

# **Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners**

## **Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Section 324 of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973; Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987; Florida Civil Rights Act of 1991; and related statutes and regulations, that no person shall on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, income or family status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any federally or non-federally funded program, service or activity administered by the County or its sub- recipients.

### **Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator**

The Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners has established the Title VI/ Nondiscrimination Coordinator as:

Jane Evans, Grants and RESTORE Manager  
1250 North Eglin Parkway, Ste 102  
Shalimar, Florida 32579  
E-mail: [jevans@myokaloosa.com](mailto:jevans@myokaloosa.com)  
Phone: 850-651-7515 Fax: 850-651-7551

### **Title VI Complaint Procedure**

The purpose of the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners Title VI policy is to establish and implement procedures that comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as well as other related federal and state statutes and regulations.

The County does not tolerate discrimination in any of its programs, services or activities; and will not exclude participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, income or family status. The County values diversity and both welcomes and actively seeks input from all interested parties.

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, income or family status by the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners may file a discrimination complaint by completing and submitting the County's Title VI/Nondiscrimination complaint form. See below for filing instructions:

1. Any complaint received should be date stamped and forwarded to the Risk Manager
2. and County Attorney.

3. All complaints shall be submitted in a written format and contain the identity of the complainant as well as the basis for the allegations (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, income or family status). If the complaint cannot be submitted in writing, the complainant should contact the Risk Manager. See ADA/504 section for contact information. Submissions must also include:

Name, address and contact number of the person making the

complaint; Names, addresses and contact numbers of witnesses;

A narrative or statement describing the alleged violation of Title VI, including date and time of the alleged violation and County program, service or activity where the alleged violation occurred; and

Any other documentation that may provide additional explanation or identification of the alleged violation.

4. All complaints shall be filed no later than (180) calendar days from the date of the alleged discrimination. Complaints should be filed with the Risk Manager. See ADA/504 section for contact information.
5. *When applicable, the appropriate government entity will be notified immediately upon receipt of a Title VI/Nondiscrimination complaint. For complainant unwilling to speak with Okaloosa County, the Florida Department of Transportation serves as a statewide clearinghouse for Title VI purposes and will either assume jurisdiction over the complaint or forward it to the appropriate federal or state authority for continued processing. Those direct complaints may be submitted to:*

*Florida Department of Transportation  
Equal Opportunity Office  
Attn: Title VI Complaint Processing  
605 Suwannee Street M65  
Tallahassee, FL 32399*

6. No more than forty-five (45) calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the Risk Manager will address the alleged discrimination with the complainant and discuss a possible resolution. *Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information within fifteen (15) days may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.*

7. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the discussion, the Risk Manager will complete an investigation of the allegations and respond in writing to the person who filed the complaint. The response will explain the position of the County and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.
8. The person who filed the complaint may appeal the written response if it does not satisfactorily resolve the issue. Appeals must be submitted in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of written response to the County Administrator at:

Okaloosa County BCC  
1250 North Eglin Parkway, Ste 102  
Shalimar, Florida 32579

## **Retaliation**

Retaliation is prohibited under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related federal and state nondiscrimination authorities. It is the policy of the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners that persons filing a complaint of discrimination should have the right to do so without interference, intimidation, coercion or fear of reprisal. Anyone who feels they have been subjected to retaliation should report such an incident to the Risk Manager named in this policy. The procedures and time constraints for filing retaliation claims are the same as those that apply to Title VI discrimination claims.

## **ADA/504 Statement**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and related federal and state laws and regulations forbid discrimination against those who have disabilities. Furthermore, these laws require federal aid recipients and other government entities to take affirmative steps to reasonably accommodate the disabled and ensure that their needs are equitably represented in the transportation planning process.

The Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners will make every effort to ensure that its facilities, programs, services and activities are accessible to those with disabilities. The County invites members of the disabled community and disability service groups to participate in its advisory committees and public involvement activities.

The County encourages the public to report any facility, program, service or activity that appears inaccessible to the disabled. Furthermore, the County will provide reasonable accommodation to disabled individuals who wish to participate in public involvement events or who require special assistance to access County facilities, programs, services or activities.

