



Alachua County Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan

February 22, 2021
Review Date

Policy Statement

Alachua County values diversity and welcomes input from all interested parties, regardless of cultural identity, background or income level. Moreover, Alachua County does not tolerate discrimination in any of its programs, services or activities. Alachua County will not exclude participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination anyone on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income or family status.

Nondiscrimination Assurance

Alachua County is committed to nondiscrimination in its programs, services and activities, and equitable service to the community. The County's Nondiscrimination Assurance can be viewed at [Title VI Nondiscrimination Assurance](#) or by visiting the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office.

Complaint Procedures

Alachua County has established a discrimination complaint procedure and will take prompt and reasonable action to investigate and eliminate discrimination when found. Individuals who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income or family status in the provision of programs, services, activities, or benefits by Alachua County, may file a complaint with the County's Title VI Coordinator within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct. Contact:

Jacqueline Chung, Equal Opportunity Manager
Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office
12 SE 1st Street, 1st Floor
Gainesville, FL 32601
Email: jac@alachuacounty.us
Phone: (352) 374-5275
TDD/TTY users, call 711 (Florida Relay Service)

If possible, the complaint should be submitted in writing and contain the identity of the complainant; the basis for the allegations (i.e., race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income or family status); and a description of the alleged discrimination with the date of occurrence. If the complaint cannot be submitted in writing, the complainant should contact the Title VI Coordinator for assistance.

The Title VI Coordinator will respond to the complaint within thirty (30) calendar days and will take reasonable steps to resolve the matter. Should the County be unable to satisfactorily resolve a complaint the County will forward the complaint, along with a record of its disposition to the appropriate District of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The Title VI Coordinator has easy access to the County Manager and is not required to obtain management or other approval to discuss discrimination issues with the County Manager. However, if the complainant is unable or unwilling to complain to the County, the written complaint may be submitted directly to FDOT:

Florida Department of Transportation
 Equal Opportunity Office
 ATTN: Title VI Complaint Processing
 605 Suwanee Street MS 65
 Tallahassee, FL 32399

FDOT serves as a statewide clearinghouse for Title VI purposes and will either assume jurisdiction over the complaint or forward it to the appropriate federal or state or authority for continued processing.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Alachua County will make reasonable efforts to ensure its programs, services and activities are meaningfully accessible to those who do not speak English proficiently. Alachua County will utilize its bilingual employees, community groups, and other language service providers to provide oral interpretation and translation of program documents, as required. To determine if or when alternate language usage is required for meaningful access, Alachua County will assess the program, service or activity using the following four factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the County’s programs, services or activities.

- Based on a review of U.S. Census population demographics for Alachua County, and World Population Review: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/fl/alachua-county-population>, Alachua County’s estimated population in 2020 is 276,228, and 13.76% of the population age 5 and older speak a language other than English at home.
- People speaking Spanish at home comprised the largest group speaking a language other than English, 6.22%. According to the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University, immigrants in Gainesville, FL are more likely to speak Spanish relative to all other immigrants in Alachua County. However, additional languages spoken at home include Chinese, Hindi and French. See figures 5 and 6 on page 2 at link below: [Immigrants in Alachua County](#).



Alachua County Population: 276,228 Languages Spoken at Home	
English	86.24%
Spanish	6.22%
All Other	7.54%

Based on U.S Census and World Population Review data

2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with these programs, services or activities.

- Alachua County departments will assess the frequency with which staff has or could possibly have contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone requests, outreach contacts and in-person inquires for LEP assistance or materials, requests for language interpreters or translated material, and may include surveying public meeting attendees. Based on an informal survey of County departments and requests for document translation and interpreting services, Spanish is the primary language requested.

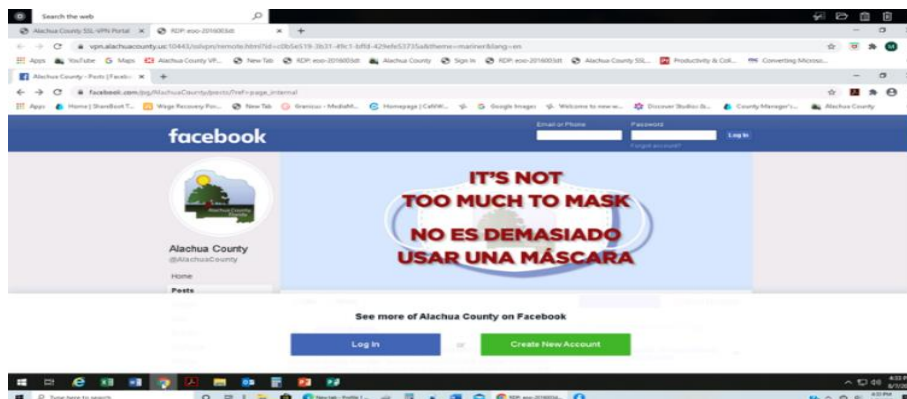
3. The nature and importance of the program, service, or activity to people's lives.

- Alachua County recognizes that within the range of programs, services and activities it provides, the nature of some programs and services may be more important to LEP persons than others. It is the County's intent to provide meaningful access to all participants and eligible persons.

- The more important the information, service or benefit provided in a program or activity the greater the possible consequences to LEP persons, the more likely language services are needed. For instance, in determining importance, the obligation to communicate information on the availability of emergency assistance in a designated disaster area may differ significantly from the obligation to communicate information on the opportunity to attend a one-time outreach event at a community recreation center. Alachua County will review its programs and services to determine whether denial or delay of access may have serious or even life-threatening implications for an LEP person.

