

## Hood River County Title VI Plan

Adopted April 8, 2025

### **Introduction**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

Hood River County is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its programs and services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in U.S. Department of Transportation Order 1050.2A.

### **Title VI Complaint Procedures**

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9(b), Hood River County has developed procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against them and has made procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public upon request. Complainants, or their representative, may file a written complaint with the Title VI Complaint Coordinator (Clerk of the Board) at any time within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged discriminatory act.

If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination under Title VI, you may file a complaint.

### **How to file a Title VI Complaint**

You may file a signed, written complaint up to one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of 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.)
- Name, address, phone number and relationship of Representative to Complainant, if applicable
- How, when, where and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names and contact information of any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant

A form is available at [HOODRIVERCOUNTY.GOV](http://HOODRIVERCOUNTY.GOV), which may be completed for this purpose. (Attachment B) The complaint may also be filed in writing with Hood River County at the following address:

Hood River County  
601 State Street  
Hood River, Oregon 97031  
By phone: 541-386-3970

NOTE: Hood River County 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 your complaint after it is submitted to Hood River County?**

All complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in a service or benefit provided by Hood River County will be directly addressed by Hood River County. Hood River County provides for staff to take complaints and forward them to the Title VI Complaint Coordinator (Clerk of the Board) who categorizes, tracks them, and develops responses and forwards them to the County Administrator for approval. The County Administrator will ensure the appropriate department will investigate the complaint. Formal investigation of

the complaint will be confidential and will include, but is not limited to, details of the specific incident, frequency and dates of occurrences and names of any witnesses. The Title VI Coordinator will submit all grievances to Oregon Department of Transportation within 30 calendar days of receipt.

Within 30 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will meet with the grievant to discuss the grievance and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days following that meeting, the Title VI Coordinator will respond in writing, and where appropriate in a format accessible to the grievant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of Hood River County and offer options for substantive resolution of the grievance.

If the response by the Title VI coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the grievant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision by letter or email within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the Hood River County Administrator.

Within 30 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the County Administrator will meet with the grievant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after that meeting, the County Administrator will respond in writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant, with a final resolution of the grievance.

Hood River County shall also provide appropriate assistance to complainants, including those persons with disabilities, or who are limited in their ability to communicate in English. Additionally, Hood River County shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

In instances where additional information is needed for investigation of the complaint, Hood River County will contact the complainant in writing. Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information within thirty (30) calendar days may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.

Once sufficient information for investigating the complaint is received by Hood River County, a written response will be drafted, subject to review by County Counsel. If appropriate, Hood River County's Counsel may administratively close the complaint. In this case, Hood River County will notify the complainant of the action as soon as possible. **How you will be notified of the outcome of your complaint**

Hood River County will send a final written response to the complainant and advise the complainant of his or her right to 1) appeal within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the final written decision from Hood River County, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the appropriate modal operating administration (e.g. Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration). Every effort will be made to respond to Title VI complaints within 30 calendar days of receipt of such complaints, if not sooner.

A written appeal requesting review of a determination of unlawful denial of access or accommodation to services must include the customer's name, address, and telephone contact number. A statement of reason(s) why the applicant believes the denial of accommodation request or access to services was inappropriate is recommended. The Title VI Coordinator will set a mutually agreed-upon time and place for the review process with the applicant and/or representatives within 30 days of the request. The applicant may submit documents or other information to be included with the record and considered in the review process. Anyone needing special accommodations may contact Hood River County at 541-386-3970 for assistance within 48 hours of the meeting.

The right of the appellant to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint must not be impaired by the appellant's pursuit of other remedies, such as filing of a complaint with the Department of Justice or other appropriate federal agency or the filing of a suit in state or federal court. Use of this procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

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

Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Civil Rights  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE 8th Floor E81-105  
Washington, DC 20590

Oregon Department of Transportation  
Office of Civil Rights, MS 23  
3930 Fairview Industrial Drive SE  
Salem, OR 97302

U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division  
Coordination and Review  
Section – NWB  
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

### **Disposition of Complaints and Resolution**

**Substantiated Complaints:** If the complaint is substantiated and a probable cause of a discriminatory practice based on race, color, or national origin is found to exist, Hood River County shall endeavor to eliminate said practice by means of a Remedial Action Plan. The Remedial Plan shall include: a list of all corrective actions accepted by the agency; description of how the corrective action will be implemented; and a written assurance that the agency will implement the accepted corrective action in the manner discussed in the plan.

**Unsubstantiated Complaints:** If there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation(s) both parties to the complaint will be informed of the reason(s) for this disposition.

**Unfounded Complaint:** If it is determined that an act reported pursuant to this policy/procedure did not in fact occur, a finding of unfounded shall be made.

**Exonerated Complaints:** If it is determined that an act reported pursuant to this policy/procedure did in fact occur but was lawful and proper within the guidelines established herein, a finding of exonerated shall be made.

