

Program Applied to: AGENCY WIDE

TITLE: TITLE VI PLAN

**Approved by: Board of Dir.
Effective Date: May, 2019
Updated: June, 2021**

Introduction

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this plan reflects Community Options' commitment to ensure that no person shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by Community Options.

This plan is developed to follow the Colorado Department of Transportation's guidelines for Title VI. Community Options' Board of Directors and management pledge to follow these guidelines throughout its service area: Montrose County, Delta County, Ouray, Hinsdale, Gunnison and San Miguel Counties.

Policy

Community Options, Inc. (COI) provides equal access to its programs and services to all people meeting eligibility criteria (intellectual/developmental disability) and are funded for transportation through COI. Community Options qualifies for the safe harbor exception and will make every effort to assure that people with limited English proficiency will be provided an interpreter upon request. The following information serves to inform people receiving services of COI's efforts to reach out to and engage minority groups and populations with Limited English Proficient (LEP).

Community Options will ensure that its transportation services, policies, and activities will comply with the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) Title VI regulations. Community Options is committed to developing and maintaining transit services that are free from any form of discrimination.

Community Options will maintain its procedures, and where necessary perform corrective actions, to ensure the equal protection, treatment and representation of all persons without discrimination including, but not limited to age, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, marital or familial status, gender identity or expression, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, religion, religious observance, sexual orientation, and source or level of income.

Community Options will do the following:

Ensure non-discrimination as an operating principle. No person, on the basis of age, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, marital or familial status, gender identity or expression, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, religion, religious observance, sexual orientation, and source or level of income will be subjected to discrimination in the level and quality of transportation services and transit-related benefits.

Provide an annual Title VI certification and assurance. As a condition of receiving Federal and State financial assistance and in accordance with CRS Section 21.7, Community Options will submit its Title VI Assurance, as part of its annual Certification and Assurance submission to CDOT.

Notify beneficiaries of protection under Title VI. In accordance with 49 CFR Section 21.0 (d), Community Options will provide information to our constituency regarding Title VI obligations and apprise people of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI. These Title VI obligations and protections will be posted on the agency website and through other communications methods used by the agency.

Maintain a Local Title VI Complaint Procedure. In accordance with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), Community Options will develop and maintain procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against them and make their procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public upon request. Community Options will provide a complaint form upon request and forward those forms to the Title VI Complaint Coordinator (Community Options, Executive Director) for resolution.

Recourse to Federal Title VI Enforcement. Community Options will make it known to all people receiving services that anyone alleging discrimination on the basis of age, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, marital or familial status, gender identity or expression, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, religion, religious observance, sexual orientation, and source or level of income as it relates to the provision of transportation services and transit-related benefits may file a complaint with the Federal Transit Administration and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation. (Please see Title VI Complaint Procedures).

Record Title VI Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits. In accordance with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), Community Options will prepare and maintain a list of any active investigations conducted by entities other than the FTA, lawsuits, or complaints naming the recipient that allege discrimination on the basis of age, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, marital or familial status, gender identity or expression, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, religion, religious observance, sexual orientation, and source or level of income. This list will include the date of the investigation, lawsuit or complaint was filed; a summary of the allegation(s); and the status of the investigation, lawsuit or complaint. (Please see Title VI Investigation Log attached to Title VI Complaint Procedures).

Provide Access to Limited English Proficient Persons Community Options falls under the Safe Harbor Provision which states, “..If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group that reaches the five percent (5%) trigger, the recipient is not required to translate vital written materials but should provide written notice in the primary language of the LEP language group of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.” Community Options does have access to competent translators and does not hesitate to utilize their services at meetings with families, public forums etc. to explain the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of its programs and activities for individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP). Community Options will utilize these processes to assist persons with limited English proficiency to participate in the transportation planning and utilization process.

Prepare and Submit a Title VI Program Plan. To ensure compliance with 49 CFR Section 21.9 (b), Community Options will document their compliance with this chapter by submitting a Title VI Plan to the FTA’s regional civil rights officer once every three years. This document is that plan.

Public Participation. Community Options will consider, and will make a reasonable effort to seek out, the viewpoints of minority, low income, and populations with LEP in the course of conducting outreach and activities to our constituents regarding proposed transportation planning decisions. Employees and management of Community Options will adhere to the following guidelines to achieve this goal:

- 1) Community Options will reach out to Limited English Proficiency individuals in the Region 10 service area through the following means:
 - a. Community Options conducts public forums in the spring of each year; one in Montrose and one in Cedaredge as well as satisfaction surveys to many of the constituents.
 - b. Community Options will make available one of its Spanish speaking staff members to meetings with clients/families, public events and other meetings upon request.
 - c. Provide notice at the Administrative office and day program locations that Spanish speaking staff are available.

Responsibilities: Employees and management of Community Options will follow the intent of these guidelines in a manner that reflects agency policy.

