

Montachusett Regional Transit Authority Complaint Procedures

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d). The purpose of Title VI is to prevent the denial, reduction or delay of benefits and services to minority and low-income populations, to ensure full and fair participation by affected populations in transportation decisions, and to ensure that the policies and programs of MART avoid producing disproportionately negative effects on minority and low-income populations.

Filing A Complaint:

Any person who believes him/herself to be subjected to a discrimination prohibited by Title VI may by him/herself, or by a representative, file a written complaint form with MART. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discriminatory act.

Complainants shall complete all requested information on the form, which will include the following information:

- Name, address and phone number of the complainant
- Name, address, phone number and relationship of representative to the complainant (if applicable)
- Basis of complaint (i.e. race, color, national origin)
- Date of alleged discriminatory act(s)
- Date complaint received by MART
- Description of the complaint containing as many specific details and facts as possible

No one may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or engage in other discriminatory conduct against anyone because he/she has filed a complaint to secure rights protected by the nondiscrimination statutes FTA enforces. Any individual alleging such harassment or intimidation may file a complaint with the Federal Transit Administration.

Tracking System:

All filed complaint forms will be maintained at our main office. These written complaints will be transposed into an electronic database. The complaints database is accessible to all customer service staff for complaint input. Most of the information stored within this database is related to poor service provided, but would be the repository for complaints filed for discrimination as well. Complaints lodged against MART staff will be investigated internally and recorded. Complaints lodged against drivers or dispatch personnel will be handed over to MART's operating company. The same complaints database is accessible to our transportation operator who responds to the complaint with investigations done and any disciplinary actions taken. MART staff monitors the database for resolutions provided by the operating company.

Montachusett RTA Procedure for Investigate of Complaints:

Within three (3) days of receipt of a written complaint form, MART will have input the information into the database and notified the complainant of the investigation process.

Within seven (7) days, should the complaint have merit, MART shall commence an investigation of the allegation(s). The purpose of an investigation is to determine whether there is a reason to believe that a failure to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 occurred. Furthermore MART, or its operating company, will render a recommendation for action in a report of findings or resolution.

Within thirty (30) days, MART will notify the complainant in writing of the final decision reached, including the proposed disposition of the matter. If they are dissatisfied with the final decision rendered by MART, the complainant has a right to file a complaint with the FTA directly. The decision letter will notify him/her of this right and how to proceed if necessary.

Resolution of Complaints

If a probable cause of discriminatory practice based on race, color, or national origin is found to exist, MART shall endeavor to eliminate said practice by means of a Remedial Action Plan. The Remedial Action Plan shall include: a list of corrective actions accepted by the agency; a description of how the corrective action will be implemented; and a written assurance that the agency will implement the accepted corrective action in the manner discussed in the plan. Where attempts to resolve the complaint fail, the complainant shall be notified in writing of his or her right to submit the complaint to the Federal Transit Administration as cited in FTA C4702.1A.