

Franklin County Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan

This plan was approved and adopted by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners on the 23rd of September 2026.

Policy Statement:

The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners (Franklin County) recognizes the diversity of residents and businesses in the County and welcomes input from all interested parties, regardless of cultural identity, background or income level. Moreover, the County believes that the best programs and services result from careful consideration of the needs of all its communities and when those communities are involved in the public policy and governmental services decision-making process. Thus, the County does not tolerate discrimination in any of its programs, services or activities. Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal and state authorities, the County will not exclude from participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination anyone on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, income or family status.

Complaint Procedures:

The County has established a discrimination complaint procedure and will take prompt and reasonable action to investigate and eliminate discrimination when found. Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, family or income status in any of the County's programs, services or activities may file a complaint with the County Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Michael Moron, County Coordinator
248 Highway 98
Eastpoint, FL 32320
E-Mail: michael@franklincountyflorida.gov
michael@franklincountyflorida.gov
Phone: 850-653-5077

If possible, the complaint should be submitted in writing and contain the identity of the complainant, the basis for the allegations (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability or family status), and a description of the alleged discrimination with the date of occurrence. If the complaint cannot be submitted in writing, the complainant should contact the Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator for assistance.

The Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator will respond to the complaint within thirty (30) calendar days and will take reasonable steps to resolve the matter. The nature of the complaint will determine the type of action and investigation required. Should the County be unable to satisfactorily resolve a complaint, the County will forward the complaint, along with a record of its disposition, to the appropriate party. For issues regarding transportation, that party would be the District Office of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

The County's Title VI Coordinator has easy access to the County Commission Chairman (Chief Executive Officer – CEO) and is not required to obtain management or other approval to discuss discrimination issues with the CEO. However, should the complainant be unable or unwilling to complain to the County regarding a County facility or County service funded by another agency, 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:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Federal Coordination and Compliance Section, NWB
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530
Title V Hotline: 1-888-TITLE-06, 1-888-848-5306 (Voice/TTY)

For complaints regarding other issues, individuals may view the following website for the U.S. Department of Justice, where there are links for various types of complaint forms and contacts.
<http://www.justice.gov/crt/complaint/>

ADA/504 Statement:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and related federal and state laws and regulations forbid discrimination against those who have disabilities. Someone is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. 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 transportation and other programs, services and activities.

The County will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its facilities, programs, services, and activities are accessible to those with disabilities. The County will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its advisory committees, public involvement activities and all other programs, services and activities include representation by the disabled community and disability service groups.

The County encourages the public to report any facility, program, service or activity that appears inaccessible to those who are 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 facilities, programs, services or activities.

Because providing reasonable accommodation may require outside assistance, organization or resources, the County asks that requests be made at least three (3) County business days prior to the need for accommodation.

Questions, concerns, comments or requests for accommodation should be made to the County's ADA Officer:

Michael Moron, County Coordinator
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Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Assistance:

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:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the City/County's programs, services or activities.
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities.
3. The nature and importance of the program, service, or activity to people's lives and;
4. The resources available to the County and the likely costs of the LEP services.

1. Number or Proportion of LEP Persons

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2020 Franklin County population was 12,451. 5.9% of the County's total population (735 individuals, including children) spoke a language other than English at home, although that does not necessarily indicate a lack of English proficiency. The US Census Bureau quick facts estimate of the County's Hispanic/Latino population is 6.8%, which relates closely to the total 5.9% speaking another language at home. Adults and teenagers, who are born in the United States may be presumed to be English proficient, especially in Franklin County which does not have insular communities of non-English speakers.

The foreign-born population estimate was only 4.2%, or 523 individuals, including children. It should not be assumed that all foreign- born residents have LEP. Also, it would be reasonable to subtract some number of the LEP population as children who would not seek County services independently of their parents or guardians. Access to the public libraries would be the only service provided directly to children by the County (as opposed to services provided by state agencies, school board, etc.). This further reduces the LEP population to whom County services are available.

