THE ALBEMARLE RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION
EXTERNAL DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These external discrimination complaint procedures apply to the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization and cover complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination authorities applicable to programs, services, or activities carried out by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization or its agents.

The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will make every effort to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. Complaints of alleged discrimination will be investigated by the appropriate authority. The option of informal mediation between the affected parties and the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff may be utilized for resolution. Upon completion of each investigation, the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization staff will inform every complainant of all avenues of appeal.

PURPOSE

The purpose of these discrimination complaint procedures is to describe the process used by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization for processing and investigating alleged complaints of discrimination.

FILING OF COMPLAINTS

1. Applicability – The complaint procedures apply to the beneficiaries of the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization programs, activities, and services, including the public and any consultants/contractors hired by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization.

2. Eligibility – Any person or class of persons who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by any of the Civil Rights authorities, based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complaint with the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization. The law prohibits intimidation or retaliation of any sort. The complaint may be filed by the affected individual or a representative and must be in writing.

3. Time Limits and Filing Options – A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the following:
   - The date of the alleged act of discrimination; or
   - The date when the person(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or
   - Where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct.

Complaints may be submitted to the following entities:

- The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization 512 South Church Street Hertford, NC 27944
- North Carolina Department of Transportation, Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Services, External Civil Rights Section, 1511 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1511; 919-508-1830 or toll free 800-522-0453
- US Department of Transportation, Departmental Office of Civil Rights, External Civil Rights Programs Division, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590; 202-366-4070
- Federal Highway Administration, Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, 8th Floor, E81-314, Washington, DC 20590, 202-366-0693 / 366-0752
- Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina Division Office, 310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410, Raleigh, NC 27601, 919-747-7010
- Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, ATTN: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Bldg. 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590
- Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Civil Rights, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591, 202-267-3258
- US Department of Justice, Special Litigation Section, Civil Rights Division, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530, 202-514-6255 or toll free 877-218-5228

4. Format for Complaints – Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s) or a representative and include the complainant’s name, address, and telephone number. Complaints received by fax or e-mail will be acknowledged and processed. Allegations received by telephone or in person will be reduced to writing, may
be recorded and will be provided to the complainant for confirmation or revision before processing. Complaints will be accepted in other languages including Braille.

5. **Complaint Basis** – Allegations must be based on issues involving race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The term “basis” refers to the complainant’s membership in a protected group category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected Categories</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Applicable Statutes and Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>An individual belonging to one of the accepted racial groups; or the perception, based usually on physical characteristics that a person is a member of a racial group</td>
<td>Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White</td>
<td>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR Part 21; 23 CFR 200 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR Part 21; Circular 4702.1B</td>
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<td>Color</td>
<td>Color of skin, including shade of skin within a racial group</td>
<td>Black, White, brown, yellow, etc.</td>
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<td>National Origin</td>
<td>Place of birth. Citizenship is not a factor. Discrimination based on language or a person’s accent is also covered.</td>
<td>Mexican, Cuban, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese</td>
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<td>Sex</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Women and Men</td>
<td>1973 Federal-Aid Highway Act Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972</td>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>Persons of any age</td>
<td>21 year old person</td>
<td>Age Discrimination Act of 1975</td>
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<td>Disability</td>
<td>Physical or mental impairment, permanent or temporary, or perceived.</td>
<td>Blind, alcoholic, para-amputee, epileptic, diabetic, arthritic</td>
<td>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Complaint Processing**

1. When a complaint is received by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, a written acknowledgment and a Consent Release form will be mailed to the complainant within ten (10) business days by registered mail.

2. **The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization cannot investigate Title VI complaints filed against itself**, but can investigate ADA complaints against itself. The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will consult with the NCDOT External Civil Rights Section to determine the acceptability and jurisdiction of all complaints received. (Note: If NCDOT has jurisdiction, the External Civil Rights Section will be responsible for the remainder of this process. The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will record the transfer of responsibility in its complaints log).

3. Additional information will be requested if the complaint is incomplete. The complainant will be provided 15 business days to submit any requested information and the signed Consent Release form. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.

4. Upon receipt of the requested information and determination of jurisdiction, the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization will notify the complainant and respondent of whether the complaint has sufficient merit to warrant investigation.