## **ADA/504 Coordinator**

The Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners has established an ADA/504 Coordinator to facilitate assistance for disabled residents and visitors. The ADA/504 Coordinator is able to assist

members of the public with the provision of auxiliary aids and services for County meetings, programs and events by coordinating with corresponding department heads. The ADA/504 Coordinator also investigates and seeks to resolve any complaints regarding special needs accessibility to County facilities or programs. The same complaint procedures and time constraints for filing in regard to Title VI also apply for alleged discrimination incidents against those who have disabilities, and should be directed to:

Kelly Bird, Risk Manager  
Okaloosa County BCC  
302 North Wilson Street, Ste 301  
Crestview, Florida 32536  
Email: [kbird@myokaloosa.com](mailto:kbird@myokaloosa.com)  
Phone: 850-689-5978 Fax: 850-689-5973

## **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Guidance**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and various directives from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and US Department of Transportation (DOT) require federal aid recipients to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs, services and activities by those who do not speak English proficiently. To determine the extent to which LEP services are required and in which languages, the law requires the analysis of four factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the County's programs, services or activities;
  - The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities;
  - The nature and importance of the program, service, or activity to people's lives; and
  - The resources available to the County and the likely costs of the LEP services.
1. Using census data, the County has determined that LEP individuals speaking English less than well represent approximately 28.1% of the community. The County realizes that such statistical data can become outdated or inaccurate. Therefore, the County communicates with local law enforcement, social service agencies and the school board to validate the proportions of the LEP service by those entities. In the school district, Spanish was reported to be the prevalent LEP language with an estimate of 5.31% eligible to be served.
  2. The County has received requests for translation or interpretation of this programs, services or activity into Spanish or other languages(s). In addition, County sponsored community outreach or public events are not attended by a significant number of LEP individuals requesting to make public comments. Thus, the County estimates its contact with LEP individuals to be infrequent but increasing.

3. The County believes that transportation is of critical importance to its public, as access to health care, emergency services, employment, and other essentials would be difficult or impossible without reliable transportation systems. In that spirit, the County defines as essential any document that advises the public of how to access nondiscrimination and public involvement policies, as well as those that impact public safety, health and welfare and emergency services. A full list of translated documents is available on the County website or by contacting the County Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator.
4. The County is fortunate to house within/near its jurisdiction one or more institutions of higher education which have extensive language resources. Further, the County maintains cordial relationships with faith based and/or community organizations that offer competent language services at low or no cost to the County. Finally, the County employs a number of proficient Spanish speakers that are able to interpret and/or provide translation services.

The analysis of these factors suggest the LEP services are required at this time. At a minimum, the County commits to:

- Maintain a list of employees who competently speak the LEP language and who are willing to provide translation and/or interpretation services.
- Distribute the list to staff that regularly have contact with the public.
- Provide public notification in the LEP language of the availability of language assistance, free of charge.

In addition, Okaloosa County Departments provide the following services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency:

**Agricultural Extension:** The University of Florida (UF) requires Extension Services to provide an interpreter if there is advanced notice of an audience need. All Agents in the Extension Services (Agriculture, Commercial Horticulture, Residential Horticulture, Family & Consumer Science, 4-H Youth Development, and Marine Science) comply with this policy. The expense of the interpreter is on the Agent and paid from UF program funds. Currently, the Green Industries Best Management Practices training and exam are offered in Spanish and Creole. Pesticide exams are only available in English; however, our Commercial Horticulture Agent has offered exam preparation and renewal classes in Spanish by utilizing both County and UF personnel as interpreters. Additionally, we have offered training with a sign language interpreter for both pesticide and with the Master Naturalist program.

**Airport:** Signs are posted in English and Spanish prohibiting unlawful discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, creed or disability. Generally, a Spanish speaking TSA or airline employee is available to assist individuals within the VPS Airport. Exhibit A and Exhibit B are examples of signage posted near the TSA checkpoint.

