

# **CITY OF TAVARES NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY AND PLAN**

## **POLICY**

The City of Tavares City Council and personnel recognize that as a local government entity, it does not exist separate from its residents. In order to continue to provide programs, activities and services of value to its residents, the local government must maintain a mission of careful consideration of the needs of its residents and a protection of the means by which the general public interacts with the local government free from discrimination. Thus the City of Tavares does not tolerate discrimination. Pursuant to the Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 and related laws and regulations, the City will not exclude from participation in or subject to discrimination anyone on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, income or religion.

Instead, the City of Tavares will actively seek to embrace diversity and welcome input from all interested parties and harmoniously resolve any instances of grievances in pursuit of this effort.

## **Grievance Procedures**

The City of Tavares has established this discrimination grievance procedure and will take reasonable action to investigate and eliminate discrimination when it is found in an effort to maintain the City's commitment to provide a nondiscriminatory environment and to meet the requirements of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts. The City of Tavares personnel related policy shall govern employment-related concerns. The City of Tavares Nondiscrimination grievance policy may be used by anyone who wished to file such a related discrimination based grievance.

The City of Tavares shall maintain a designated Title VI Coordinator at all times. The Title VI Coordinator shall be the Community Development Department Senior Planner. In the event of an extended absence of the Coordinator due to illness etc, the Title VI responsibilities shall be performed by the Human Resources Director.

The Title VI Coordinator shall have easy access to the City Administrator and is not required to obtain management or other approval to discuss discrimination issues with the City Administrator. However, should the complainant be unable or unwilling to communicate the grievance to the City staff or the City Administrator or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the City's handling of a complaint, the written complaint may be submitted directly to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). DOJ will ensure that the matter is assigned to the correct Federal or State Authority for processing.

If a complainant wishes to convey a grievance to the Title VI Coordinator, to the extent possible, the complaint should be made in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name and phone number of the person making the complaint; name and phone numbers of any witnesses; and a narrative describing the alleged violation of Title VI, including the date and time of the alleged violation and the City program or facility where the alleged violation occurred; and any other documentation that may provide an additional explanation or identification of the alleged violation. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews accompanied by witnesses and/or recordings of the complaint will be considered acceptable.

In order to be investigated, all complaints shall be filed no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.

Within thirty (30) days after receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator (Coordinator) will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolution.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the meeting, the Coordinator 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 City and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

The person who filed the complaint may appeal Coordinator's proposed resolution if it does not satisfactorily resolve the issue. The Coordinator's resolution may be appealed to the City Administrator. This appeal should be made within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Coordinator's proposed resolution and the City Administrator shall have sixty days (60) in which to respond.

## **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 City that persons filing a grievance 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 incident to the Title VI Coordinator.