

**Title VI Plan and Procedures**

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

**PORTCO, INC.**

*May 2, 2014*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of 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).

Recipients of public transportation funding from FTA and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) are required to develop policies, programs, and practices that ensure that federal and state transit dollars are used in a manner that is nondiscriminatory as required under Title VI.

This document details how **PORTCO, INC.** incorporates nondiscrimination policies and practices in providing services to the public. **PORTCO, INC.**'s Title VI policies and procedures are documented in this plan and its appendices and attachments. This plan will be updated periodically (at least every three years) to incorporate changes and additional responsibilities that arise.

## II. POLICY STATEMENT AND AUTHORITIES

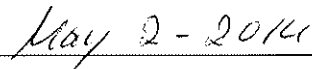
### Title VI Policy Statement

**PORTCO, INC.** is committed to ensuring that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (PL 100.259), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

The **PORTCO, INC.** Title VI Manager is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, preparing required reports, and other responsibilities as required by Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, and Title 49 CFR Part 21.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Authorizing Official

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date

### Authorities

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (refer to 49 CFR Part 21). The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 broadened the scope of Title VI coverage by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all programs or activities of Federal Aid recipients, sub recipients, and contractors, whether such programs and activities are federally assisted or not.

Additional authorities and citations include: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d); Federal Transit Laws, as amended (49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 et seq.); Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4601, et seq.); Department of Justice regulation, 28 CFR part 42, Subpart F, “Coordination of Enforcement of Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs” (December 1, 1976, unless otherwise noted); U.S. DOT regulation, 49 CFR part 21, “Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964” (June 18, 1970, unless otherwise noted); Joint FTA/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulation, 23 CFR part 771, “Environmental Impact and Related Procedures” (August 28, 1987); Joint FTA/FHWA regulation, 23 CFR part 450 and 49 CFR part 613, “Planning Assistance and Standards,” (October 28, 1993, unless otherwise noted); U.S. DOT Order 5610.2, “U.S. DOT Order on Environmental Justice to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” (April 15, 1997); U.S. DOT Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’

Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons, (December 14, 2005), and Section 12 of FTA's Master Agreement, FTA MA 13 (October 1, 2006).

### **Annual Nondiscrimination Assurance to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)**

As part of the Certifications and Assurances submitted to the DRPT with the Annual Grant Application and all Federal Transit Administration grants submitted to the VDRPT, **PORTCO, INC.** submits a Nondiscrimination Assurance which addresses compliance with Title VI as well as nondiscrimination in hiring (EEO) and contracting (DBE), and nondiscrimination on the basis of disability (ADA). In signing and submitting this assurance, **PORTCO, INC.** confirms to VDRPT the agency's commitment to nondiscrimination and compliance with federal and state requirements.

### III. ORGANIZATION AND TITLE VI PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

**PORTCO, INC.'s Transportation Coordinator - Title VI Manager, Chris Silver** is responsible for ensuring implementation of the agency's Title VI program. Title VI program elements are interrelated and responsibilities may overlap. The specific areas of responsibility have been delineated below for purposes of clarity.

#### Overall Organization for Title VI

- **Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager** is responsible for coordinating the overall administration of the Title VI program, plan, and assurances, including complaint handling, data collection and reporting, annual review and updates, and internal education.
- **Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager** is responsible for public outreach and involvement. This includes development and implementation of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan. Those responsible for this area also coordinate with those who are responsible for service planning and delivery.
- **Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager** is responsible for service planning and delivery. This includes analysis of current services, analysis of proposed service and fare changes, and environmental justice. Those responsible for this area also coordinate with those who are responsible for service planning and delivery.

#### Detailed Responsibilities of the Title VI Manager

The Title VI Manager is responsible for supervising the other staff assigned with Title VI responsibilities in implementing, monitoring, and reporting on **PORTCO, INC.'s** compliance with Title VI regulations. In support of this, the Title VI Manager will:

- Identify, investigate, and eliminate discrimination when found to exist.
- Process Title VI complaints received by **PORTCO, INC.** in accordance with the agency's Nondiscrimination Complaint Procedures (presented below).
- Meet with the other staff assigned with Title VI responsibilities, including public outreach & involvement and service planning and delivery periodically to monitor and discuss progress, implementation, and compliance issues.
- Periodically review the agency's Title VI program to assess if administrative procedures are effective, staffing is appropriate, and adequate resources are available to ensure compliance.