5. If the complaint is investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization’s jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.

6. If the complaint does not warrant investigation, the notification to the complainant shall specifically state the reason for the decision.

**Complaint Log**

1. When a complaint is received by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, the complaint will be entered into the Discrimination Complaints Log with other pertinent information, and assigned a **Case Number**. (Note: All complaints must be logged).

2. The complaints log will be submitted to the NCDOT’s Civil Rights office during Title VI compliance reviews. (Note: NCDOT may also be request the complaints log during pre-grant approval processes).
3. The **Log Year(s)** since the last submittal will be entered (e.g., 2012-2015, 2014-2015, FFY 2015, or 2015) and the complaints log will be signed before submitting the log to NCDOT.

4. When reporting **no complaints**, check the **No Complaints or Lawsuits** box and sign the log.
The Albemarle Rural Planning Organization

**DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM**

Any person who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination based upon race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability may file a written complaint with the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, within 180 days after the discrimination occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name:</th>
<th>First Name:</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mailing Address:</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Zip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Telephone:</td>
<td>Work Telephone:</td>
<td>E-mail Address</td>
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Identify the Category of Discrimination:

- [ ] RACE
- [ ] COLOR
- [ ] NATIONAL ORIGIN
- [ ] AGE
- [ ] RELIGION
- [ ] DISABILITY
- [ ] SEX/GENDER

Identify the Race of the Complainant:

- [ ] Black
- [ ] White
- [ ] Hispanic
- [ ] Asian American
- [ ] American Indian
- [ ] Alaskan Native
- [ ] Pacific Islander
- [ ] Other _________________

Date and place of alleged discriminatory action(s). Please include earliest date of discrimination and most recent date of discrimination.

Names of individuals responsible for the discriminatory action(s):

How were you discriminated against? Describe the nature of the action, decision, or conditions of the alleged discrimination. Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe your protected status (basis) was a factor in the discrimination. Include how other persons were treated differently from you. *(Attach additional page(s), if necessary).*

The law prohibits intimidation or retaliation against anyone because he/she has either taken action, or participated in action, to secure rights protected by these laws. If you feel that you have been retaliated against, separate from the discrimination alleged above, please explain the circumstances below. Explain what action you took which you believe was the cause for the alleged retaliation.

Names of persons (witnesses, fellow employees, supervisors, or others) whom we may contact for additional information to support or clarify your complaint: *(Attached additional page(s), if necessary).*

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
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DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

Have you filed, or intend to file, a complaint regarding the matter raised with any of the following? If yes, please provide the filing dates. Check all that apply.

- NC Department of Transportation
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Highway Administration
- US Department of Transportation
- Federal or State Court
- Other

Have you discussed the complaint with any Albemarle Rural Planning Organization representative? If yes, provide the name, position, and date of discussion.

Please provide any additional information that you believe would assist with an investigation.

Briefly explain what remedy, or action, are you seeking for the alleged discrimination.

**WE CANNOT ACCEPT AN UNSIGNED COMPLAINT. PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THE COMPLAINT FORM BELOW.**

COMPLAINANT’S SIGNATURE ____________________________ DATE ____________________________

MAIL COMPLAINT FORM TO:
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & WORKFORCE SERVICES
EXTERNAL SERVICES SECTION
1511 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH, NC 27699-1511
919-508-1808 or 800-522-0453

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Complaint Received: ____________________________
Processed by: ____________________________
Case #: ____________________________
Referred to: □ NCDOT  □ FTA  Date Referred: ____________________________
<table>
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<tr>
<th>CASE NO.</th>
<th>COMPLAINANT NAME</th>
<th>RACE/GENDER</th>
<th>RESPONDENT NAME</th>
<th>BASIS</th>
<th>DATE FILED</th>
<th>DATE RECEIVED</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
<th>DATE INVESTIG. COMPLETE</th>
<th>DISPOSITION</th>
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No Complaints or Lawsuits [ ]

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the above described complaints or lawsuits alleging discrimination, or no complaints or lawsuits alleging discrimination, have been filed with or against the **Albemarle Rural Planning Organization** since the previous Title VI Program submission to NCDOT.

Signature of Title VI Coordinator

______________________________________________________________

Date

Print Name of Title VI Coordinator

______________________________________________________________