



## **City of Whittier**

---

# **Transit Services Title VI Program Update**

---

Effective: December 13, 2016

This document sets forth policies and procedures to effectively monitor and ensure that Whittier Transit Services are in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as required by the US Federal Transit Administration.

Whittier Title VI Program Update

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**I. Introduction** ..... 1

**II. Title VI Requirements**

- A. Requirement to Notify Beneficiaries of Protection under Title VI ..... 1
- B. Requirement to Develop Title VI Complaint Procedures & Complaint Form ... 2
- C. Requirement to Record and Report Transit-Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits. .... 4
- D. Promoting Inclusive Public Participation and Language Assistance ..... 5
- E. Providing Meaningful Access to LEP Persons ..... 5
- F. Minority Representation on Planning/Advisory Board ..... 5
- G. Monitoring Subrecipients..... 6
- H. Determination of Site or Location of Facilities ..... 6
- I. Fixed-Route Provider: System-Wide Standards and Policies..... 6
- J. Obligation to Provide Additional Information to FTA upon Request ..... 6

**III. Attachments**

- Attachment 1: Notice of Civil Rights..... 7
- Attachment 2: Title VI Complaint Form ..... 11
- Attachment 3: List of Transit Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits..... 14
- Attachment 4: Public Participation Plan ..... 16
- Attachment 5: Title VI Language Assistance Plan ..... 19

**Additional Documents**

- City Council Agenda Materials and Consent Decree ..... 24

## I. INTRODUCTION

As stated on the city website, Whittier is committed to “an atmosphere conducive to community spirit and active participation in the affairs and progress of the community.” An essential part of this effort is making sure all citizens are provided equal access to services and decision-making without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws.

This commitment to inclusion and service is reflected in the Title VI Program of Whittier’s Transit Services. As required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and as set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the City of Whittier Transit Service division is reiterating its commitment to fair and equitable access to the City’s transit services, specifically:

*"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. 2000d)*

To ensure that all residents are given equitable access to Transit Services and that all citizens are provided an opportunity take part in Transit planning and decision-making, City of Whittier Transit Services will ensure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

This Title VI Program was updated in conformance with FTA C 4702.1B (October 1, 2012).

## II. TITLE VI REQUIREMENTS

### A. Requirement to Notify Beneficiaries of Protection under Title VI

In order to comply with 49 CFR, Section 21.9(d), the City shall provide information to the public regarding the City’s obligations under DOT’s Title VI regulations and apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI.

The City of Whittier Transit division will inform members of the public of their Title VI protection in a variety of way, including:

- on the Transit Services page of the City’s website at [www.cityofwhittier.org](http://www.cityofwhittier.org);
- posting of notices inside all Dial-A-Ride vehicles; and

- posting of notices in the public area of the Whittier Senior Centers on Walnut and at Parnell Park where Dial-A-Ride applications are received and cards are purchased.

Copies of notices can be found in Attachment 1.

## **B. Requirement to Develop Title VI Complaint Procedures and Complaint Form**

The City of Whittier takes allegations of discrimination of any kind very seriously. Three specific categories of discrimination fall under Federal Title VI regulations: discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin. As a recipient of Federal funding, the City is required to develop procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against the City's Transit Services and to make these procedures for filing a complaint available to the general public. With this in mind, the City has developed the following complaint procedures for all allegations of discrimination.

### 1. City of Whittier Title VI Complaint Procedures

If any individual believes that she or he, or any other program beneficiaries, have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws, they have the right to file a complaint with the City of Whittier.