## **Annual Review of Title VI Program**

Each year, in preparing for the Annual Report and Updates, the Title VI Manager and Liaison(s) will review the agency's Title VI program to assure implementation of the Title VI plan. In addition, they will review agency operational guidelines and publications, including those for contractors, to verify that Title VI language and provisions are incorporated, as appropriate.

## **Title VI Clauses in Contracts**

In all procurements requiring a written contract, **PORTCO, INC.**'s contract will include the federal non-discrimination clauses. The Title VI Manager will work with the **Finance Manager**.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING THE PUBLIC OF TITLE VI RIGHTS AND HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT**

**PORTCO, INC.** includes the following language on all printed information materials, on the agency's website, in press releases, in public notices, in published documents, and on posters on the interior of each vehicle operated in passenger service:

**PORTCO, INC.** 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 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

For additional information on **PORTCO, INC.**'s nondiscrimination policies and procedures or to file a complaint, please visit the website at [www.Portco.org](http://www.Portco.org) or contact:

**PORTCO, INC.**

**Attn: Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager**

**800 Loudoun Avenue**

**Portsmouth, VA 23707**

Instructions for filing Title VI complaints are posted on the agency's website and in posters on the interior of each vehicle operated in passenger service, and are also included within **PORTCO, INC.**'s **PASSENGER POLICY** brochure.

##### **Policy**

*“If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination under Title VI based on your race, color, national origin, or any aspect of this policy, you may file a complaint up to 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.”*

*The complaint should include the following information:*

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

*The complaint may be filed in writing to:*



**PORTCO, INC.**

**Attn: Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager**

**800 Loudoun Avenue**

**Portsmouth, VA 23707**

## **V. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING, TRACKING, RESOLVING AND REPORTING INVESTIGATIONS/COMPLAINTS AND LAWSUITS**

Any individual may exercise his or her right to file a complaint with **PORTCO, INC.** if that person believes that s/he or any other program beneficiaries have been subjected to unequal treatment or discrimination in the receipt of benefits/services or prohibited by non-discrimination requirements. **PORTCO, INC.** will report the complaint to DRPT within three business days (per DRPT requirements), and make a concerted effort to resolve complaints locally, using the agency's Nondiscrimination Complaint Procedures, as described below. All Title VI complaints and their resolution will be logged as described under "Data collection" and reported annually (in addition to immediately) to DRPT.

Should any Title VI investigations be initiated by FTA or DRPT, or any Title VI lawsuits be filed against **PORTCO, INC.** the agency will follow these procedures:

### **Procedures**

1. Any individual, group of individuals, or entity that believes they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin may file a written complaint with **PORTCO, INC.**'s Title VI Manager. The complaint is to be filed in the following manner:
  - a. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrence.
  - b. The complaint shall be in writing and signed by the complainant(s).
  - c. The complaint should include:
    - the complainant's name, address, and contact information
    - (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.)
    - the date(s) of the alleged act of discrimination (if multiple days, include the date when the complainant(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination and the date on which the alleged discrimination was discontinued or the latest instance).
    - a description of the alleged act of discrimination
    - the location(s) of the alleged act of discrimination (include vehicle number if appropriate)
    - an explanation of why the complainant believes the act to have been discriminatory on the basis of race, color, and national origin
    - if known, the names and/or job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the incident

