

# Title VI E-Report



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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Volunteer Translation Services	2
Online Training Automation	2
Nashville MPO Cert. Review	3
A Salute to two CR Pioneers	3
Contact Information	4

## TITLE VI

### NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Tennessee Department of Transportation to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, Part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin.

### MISSION STATEMENT

To plan, implement and provide guidance to prevent discrimination in federal aid programs and activities.

## A Message from the CRO Executive Director Cammie Davenport Woodle

In order to adequately implement Title VI, adequate training is necessary. It is important to understand what Title VI is, you know – the part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that states that no person shall be denied the benefits of any federally funded program or activity due to their race, color or national origin. The best way to know this is through purposeful training. Training makes for an adequate understanding of and the ability to implement an idea creatively.

TDOT's Title VI program has placed an emphasis on training this program year. The staff has already held several training sessions with TDOT Title VI Divisional Liaisons and many of our sub-recipient Title VI Coordinators. In addition to onsite training activities, the fully automated online Title VI module is available at anytime (thanks for all your help IT!). You are encouraged to take advantage of this online training opportunity as it will assist you greatly in helping us maintain a quality Title VI program here at TDOT.

Both the onsite and online training provide pertinent information on identifying and addressing Environmental Justice (EJ) issues in minority and/or low-income populations. EJ is a Title VI tool established by Executive Order 12898 in 1994 by President Bill Clinton. EJ assures public participation in the decision-making process of all federally funded programs, including transportation related projects, EJ sets the framework to eliminate

discrimination in making decisions to build a noise wall or not, to widen a highway along this path or not, to take these homes or businesses versus others, to fund litter grants or safe routes to school programs in this community or not.

Additionally, you will learn about communicating with persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). This is another Title VI tool that was implemented by Executive Order 13166. LEP addresses the need to provide interpretive or written translation services to those that do not speak English. It ensures that non-English speaking residents are equally given the opportunity to be aware of and participate in the planning and decision-making process on projects that may impact them and/or their community.

The Civil Rights Office Title VI Program works diligently to provide timely training in addition to the guidance and technical assistance they give to TDOT and its sub-recipients on how to implement Title VI. Implementing Title VI requires proper training, monitoring TDOT and its sub-recipients and reporting annually to FHWA on our accomplishments and goals for the future to ensure non-discrimination.

Training is vital to adequately understand and implement Title VI. Go online, schedule a session, get trained!

## Volunteer Translation Services

The Tennessee Department of Transportation Civil Rights Office (CRO) Title VI staff is currently working with all departments in its efforts to update the translation services volunteer list located on TDOT's intranet. In doing this language surveys were sent out to all employees to complete and return to the CRO. As employees sever employment with TDOT, the number of volunteer translators decreases. As a result, we are seeking as many qualified volunteers as possible to provide translation services to Limited English Proficient individuals with which we may come into contact. Acquiring more volunteer translators will allow TDOT to provide translation services in a prompt and cost-effective manner. Each division has a designated Title VI Liaison who coordinates these efforts with the employees.

**“We would like to thank all the employees who have completed the surveys to date and also thank the volunteers for their generosity.”**

**~Title VI Staff**

For more information or questions about the volunteer translation services please contact the Civil Rights Office Title VI Program.

## New Online Training Automation

A little over a year ago, the CRO Title VI program developed the automated training to assist TDOT's sub-recipients in satisfying their Title VI training requirements. The online training and post test provided TDOT's sub-recipients flexibility in scheduling, a one-on-one training that's self-paced, the ability to take the test in the comfort of their domains, and it eliminated the burden of traveling and incurring traveling cost. Once an individual took the test, they had to print out their completed test and fax it to the CRO. Upon receipt a Title VI staffer would log the completed test, score it, and if the tester scored in the 90th percentile, a certificate of completion would be prepared and mailed. If an individual failed to score in the 90th percentile, a staffer would contact the tester to send them back to the training.

Certainly, this was a system that worked; however, the CRO wanted to improve upon the automated system...make it truly automated. With the assistance of TDOT's Information Technology (IT) department this goal has come to fruition. Starting on Thursday, May 6, 2010 when sub-recipients avail themselves of the online training and post test, the system will automatically generate a certificate of completion if an individual scores in the 90th percentile. If an individual fails to attain a passing score, the system alerts the tester immediately. The system maintains contact information, dates and scores and can be retrieved and monitored with great ease.

The CRO would like to send a special thanks to Mark Herring and Carl Hefner for their efforts in developing a user friendly tool that is beneficial to TDOTs sub-recipients and Title VI staff.

## Nashville MPO Certification Review

In April the Civil Rights Office's (CRO) Title VI Staff participated in the Metropolitan Planning Certification Review for the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The review was scheduled and conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) to follow up on recommendations made in the July 2006 review.

The review was thorough, examining every aspect of the MPO's program. Michael Skipper, executive director of the MPO, and his staff presented a comprehensive report. The MPO's activities as it relates to Title VI and Environmental Justice were of particular interest to the Title VI staff, specifically, but not limited to:

- Is there early public involvement?
- Is there timely exchange of information?
- Is there consideration of input?
- Does the MPO utilize minority news media?
- Does the MPO collect data, e.g., racial/ethnic makeup of communities, income levels, etc.?

At the conclusion of the review, this office was pleased to find that the MPO administers a good program, one of inclusivity and compliant with the federal and state mandates.

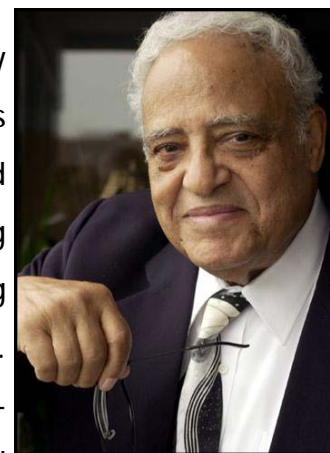
## A Salute to Two Civil Rights Pioneers



Dr. Dorothy Height

During April, the nation celebrated the life and mourned the passing of Dr. Dorothy Height and Rev. Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks. Height dedicated her life to fighting for equal rights of women and equality for all Americans. Hooks championed for the underserved, underprivileged, and minorities. Both started their careers as public servants early, armed with tenacity, determination, humility, and a resolve to right the wrongs of injustice.

The journey towards justice was long, but they stayed the course, removing barriers and inspiring hope along the way. Their indelible footprints have marked



Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks

this nation, its people and our hearts, carrying us away from a time that is scarred with atrocities and indignities against all of mankind. . .

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**Gerald F. Nicely, Commissioner**