### **Recording Title VI Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits**

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9(b), Hood River County prepares and maintains a list of any active investigations conducted by entities other than the U.S. Department of Transportation, lawsuits, or complaints naming Hood River County that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This list includes the date of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint was filed; a summary of the allegation(s); the status of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint; and actions taken by the recipient in response to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint. The Hood River County Title VI Complaint Coordinator (Clerk of the Board) maintains these files until closed. The Hood River County Title VI Complaint Coordinator will also maintain a log

of all complaints received. Records will be stored according to state and federal record retention requirements. Tracked information will be reported to ODOT as the grantor of the funds as required.

**Additional Information Upon Request**

At the discretion of the U.S. Department of Transportation modal operating administration, information other than that required by the referenced order may be requested, in writing, from Hood River County to investigate complaints of discrimination or to resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with Title VI requirements. The Hood River County Title VI Complaint Coordinator is available to provide additional information as needed and to respond to any inquiry.

**Board Composition and Minority Representation on Non-Elected Bodies**

Hood River County is overseen by a Board of Commissioners, and the table depicting membership of the Board as of February 2025 is below:

				Not Hispanic or Latino		Hispanic or Latino	
Population (2020 Census)				14,935		7,148	
Hood River County Board of Commissioners				4		1	
	White Alone	Black or African American	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races
Population (2020 Census)	16,381	53	392	37	274	3,130	3,710
Hood River County Board of Commissioners	4					1	

For the Board of Commissioners and Committees advising the Hood River County Board and transportation operations, Hood River County encourages participation of minorities on the Board and committees in the following manners:

- Posting information about the ability to participate on our website, through our social media platforms and through our newsletter.
- Sending press releases to the local newspapers in our regional service area.
- Conducting direct outreach to organizations and agencies representing the interests of minority populations and/or providing direct services to minority individuals. **Record of Title VI or Other Civil Rights Investigations, Complaints, or Lawsuits** [Information will be updated pending review by legal counsel].

**Limited English Proficiency Plan**

Hood River County is committed to breaking down language barriers by implementing consistent standards of language assistance across its service area. Hood River County has adopted an updated Limited English Proficiency Plan as part of our Title VI policy. The plan is attached. (Attachment A)

## **Notifying Beneficiaries of Their Rights Under Title VI**

Hood River County's website includes our Title VI policy and complaint form. The website also states the AntiDiscrimination Statement as listed in this plan. Hood River County's Title VI policy and complaint form are also posted at the:

1. County Business Administration Building (601 State Street, Hood River, Oregon 97031).
2. Hood River County Circuit Court (309 State Street, Hood River, Oregon 97031)
3. Public Works and Forestry Offices (918 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Hood River, Oregon 97031)
4. Health Department (1109 June Street, Hood River, Oregon 97031)

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against may request a complaint form from the Clerk of the Board at the County Business Administration Building.

## **Analysis of Construction Projects**

Over the last three years Hood River County has not completed a construction project requiring an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS).

## **Include Public Participation**

Community Outreach is a requirement of Title VI. Hood River County and its subrecipients shall seek out and consider the viewpoints of minority and low-income populations in the course of conducting public outreach. Recipients have wide latitude to determine what specific measures are most appropriate and should make this determination based on the composition of the affected population, the public involvement process, and the resources of Hood River County. Hood River County has engaged the public in its planning and decisionmaking processes, as well as its marketing and outreach activities. Hood River County also follows public notification regulations as required by any federal funds received by Hood River County. Specific outreach mechanisms that are and will be employed by Hood River County include:

- In accordance with Oregon public meeting law, all public meetings are advertised in local newspapers and open to the general public.
- Providing flexibility in scheduling meetings at times and locations that are accessible, a) holding meetings at various times, including after usual working hours and b) holding meetings at locations with access to transit c) holding meetings in the community such as at the library and senior center and d) always offering a virtual option.
- Individuals requiring an interpreter or other accommodations are encouraged to contact Hood River County at least 48 hours in advance of meetings to allow for accommodations to be made.
- Engaging with partner entities directly serving minority populations to provide communication and outreach in the most direct and accessible manner.
- Hood River County's website includes a language translator that allows all web pages and materials to be translated into almost any language.
- Hood River County uses social media to post information and provide opportunities for public input and comment. In addition, a quarterly newsletter is directly emailed to individuals requesting a copy. This communication method allows for additional opportunities to disseminate information about meetings and services.

As part of two recent planning projects involving the development of community plans for the Unincorporated Communities of Odell and Parkdale, the County Planning Department utilized The Next Door, Inc. (TND) to assist with gathering public feedback and providing translation services at multiple community meetings.

For Parkdale, TND helped the County prepare bilingual surveys that were mailed to property owners in and around the community. TND also helped hand out surveys and performed one-on-one interactions with those who did not receive the survey by mail. They also helped host informational sessions outside of the local grocery store with focus on assisting community members, especially Spanish speakers, in filling out the survey, learning more about project, and encouraging them to attend the initial kick-off community meeting.

TND also worked with a local Latino radio station to help advertise the community meeting. During the two community meetings, TND provided translation services for all Spanish speakers who attended.