- contact information for any witnesses
  - indication of any related complaint activity (i.e., was the complaint also submitted to DRPT or FTA?)
- d. The complaint shall be submitted to the **PORTCO, INC.'s Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager, Chris Silver at 800 Loudoun Avenue, Portsmouth VA 23707**
  - e. Complaints received by any other employee of **PORTCO, INC.** will be immediately forwarded to the Title VI Manager.
  - f. In the case where a complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint of discrimination may be made to the Title VI Manager. Under these circumstances, the complainant will be interviewed, and the **Title VI Manager** will assist the complainant in converting the verbal allegations to writing.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the **Title VI Manager** will immediately:
    - a. notify DRPT (no later than 3 business days from receipt)
    - b. notify the **PORTCO, INC. CEO**
    - c. ensure that the complaint is entered in the complaint database
  3. Within 3 business days of receipt of the complaint, the **Title VI Manager** will contact the complainant by telephone to set up an interview.
  4. The complainant will be informed that they have a right to have a witness or representative present during the interview and can submit any documentation he/she perceives as relevant to proving his/her complaint.
  5. If DRPT has assigned staff to assist with the investigation, the **Title VI Manager** will offer an opportunity to participate in the interview.
  6. The alleged discriminatory service or program official will be given the opportunity to respond to all aspects of the complainant's allegations.
  7. The **Title VI Manager** will determine, based on relevancy or duplication of evidence, which witnesses will be contacted and questioned.
  8. The investigation may also include:
    - a. investigating contractor operating records, policies or procedures
    - b. reviewing routes, schedules, and fare policies
    - c. reviewing operating policies and procedures
    - d. reviewing scheduling and dispatch records
    - e. observing behavior of the individual whose actions were cited in the complaint
  9. All steps taken and findings in the investigation will be documented in writing and included in the complaint file.
  10. The **Title VI Manager** will contact the complainant at the conclusion of the investigation, but prior to writing the final report, and give the complainant an opportunity to give a rebuttal statement at the end of the investigation process.
  11. At the conclusion of the investigation and within 60 days of the interview with the complainant, the **Title VI Manager** will prepare a report that includes a narrative description of the incident, identification of persons interviewed, findings, and recommendations for disposition. This report will be provided to the CEO, the DRPT, and, if appropriate, **PORTCO, INC.'s** legal counsel.

12. The **Title VI Manager** will send a letter to the complainant notifying them of the outcome of the investigation. If the complaint was substantiated, the letter will indicate the course of action that will be followed to correct the situation. If the complaint is determined to be unfounded, the letter will explain the reasoning, and refer the complainant to DRPT in the event the complainant wishes to appeal the determination. This letter will be copied to DRPT.
13. A complaint may be dismissed for the following reasons:
  - a. The complainant requests the withdrawal of the complaint.
  - b. An interview cannot be scheduled with the complainant after reasonable attempts.
  - c. The complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.
14. DRPT will serve as the appealing forum to a complainant that is not satisfied with the outcome of an investigation conducted by **PORTCO, INC.** DRPT will analyze the facts of the case and will issue its conclusion to the appellant according to their procedures.

## **Overview**

These procedures apply to all complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, relating to any program or activity administered by **PORTCO, INC.**, as well as to sub-recipients, consultants, and/or contractors. Intimidation or retaliation of any kind is prohibited by law. These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. These procedures are part of an administrative process that does not provide for remedies that include punitive damages or compensatory remuneration for the complainant. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and the Title VI Manager may be utilized for resolution. The Title VI Manager will make every effort to pursue a resolution to the complaint. Initial interviews with the complainant and the respondent will request information regarding specifically requested relief and settlement opportunities.

## **VI. STAFF TRAINING RELATED TO THE TITLE VI PROGRAM**

Information on the **PORTCO, INC.**'s Title VI program is disseminated to agency employees, contractors, and beneficiaries, as well as to the public, as described in the "public outreach and involvement" section of this document, and in other languages when needed according to the LEP plan.

**PORTCO, INC.**'s employees will receive training on Title VI policies and procedures upon hiring and upon promotion. This training will include requirements of Title VI, **PORTCO, INC.**'s obligations under Title VI (LEP requirement included), required data that must be gathered and maintained and how it relates to the Annual Report and Update to DRPT, and any findings and recommendations from the last DRPT compliance review.

In addition, training will be provided when any Title VI-related policies or procedures change (agency-wide training), or when appropriate in resolving a complaint (which may be for a specific individual or for the entire agency, depending on the complaint).