#### (a) Submission of Complaint

The complainant may file a signed, written complaint up to one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged discrimination. The complaint should include the following information:

- the complainant's name, mailing address, and contact information;
- how, when, where and why the complainant believes he or she was discriminated against, including such information as the location, names and contact information of any witnesses; and,
- all other information that deemed significant

A convenient Title VI Complaint Form is available on the Transit page of the City of Whittier website (see Attachment 2). The complaint should be filed with:

Community Services Manager  
Whittier Senior Center  
13225 Walnut St.  
Whittier, CA 90602

All complainants are encouraged to send their complaint forms via certified mail through the U.S. Postal Service to ensure the document is received by the Community Services Manager. Alternatively, complainants may hand deliver their

complaint forms to the above mentioned address between the hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday.

(b) Investigation of Complaints

Once filed, the Community Services Manager will commence an investigation of the complaint. The investigation may include discussion(s) of the complaint with all affected parties to determine the issue.

The City will commence an investigation within 15 business days of receipt of the complaint.

The City will only investigate complete complaints. If the City requires more information to resolve the case, the City may contact the complainant. The complainant has 15 business days from the date of the City's request to send requested information to the investigator or request more time to gather the information. If the complainant does not respond to the request within 15 business days, the City can administratively close the case. A case can also be closed if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

(c) Resolution of Case

After the investigator reviews the complaint, she/he will issue one of two letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a Letter of Finding (LOF). A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was no Title VI violation and that the case will be closed. An LOF summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member or contractor staff, or other action will occur.

(d) Request for Reconsideration

The Letter of Finding will also notify the complainant of his/her right to appeal the decision. If the complainant disagrees with the City's or transit provider's findings, the complainant may request reconsideration by submitting a written request to the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services within 15 business days of receipt of the City's response. The complainant shall provide a detailed description of the request for consideration. The Director will notify the complainant of his/her decision either to accept or reject the request for reconsideration within 15 business days. If the Director agrees to reconsider the matter, the complaint shall be returned to the investigator for re-evaluation in accordance with the "Investigation of Complaint" procedures described above.

(e) Appeal Process

If the request for reconsideration is denied, the complainant may appeal the Director's response by submitting a written request to the Assistant City Manager for final determination.

(f) Submission of Complaint to the Department of Transportation

If this is a Title VI complaint (that is, discrimination based on color, race, or national origin), complainant may, at any time, submit the complaint directly to the Department of Transportation for investigation:

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Civil Rights, Region IX  
201 Mission St., Suite 1650  
San Francisco, California 94105-1839

In accordance with Chapter 9, Complaints, of FTA Circular 4702.1B, such a complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the date of the alleged discrimination.

2. Ensuring Easy Access to Complaint Form and Procedures

The City has developed a Title VI Complaint Form to document all complaints received by City and/or transit contractor staff (Attachment 2). This form is available in English and Spanish on the transit page of the City's website and at the City of Whittier Senior Centers located at:

Uptown Senior Center  
13225 Walnut Street  
Whittier, CA 90602

Parnell Park Community and Senior Center  
15390 Lambert Rd.  
Whittier, CA 90604

The form is also available via email or can be mailed upon request.

**C. Requirement to Record and Report Transit-Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits.**

The City of Whittier maintains a list of complaints, investigations, and lawsuits conducted as required by Title VI regulations (see Attachment 3). This list includes the date that the Title VI investigation, lawsuit or complaint was filed; a summary of the allegation(s); the status of the investigation, lawsuit or complaint; actions taken by the City of Whittier in response; and final findings related to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint.

There are no Title VI investigations, complaints or lawsuits currently active or pending with the City of Whittier.

#### **D. Promoting Inclusive Public Participation**

Transit Services' Public Participation Plan is designed to encourage participation by all Whittier residents in transit planning and services. Whittier Transit Services has used – and will continue to use – a number of avenues to reach the greatest number of residents. The full Public Participation Plan is included as Attachment 4.

##### Summary of outreach efforts made since the last Title VI Program submission

Information on Transit Services is included in each edition of the Recreation Brochure which is mailed to every residence in the City. Outreach materials are also made available at the Senior Centers and circulated through the various commissions and committees which serve seniors and the disabled. Transit contact information is also included in the Senior Center Newsletters which is taken to senior and housing buildings. Finally, there is a Transit booth at every Abilities Awareness Faire (the Faire is a free annual event for disabled Whittier residents). Dates of attendance include October 21, 2014, October 20, 2015 and October 18, 2016.