**Corrections:** At each day's 1st Appearance, if necessary, Language Line Solutions is used. The department has two (2) officers of Hispanic origin that speak fluid Spanish and, when on duty, provide personal translation for our Spanish speaking inmates. It has proven to be a successful alternative. On occasion, our Admission, Classification, & Release (ACR) officers use Google

Translate on their computers to complete what they need if a translator is not available. Our ACR Commander has assisted the hearing impaired by writing back and forth, or spelling words out through sign language.

**Growth Management** The County's affordable housing program serves very-low to moderate income households by providing rehabilitation of owner-occupied and rental housing, down payment assistance, affordable rental units, rental assistance through the Federal Emergency Rental Assistance program, and other services. Among the Limited English Proficiency population served, Spanish is the predominant non-English language. The Department has not encountered any languages other than Spanish, and has had no clients to date who were completely unable to communicate in English. However, because being less than proficient in English makes an already arduous application process even more difficult and stressful (for both staff as well as clients), the Growth Management Department employs a bilingual Housing Program Specialist who is available to assist clients for whom Spanish is the better language for providing instructions on programs and forms. As an employee within the Growth Management Department, the Housing Program Specialist is also available to assist with non-English-speaking customers at the permitting counter as with Code Enforcement and Planning matters.

**Human Resources:** E-verify posters are in English and Spanish on each designated Human Resources bulletin board.

**Library Cooperative:** The Library Cooperative provides materials in languages other than English for customers to borrow, both in libraries and online. It provides assistance for people to learn/improve English proficiency through self-paced online courses. The instructional interface for English language courses is available in over 30 languages. The online tutoring service provided by the library can provide Spanish-literate tutors to interact with students. The interface to learning courses is available in 3 languages.

**Public Safety:** Okaloosa County contracts with AT&T for Language Line Solutions. EMS and 9-1-1 Communications have access immediately available. The Language Line allows individuals who are non-English speaking to utilize translation services in the event of an emergency. In addition, during emergency events, such as tropical storm or other threats, the County seeks speakers of other languages to staff the Citizen Information Line (CIL). In addition, sign language experts have been retained for emergency events public broadcasts and meetings. Furthermore, the Beach Safety Warning Flag placards are printed in English and Spanish and are posted at each beach access way. See Exhibit C for examples of emergency preparedness materials printed in other languages spoken regionally (Spanish and Creole).

**Public Works:** Current projects have state and federal requirements for on the job training as it relates to disadvantaged groups or classes.

**Public Transportation:** Service announcements including reduction or increase in transit service, fare changes, extended route detours, required FTA & FDOT Clauses, CDC COVID-19 Announcements, and holiday closings are posted in English and Spanish on County Transit Vehicles, Transit Facilities, County Offices, County/Transit Websites, and Social Media Outlets. Upon request, Transit Disadvantage Applications and Reduced Fare Applications can be modified and distributed in Spanish to accommodate Persons with Limited English Proficiency. In addition, Informational and

Service Announcements are posted and available on County Transit Vehicles, Transit Facilities, and Transit Websites. Those announcements are as follows:

1. Reduction\Increase in Transit Service
2. Transit Fare Changes
3. Extended Route Detours
4. New Transit Operating Procedures
5. Required Federal and State Clauses
6. Federal and State Health Guidelines & Mandates
7. Holiday Closings

Tourist Development has three bilingual staff available to assist welcome center visitors and convention center clients as needed. Exhibit D shows COVID19 awareness signs in English and Spanish.

Veterans Services: Individuals with Limited English Proficiency are always accompanied by a person who can speak on their behalf. All Veterans Affairs forms and documents are available online in English and Spanish.

Water and Sewer: Citizens have an option to make a payment and/or retrieve automated account information through the department's Interactive Voice Response in both English and Spanish. There is one employee in Maintenance and one employee at the Arbennie Pritchett Wastewater plant who are designated bilingual employees. See Exhibit E and Exhibit F for examples of signage.

Documents that are considered vital, such as the Title VI complaint form and notice of a person's rights under Title VI will be printed in-house at minimal cost and made available to the LEP population as needed. With additional funding currently not available, printing in-house will be the most economical means of transmitting the information.

