Transit Administration \_\_\_\_\_
- Federal Highway Administration \_\_\_\_\_
- US Department of Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- Federal or State Court \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Have you discussed the complaint with any the Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization representative? If yes, provide the name, position, and date of discussion.

Please provide any additional information that you believe would assist with an investigation.

Briefly explain what remedy, or action, are you seeking for the alleged discrimination.

**\*\*WE CANNOT ACCEPT AN UNSIGNED COMPLAINT. PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THE COMPLAINT FORM BELOW.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**COMPLAINANT'S SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

**MAIL COMPLAINT FORM TO:**  
CAPE FEAR RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
1480 HARBOUR DR  
WILMINGTON, NC 28401  
910-395-4553

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date Complaint Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Processed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Case #: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred to:  NCDOT  FTA Date Referred: \_\_\_\_\_

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CASE NO.	COMPLAINANT NAME	RACE/GENDER	RESPONDENT NAME	BASIS	DATE FILED	DATE RECEIVED	ACTION TAKEN	DATE INVESTIG. COMPLETED	DISPOSITION

No Complaints or Lawsuits

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the above described complaints or lawsuits alleging discrimination, or **no complaints or lawsuits** alleging discrimination, have been filed with or against **the Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization** since the previous Title VI Program submission to NCDOT.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Title VI Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Title VI Coordinator