



CITY OF ROCKY TOP

Proud Past • Bright Future

Tennessee Title VI Policy

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The City of Rocky Top is committed to fostering an inclusive community that values diversity in all its forms. Recognizing that impartial services emerge from understanding the needs of every segment of the community, the City actively welcomes input from individuals of all cultural identities, backgrounds, and income levels.

This plan outlines the federal nondiscrimination laws applicable to the City and affirms its obligation to prevent and prohibit discrimination in all programs and services. Designed as a practical guide for implementing Title VI and related statutes, the plan serves as an administrative tool rather than a legal mandate under the City Charter or ordinances.

TITLE VI POLICY

It is the policy of The City of Rocky Top to ensure that no citizen shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance.

All employees of The City of Rocky Top are expected to consider, respect, and observe this policy in their daily work duties. If a citizen approaches you with a question or complaint, direct him or her to the Title VI Coordinator at (865) 426-2838 or at P.O. Box 66, Rocky Top, TN 37769.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to the administration of all programs, projects, facilities, benefits or services that receive financial assistance from the federal government.

TITLE VI COORDINATOR

The City Manager shall designate a City employee to serve as the Title VI Coordinator and to facilitate Title VI matters.

RECORD KEEPING DURATION

The Title VI Coordinator is charged with maintaining permanent records and submitting required Title VI reports. These records shall include, but are not limited to, any written complaints, all correspondence to complainants and the annual self-survey for the Military Department.

TITLE VI INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

A. Public Display of Information

Title VI information posters, including the name and contact information of the local Title VI Coordinator, shall be prominently and publicly displayed in accessible areas.

B. Employee Education

Title VI information shall be disseminated to all City of Rocky Top employees at least once per year. This will be accomplished by including the Employee Education Form in employee payroll envelopes. This form serves as a reminder of the City's Title VI policy and reinforces employees' responsibilities in supporting non-discriminatory practices in their daily work.

C. New Employee Orientation

All new employees shall receive Title VI orientation upon hire. The orientation will include the New Employee Orientation Form which outlines the City of Rocky Top's Title VI policy and communicates the expectations for upholding these responsibilities while performing job duties.

D. Public Dissemination

Title VI information shall be provided to residents at least once annually. This will be done by including the City's Title VI policy statement with customer utility billing statements.

E. Outreach to Minority Communities

Whenever possible, the City of Rocky Top will take positive, proactive steps to inform minority communities about program availability. This may include using communication methods such as utility billing statements, newsletters, and direct distribution of informational materials (e.g., letters, leaflets, brochures, and bulletins) to relevant referral sources and minority-focused community organizations within the service area.

SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

All subcontractors and vendors (tertiary recipients) who receive payments from the The City of Rocky Top (secondary recipient) shall be required to submit to the The City of Rocky Top Assurance of Compliance Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 form as found in Appendix C, before any federally-assisted payment(s) will be made.

All written contracts shall contain the following non-discrimination statement that complies with Title VI:

It is the policy of the City of Rocky Top to provide equal employment opportunities and to offer its programs, activities, and services to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other status protected by law. Inquiries or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to the Title VI Coordinator at (865) 426-2838 or at 195 Main Street, Rocky Top, TN 37769.

PUBLIC INTERACTION

- A. All The City of Rocky Top equipment or physical facilities (i.e. restrooms, waiting rooms, recreational area, etc.) shall be provided to citizens without regard to race, color, or national origin.
- B. Staff shall use courtesy titles (i.e. Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss) to address citizens without regard to race, color or national origin.

COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATION

A. Commitment to Addressing Complaints

The City of Rocky Top takes all Title VI violation complaints seriously and is committed to investigating and resolving them promptly and fairly.

B. Acceptance of Complaints

Complaints may be submitted in either written or verbal form. If a complainant presents allegations verbally and declines to submit them in writing, the individual receiving the complaint must document the details in writing.

To ensure a thorough and effective investigation, each complaint should include the following information:

1. Name, address, and telephone number of the complainant
2. A detailed description of the incident, including why the complainant believes discrimination occurred
3. The basis of the complaint (i.e., race, color, or national origin)
4. Names, addresses, and phone numbers of any witnesses or individuals with knowledge of the event

5. The date(s) on which the alleged discriminatory event(s) occurred

C. Use of Complaint Form

Complainants are encouraged—but not required—to use the *Discrimination Complaint Form*.

D. Investigation and Recordkeeping

All complaints shall be formally acknowledged, recorded, investigated, and maintained on file by the Title VI Coordinator or their designee.

E. Resolution Timeline

All complaints will be resolved within **ninety (90) days** of receipt.

COMPLAINT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A. Use of Complaint Form

While the *Title VI Complaint Form* may be used to submit a complaint, its use is not required. If a complainant chooses not to use the form, the Title VI Coordinator may request additional information typically included on the form to ensure all necessary details are captured for processing the complaint.

B. Submission via Fax or Email

Complaints received by fax or email will be acknowledged and processed once the identity of the complainant and their intent to proceed with the complaint have been confirmed. The complainant must mail a signed, original copy of the faxed or emailed complaint to the Title VI Coordinator for the City to initiate formal processing.

C. Complaint Handling and Recordkeeping

All complaints will be promptly acknowledged, recorded, and investigated. The Title VI Coordinator is responsible for maintaining all complaint records in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.


D. Who May File a Complaint


Any individual who believes they have been subjected to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family/income status in any of the City's programs, services, or activities may file a complaint with the Title VI Coordinator.

E. Contact Information

Complaints should be directed to:

Title VI Coordinator Heather Parks

 (865) 426-2838

 hparks@rockytopn.org

 195 S. Main Street, Rocky Top, TN 37769

NON-DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

A. Jurisdiction and Referral of Complaints

1. Complaints Against the City or Its Departments

If a complaint is filed against the City of Rocky Top or one of its departments (rather than an individual), the Title VI Coordinator will close the case at the local level and forward all relevant complaint information to the appropriate State or Federal agency for review and disposition pursuant to their established procedures.

2. Complaints Against Subrecipients

If a complaint is filed against a subrecipient of federal funds under the City's jurisdiction, the City will retain authority and proceed with investigation and adjudication of the case.

B. Grounds for Complaint Dismissal

A complaint may be administratively dismissed under any of the following conditions:

- The complainant voluntarily withdraws the complaint.
- The complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional, necessary information.
- The complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts have been made.

C. Notification of Acceptance for Investigation

Once the City of Rocky Top accepts a complaint for investigation:

- The complainant and the respondent will be notified in writing within seven (7) business days.
- The complaint will be assigned a case number and logged into official City records, including the basis of the complaint and a summary of the alleged discriminatory act(s).

D. Respondent's Opportunity to Respond

In cases where the City assumes investigation:

- The respondent will be provided the opportunity to submit a written response to the allegations.
- The response must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the City's written notification of complaint acceptance.

E. Investigative Report and Final Disposition

- The City will complete its investigation and prepare a final investigative report within sixty (60) calendar days of complaint acceptance.
- Copies of the report and the original complaint will be submitted to the appropriate State and/or Federal agency and to the affected parties.
- The City of Rocky Top will formally notify both the complainant and the respondent of the final decision.

F. Right to Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they will be informed of their right to appeal to the appropriate State or Federal agency for further review.