#### **E. Providing Meaningful Access to LEP Persons**

The Language Assistance Plan includes two components; a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Analysis (LEP Analysis), and a Language Assistance Plan. The LEP Analysis is a four factor analysis, which considers:

- the number of LEP persons in the service area;
- the frequency that LEP persons come in contact with transit services;
- the nature and importance of programs, activities or service to the LEP population; and,
- the resources available to the City and overall costs to provide LEP assistance.

The Language Assistance Plan explains the findings of the Four Factor Analysis and describes how the City will implement language assistance.

Title VI and its implementing regulations require that FTA recipients take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their programs and activities for individuals who have Limited English Proficiency. In addition to the steps outlined herein, the City collaborates with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and other neighborhood stakeholders to ensure LEP persons have access to necessary information.

The LEP Analysis and Language Assistance Plan are detailed in Attachment 5.

#### **F. Minority Representation on Planning/Advisory Board**

The City of Whittier does not have a “transit-related, non-elected” planning board, advisory council, or committee. Rather, the City Council serves as the legislative body

for all transportation related policy decisions. Therefore, this requirement does not apply to the City of Whittier.

### **G. Monitoring Subrecipients**

The City of Whittier does not have any subrecipients. Therefore, this requirement does not apply.

### **H. Determination of Site or Location of Facilities**

The City of Whittier is not currently using any Federal grants for the construction of any transit related facilities. Therefore, this requirement does not apply.

### **I. Fixed-Route Provider: System-Wide Standards and Policies**

The City of Whittier does not currently operate a fixed-route service. Therefore, this requirement does not apply.

### **J. Obligation to Provide Additional Information to FTA upon Request**

The City of Whittier's Community Services Manager is available to provide additional information, as needed, and to respond to any verbal or written requests for information in order for FTA to investigate complaints of discrimination or to resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with DOT's Title VI regulations.

## ATTACHMENT 1

---

### ≡ NOTICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS ≡

- Text for Website
- Posting Card for DAR Vehicles and Senior Centers

## **Website Text**

### **Whittier Title VI Non-Discrimination Policy**

*Para información en español, póngase en contacto con (562) 567-9480*

Whittier is committed to “an atmosphere conducive to community spirit and active participation in the affairs and progress of the community.” An essential part of this effort is making sure all citizens are provided equal access to transit services and decision-making without regard to race, color or national origin as provided under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. In addition to Title VI, Whittier also prohibits discrimination based on sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws.

Whittier Transit Services promotes full and fair participation of all potentially affected populations in transportation planning and decision making, including providing meaningful access to Whittier Dial-a-Ride by persons with limited English proficiency.

The City of Whittier, as a federal grant sub-recipient, is required by the Federal Transit Administration to prepare a formal Title VI Plan affirming and ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its amendments, specifically:

*"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. 2000d)*

**For a copy of the full Title VI Plan [click here](#)**

If you have any questions about the Title VI Civil Rights Act or would like additional information on Whittier’s obligation regarding non-discrimination, please contact the Whittier Transportation Department at (562) 567-9480.

## **How to File a Complaint**

Any person who believes that he/she has been excluded from participation in, denied benefits or services of any Transit Services program or activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws may bring forth a complaint of discrimination under Title VI. The complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination of the alleged act of discrimination.

While not included under Title VI, Whittier does not allow discrimination on the basis of sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws.. Allegations of discrimination related to

these categories will use the same complaint form and procedures as Title VI complaints.