The County understands that its community characteristics change and that the four-factor analysis may reveal the need for more or varied LEP services in the future. As such, it will at least triennially examine its LEP plan to ensure that it remains reflective of the County's needs.

Persons requiring special language services should contact the County's Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator.

## **Public Involvement**

Okaloosa County holds public meetings, workshops and other events designed to gather public input on program/project planning and construction. Board of County Commissioners meetings are given due notice and open to the public. In this forum, the meeting Agenda is published in advance of the meeting, there are two Public Comment segments (start and end of meeting) and the minutes of the meeting plus the meeting transcript are posted to [www.myokaloosa.com](http://www.myokaloosa.com).

## Assurances

Effective May 05, 2015, the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners has designated the County Administrator as the signing authority for the Title VI/Nondiscrimination policy and associated assurances. The County Administrator will certify every three years, or commensurate with a change in incumbent, that its programs, services and activities are being conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner. This certification is termed as 'assurances' and serve two important purposes. First, they document the County's commitment to nondiscrimination and equitable service to its community. Second, they serve as a legally enforceable agreement by which the County may be held liable for breach. The public may view the current assurance on the County website or by contacting the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator.

For additional information and resources regarding Title VI issues, please contact the County's Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator named in this policy.

Dated: August 17, 2021

By  \_\_\_\_\_

John Hofstad, County Administrator



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## **Unlawful Discrimination**

It is unlawful for airport operators and their lessees, tenants, concessionaires and contractors to discriminate against any person because of race, color, national origin, sex, creed, or disability in public services and employment opportunities. Allegations of discrimination should be promptly reported to the Airport Manager or:

Federal Aviation Administration  
Office of Civil Rights, ACR-1  
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20591

Federal regulations on unlawful discrimination are available for review in the Airport Manager's Office.

Coordinator: JON MORRIS, C.M.  
Phone: (850) 651-7160, Ext: 1005  
Address: 1701 SR 85 North, Eglin AFB, FL 32542

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## **Discriminacion Ilegal**

Se prohíbe a los operadores de aeropuertos y a sus arrendatarios, inquilinos, concesionarios y contratistas discriminar contra cualquier persona por motivo de raza, color, nacionalidad de origen, sexo, creencias religiosas, impedimento físico o discapacidad en lo que respecta a servicios públicos y oportunidades de empleo. Las alegaciones de discriminación deberán ser dirigidas inmediatamente al Administrador del Aeropuerto o a:

Federal Aviation Administration  
Office of Civil Rights, ACR-1  
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20591

Los reglamentos sobre discriminación ilegal están a la disposición de los interesados para su examen en la oficina del Administrador del Aeropuerto.

Coordinador: JON MORRIS, C.M.  
Teléfono: (850) 651-7160, Ext: 1005  
Dirección: 1701 SR 85 North, Eglin AFB, FL 32542





# **ATENCIÓN**

**Si usted o alguien que usted conoce está siendo forzado a participar en una actividad y no puede irse – sea prostitución, trabajo doméstico, trabajo agrícola, trabajo en las fábricas, trabajo en almacenes, trabajo en restaurantes, o cualquier otra actividad – llame al Centro Nacional de Recursos para el Tráfico de Seres Humano al número**

**1-888-373-7888**

**O envíe un mensaje de texto INFO o HELP al número**

**233733**

**para obtener ayuda y servicios. Las víctimas de la esclavitud y del tráfico de los seres humanos están protegidas por las leyes de los Estados Unidos y del Estado de la Florida.**



## Fè ladiferans ak Florida Teen CERT

Kiam yan jan tinnian, yan yan se pashidientan yan  
bann bagay sa yan w ap di ou pa kapab fè. Men, yan  
yan sil bagay ki enpòtan anpil ou ka fè. Apreyan  
premjè sèt ou, fann ou, ak zann ou nan ka te  
yan yan dezan.



## ¿Qué Debe Hacer Cuando Un Huracán Amenaza A Su Comunidad?



Puede Tomar  
Dos Caminos

Continuación →

✓ Listo

## Exhibit C



Prepararse  
tiene sentido.  
Esté listo  
ahora.



