

Title VI Discrimination Complaint Procedures

Port Tampa Bay

Introduction

Port Tampa Bay has established this Complaint of Discrimination Procedure to review and resolve allegations of discrimination. These procedures apply to complaints filed under:

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

These laws prohibit discrimination based on **race, color, national origin** in any program or activity administered by Port Tampa Bay, including those carried out by sub-recipients, consultants, or contractors. Retaliation or intimidation of any kind is also prohibited.

These procedures do not limit the right of a complainant to file formal complaints with other local, state, or federal agencies. However, this internal process does not provide for compensatory damages or punitive action.

The Port Tampa Bay Title VI Officer located at **1101 Channelside Drive, Tampa, FL 33602**, serves as a resource for the public and is responsible for receiving, counseling, and investigating alleged incidents of discrimination. Complainants are advised of their legal rights and are provided with a copy of this procedure.

Protected Categories and Definitions

Category	Definition	Example
Race	Perception based on physical characteristics that suggest racial identity	Black, White, Native American
Color	Shade or tone of skin within a racial or ethnic group	Dark or light brown, fair skin, etc.
National Origin	Shared language, culture, ancestry, or place of origin. Includes accent discrimination	Cuban, Vietnamese, Mexican

Complaint Process

Any individual or group who believes they have experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including LEP) may file a written complaint with the Port Tampa Bay Title VI Officer:

- Complaints must be filed within **180 calendar days** of the incident.
- All complaints must be **signed and submitted in writing or electronically**, using the official Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form.

The complaint must include:

- Complainant's full name and address
- Date(s) of the incident
- Name(s), title(s), and address(es) of the accused party
- Detailed description of the alleged discriminatory act
- The basis (e.g., race, color, national origin)
- Names and contact information for any witnesses

Complaints may be dismissed if:

- The complainant voluntarily withdraws the complaint
- The complainant fails to respond to requests for additional information
- The complaint is not submitted in a timely manner

Accommodations will be provided for individuals unable to submit a written complaint. All complaints must be signed either by the complainant or their legal representative with written authorization.

Complaint Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint:

1. Acknowledgment will be sent by the **Title VI Officer, or other appropriate Port Tampa Bay representative.**

2. The accused party will be notified 30 business days of the allegation and informed of their right to representation.
 3. A **fact-finding investigation** will be conducted within 90 business days.
 4. The complainant will receive a written notice of findings and information on the right to appeal.
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Appeals Procedure

- Appeals must be submitted **in writing within 10 business days** of receiving the resolution.
 - The appeal will be reviewed by the **Title VI Officer or other appropriate Port Tampa Bay representative**, and the complainant may be asked to present relevant information.
 - A **final decision** will be issued within **30 business days** and shared with all parties involved.
 - This internal decision does not preclude the complainant from pursuing other remedies under state or federal law.
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Record Retention

All complaints and related documentation are retained in strict confidence and reviewed according to the State of Florida Sunshine Law and record retention requirements.