In March 2020, a State of Emergency was declared by the Governor of Florida and by Alachua County due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and as of February 2021, remains in effect. Emergency Orders issued by Alachua County are published in both English and Spanish. Press releases, Facebook posts and urgent information related to Covid-19, mental health assistance or the Alachua County CARES Act are translated into Spanish. Meetings of the Board of County Commissioners with topics related to Covid-19 on the agenda are closed-captioned in English and Spanish, with remote Sign-Language Interpreting for the hearing-impaired.

The County's 311 Information Line has English and Spanish prompts at the beginning of the call, and bilingual staff available. The Crisis Center hotline and 311 call center staff have immediate access to 24/7 professional language translation and interpreting resources to assist callers as needed. Print media, notices and business posters explaining mask requirements are available in English and Spanish.



4. The resources available to the County and the likely costs of the LEP services.

- Alachua County will assess available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. This includes identifying and maintaining a database of staff and volunteers who are readily available to assist in language translation and interpreting as needed.
- County websites feature Google Translator which allows individuals to translate information regarding County programs and services into their language of choice (108 different language options). See snapshot below:



- The County has agreements with professional vendors for language access services. Vendors include LanguageLine, Inc. for telephone/video remote interpreting services and translation of complex legal documents such as ballot language items and ordinances. A local vendor, i2i Languages, Inc. provides quick turnaround of Spanish translations of emergency orders, social media posts, and on-site interpreting services.

The County understands that its community profile is changing and the four factor analysis may reveal the need for more or varied LEP services in the future. As such, it will periodically examine its LEP plan to ensure that it remains reflective of the community's needs. Persons requiring special language services should contact the County's Title VI Coordinator:

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Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office
12 SE 1st Street, 1st Floor
Gainesville, FL 32601
Email: jac@alachuacounty.us
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TDD/TTY users, call 711 (Florida Relay Service)

Public Involvement

Alachua County welcomes the input of its residents and strongly encourages the participation of the entire community in its planning and decision-making process. The County holds public meetings, policy discussion workshops and other events designed to gather public input, and hosts an informative website that advises the public on how to access information and provide feedback. The County also conducts public education and outreach efforts to raise awareness and promote its programs and services to the public. In addition, Alachua County utilizes social media and engages with the public on a robust Facebook page.

A citizen Equity Advisory Board was recently established by the County Commission to assist staff with reviewing County policies, programs and procedures for race and gender bias, make recommendations on eliminating such bias, and ensure that input from communities most impacted or disadvantaged by such bias is included in the development of policy recommendations and the design and delivery of County programs and services.

Persons wishing to request special presentations by County staff; volunteer in any of its activities; offer suggestions for improvement; or to simply learn more about County programs and services should visit: www.alachuacounty.us or contact:

Gina Peebles, Assistant County Manager
Community and Administrative Services
12 SE 1st Street, 2nd Fl, Gainesville, FL 32601
Email: gpeebles@alachuacounty.us
Phone: (352) 538-8265
TDD/TTY users, call 711 (Florida Relay Service)

Data Collection

Federal regulations require federal-aid recipients to collect racial, ethnic and other similar demographic data on beneficiaries of or those affected by its programs, services and activities. Alachua County accomplishes this through the use of census data, American Community Survey reports, Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Florida, and other resources. From time to time, the County may find it necessary to request voluntary identification of certain racial, ethnic or other data from those who participate in County programs, services or activities. This information assists the County with improving service equity and ensuring effective outreach. The County will not release or otherwise use this data in any manner inconsistent with state or federal regulations.

Grievance Procedure

Alachua County Title VI grievance procedures comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other related federal and state statutes and regulations. The procedures are posted on the Equal Opportunity Office webpage and can also be viewed here [Title VI Grievance Procedure](#).

Accessibility of County Programs, Services and Facilities

ADA/504 Statement

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and related federal and state laws and regulations forbid discrimination against those who have disabilities. Furthermore, these laws require federal aid recipients and other government entities to take affirmative steps to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities and ensure that their needs are equitably represented in programs, services and activities.

Alachua County will make every effort to ensure that its facilities, programs, services, and activities are accessible to those with disabilities. The County will make every effort to ensure that its advisory committees, public involvement activities and all other programs, services and activities include representation by the disabled community and disability service groups. Because providing reasonable accommodation may require outside assistance, organization or resources, the County asks that requests be made at least 2 business days prior to the need for accommodation.

The following public notice is on County websites, press releases, and notices of public meetings or events:

If you have a disability and need an accommodation in order to participate in a County program, service or public meeting, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 352-374-5275 at least 2 business days prior to the event. TDD/TTY users please call 711 (Florida Relay Service).

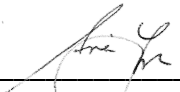
Questions, concerns, comments or requests for accommodation should be made to the County's ADA Coordinator:

Jacqueline Chung, Equal Opportunity Manager
Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office
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Grievance Procedure

The [ADA Grievance Procedure](#) is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of programs, services, activities, or benefits by Alachua County. The Alachua County Equal Employment Opportunity Policy governs employment-related complaints of disability discrimination. The procedures are also available on the Equal Opportunity Office webpage.

Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan Approved:



County Manager or designee

2/25/21

Date