

**Harris County Community Services Department  
Office of Transit Services**

**TITLE VI "STATEMENT OF POLICY"**

Harris County Community Services Department, Office of Transit Services is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in the conduct of its business, including its Title VI responsibilities - the delivery of equitable and accessible transportation services. Harris County CSD recognizes its responsibilities to the communities in which it operates and to the society it serves. It is the County's policy to utilize its best efforts to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under its program of transit service delivery and related benefits.

Toward this end, it is the County's objective to:

- A. Ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin;
- B. Identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects of programs and activities on minority populations and low-income populations;
- C. Promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in transportation decision making by providing meaningful access to these activities;
- D. Prevent the denial, reduction, or delay in benefits related to programs and activities that benefit minority populations or low-income populations and to notify beneficiaries of protections available under Title VI;
- E. Ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

The responsibility for carrying out Harris County's commitment to this program has been delegated to the Harris County Office of Transit Services. Harris County CSD has a Title VI Compliance Officer who will receive and investigate Title VI complaints which come through the complaint procedure. However, all managers, supervisors and employees share in the responsibility for making Harris County's Title VI Program a success.

Additional information concerning Harris County's Title VI obligations and the complaint procedure can be found on the Harris County web site [www.harriscountytransit.com](http://www.harriscountytransit.com) or by calling 713-578-2000.

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY POLICY STATEMENT AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq., provides that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance. Title VI and its implementing regulations require that FTA recipients take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their programs and activities for individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP).

To that end, Harris County CSD provides translation and interpretation services free of charge upon request by calling (713)-578-2216. Harris County CSD contracts with Language Line Services, a language translation firm, to provide phone interpretation. The firm provides real-time phone interpretation in 140 different languages and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

As of the most recent 2000 Census, 1,129,856 (36%) of the residents of Harris County listed a language other than English as the language spoken at home. Of the above 1,129,856 residents, 898,885 (79%) listed Spanish as the language spoken at home which is the largest non-English speaking segment of the County. As such, all publications, communications and advertising are published in English and Spanish.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Harris County Community Services Department, Office of Transit Services (HCCSD) is responsible for preparing and utilizing a Public Participation Plan (PPP) that is developed in consultation with interested parties pursuant to the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU). The participation procedures outlined below are intended to afford an expanded list of interested parties with an opportunity to comment on transportation plans and programs. HCCSD strives to provide timely information to the public and opportunities for public participation. Key objectives of the public participation process are to:

- Provide opportunities for citizens to help shape the region's future through a public comment process that is open and accessible to the public, stakeholders, and policy-makers.
- Work with community groups to create opportunities for all segments of the public to learn and become informed about issues and proposals under consideration that may impact their neighborhoods.
- Look for opportunities to seek comment from low-income, elderly/disabled, and minority communities that may not typically participate in the regional planning process.
- Disseminate clear, concise, and timely information to citizens, affected agencies, and interested parties.

- Make information on transportation projects and programs available in a variety of formats, mediums, and languages to reach a larger audience.
- Provide timely responses to concerns and comments raised by the public regarding the development and implementation of regional transportation plans, programs, and projects. Ensure that the comments received are considered and incorporated into the deliberation regarding proposed plans and programs.

### **COLLECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9(b), the Harris County Community Services Department, Transit Services Division (HCCSD) shall collect and analyze racial and ethnic data showing the extent to which members of minority groups are beneficiaries of programs receiving Federal financial assistance. HCCSD collects customer demographic and travel pattern questioners on a frequent basis. Those questioners collect the following information: the riders race, color and national origin; Language spoken at home and whether the passenger understands English; Rider income information; modes of transit uses; availability of an automobile; and frequency of transit use.

In addition to the above, HCCSD also conducts planning by preparing demographic and service profile maps and charts displaying such information as major streets, highways, major activity centers or trip generators. In addition the maps should reflect the census tracts where the percentage of the total minority and low-income population residing in these areas exceeds the average minority and low income population for the service area as a whole. In addition to the mapping, charts will be developed showing the actual number and percentages for each minority group within the tract and the total population for each tract.