For the full complaint procedures [click here](#)

Para el procedimiento completo para hacer reclamaciones, [haga clic aqui](#)

**A convenient complaint form is available by [clicking here](#)**

**La forma para hacer una queja formal esta disponible [haciendo clic aqui](#).**

Complaint procedures and forms are also available for pick up at the Uptown Senior Center on Walnut and the Senior and Community Center at Parnell Park, or can be sent via email or mail by contacting the Transportation Department at (562) 567-9480.

Complainant may, at any time, submit the complaint directly to the Department of Transportation for investigation:

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Civil Rights, Region IX  
201 Mission St., Suite 1650  
San Francisco, California 94105-1839

Complaint Assistance: The Community Services Manager will assist with writing a complaint if the complainant is unable to do so.

## **Vehicle and Senior Center Notice**

### **Public Notice of Rights under Title VI**

Whittier Transportation operates its programs and services without regard to race, color or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. (Whittier also prohibits discrimination based on sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected classes enumerated in federal and state laws.) Any person who believes he/she has been a victim of any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Whittier Community Services Manager.

If you have any questions or would like additional information on Whittier's obligation regarding non-discrimination or how to file a complaint, please visit the Transit page on the City's website [www.cityofwhittier.org](http://www.cityofwhittier.org), or contact the Transit Services Department.

You may also file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, Region IX  
201 Mission St., Suite 1650, San Francisco, California 94105-1839

If information is needed in another language, please contact (562) 567-9480

### **Aviso Público de Derechos bajo el Título VI**

Whittier Transportation opera sus programas y servicios, sin distinción de raza, color u origen nacional en conformidad con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles. (La ciudad de Whittier también prohíbe la discriminación basada en el sexo, edad, discapacidad, religion, orientación sexual, identidad de género y otras clases protegidas enumeradas en las leyes federales y estatales.) Cualquier persona que cree que él o ella ha sido víctima de cualquier práctica discriminatoria ilícita bajo el Título VI puede presentar una queja con el gerente de servicios comunitarios de la ciudad de Whittier.

Si usted tiene cualquier pregunta o desea información adicional sobre la obligación de la ciudad de Whittier con respecto a la política de no discriminación o como presentar una queja, puede visitar la página web de la ciudad [www.cityofwhittier.org](http://www.cityofwhittier.org) o ponerse en contacto con el departamento de tránsito de la ciudad.

También puede presentar una queja directamente con la Administración Federal de Tránsito a:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, Region IX  
201 Mission St., Suite 1650, San Francisco, CA 94105-1839

Para información en español, por favor llame a (562) 567-9480.

**ATTACHMENT 2**

---

≡ TITLE VI COMPLAINT FORM ≡



# Transit Services Title VI Complaint Form

As required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and as set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:

*"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. 2000d)*

If you believe you have been the target of discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, please complete this form in as much detail as possible. This completed form must be submitted within 180 days of the incident. If you need help completing this form for any reason, please contact the Community Services Manager at (562) 567-9480.

## Section I:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II:

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?  Yes  No

If you answered "Yes," go to Section III

If you answered "No":

Please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are filing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain why you have filed for a third party: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you obtained the permission of the aggrieved party?  Yes  No

## Section III:

I believe the discrimination experienced was based on (check all that apply):

Race  Color  National Origin  Other\* \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Alleged Discrimination (Month, Day, Year): \_\_\_\_\_

\*Non-Title VI discrimination allegations will be investigated using the same procedures as outlined in the "Title VI Complaint Procedures" document.

(continued on back)

Explain as clearly and completely as possible what happened and why you believe you (or another) were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witnesses. If more space is needed, please attach additional sheets.

**Section IV:**

Have you previously filed a Title VI complaint with this agency?

Yes

No

**Section V:**

Have you filed this complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State court?  Yes  No

If yes, check all that apply and list the agency's name:

Federal Agency \_\_\_\_\_  State Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Court \_\_\_\_\_  State Court \_\_\_\_\_

Local Agency \_\_\_\_\_  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide information for the contact person at the agency/court(s) where the complaint was filed. (Please attach additional sheets if more than one agency/court.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint.