Based upon the US Census Bureau's Language Proficiency Data for the State of Florida, approximately 39.6% of people who speak a language other than English at home speak English less than very well. Given this information, the County reasons that approximately 291 Franklin County adults and teens may be LEP speakers of Spanish, and there is no measurable LEP population speaking any native language other than Spanish.

2. Frequency of Contact with LEP

The County departments report that they rarely encounter anyone who cannot speak English enough to make themselves understood. The library has one employee on staff at their Eastpoint location who can speak Spanish and the library director on occasion has used a web-based translator app which has worked well for the few times that it has been needed.

3. Nature and Importance to People's Lives

Services/facilities provided to the public by the Board of County Commissioners include roads and pedestrian walkways, solid waste and recycling collection, housing assistance, parks and recreation, emergency management, public libraries, and mosquito control. Other local services are provided by various local and state entities (senior citizen services including passenger van transit service, state health department, county school board, county sheriff, etc.) and not under the control of the Board of County Commissioners. Although not all residents receive, utilize or need all services/facilities, each of these is important to many or most people. Some services, such as emergency management, are vital to safety. The county's emergency management department has certain documents available in Spanish. Emergency management has also prepared Spanish announcements for broadcast in the event a general evacuation of the county has been ordered. Emergency management has also utilized a web-based translation application in the past for on-site response efforts.

4. Available Resources and Costs

The Board of County Commissioners has not received any formal requests for translation or interpretation of its programs, services or activities into Spanish or any other language. On the rare occasion that information is needed, the LEP individual typically has a relative or friend translating. The Court Administrator has a translator available but services are seldom used. The County has very limited resources language translation services. However, there is at least one employee in the public library system who translates Spanish to English when needed. Although there are a limited number of county employees who can speak Spanish, almost all non-English speakers who utilize County programs and services bring their own translator with them (usually a relative). The Clerk of Court also has resources available to translate orally or in writing.

Translating documents into Spanish or any other language is not feasible and is not required under "Safe Harbor" guidelines of the U. S. Department of Transportation and U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Those guidelines state that written translation of documents is not required unless at least 1,000 persons or 5% of the population of the potential service/facility users (whichever is less) are LEP, and the 5% has a minimum number of 50 individuals.

The analyses of these factors suggest that formal LEP services are not required currently.

Franklin County will review the need to provide services for non-English speakers every three years. If the community profile changes so that non-English speaking services are required, the County will provide for those services. Persons requiring special language services should contact the County's Title VI/Nondiscrimination Officer:

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Public Involvement and Outreach:

To plan for efficient, effective, safe, equitable and reliable transportation systems, the County must have the input of its public. The County encourages the participation of the entire community. Any person may attend any County Commission meeting and speak during the public comments portion of the agenda concerning a matter of county business of concern to the person. County Commission meetings are generally held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at the Courthouse Annex, 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, FL 32320. Persons should check the County's website www.franklincountyflorida.com for any changes to meeting dates, times, or locations. Meeting locations are accessible.

People who wish to request special presentations by the County, volunteer in any of its activities, or offer suggestions for improvement of County public involvement may contact:

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Data Collection:

Federal Highway Administration and other federal agency regulations require federal -aid recipients to collect racial, ethnic and other similar demographic data on beneficiaries of or those affected by transportation and other programs, services and activities. The County accomplishes this using U.S. Census Bureau data and reports, driver and ridership surveys, its community development department/consultant, grant application beneficiary surveys, records of social and other direct services provided to and/or applied for by individuals, and other methods. From time to time, the County may find it necessary to request voluntary identification of certain racial, ethnic or other data from those who participate in its public involvement events. This information assists the County with improving its targeted outreach and measures of effectiveness. Self-identification of personal data to the County will always be voluntary, and anonymous except for certain public record requirements. Moreover, the County will not release or otherwise use this data in any manner inconsistent with the federal and/or state regulations.

Assurances:

Every three years the County must certify to FHWA and FDOT and other agencies that its programs, services and activities are being conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner. The certifications are termed 'assurances' and document the County's commitment to nondiscrimination and equitable service to its community. The public may view the assurance on the County's website or by visiting the County's offices.