

Title VI Complaint Procedures

How to file a Title VI Complaint? See enclosed COTA Title VI Complaint Form (Appendix A).

The complainant may file a signed, written complaint to one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged discrimination. The complaint should include the following information:

- Your name, mailing address, and how to contact you (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.)
- How, when, where, and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names, and contact information for any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant

The Title VI Complaint Form may be used to submit the complaint information. The complaint may be filed in writing with COTA at the following address:

Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority
Office of the Governor
2nd Floor, Marianas Business Plaza, Suite 216, Susupe
Caller Box 10007
Saipan, MP 96950

NOTE: COTA encourages all complainants to certify all mail that is sent through the U.S. Postal Service and/or ensure that all written correspondence can be tracked easily. For complaints originally submitted by facsimile, an original, signed copy of the complaint must be mailed to the Title VI Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than 180 days from the alleged date of discrimination.

What happens to the complaint after it is submitted?

All complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color or national origin in a service or benefit provided by COTA will be directly addressed by COTA. COTA shall also provide appropriate assistance to complainants, including those persons with disabilities, or who are limited in their ability to communicate in English. Additionally, COTA shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

A letter of acknowledging receipt of complaint will be mailed within seven days (**see Appendix B**). Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.

How will the complainant be notified of the outcome of the complaint?

COTA will send a final written response letter (**see Appendix C or D**) to the complainant. In the letter notifying complainant that the complaint is not substantiated (**see Appendix D**), the complainant is also advised of his or right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of the final written decision from COTA, and/or 2) file complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the FTA. Every effort will be made to respond to Title VI complaints within 60 working days of receipt of such complaints, if not sooner.

In addition to the complaint process described above, a complainant may file a Title VI complaint with the following offices:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor-TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC 20590

Appendix A

COTA Title VI Complaint Form

Instructions:

You have one-hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of alleged discrimination to submit your complaint. Please fill out the form below.

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email: _____

Discrimination Complaint

Name of Staff Person that You

Believe Discriminated Against You: _____

Date of Alleged Incident: _____

You were discriminated because of:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin

Explain as briefly and clearly as possible what happened and how you were discriminated against. Indicate who was involved. Be sure to include how other persons were treated differently than you. Also attach any written material pertaining to your case:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Letter Acknowledging Receipt of Complaint

Today's Date
Ms. Jo Doe
P.O. Box 123
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Ms. Doe:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your complaint against Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority alleging_____.

An investigation will begin shortly. If you have additional information you wish to convey or questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact this office by calling 670-664-2682, or write to me at Caller Box 10007, Saipan MP 96950.

Sincerely,

Alfreda Camacho Maratita, Special Assistant for Public Transportation

Appendix C

Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Substantiated

Today's Date
Ms. Jo Doe
P.O. Box 123
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your letter of _____ (date) against the COTA alleging Title VI violation has been investigated. (An/Several) apparent violation(s) of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including those mentioned in your letter (was/were) identified. Efforts are underway to correct these deficiencies.

Thank you for calling this important matter to our attention. You were extremely helpful during our review of the program. (If a hearing is requested, the following sentence may be appropriate.) You may be hearing from this office, or from federal authorities, if your services should be needed during the administrative hearing process.

Sincerely,

Alfreda Camacho Maratita, Special Assistant for Public Transportation

Appendix D

Letter Notifying Complainant that the Complaint Is Not Substantiated

Today's Date
Ms. Jo Doe
P.O. Box 123
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Ms. Doe:

The matter referenced in your complaint of _____ (date) against the COTA alleging _____ has been investigated. The results of the investigation did not indicate that the provisions of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had in fact been violated. As you know, Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

The COTA has analyzed the materials and facts pertaining to your case for evidence of the COTA's failure to comply with any of the civil rights laws. There was no evidence found that any of these laws have been violated.

I, therefore, advise you that your complaint has not been substantiated, and I am closing this matter in our files.

You have the right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of this final written decision from COTA, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the Federal Transit Administration at

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor-TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Thank you for taking the time to contact us. If I can be of assistance to you in the future, do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Alfreda Camacho Maratita, Special Assistant for Public Transportation