Signature and date are required.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please submit this form in person at the address below, or mail this form to:

Community Services Manager  
Whittier Senior Center  
13225 Walnut St.  
Whittier, CA 90602

## ATTACHMENT 3

---

≡ LIST OF TRANSIT RELATED TITLE VI  
INVESTIGATIONS, COMPLAINTS, AND  
LAWSUITS ≡

**City of Whittier**

**List of Transit-Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits**

As of December 2016, no complaints or lawsuits have been filed against the City of Whittier Transit Services.

<b>Complaints</b>				
Date Complaint Received	Type of Alleged Discrimination	Name of Complainant	Status	Action Taken

<b>Investigations</b>				
Date Investigation Commenced	Type of Alleged Discrimination	Name of Target of Alleged Discrimination	Status	Resolution/Action Taken

<b>Lawsuits</b>				
Date Lawsuit Filed	Type of Alleged Discrimination	Name of Person who Filed Suit	Status	Resolution

## **ATTACHMENT 4**

---

# ≡ PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN ≡

**CITY OF WHITTIER  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
March 2016**

**Introduction**

Whittier Transit Services' Public Participation Plan has been designed to help ensure that no one is prevented from participating in key issues in Whittier's transportation planning efforts, such as fare increases or service modifications. The goal is to bring all stakeholders into the decision-making process so the City Council can make an informed decision in regards to the City's transit services.

**General Public Outreach Activities**

The City plans to continue to directly reach out to the community through the dissemination of flyers, advertisements in local newspapers, articles on the City's website, and at local events.

Fliers, Brochures and Mailings

Brochures for Dial-A-Ride (English and Spanish) are distributed at various sites throughout the City including senior and community centers. Information on DAR is also included in the Senior Center newsletter and in the Whittier Recreation brochure that is mailed to all City residents.

Community Meetings

The Transit division participates on the advisory boards and committees of other city programs and offices, including:

- Whittier Accessibility Committee which advises the City on issues affecting residents with physical or developmental challenges;
- Whittier Senior Center Advisory Committee which advises the City on issues affecting older adults;
- Parking and Transportation Commission which is responsible for city transportation infrastructure planning (e.g. streets, curb cuts, parking structures, etc.); and,
- Social Services Commission which oversees the Accessibility and Senior Center Committees.

While these groups have no authority over transit planning or services, they nevertheless focus on groups which represent the principal demographics of DAR service patrons and are a valuable source of advice.

In addition, there is the occasional establishment of short-term citizens' Dial-A-Ride Focus Groups and rider surveys to solicit suggestions and input on system improvement. All riders are invited to participate in focus groups and surveys. Focus groups were created on December 30, 2014 and January 8, 2015. A survey was also distributed to all riders in October 2016.

Meetings are held at ADA accessible locations and at various times to ensure meetings are accessible and open to all regardless of disability or income.

### **Substantial Services Changes**

When the City is proposing a material change to the transportation services (including such changes as permanent route adjustments, fare increases, or substantial service modifications), staff will inform the public of the proposed changes with a minimum of 30 days' and up to four months' notice, depending on the level of service change.

The City will continue its current notification outreach efforts; specifically, notices are handed out to all riders and signs are posted in the vehicles.

Whenever possible, when staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, the meeting notices, flyers, and agendas may be made available in Spanish (based on available resources). If Spanish interpretation is requested in advance of a meeting that invites public comment on Transit issues, it will be provided. Additionally, every effort will be made to have bilingual staff available at these meetings.

### **Assurances**

The City of Whittier and its transit contract provider will ensure that no person, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the use of the City's transportation services (both contracted and otherwise). Further, the City will notify the public of protections against discrimination afforded them by Title VI Regulations and will take preventive corrective and disciplinary action necessary to stem behavior that violates the rights and privileges the regulations are designed to protect. The City will post this information on its web site and ensure that it reflects up to date information consistent with the requirements of Title VI.