Title VI training is the responsibility of **Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager, Chris Silver**

## **VII. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)**

### **SAMPLE PLAN FOR SERVING PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)**

#### **Introduction and Legal Basis**

LEP is a term that defines any individual not proficient in the use of the English language. The establishment and operation of an LEP program meets objectives set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13116, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This Executive Order requires federal agencies receiving financial assistance to address the needs of non-English speaking persons. The Executive Order also establishes compliance standards to ensure that the programs and activities that are provided by a transportation provider in English are accessible to LEP communities. This includes providing meaningful access to individuals who are limited in their use of English. The following LEP language implementation plan, developed by **PORTCO, INC.** is based on FTA guidelines.

As required, **PORTCO, INC.** developed a written LEP Plan (below). Using 2010 and American Community Survey (ACS) Census data, **PORTCO, INC.** has evaluated data to determine the extent of need for translation services of its vital documents and materials.

LEP persons can be a significant market for public transit, and reaching out to these individuals can help increase their utilization of transit. Therefore, it also makes good business sense to translate vital information into languages that the larger LEP populations in the community can understand.

#### **Assessment of Needs and Resources**

The need and resources for LEP language assistance were determined through a four-factor analysis as recommended by FTA guidance.

##### **Factor 1: Assessment of the Number and Proportion of LEP Persons Likely to be Served or Encountered in the Eligible Service Population**

The agency has reviewed census data on the number of individuals in its service area that have limited English Proficiency, as well as the languages they speak.

##### **U.S. Census Data – American Community Survey (2006-2010)**

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) were obtained through [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) by **PORTCO, INC.**'s service area. The agency's service area includes a total of **3,899 (4.4% of total population)** persons with Limited English Proficiency. **489 persons (0.5%)** indicated that they spoke English "**not well,**" and "**not at all**" in the 2006-2010 ACS Census).

Information from the 2006-2010 ACS also provides more detail on the specific languages that are spoken by those who report that they speak English less than very well. Languages spoken at home by those with LEP are presented below. These data indicate the extent to which translations into other language are needed to meet the needs of LEP persons.

It is noted that there are relatively low number of LEP persons in the service area - no language is spoken by over 5% or a total of 1,000 persons in the LEP population.

**Factor 2: Assessment of Frequency with Which LEP Individuals Come Into Contact with the Transit Services or System**

**PORTCO, INC.** reviewed the relevant benefits, services, and information provided by the agency and determined the extent to which LEP persons have come into contact with these functions through one or more of the following channels:

- Contact with transit vehicle operators;
- Contact with transit station managers;
- Calls to **PORTCO, INC.**'s customer service telephone line;
- Visits to the agency's headquarters;
- Access to the agency's website ;
- Attendance at community meetings or public hearings hosted by **PORTCO, INC.**;
- Contact with the agency's ADA complementary paratransit system (including applying for eligibility, making reservations, and communicating with drivers).

There have been no incidences of LEP contact with **PORTCO, INC.**

We will continue to identify emerging populations as updated Census and American Community Survey data become available for our service area. In addition, when LEP persons contact our agency, we attempt to identify their language and keep records on contacts to accurately assess the frequency of contact. To assist in language identification, we use a language identification flashcard based on that which was developed by the U.S. Census. (<http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf>)]

**Information from Community Organizations that Serve LEP Persons (Optional?)**

To supplement the Census, education, and labor department data, **PORTCO, INC.** conducted community outreach to the following organizations that work with LEP populations.

- *Community organizations;*
- *State and local governments;*
- *Religious organizations;*
- *Legal aid entities.*

*Outreach presentations at the organization and community stakeholders meetings centered around Coordinated Human Services Transportation and development of a Transportation Development Plan along with faith based communities have not reported any growing need for additional translation or other services for the small LED population in the PORTCO, INC. service area. These community based outreach and stakeholder contacts are renewed annually and additional information can be reported in each fiscal year period, not to exceed the three year reporting guidelines for LED accommodations.*

**Factor 3: Assessment of the Nature and Importance of the Transit Services to the LEP Population**

**PORTCO, INC.** provides the following programs, activities and services:

**Based on our current client population, PORTCO, INC. has determined that there are no fixed transportation routes that are of particular importance to LEP Persons in the community.**

Based on past experience serving and communicating with LEP persons and interviews with community agencies, *[as well as questionnaires or direct consultations with LEP persons (if applicable, e.g. through focus groups or individual interviews facilitated/interpreted by a community agency)]*, we learned that the following services/routes/programs are currently of particular importance LEP persons in the community.

