

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Who is eligible to file a complaint?

Anyone who believes they have been excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any M-1 RAIL program or activity because of their race, color, or national origin may file a complaint by completing and submitting the agency's Title VI Complaint form. The Agency will process complaints that are complete. The Complaint Form can be found in Appendix A and on M-1 RAIL's website.

Discrimination includes lack of access, harassment, retaliation and disparate impacts from a program or activity. Harassment includes a wide range of abusive and humiliating verbal or physical behaviors. Retaliation includes intimidating, threatening, coercing, or engaging in other discriminatory conduct against anyone because they filed a complaint or otherwise participated a discrimination investigation.

How do you file a complaint?

Complaints must be filed in writing within 180 days from the last date of the alleged discrimination. The Complaint should include the following information: (1) Complainant's name, mailing address, telephone number, email address and any other contact information; (2) how, when, where and why you believe you were discriminated against; (3) location, names and contact information of any witnesses, and (4) other information that you consider significant.

However, contact Sommer Woods, M-1 RAIL Title VI Coordinator (see contract information below), if you believe your complaint may fall outside this deadline.

The M-1 Title VI Complaint Form (see Appendix A) may be used to submit the complaint information.

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist persons with disabilities, non-English speakers, and others unable to file a written complaint. For assistance in filing a complaint, please contact Sommer Woods, M-1 RAIL Title VI Coordinator.

Complaints may be submitted via mail, email, or in person to:

Sommer Woods

M-1 RAIL
7520 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202
sommer.woods@m1rail.org

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Complaints may also be filed directly with the following agencies:

**Statewide Title VI Coordinator,
Michigan Department of
Transportation**

425 W. Ottawa St.
PO Box 30050
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 241-7462
www.michigan.gov/titlevi

**Federal Highway
Administration Michigan
Division**

315 W. Allegan, Room 201
Lansing, Michigan 48933
Phone: (517) 377-1844

Federal Transit Administration

(FTA Office of Civil Rights)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590.

What happens after a complaint is filed?

Once the complaint is received, it will be reviewed to determine if M-1 RAIL has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgment letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by M-1 RAIL.

Title VI complaints must be investigated within sixty (60) days of being received. Investigating a complaint includes interviewing all parties involved and key witnesses. The investigator may also request relevant information such as books, records, electronic information, and other sources of information from all involved parties. A complainant may specify if there is a particular individual or individuals that he/she feels should not investigate the complaint due to conflict of interest or other reasons.

If more information is needed to complete an investigation, the complainant will be notified in writing. The complainant has fourteen (14) calendar days from receipt of the written notice to send the requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within fourteen (14) calendar days, the complaint can be administratively closed. A case can also be administratively closed if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

After the investigator completes the investigation, she/he will issue one of two letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF). A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed. An LOF summarizes the allegations and findings regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of a staff member, or other action will occur. If the complainant wishes to appeal the investigator's decision, she/he has fourteen (14) calendar days from receipt of the closure letter or the LOF to do so.

In some cases, complaints will be forwarded to either the Michigan Department of Transportation or the Federal Highway Administration for investigation. If a complaint is forwarded to one of these agencies, the complainant will be provided the name and contact information of the employee handling the complaint.

Federal law prohibits retaliation against individuals because they have filed a discrimination complaint or otherwise participated in a discrimination investigation. Any alleged retaliation should be reported in writing to the investigator.