For Odell, TND also helped the County prepare a bilingual invitation to two kick-off community meetings, one in English and one in Spanish. TND was hired to recruit and advertise the community meeting to encourage participation by people who live or work in Odell from underrepresented groups. This involved contacting key community members to help get the word out and conducting door-to-door promotion of the event in certain neighborhoods. The Spanish speaking event was also facilitated by TND and was conducted entirely in Spanish, which included multiple small-group discussions. Approximately 30 participants attended the Spanish speaking event.

The Health Department tables and offers health services at a variety of community events (for example, in 2024 we attended 22 community events). Our department consists of roughly half bilingual/bicultural staff members – at least one of whom attends each outreach event to ensure that a native or fluent Spanish speaker is available for attendees. These events also include all outreach materials available in both English/Spanish and our staff trained on utilizing Language Link to assist any community members that are not English or Spanish speaking. The Health Department's communication strategy involves specific plans written for LEP clients on how best to communicate pertinent health information. Social media postings are available in both English and Spanish.

In 2025, the County Health Department partnered with the Hood River Latino Network to train their staff on the use of opioid overdose rescue medication and record a joint video of Health Department staff in Spanish promoting overdose rescue kits to their network of followers.

The County Health Department also partnered with Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) to design water safety messaging for river users and fishers. In addition to a social media campaign, CRITFC also utilized native community health workers to share this information throughout the community.

### **Anti-Discrimination Statement/Title VI Policy**

Anti-Discrimination Statement: Hood River County is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Services are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

Declaración de Anti-discriminación: Declaración contra la discriminación: El Condado de Hood River es un empleador de acción afirmativa e igualdad de oportunidades. Los servicios están disponibles para todos sin distinción de raza, color, origen nacional, género, identidad de género, religión, edad, altura, peso, discapacidad, creencias políticas, orientación sexual, estado civil, situación familiar o si es veterano de Guerra.

Hood River County's Title VI policy and complaint form are posted on the Hood River County website (web address) and at the County Business Administration Building, Hood River County Circuit Court, Public Works and Forestry departments, and Health department. Title VI notification forms and complaint forms are available in English and Spanish. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against may request a complaint form from the Title VI Coordinator/Clerk of the Board at the County Business Administration Building.

## **Reference**

.S. Department of Transportation Order 1050.2A.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to effectively monitor and ensure that Hood River County is in compliance with all Title VI requirements and regulations in order to carry out the provisions of the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Title VI Regulations at 49 CFR Part 21.

## **Authorities**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

## **Policy Statement**

Hood River County assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. Hood River County is committed to creating and maintaining programs and services that are free of all forms of discrimination.

## **Responsibilities**

All employees of Hood River County shall follow the intent of these guidelines in a manner that reflects the organization's policy. Employees receiving information regarding violations of this order shall determine if there is any basis for the allegation and shall proceed with resolution as stated in the sections Employee Responsibility and/or Investigation of Complaints and Appeal Process.

## **Certification and Assurance**

To ensure accordance with 49 CFR Section 21.7, every application for federal financial assistance from must be accompanied by an assurance that the applicant will carry out the program in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

## **Notification of Compliance with Title VI**

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (d) Hood River County has posted information for the public regarding the Title VI obligations and protections against discrimination afforded to the public by Title VI on the Hood River County website. Hood River County has also posted the following notice of compliance with Title VI, which is visible to the public at the County Business Administration Building and directs the public to the Hood River County website and to the appropriate phone number to inquire for more information. Additionally, this information is available upon request.

## **Notification of Compliance with Title VI**

Hood River County complies with Title VI and Title VI Dependent Guidelines for recipients of federal financial assistance. Title VI obligations and protections against discrimination afforded to the public by Title VI can be found on the County website. This information is also available upon request, please inquire inside office or contact Title VI Complaint Coordinator at 541-386-3970.

**Notificación de la conformidad con Title VI**

El Condado de Hood River cumple con el Título VI y las pautas dependientes del Título VI para los beneficiarios de asistencia financiera federal de la Administración Federal de Tránsito. Las obligaciones del Título VI y las protecciones contra la discriminación otorgadas al público por el Título VI se pueden encontrar en el sitio web del Condado. Esta información también está disponible bajo petición, por favor pregunte en la oficina o póngase en contacto con el Coordinador de Quejas Título VI al 541-386-3970.

[County approval format for signatures]

Signed by:

*Jennifer Euwer*

BFDPSA1237C348E...

4/9/2025 | 3:03 PM PDT

Signature

Date

Chair Euwer, Hood River County Commissioners

## ATTACHMENT B

### Title VI Complaint Form

<b>Section I:</b>				
Name:				
Address:				
Telephone (Home):		Telephone (Work):		
Electronic Mail Address:				
Accessible Format	Large Print		Audio Tape	
Requirements?	TDD		Other	
<b>Section II:</b>				
Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?		Yes*	No	
*If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section III.				
If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining:				
Please explain why you have filed for a third party:				
Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party.		Yes	No	
<b>Section III:</b>				
I believe the discrimination I experienced was based on (check all that apply):				
<input type="checkbox"/> Race				
<input type="checkbox"/> Color				
<input type="checkbox"/> National Origin				
Date of Alleged Discrimination (Month, Day, Year):				
Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witnesses. If more space is needed, please use the back of this form.				
<b>Section IV:</b>				