Community Options’ Board of Directors monthly meeting is open to the public. A schedule of the board meetings is posted on the agency website: www.communityoptionsinc.org. The meetings are held at the Allinson Administrative Building located at 336 S. 10th Street, Montrose, CO on the second Tuesday of each month. The building is accessible and public comment is included on the agenda for each meeting. The Board is currently composed of eleven community members including a CPA, several parents of program participants, a person who receives services, a real estate agent, a doctor, several retired special education teachers and a financial advisor. Annual public forums are held during the spring of each year and are held in Montrose and Cedaredge. This is an opportunity for the people receiving services and

the general public to talk directly with the Executive Director about any issues of concern. At the same time, surveys are distributed annually to participants in the programs to ascertain any program quality concerns and participant satisfaction.

COI presents regularly to local Boards of County Commissioners, City Councils, and public service organizations in the community. The funding available is minimal and subject to review each year based on available dollars.

Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who qualify for agency services and who access our transportation services do not pay directly for these services. Services are billed through Medicaid under a fee for service system and Medicaid reimburses COI an amount set by contract. People who access COI’s transportation services are enrolled in the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver program for long term care services and supports, or in the State-funded Supported Living Services program.

COMMITTEE NAME	WHITE	HISPANIC	ASIAN/PACIFIC	OTHER
Board of Directors	100%			
Human Rights Committee	89%	11%	0%	
Family Support Council	66%	33%		

Board members are sought out when there is an opening on the board which can occur at any given time. Community Options’ by-laws require that we maintain not less than 9, nor more than 20 board members. When seeking new board members, the Board pursues people who live in our service area, are familiar with our services and the people we serve and have a passion to serve as a Board member. Consideration is certainly given to geographic, experiential, and ethnic diversity.

The Human Rights Committee (HRC) is established and utilized as an impartial third-party mechanism to safeguard the rights of persons receiving services. The committee is an advisory and review body to the administration of COI and shall be constituted and function as established in 25.5-10-209(2) h, C.R.S. and in the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF). When an opening occurs on the HRC, the Case Management Director pursues individuals in the community who have expertise in behavior development techniques, and/or are the parents, guardians, or representatives of people receiving services, and consideration is certainly given to geographic, experiential, and ethnic diversity.

The Family Support Council is established to advise on policies regarding the granting of money to families who qualify for the Family Support Program. When needing to fill a position on the

Council, the Family Support staff seek individuals from the community who are familiar with our agency and would represent geographic and ethnic diversity.

Title VI Responsibilities and Compliance Activities

Community Options' Executive Director shall be the local Title VI Compliance Coordinator. At minimum the following Title VI compliance activities will be performed.

- Identify, investigate and conscientiously work to eliminate any actual discrimination, and the possibility of opportunity for discrimination in any form, in the provision of Community Options' transportation services.
- Gather and maintain demographic and statistical data to analyze Title VI areas of concern and potential impacts regarding the people served.
- Disseminate Title VI program information at the time of enrollment and to people currently in service.
- Design and review changes to transportation services keeping the principles of environmental justice in mind and analyze any unintended potential discriminatory impacts of service changes prior to implementing them.
- Oversee formal and informal Title VI complaints and maintain a list of Title VI complaints and investigations.
- Ensure that required Title VI documents are submitted to CDOT on a timely basis, including annual Certifications and Assurances.
- Attend Title VI trainings provided by CDOT or by FTA and review new documents and guidance when issued to the public.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The following notice will be made available on Community Options website as well as public areas of the facilities listed below. All vehicles will also carry a copy of this notice.

Administrative Building
336 South 10th Street
Montrose, CO

Aspen Crest
155 NW 2nd Street
Cedaredge, CO

Park Place Facility
932 N. Park Street
Montrose, CO

Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI Community Options, Inc.

Community Options operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Community Options.

For more information on the Community Options' civil rights program and the procedures to file a complaint, please contact;

John Vastag, Executive Director
Community Options, Inc.
P.O. Box 31
Montrose, CO 81402
johnvastag@communityoptionsinc.org
970 249 1412 x237

You can also visit our Administrative Office at:

336 South 10th Street
Montrose, CO 81401

Additional information can also be found on our website at www.communityoptionsinc.org

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with;

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

Statement of Rights

In accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Community Options does not discriminate on the basis of, but not limited to age, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, marital or familial status, gender identity or expression, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, religion, religious observance, sexual orientation, and source or level of income.

For more information about these statutes, or to file a complaint, please contact Community Options' designated Disability Rights and Title VI Coordinator:

John Vastag, Executive Director
970-249-1412 x235
P.O. Box 31
Montrose, CO 81402
johnvastag@communityoptionsinc.org.

Information on securing appropriate interpretation of this material may be obtained through the person listed above or the Case Management Department.

Individuals will be permitted to use service animals as defined within the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, if necessary.

Compliment or complaint? Call 970-249-1412.