



## **FACT SHEET: Protecting Individuals from Discrimination Based on Actual or Perceived Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics**

The U.S. Department of Transportation and its operating administrations enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations (collectively Title VI),\* which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin (including limited English proficiency) in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. This fact sheet describes the ways in which Title VI protects individuals who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or of another religious group. This fact sheet also provides examples that may raise Title VI concerns relevant to programs or activities receiving DOT funds.

### **What is required under Title VI?**

1. Title VI's protection from race, color, and national origin (including limited English proficiency) discrimination extends to individuals who experience discrimination, including harassment, based on their actual or perceived: (i) shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or (ii) citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity.
2. Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin against individuals of any religion, such as individuals who are Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, or Buddhist. For example, this includes discrimination involving:
  - racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes
  - how an individual looks, including skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions
  - an accent or a name, including names commonly associated with a particular shared ancestry or ethnic characteristic, or speaking a non-English language
3. In addition to Title VI, Federal law (49 U.S.C. § 40127) prohibits airlines from discriminating against passengers based on other protected categories, including religion. If an airline has discriminated against a passenger based only on religion, this law may apply. Because Title VI does not protect individuals from discrimination based on religion, DOT may refer discrimination complaints based solely on religion to the **[U.S. Department of Justice](#)**, which may have jurisdiction.

\* [42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.](#) and DOT's implementing regulations at [49 C.F.R. Part 21.](#)



## Examples that may, depending upon individual facts and circumstances, raise Title VI concerns:

- A State Department of Motor Vehicles requires everyone to remove head coverings when renewing their driver’s license photograph and refuses to make an exception for a practicing Sikh individual who wears head coverings in public for religious purposes.
- A Jewish man reports to his local transit agency that a bus driver on his regular commute often mocks his appearance, including his sidelocks and kippah. The transit agency refuses to address his complaint, telling him that the driver is just joking around.
- Airport lounge customers complain to staff that a group of Pakistani customers are making other people uncomfortable because they are speaking in Arabic and using the word “Allah.” The airport lounge staff call airport security, who escort the customers out of the lounge.

## How can you report discrimination under Title VI?

Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color, or national origin, may file a complaint of discrimination with the Department or its operating administrations. A list of the operating administrations is below. To learn more about the compliant resolution process, visit DOT’s website:

[www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/complaint-resolution](http://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/complaint-resolution).

## Civil Rights Offices at U.S. DOT

Civil Rights Office	Website	Phone Number
U.S. DOT Departmental Office of Civil Rights (DOCR)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-4648
U.S. DOT’s Office of Aviation Consumer Protection	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-2220
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 267-3254
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-0693
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-8810
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 493-6010
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(888) 446-4511
Maritime Administration (MARAD)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-7557
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-4648
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)	<a href="#">click here</a>	(202) 366-9638

Please note: this resource does not have the force or effect of law. DOT’s enforcement stems from the Title VI statute and its implementing regulations.

If you have difficulty understanding English or have a disability, free language assistance or other aids and services are available upon request. Please call: 202-366-4648

إذا كنت تواجه صعوبة في فهم اللغة الإنجليزية أو كنت تعاني من إعاقة ما، تتوفر المساعدات اللغوية أو غيرها من المساعدات والخدمات مجاناً عند الطلب. يرجى الاتصال على الرقم: 202-366-4648

如果您理解英语有困难或有残疾，可应要求提供免费语言援助或其他帮助和服务。请致电：  
202-366-4648

如果您理解英語有困難或有殘疾，可應要求提供免費語言援助或其他幫助和服務。請致電：  
202-366-4648

אם יש לך קושי בהבנת עברית או אם אתה בן אדם עם מוגבלות; סיוע בשפה או עזרים ושירותים אחרים יהיו זמינים ללא עלות על פי בקשה. נא להתקשר: 202-366-4648

영어를 이해하시는 데 어려움이 있거나 장애가 있는 경우, 요청하시면 무료 언어 지원 또는 기타 지원 및 서비스를 이용하실 수 있습니다. 전화해 주십시오: 202-366-4648

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਔਖਿਆਈ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਅਪਾਹਜ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਅਪੀਲ 'ਤੇ ਮੁਫਤ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਸਹਾਇਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਉਪਲੱਬਧ ਹਨ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ: 202-366-4648

Si tiene dificultades para entender la lengua inglesa o presenta una discapacidad, puede solicitar asistencia lingüística y otros tipos de ayuda y servicios sin coste alguno. Llame al siguiente número de teléfono: 202-366-4648

Kung nahihirapan kang maunawaan ang Ingles o may kapansanan, magagamit kapag hilingin ang libreng tulong sa wika o iba pang mga tulong at serbisyo. Mangyaring tumawag sa: 202-366-4648

اگر آپ کو انگریزی سمجھنے میں مشکل پیش آتی ہے یا کسی معذوری کا سامنا ہے، تو درخواست کرنے پر زبان کی مفت معاونت یا دیگر امداد اور سروسز دستیاب ہیں۔ براہ کرم کال کریں: 202-366-4648

Nếu quý vị gặp khó khăn trong việc hiểu tiếng Anh hoặc bị khuyết tật, hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí hoặc các hỗ trợ và dịch vụ khác được cung cấp theo yêu cầu. Xin gọi: 202-366-4648

אויב איר האט שוועריגקייט צו פארשטיין ענגליש אדער האט א דיסאביליטי, קענט איר פארלאנגען און באקומען הילף מיט שפראך אדער אנדערע הילפ'ס-מיטלען פאר אומזיסט. ביטע רופט אן: 202-366-4648