The following are the most critical services provided by **PORTCO, INC.** for all customers, including LEP persons.

- Safety and security awareness instructions
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Public transit services, including reduced fare application process
- ADA paratransit services (if your agency operates fixed-route), including eligibility certification process
- Other paratransit services

- Services targeted at low income persons

#### **Factor 4: Assessment of the Resources Available to the Agency and Costs**

##### *Costs*

The following language assistance measures currently being provided by **PORTCO, INC.**

##### CURRENT PORTCO CLIENTEL

We anticipate that these activities and costs will increase as follows. Limited costs will include the placement of LED information cards in transit vehicles and access to translation through face-to-face interviewers for various transportation services.

**PORTCO, INC. anticipates no increase of costs/activities during calendar year 2012.**

Based on the analysis of demographic data and contact with community organizations and LEP persons, **PORTCO, INC.** has determined that the following additional services are ideally needed to provide meaningful access:

##### *Resources*

The available budget that could be currently is devoted to additional language assistance expenses is less than \$100.00 annually. This amount is likely to be stable over time.

**PORTCO, INC.** has not also requested the following additional grant funding for language assistance.

##### *Feasible and Appropriate Language Assistance Measures*

Based on the available resources, the following language assistance measures are feasible and appropriate for our agency at this time:

- Translating vital documents posted on Web sites.

#### **LEP Implementation Plan**

Through the four-factor analysis, **PORTCO, INC.** has determined that the following types of language assistance are most needed and feasible:



- *Translation of vital documents into Spanish. These documents include:*
  - *System Map and Ride Guide*
  - *Application for reduced fare*
  - *All printed materials on ADA Paratransit, including brochure, eligibility application package, and passenger policies and procedures*
  - *Emergency preparedness brochure*
- *Attempt to hire bilingual staff with competency in spoken and written (Spanish, Vietnamese, etc. as appropriate for your service area).*
- *Language Line Translation Services for telephone contacts.*
- *In-person translation for ADA eligibility assessments.*

### *Staff Access to Language Assistance Services*

Agency staff who come into contact with LEP persons can access language services by offering the individual a language identification flashcard, having a supply of translated documents on hand, transferring a call to bilingual staff, having a telephone menu allowing the customer to pre-select their language. All staff will be provided with a list of available language assistance services and additional information and referral resources (such as community organizations which can assist LEP persons). This list will be updated at least annually.

### *Responding to LEP Callers*

Staff who answer calls from the public respond to LEP customers as follows: *Transfer to available Bilingual Staff, Refer to Website Translation of Services, Language Translation Services.*

### **Responding to Written Communications from LEP Persons:**

*Transfer to available Bilingual Staff, Refer to Website Translation of Services, Language Translation Services.*

### **Responding to LEP Individuals in Person:**

*Transfer to available Bilingual Staff, Refer to Website Translation of Services, Language Translation Services.*

The following procedures are followed by operators when an LEP person has a question on board a **PORTCO, INC.** vehicle: No incidence of this has been reported on vehicles providing Human Services/Employment Services Transportation.

### *Staff Training*

As noted previously, all **PORTCO, INC.** staff are provided with a list of available language assistance services and additional information and referral resources, updated annually. All new hires receive training on assisting LEP persons as part of their sensitivity and customer service training. This includes:

- A summary of the transit agency's responsibilities under the DOT LEP Guidance;
- A summary of the agency's language assistance plan;
- A summary of the number and proportion of LEP persons in the agency's service area, the frequency of contact between the LEP population and the agency's programs and activities, and the importance of the programs and activities to the population;
- A description of the type of language assistance that the agency is currently providing and instructions on how agency staff can access these products and services; and
- A description of the agency's cultural sensitivity policies and practices.

