

# Title VI

## E-Newsletter

### Tennessee Department of Transportation Civil Rights Division



## 2022 Employee Title VI Training

by Cynthia Howard

Annually, TDOT employees are required to complete an online Title VI training. The Civil Rights Division (CRD) and the Human Resources Division continues to collaborate, ensuring TDOT remains in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and other nondiscrimination mandates.

The training, available on TDOT's Learning Network, starts April 25, 2022, and concludes on June 30, 2022. Your Division/Regional Title VI Liaison will coordinate with the training specialist, assisting in the training efforts. Employees will receive an email alerting them of their enrollment in the training. Our goal is to achieve 100% participation. Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation in this effort.

Please contact Cynthia Howard, Title VI Program Director, at [Cynthia.Howard@TN.GOV](mailto:Cynthia.Howard@TN.GOV) or by phone at 615-253-1066, should you have questions.

#### HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

2 - TDOT TO UNDERGO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE REVIEW

3 - CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION OFFERS VIRTUAL TITLE VI TRAINING

3 - CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION TITLE VI STAFF OFFERS DBE UTILIZATION TRAINING

4 - CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION TO EMPLOY SUMMER INTERNS

4 - BIENNIAL TITLE VI LIAISON AND ADVISORY MEETING





Title VI  
Racial Equity  
Gender Equity  
Limited English Proficiency  
Environmental Justice ★

## TDOT to Undergo an Environmental Justice (EJ) Review

by Wes White

Environmental Justice (EJ) is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

TDOT is mandated, in accordance with Executive Order 12898, to:

- identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law
- develop a strategy for implementing environmental justice
- promote nondiscrimination in federal programs that affect human health and the environment, as well as provide minority and low-income communities access to public information and public participation

“Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races, colors, and national origins contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in discrimination.”  
- John F. Kennedy

The Civil Rights Division has identified EJ reviews and data collection/analysis as two of its top Title VI risks. On February 23, 2022, the TDOT Civil Rights Division and Multimodal Division met with the Tennessee Division of the FHWA for a Title VI Process Review kickoff meeting.

The review will emphasize TDOT’s compliance with environmental justice and equity regulations in its project selection process. During this review, FHWA will examine TDOT’s rules, plans, policies, procedures, and other guiding documents that inform the State’s inclusion and design of sidewalks on TDOT-administered projects.

The FHWA will take an inventory of State-administered stand-alone completed sidewalk projects completed over the last two years, as well as conduct outreach with TDOT staff for feedback on project development for sidewalks, corridor plans and sidewalk planning documents. The review is scheduled to be completed by August 2022.

## Civil Rights Division Offers Virtual Title VI Training

by Pamela Sharp

On March 23, 2022, TDOT Civil Rights Division (CRD) kicked off its Second Annual Title VI Program Virtual Subrecipient Training via Web-Ex. There were 27 attendees. The CRD conducts four trainings throughout each year for the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) subrecipients who require Title VI training certification. Subrecipients are required to participate in a TDOT Title VI training every three years.

The training covers several learning objectives: an introduction and overview of the Title VI law and other nondiscrimination legislation that followed its enactment, Environmental Justice (EJ), public involvement, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), complaint processing, compliance responsibilities, and strategies for preventing discrimination. It's recommended that newly appointed Title VI Coordinators participate in the virtual training that allows participants to ask the Title VI Specialist questions which serves as a great benefit to the coordinators.

Virtual Title VI Program future subrecipient's training dates:

May 25, 2022

August 24, 2022

November 23, 2022

TDOT subrecipients can register for 2022 upcoming training on the CRD Title VI Program website at: [www.tn.gov/tdot/civil-rights/title-vi-program/title-vi---training.html](http://www.tn.gov/tdot/civil-rights/title-vi-program/title-vi---training.html)

## Civil Rights Division Title VI Staff Offers DBE Utilization Training

by Wes White

The Title VI Program staff recently met with the TDOT Multimodal Division to discuss Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program procurement requirements for Human Resource Agency (HRA) organizations. As subrecipients of federal funding of over \$250,000 annually distributed by TDOT, these agencies are responsible for maintaining a DBE program for compliance with nondiscrimination provisions to ensure a level playing field and fair access to opportunities for socially and economically disadvantaged owned businesses.

The Title VI Program staff is developing training for the HRA's to help them understand and meet DBE procurement requirements. The training will cover the key objectives of the DBE program including goal setting methodology, DBE outreach, DBE solicitation, and DBE reporting requirements. The training will be beneficial to both the DBEs in gaining opportunities and to the HRA's in ensuring compliance. The anticipated date for the training is May 2022.





## Civil Rights Division To Employ Summer Interns

by Azad Saeed

The Civil Rights Division (CRD) will employ two interns this summer, May - August 2022. The CRD is endeavoring to evolve its diversity, equity, and inclusion programs to meet or exceed variables within President Biden's Justice40 Initiative. The Justice40 Initiative is a historic commitment by President Joe Biden to advance environmental justice and urge economic opportunity for disadvantaged communities. Federal agencies will work with state and local communities to deliver, at least, 40 percent of overall benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities.

The CRD will work with the interns to develop methodologies for conducting internal EJ reviews. The CRD's goal is to ensure TDOT is in compliance and that there are no inherited internal and external systemic barriers in its programs and activities for underserved communities (minority and low-income communicates), and in the hiring of minority and female applicants.

The interns will be tasked with researching executive reports and programmatic best practices from nearby states. They will determine if the approaches and practices used by nearby states meet or exceed the Justice40 Initiative and current TDOT practices and programs. The interns will coordinate with multiple divisions within TDOT to complete the assigned tasks.

## Biannual Title VI Liaison and Advisory Meeting

by Cynthia Howard

The CRD Title VI Program staff held its biannual Title VI Advisory and Title VI Liaison Committee meetings on March 23, 2022. The Title VI staff discussed the upcoming EJ review that FHWA will be conducting on TDOT. Avery Poor, Human Resource Business Partner, gave a brief overview of the 2022 Annual Employee Title VI training.

The Title VI Advisory Committee serves as an administrative advisory committee to the Civil Rights Division's Title VI Program. The committee helps ensure TDOT's programs, contractees, and service beneficiaries comply with Title VI.

The Title VI Liaisons play an important role in disseminating information to the various regions, divisions and departments throughout TDOT. Additionally, they serve as the point of contact to assist the Civil Rights Division's Title VI Program with ensuring that Title VI and related federal and state antidiscrimination mandates are followed in all TDOT's programs and activities.