

CITY OF HOUGHTON TITLE VI PLAN

I. Plan Statement

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI 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 City of Houghton, hereinafter referred to as the CITY OF HOUGHTON, is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B.

This plan was developed to guide the CITY OF HOUGHTON in its administration and management of Title VI-related activities.

Title VI Coordinator Contact Information

Transit Director
616 Shelden Avenue
PO Box 606
Houghton, MI 49931
906-482-1700

transitdepartment@cityofhoughton.com

II. Title VI Dissemination

Title VI information posters (see Appendix G) shall be prominently and publicly displayed in the CITY OF HOUGHTON facility and on their revenue vehicles. The name of the Title VI coordinator is posted and available at **616 Shelden Avenue, Houghton, Michigan** and **www.cityofhoughton.com**. Additional information relating to nondiscrimination obligation can be obtained from the Title VI Coordinator.

Nondiscrimination information shall be disseminated to the CITY OF HOUGHTON employees annually (see Appendix A). This information reminds employees of the CITY OF HOUGHTON policy statement, and of their nondiscrimination responsibilities in their daily work and duties. All employees of the CITY OF HOUGHTON are provided a copy of the plan and are required to sign an Acknowledgement of Receipt (see Appendix B).

During New Employee Orientation, new employees shall be informed of the provisions of Title VI, and the CITY OF HOUGHTON expectations to perform their duties accordingly.

III. Subcontractors and Vendors

All subcontractors and vendors who receive payments from the CITY OF HOUGHTON where funding originates from any federal assistance are subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended.

Written contracts shall contain non-discrimination language, either directly or through the bid specification package which becomes an associated component of the contract.

IV. Record Keeping

The Title VI Coordinator will maintain permanent records, which include, but are not limited to, signed acknowledgements of receipt from the employees indicating the receipt of the CITY OF HOUGHTON Title VI Plan, copies of Title VI complaints or lawsuits and related documentation, records of correspondence to and from complainants, and Title VI investigations.

V. Title VI Complaint Procedures

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:

- Your name, mailing address, and how to contact you (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.)
- How, when, where and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names, and contact information of any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant

The Title VI Complaint Form (see Appendix C) may be used to submit the complaint information. The complaint may be filed in writing or by e-mail with the CITY OF HOUGHTON at the following address:

City of Houghton
616 Shelden Avenue
PO Box 606
Houghton, MI 49931
906-482-1700
Fax: 906-482-0282

transitdepartment@cityofhoughton.com

NOTE: The CITY OF HOUGHTON encourages all complainants to certify all mail that is sent through the U.S. Postal Service and/or ensure that all written correspondence can be tracked easily. For complaints originally submitted by facsimile, an original, signed

copy of the complaint must be mailed to the Title VI Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than 180 days from the alleged date of discrimination.

All complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in a service or benefit provided by the CITY OF HOUGHTON will be directly addressed by the CITY OF HOUGHTON. The CITY OF HOUGHTON shall also provide appropriate assistance to complainants, including those persons with disabilities, or who are limited in their ability to communicate in English. Additionally, The CITY OF HOUGHTON shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

A letter acknowledging receipt of complaint will be mailed within seven days (see Appendix D). Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON will send a final written response letter (see Appendix E or F) to the complainant. In the letter notifying complainant that the complaint is not substantiated (Appendix F), the complainant is also advised of his or her right to 1) appeal within seven calendar days of receipt of the final written decision from the CITY OF HOUGHTON, and/or 2) file a complaint externally with the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the FTA. Every effort will be made to respond to Title VI complaints within 60 working days of receipt of such complaints, if not sooner.

Once sufficient information for investigating the complaint is received by the CITY OF HOUGHTON, a written response will be drafted subject to review by the transit's attorney. If appropriate, The CITY OF HOUGHTON'S attorney may administratively close the complaint. In this case, the CITY OF HOUGHTON will notify the complainant of the action as soon as possible.

In addition to the complaint process described above, a complainant may file a Title VI complaint with the following offices:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC 20590

VI: Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits

LIST ANY INVESTIGATIONS, COMPLAINTS, OR LAWSUITS IN FOLLOWING TABLE.

Lawsuits, Complaints, or Investigations Alleging Discrimination

Type (Investigation, Lawsuit, Complaint)	Date	Summary of Complaint	Status	Action(s) Taken

VII. Four Factor Analysis

The CITY OF HOUGHTON is required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons. While designed to be a flexible and fact-dependent standard, the starting point is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee.
- the frequency with which LEP individuals meet the program.
- the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives; and
- the resources available to the grantee/recipient or the City of Houghton, and costs.

Factor 1: Number/Proportion of LEP Persons in Service Area

- Include data from sources such as the US Census Bureau's Demographic and Housing Characteristics or American Community Survey
- Include a listing of the counts and percentages of LEP individuals present in your service area by language.
- Identify if any of the LEP languages reach the LEP threshold of 5%, or the Safe Harbor Threshold (1,000 persons).

The CITY OF HOUGHTON examined the US Census report from 2020 and the Bureau's Demographic and Housing Characteristics and was able to determine that approximately **14.4%**, or **1,075** people within the CITY OF HOUGHTON service area age 5 and older spoke a language other than English. Of the **1,075** reporting they speak other languages than English, **281** or **3.7%** of respondents speak English less than "very well." The **Other Indo-European** language comprised the largest non-English

speaking language group with **6.8%**. The other largest non-English speaking language group was the **Asian and Pacific Islander** language at **4.1%**.