Also, all staff who routinely come into contact with customers, as well as their supervisors and all management staff, receive annual refresher training on policies and procedures related to assisting LEP persons.

### *Providing Notice to LEP Persons*

LEP persons are notified of the availability of language assistance through the following approaches:

- *PORTCO, INC.'s Title VI policy statement included on our vital documents.*
- *on our website, with links to translations of vital documents in other languages as presented by LEP customer need.*
- *through signs posted on our vehicles and in our customer service and administrative offices.*
- *through ongoing outreach efforts to community organizations, schools, and religious organizations.*
- *sending translated news releases and public service announcements about the availability of translated information to newspapers and broadcast media that target local LEP communities, as indicated by service number in the future with regular review beginning in FY 2014.*

LEP persons will also be included in all community outreach efforts related to service and fare changes.

### *Monitoring/Updating the plan*

This plan will be updated on a periodic basis (at least every three years), based on feedback, updated demographic data, and resource availability.

As part of ongoing outreach to community organizations, **PORTCO, INC.** will solicit feedback on the effectiveness of language assistance provided and unmet needs. In addition, we will conduct periodic review through *surveys, focus groups, community meetings, internal meetings with staff who assist LEP persons, review of updated Census data, formal studies* of the adequacy and quality of the language assistance provided, and determine changes to LEP needs.

In preparing the triennial update of this plan, **PORTCO, INC.** will conduct an internal assessment using the Language Assistance Monitoring Checklist provided in the FTA's "Implementing the Department of Transportation's Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons: A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers."

Based on the feedback received from community members and agency employees, **PORTCO, INC.** will make incremental changes to the type of written and oral language assistance provided as well as to their staff training and community outreach programs. The cost of proposed changes and the available resources will affect the enhancements that can be made, and therefore **PORTCO, INC.** will attempt to identify the most cost-effective approaches.

As the community grows and new LEP groups emerge, **PORTCO, INC.** will strive to address the needs for additional language assistance.

## VIII. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

Public outreach and involvement applies to and affects **PORTCO, INC.**'s mission and work program as a whole, particularly agency efforts and responsibilities related to **PORTCO, INC.**'s service planning. The overall goal of **PORTCO, INC.**'s public outreach and involvement policy is to secure early and continuous public notification about, and participation in, major actions and decisions by **PORTCO, INC.**. In seeking public comment and review, **PORTCO, INC.** makes a concerted effort to reach all segments of the population, including people from minority and low-income communities, persons with limited English Proficiency and organizations representing these and other protected classes. **PORTCO, INC.** utilizes a broad range of public outreach information and involvement opportunities, including a process for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, settings for open discussion, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments.

### Public Outreach Activities

**PORTCO, INC.** takes the following steps to ensure that minority, low-income, and LEP members of the community have meaningful access to public outreach and involvement activities, including those conducted as part of the planning process for proposed changes in services, fares, and facilities development

- Publishing public notices within local newspapers of general circulation as well as those targeted at minority, low income and LEP persons and on the agency's website.

Public notices are issued to:

- announce opportunity to participate or provide input in planning for service changes, fare changes, new services, and new or improved facilities (early in the process)
  - announce the formal comment period on proposed major service reductions and fare increases with instructions for submitting comments including a public hearing (or opportunity for a public hearing with instructions for requesting a hearing if this is the LOTS' local policy) (at the end of the planning process)
  - announce impending service and fare changes (after plan has been finalized)
  - announce intent to apply for public transit funding from DRPT, and to announce the formal comment period on the proposed program of projects, with a public hearing (or opportunity for one) (annually in advance of submitting the ATP)
- Posting public notices as described above at major passenger/public facilities and in all vehicles.
  - Sending news releases to news media (newspapers, radio, television, web media) of general interest as well as those targeted at minority and LEP persons, as well as community-based organizations that serve persons protected under Title VI and which publish newsletters.