Homeland  
Security

[www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov)

## Guía de seguridad para incendios forestales

Todos los años, se producen incendios forestales de grandes dimensiones en Florida. En promedio, Florida es el segundo estado con mayor cantidad de incendios forestales de la nación. En los últimos años, los 67 condados de Florida han sufrido incendios forestales en algún momento.

Las 3 principales causas de incendios forestales en Florida son: incendios provocados, rayoschas/relámpagos no controlados, quemados de desechos y rayos.

**GET A  
PLAN!**  
[FloridaDisaster.org](http://FloridaDisaster.org)

**Me gusta, ¡prepararme ahora!**

Cree un plan personal para casos de desastre y un plan de evacuación para casos en que un incendio ponga en riesgo su hogar o lugar de trabajo.

Es posible que usted no sea advertido en casos en que un incendio requiera evacuación. Cuando se presenten las condiciones para que se produzca un incendio, **ESTÉ ALERTA.**



# Exhibit D

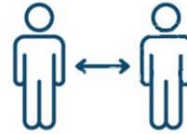


## PREVENT THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



### **Clean your hands often**

Wash your hands with soap  
for at least 20 seconds



### **Avoid close contact**

Put distance between  
yourself and others  
(about 6ft)



### **Cover coughs and sneezes**

Cover your mouth and nose  
with a tissue or the inside  
of your elbow



### **Stay home**

Stay home if you feel sick

DESTIN  
FORT  
WALTON  
BEACH  
FLORIDA

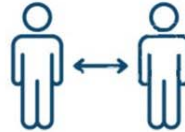
# CONVENTION CENTER

## PREVENIR LA PROPAGACIÓN DEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



### **Limpia tus manos con frecuencia**

Lávese las manos con jabón durante al menos 20 segundos



### **Evitar el contacto cercano**

Poner distancia entre usted y otros (aproximadamente 6 pies)



### **Cubrir tos y estornudos**

Cubra su boca y nariz con un pañuelo desechable o el interior de su codo



### **Quedarse en casa**

Quédate en casa si te sientes enferma

DESTIN  
FORT  
WALTON  
BEACH  
FLORIDA

# CONVENTION CENTER

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF  
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



**NO HANDSHAKES**

**NO HIGH FIVES**



DESTIN  
FORT  
WALTON  
BEACH  
FLORIDA

CONVENTION  
CENTER

# PREVENIR LA PROPAGACIÓN DEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



**SIN APRETONES DE MANOS**

**NO CHOCA LOS CINCO**

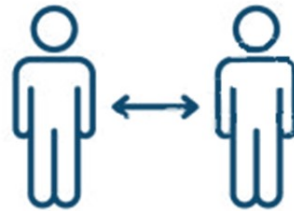


DESTIN  
FORT  
WALTON  
BEACH  
FLORIDA

CONVENTION  
CENTER

# PREVENT THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

**PLEASE STAY**



**6' APART**

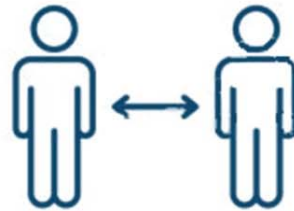


DESTIN  
FORT  
WALTON  
BEACH  
FLORIDA

CONVENTION  
CENTER

# PREVENIR LA PROPAGACIÓN DEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

**POR FAVOR MANTENGA**



**6' DE DISTANCIA**



POR FAVOR **ESPERE**  
AQUI.

**SU TURNO ES EL  
PROXIMO**

POR FAVOR RESPETE LA  
PRIVACIDAD DE OTROS,  
**ESPERE AQUI HASTA  
SER LLAMADO.**



3:30 am - 5:00 pm

# **WARNING**

**THIS AREA IS UNDER AUDIO AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE  
WITH MICROPHONES AND CAMERAS.**

# **ADVERTENCIA**

**ESTA ÁREA ESTÁ DEBAJO DE AUDIO Y VIDEO VIGILANCIA  
CON MICROFONOS Y CAMARAS.**