### **Availability of Title VI Plans and Procedures**

The City's Title VI Plan and Procedures, as well as the Language Assistance Plan, are available on the City of Whittier's website at [www.cityofwhittier.org](http://www.cityofwhittier.org). Any person or agency with internet access will be able to access and download the plan from the City's website. Alternatively, any person or agency may request a copy of the plan via email, standard mail, or in person and shall be provided a copy of the plan at no cost.

Questions or comments regarding the Title VI or Language Assistance Plan may be submitted to:

Community Services Manager  
Whittier Senior Center  
13225 Walnut St.  
Whittier, CA 90602  
(562) 567-9480

## ATTACHMENT 5

---

≡ LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN ≡

**CITY OF WHITTIER TRANSIT SERVICES  
TITLE VI LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN  
March 2016**

**Introduction**

The Language Assistance Plan has been prepared to address the City of Whittier's responsibilities as a sub-recipient of federal financial assistance as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills. The plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Federal Transit Circular 4702.1B, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of color, race, and national origin. In addition, Executive Order 13166, titled "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency", indicated that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a form of national origin discrimination. It directs each federal agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all State and local agencies that receive federal funds.

**Background**

The City of Whittier's Transit Service staff oversee Dial-A-Ride (DAR), a demand-responsive program serving seniors and disabled residents of Whittier. A supplemental service, DAR Plus, provides rides for existing DAR patrons to travel to medical appointments in specific areas/destinations outside the city of Whittier.

The Whittier City Council is the policymaking body of the system. The Council makes decisions based on advice received from the public, the City's departments, advisory boards and commissions.

The City of Whittier's Transit Services has developed this Language Assistance Plan to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency that wish to access these transportation services. As defined by Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and understand English "less than very well."

This plan outlines ways to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available. In order to prepare this plan, City of Whittier Transit Services staff performed the U.S. Department of Transportation's four-factor LEP analysis, which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter the City of Whittier's transportation programs, activities, or services.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with City of Whittier transportation programs, activities, or services.

3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by the City of Whittier transportation services to the LEP population.
4. Resources available to the City of Whittier Transit Services staff and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

### **Summary: Four-Factor Analysis**

#### **Factor 1: The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter transportation services, programs, or activities that are offered by the City of Whittier.**

City of Whittier staff reviewed 2014 ACS data from the United States Census Bureau and determined that 14% (11,413) of the City's population speaks English "less than very well." LEP Spanish speakers account for 12% of the City's population (9,827) and, therefore, qualify for inclusion under the "safe harbor" guidelines.

The remaining languages have less than 350 LEP members (0.04% or less of the City's population) fall below the "safe harbor" threshold, the City will not be including them in this Language Assistance Plan. However, the City will monitor demographic trends using data from the US Census Bureau and will survey frontline staff on the language needs of the City's transportation program patrons.

#### **Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with City of Whittier transit programs, activities, or services.**

Spanish speakers come into contact with the Dial-A-Ride program. Contractor's staff (drivers and dispatchers) and City office staff report approximately 15 % of customers are monolingual Spanish speaking. Fully bilingual staff are available at the City office and a significant number of the contractor staff are bilingual or know some Spanish. Often, communications are conducted in Spanish even when customers speak sufficient English. Thus, it is difficult to determine when bi-lingual communication is necessary, or simply preferred by the patron. Drivers and dispatchers also report that in their experience with LEP customers from other (non-Spanish) language groups, the customers have sufficient English to effectively use the services.

#### **Factor 3: The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided by the City of Whittier Transit to LEP populations.**

City of Whittier Dial-a-Ride serves the most vulnerable population – elderly and the disabled. In a recent review of Dial-A-Ride data, the most common destinations include medical appointments, social services programs, the senior center, and religious sites. Grocery shopping is also a critical destination for DAR riders. These destinations are critical for any patron. Transit staff and contractors are trained to serve these populations and LEP individuals.