- Sending public service announcements (PSAs) to news media of general interest as well as those targeted at minority, low income and LEP persons, as well as community-based organizations that serve persons protected under Title VI and which publish newsletters.
- Conducting in-person outreach upon request at public meetings, community-based organizations, human service organizations which assist low income and LEP persons, places of worship, service organization meetings, cultural centers, and other places and events that reach out to persons protected under Title VI. The availability of **PORTCO, INC.** staff for such speaking engagements is posted on the agency's website.
- Conducting public hearings at locations and meeting times that are accessible by public transit.
- Conducting periodic customer satisfaction surveys which are distributed to passengers on vehicles.

The above activities are the responsibility of **Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager.**

### **Non Elected Board Diversity (Optional – in proposed circular)**

**PORTCO, INC.**'s governing body is **PORTCO BOARD OF DIRECTORS** and, as such, members are elected.

## IX. PROCEDURES FOR ENSURING EQUITY IN SERVICE PROVISION

**PORTCO, INC.** is required to plan and deliver transportation services in an equitable manner. This means the distribution of service levels and quality is to be equitable between minority and low income populations and the overall population.

### **Service Standards and Policies - Optional – but in Proposed Circular**

**PORTCO, INC.** has reviewed its services and policies to ensure that those services and benefits are provided in an equitable manner to all persons.

#### *Service Standards*

The agency has set standards and policies that address how services are distributed across the transit system service area to ensure that that distribution affords users equitable access to these services. As shown in the following maps, the agency's routes **PORTCO TRANSIT ROUTES ARE DESIGNED TO TRANSPORT OUR CLIENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO/FROM TRAINING AND WORKSITES.** The agency's demand responsive services are available to all callers on a first-come first service basis, without regard for race, color or national origin.

The following system-wide service standards are used to guard against service design or operations decisions from having disparate impacts. All of **PORTCO, INC.**'s services meet the agency's established standards; thus it is judged that services are provided equitably to all persons in the service area, regardless of race, color or national origin.

- **Vehicle load** -Vehicle load is expressed as the ratio of passengers to the total number of seats on a vehicle at its maximum load point. The standard for maximum vehicle load is **VAN CAPACITY**, all of **PORTCO, INC.**'s services meet this standards
- **Vehicle headway** -Vehicle headway is the amount of time between two vehicles traveling in the same direction on a given route. A shorter headway corresponds to more frequent service. All of **PORTCO, INC.**'s services meet this standards.
- **On-time performance** -On-time performance is a measure of runs completed as scheduled. This criterion first must define what is considered to be "on time." The standard for on-time performance is **ADEQUATELY TIMED TRANSIT OF CLIENTS TO/FROM TRAINING AND WORKSITES.** All of **PORTCO, INC.**'s services meet this standards
- **Service availability** - Service availability is a general measure of the distribution of routes within a transit provider's service area or the span of service. The standard for service availability is **ADEQUATELY TIMED TRANSIT OF CLIENTS TO/FROM TRAINING AND WORKSITES.** All of **PORTCO, INC.**'s services meet this standard.

### *Service and Operating Policies*

The **PORTCO, INC.**'s service and operating policies also ensure that operational practices do not result in discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

- **Distribution and Siting of Transit Amenities** - Transit amenities refer to items of comfort, convenience, and safety that are available to the general riding public. **PORTCO, INC.** has a policy to ensure the equitable distribution of transit amenities across the system. This policy applies to seating (i.e., benches, seats), bus shelters and canopies, (c) provision of information, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), waste receptacles (including trash and recycling). Passenger amenities are sited based on **EACH VEHICLE**.
- **Vehicle assignment** - Vehicle assignment refers to the process by which transit vehicles are placed into service and on routes throughout the system. **PORTCO, INC.** assigns vehicles with the goal of providing equitable benefits to minority and low income populations. Vehicles are assigned with regard to service type (fixed-route, demand-response, or a hybrid type) and ridership demand patterns (routes with greater numbers of passengers need vehicles with larger capacities). For each type of assignment, newer vehicles are rotated to ensure that no single route or service always has the same vehicle. The **Transportation Coordinator – Title VI Manager** reviews vehicle assignments on a monthly basis to ensure that vehicles are indeed being rotated and that no single route or service always has the old or new vehicles.

