

HICKMAN COUNTY, TENNESSEE

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CIVIL RIGHT COMPLAINTS

These procedures cover all complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, relating to any program or activity administered by Hickman County Government through its various departments and agencies to sub-recipients, consultants, and contractors. Intimidation or retaliation of any kind is prohibited by law. The procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI Coordinator may be utilized for resolution.

Complaints shall be handled in the following manner:

- 1) Any individual, group of individuals, or entity that believes they have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI nondiscrimination provisions may file a written complaint with Hickman County's Title VI Coordinator. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrence utilizing the form supplied by the Coordinator.
- 2) Upon receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will determine its jurisdiction, acceptability, and need for additional information, as well as investigate the merit of the complaint. In cases where the complaint is against one of Hickman County's sub-recipients of federal funds, Hickman County will assume jurisdiction and will investigate and adjudicate the case.
- 3) Once Hickman County decides to accept the complaint for investigation, the complainant and the respondent will be notified in writing of such determination within five (5) business days. The complaint will receive a case number and will then be logged into the Title VI Complaint Records identifying its basis and the race, color, national origin and gender of the complainant.
- 4) In cases where Hickman County assumes the investigation of the complaint, Hickman County will provide the respondent with the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing. The respondent will then have ten (10) business days to furnish Hickman County his/her response to the allegations.
- 5) Within fifty (50) calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, Hickman County's Investigator* will prepare an investigation report for the Title VI Coordinator's review. The report shall include a narrative description of the incident, identification of persons interviewed, findings, and recommendations for disposition.

- 6) The investigative report and its findings will be sent to Hickman County's Legal Counsel for review. The Counsel will review the report and associated documentation and will provide input within ten (10) calendar days.
- 7) Any comments or recommendations from Hickman County's Legal Counsel will be reviewed by Hickman County's Investigator*. The Investigator will discuss the report and recommendations with the County Mayor. The report will be modified as needed for clarity and made final for its release.
- 8) Once the investigative report becomes final, the parties will be properly notified of the outcome and appeal rights.
- 9) Hickman County's investigative report and a copy of the complaint shall be forwarded to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint.
- 10) If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation, he/she shall be advised of their rights to appeal to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. Appeals must be filed within 180 calendar days after Hickman County's final resolution. Unless new facts not previously considered come to light, reconsideration of Hickman County's determination will not be available.
- 11) Hickman County will serve as an appeal forum to a complainant that is not satisfied with the outcome of an investigation conducted by one of its sub-recipients. Hickman County will analyze the facts of these case and will issue its conclusion to the appellant within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the appeal.

*This can be Hickman County's Title VI Coordinator or a third party appointed by the Coordinator