**Factor 4: The resources available to City of Whittier’s Transit Services staff and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.**

A significant number of City staff are bilingual English/Spanish and provide a critical resource for serving LEP Spanish speakers. In addition, MV Transportation (the Dial-A-Ride contract provider) commonly serves Spanish-speaking clients in Whittier and the surrounding Los Angeles area cities. Providing a bilingual interpreter at public hearings, transit focus groups, etc. might require a small amount of additional staff time. There are also a number of organizations and nonprofits in Whittier that provide services in English and Spanish who could also assist with outreach and service access.

Based on the four-factor analysis, the City of Whittier developed its Language Assistance Plan as outlined in the following section.

### **Language Assistance Plan**

#### **Identification of LEP Population**

Whittier Transit Services has developed several possible ways to assist in identifying LEP populations within the City, including:

1. Examine records to see if requests for language assistance have been received in the past, either at meetings or over the phone, to determine whether language assistance might be needed at future events or meetings.
2. Conduct annual Transit staff surveys to track LEP issues and needs.
3. Engage in ongoing outreach to community organizations and agencies to regularly assess and update the needs of LEP persons in the City.
4. Have City staff greet participants as they arrive at events and meetings sponsored by the City's Transit Services. By informally engaging participants in conversation it is possible to identify LEP individuals who may need language services.

#### **Language Assistance Measures**

The Spanish-speaking population has had a significant presence in the City's transportation program's service area for a long time; therefore it has been important to offer materials in formats that are easily understood by this population, including:

- Dial-A-Ride Applications and Service Brochures are available in English and Spanish
- When possible, ensuring that at least one Dial-A-Ride reservationist on duty is bilingual Spanish/English. In the occasional instance that a bilingual reservationist is not available, the staff has sufficient Spanish and training to effectively handle the call. (Whittier has had no reports of LEP Spanish speakers being unable to schedule the rides they need.)

Currently, 10 out of 13 drivers speak some Spanish (3 are fluent). All have enough training to effectively interact with LEP Spanish riders. Similarly, many other Transit and Senior Center staff are fluent in Spanish and those that are not, have sufficient Spanish to serve LEP Spanish callers.

There are also various ways in which the City's Transit Services staff responds to LEP persons, whether in person, by telephone, or in writing. These include:

- As resources allow, the City will have bilingual Spanish/English staff at Transit booths at community events and at Transit focus groups. The City will also make every effort to have bilingual staff made available to community nonprofit and social services groups for informational presentations.
- Vital printed documents, including Dial-A-Ride service information brochures and applications, Title VI notification of Rights, and Title VI Complaint Forms, are available in English and Spanish on the City Website. (These will be replaced with new versions by December 31, 2016 after the new plan is approved.)
- Notices of substantial service changes, including fare increases and permanent route changes, will be posted in English and Spanish (on the schedule and in the locations indicated in the "Public Participation" section).
- Annual survey of drivers and other frontline staff, like dispatchers and Dial-A-Ride schedulers, on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons during the previous year, to see if additional language assistance measures are needed.
- Posting of the City of Whittier's Title VI Policy and Language Assistance Plan on the City's website [www.cityofwhittier.org](http://www.cityofwhittier.org).
- Spanish translators will continue be available at Whittier City Council Meetings on request.

Transit Services will remind staff about existing programs and policies relating to language assistance annually and will include this information in all new staff training.

### **Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan**

The City of Whittier will update the Language Assistance Plan as required by US DOT or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the City's transit service area. Updates to the Language Assistance Plan will consider:

- how the needs of LEP persons have been addressed;
- the current LEP population in the service area;
- determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed; and,
- whether complaints have been received concerning the City's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS**

---

≡ CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MATERIALS  
AND CONSENT DECREE ≡