Factor 2: Frequency of Contact with LEP Persons

- How frequently does your organization encounter LEP persons?
- Are you in contact with LEP persons within a specific language group, and that language is not identified in Factor One?
- Include information gathered from face-to-face meetings with LEP persons or from surveys of LEP persons.
- Include information gathered from interviews with City of Houghton staff who typically encounter LEP persons.
- Include information kept by your organization on past interactions with members of the public who are LEP.

Via verbally surveying drivers and dispatchers since **July 1, 2022**, the CITY OF HOUGHTON has had **zero** requests for interpreters and/or translated the CITY OF HOUGHTON documents. The staff and drivers have had **substantial contact** with LEP individuals.

Factor 3: Nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program in people's lives

Access to the services provided by the CITY OF HOUGHTON is critical to the lives of many residents in the service area. Many people depend on the CITY OF HOUGHTON services for access to jobs and for access to essential community services like schools, shopping, and medical appointments. Because of the essential nature of the services and the importance of these programs in the lives of many of the region's residents, there is a need to ensure that language is not a barrier to access.

Factor 4: The resources available to the CITY OF HOUGHTON and overall costs.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON assessed the available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. This included identifying how much a professional interpreter and translation service would cost, and which documents would be the most valuable to be translated when the populations would support it.

After analyzing the four factors, the CITY OF HOUGHTON **does** feel that a formal LEP plan is needed at this time.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

The CITY OF HOUGHTON will use the following guidelines and resources to assist persons with limited English proficiency.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON will have the Census Bureau's "I Speak Cards" available at the CITY OF HOUGHTON operations facility. Although staff may not be able to provide immediate translation assistance, we will utilize the cards to identify language needs.

If an interpreter is needed immediately, in person or on the telephone, staff will use the "I Speak Cards" to help determine what language assistance is needed. Staff shall then contact www.languageline.com for assistance. On the Language Line webpage, staff will select the **Need an Interpreter Now** link in the popup window and follow the directions to receive an access code.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON will add to our webpage the Title VI policy and complaint Procedures.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON will educate our staff on the following procedures:

1. Understanding the Title VI policy and LEP responsibilities.
2. How to access language assistant services via www.languageline.com
3. Document language assistance requests
4. The procedure if a Title VI and/or LEP complaint is filed.

VIII. Public Participation Plan

The CITY OF HOUGHTON community and minority outreach plan is based on the following principles:

- Flexibility - The engagement process will accommodate participation in a variety of ways and be adjusted as needed.
- Inclusiveness – CITY OF HOUGHTON will proactively reach out to and engage low income, minority and LEP populations from the CITY OF HOUGHTON service area.
- Respect - All feedback will be given careful and respectful consideration.
- Initiative-taking and Timeliness - Participation methods will allow for early involvement and be ongoing.
- Clear, Focused and Understandable - Participation methods will have a clear purpose and use for the input and will be described in language that is easy to understand.
- Honest and Transparent - Information provided will be accurate, trustworthy, and complete.
- Responsiveness – the CITY OF HOUGHTON will respond and incorporate appropriate public comments into transportation decisions.
- Accessibility – Meetings will be held in locations which are fully accessible and welcoming to all area residents, including, but not limited to, low-income and minority members of the public and in locations relevant to the topics being presented and discussed.

As a City of Houghton receiving federal financial assistance, the CITY OF HOUGHTON has made the following community and minority outreach efforts since the last submission of a Title VI program:

The CITY OF HOUGHTON has engaged the public in its planning and decision-making processes, as well as its marketing and outreach activities.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON submits to the Michigan Department of Transportation annually an application for funding. The application requests funding for both capital and operating assistance. Part of the annual application is a public notice, which includes a 30-day public comment period.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON actively participates in the county human services – coordinated transportation services plan. **Region 13 Coordinated Transit Plan**

The CITY OF HOUGHTON currently publishes hours of service and any changes in route schedules.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON **council** holds **meetings the second and fourth Wednesday of every month** that the public is invited to attend. Meetings are held at 5:30 pm to accommodate people that cannot attend during daytime hours.

The CITY OF HOUGHTON has a complaint procedure that is available to the public at any time and is also available to the public via our website at:

www.cityofhoughton.com

IX. Membership of Non-Elected Committees

CITY OF HOUGHTON will publicly advertise and post on our website to encourage minority participation on non-elected committees such as the LAC (Local Advisory Committee).

Body	Caucasian	Latino	African American	Asian American	Native American
Population	82.7%	3.2%	2.9%	9.1%	0.8%
Local Advisory Committee	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

X. Equity Analysis

If the CITY OF HOUGHTON constructs a facility, such as a vehicle storage facility, maintenance facility, operations center, or other building, it will do a Title VI equity analysis following the procedures listed below:

The CITY OF HOUGHTON shall complete a Title VI equity analysis during the planning stage regarding where a project is located or sited to ensure the location is selected without regard to race, color, or national origin.

When evaluating locations of facilities, agencies should give attention to other facilities with similar impacts in the area to determine if any cumulative adverse impacts might result.

If the CITY OF HOUGHTON determines that the location of the project will result in a disparate impact based on race, color, or national origin, the CITY OF HOUGHTON may only locate the project in that location if there is a substantial legitimate justification for locating the project there, and where there are no alternative locations that would have a less disparate impact based on race, color, or national origin.

Appendix A Employee Annual Education Form

Title VI Policy

No person shall, on the grounds 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.

All employees of the CITY OF HOUGHTON are expected to consider, respect, and observe this policy in their daily work and duties. If a citizen approaches you with a question or complaint, direct him or her to contact: Jodi Reynolds, Transportation Director

In all dealings with citizens, use courtesy titles (i.e., Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss) to respectfully address them without regard to race, color, or national origin.