### **Monitoring Title VI Complaints**

As part of the complaint handling procedure, the Title VI Manager investigates possible inequities in service delivery for the route(s) or service(s) about which the complaint was filed. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the review examines span of service (days and hours), frequency, routing directness, interconnectivity with other routes and/or fare policy. If inequities are discovered during this review, options for reducing the disparity are explored, and service or fare changes are planned if needed.

In addition to the investigation following an individual complaint, the Title VI Manager periodically reviews all complaints received to determine if there may be a pattern. At a minimum, this review is conducted as part of preparing the Annual Report and Update for submission to the DRPT.

### **Fare and Service Changes**

**PORTCO, INC.** follows its adopted written policy for the public comment process for major service reductions and fare increases. With each proposed service or fare change, **PORTCO,**

**INC.** considers the relative impacts on, and benefits to, minority and low income populations, including LEP populations. All planning efforts for changes to existing services or fares, as well as new services, have a goal of providing equitable service. **PORTCO DOES NOT IMPOSE A FARE IN ITS TRANSIT OF CLIENTS TO/FROM TRAINING AND WORKSITES.**



## **X. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **Data collection**

To ensure that Title VI reporting requirements are met, **PORTCO, INC.** maintains:

- A log and database of Title VI complaints received. The investigation of and response to each complaint is tracked within the database. This is done within a general logging process of complaints. No Title VI complaint has ever been made to the agency, but would be indentified as such within the database and paper complaint files.
  
- A log of the public outreach and involvement activities undertaken to ensure that minority and low-income people had a meaningful access to these activities. The agency maintains the following records related to public outreach and involvement:
  - Paper files with copies of materials published or distributed for each planning project and service/fare change, as well as all news releases, public service announcements, surveys, and written summaries of in-person outreach events.
  - A log/database of public outreach and involvement activities, including dates, planning project or service/fare change supported (if applicable), type of activity, LEP assistance requested/provided, target audience, number of participants, and location of documentation within paper files.

Maintenance of these records is the responsibility of **Chris Silver, Transportation Coordinator and Title VI Manager.**

### **Annual Report and Triennial Updates**

#### *Annual Reporting*

As a subrecipient providing service in an area with less than 200,000 population, **PORTCO, INC.** submits an annual report to the DRPT that documents any Title VI investigations/complaints/lawsuits during the preceding 12 months.

#### *Triennial Reporting*

Every three years, the **PORTCO, INC.** submits to DRPT, a complete list of the investigations/complaints/lawsuits received in the prior three years, a summary of the public outreach and involvement activities undertaken to ensure that minority and low-

income people had a meaningful access to these activities, and any updates to this Title VI plan.

*Updates to the Title VI Plan*

As noted above, every three years, the **PORTCO, INC.** submits to DRPT an update to this Title VI Plan. The triennial Title VI update includes the following items, or a statement to the effect that these items have not been changed since the previous submission, indicating date.

- A copy of any compliance review report for reviews conducted in the previous three years, along with the purpose or reason for the review, the name of the organization that performed the review, a summary of findings and recommendations, and a report on the status or disposition of the findings and recommendations
- **PORTCO, INC.**'s Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan
- **PORTCO, INC.**'s procedures for tracking and investigating Title VI complaints
- A complete list of Title VI investigations, complaints or lawsuits filed with the **PORTCO, INC.** since the last submission
- A copy of **PORTCO, INC.**'s agency's notice to the public that it complies with Title VI and instructions on how to file a discrimination complaint

## **XI. Environmental Justice (for All Construction Projects)**

For new construction and major rehabilitation or renovation projects where National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation is required, **PORTCO, INC.** will integrate an environmental justice analysis into the NEPA documentation for submission to DRPT. The development of environmental justice analyses is the responsibility of the **Title VI Manager – Transportation Coordinator, Chris Silver**

