

***Union County, Georgia  
Title VI Plan***

**September 19, 2024**



# Title VI Plan Table of Contents

The Union County Title VI plan includes the following elements:

## Table of Contents

Section 1: Title VI Plan Approval .....	3
Section 2: Title VI Policy Statement .....	4
Section 3: Title VI Notice to the Public .....	5
Section 4: Title VI Complaint Procedure .....	6
Section 5: Title VI Complaint Form .....	8
Section 6: List of Title VI and Civil Rights Violation Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits ....	11
Section 7: LEP Data .....	12
Section 8: Language Assistance Plan .....	15
Section 9: Reasonable Accommodations.....	16

**Section 1: Title VI Plan Approval**

This Title VI Plan, adopted on September 19, 2024, supersedes any previously adopted plans related to Title VI with the exception of Title VI plans specific to Union County Transportation titled Federal Transit Administration Title VI Program.

Title VI Plan Adopted on: September 19, 2024

Adopted by: Lamar Paris, Sole Commissioner

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 2: Title VI Policy Statement**

### **Policy Statement**

Union County, Georgia is committed to ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulation 6 C.F.R. Part 19 and related statutes and regulations in all programs, activities and services of County departments. It is County policy that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin (including language), sex, age, disability or religion be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any County programs, activities or services.

## **Section 3: Title VI Notice to the Public**

### **Title VI Notice to the Public**

#### **Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI**

#### **Union County, Georgia**

Union County operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin (including language), sex, age, disability, or religion in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulation 6 C.F.R. Part 19 and related statutes and regulations in all programs, activities and services of County departments. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI or any other statute may file a complaint with the Union County Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator.

For more information on Union County's civil rights program or Title VI obligations, the procedures for, or to file a complaint, please contact:

Jennifer Mahan, Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator  
706-439-6000

Email: [ucexec@uniongov.com](mailto:ucexec@uniongov.com)

or visit our administrative office at

65 Courthouse St, Suite 1, Blairsville, GA 30512

For more information, visit [www.unioncountyga.gov](http://www.unioncountyga.gov)

- If information is needed in another language, contact 706-439-6000.
- Si se necesita información en otro idioma, comuníquese con 706-439-6000.

The Union County Notice to the Public is posted in the following locations:

1. Courthouse
2. Website

## **Section 4: Title VI Complaint Procedure**

Any individual, group of individuals or entity that believes they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin (including language), disability, sex, age or religion by Union County, Georgia may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the agency's Non-Discrimination Complaint Form.

If the complainant is unable to reduce the complaint to writing, please contact the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator using the information below, and a staff member will help dictate the complaint or provide other necessary assistance.

Any individual having filed a complaint or participated in the investigation of a complaint shall not be subjected to any form of intimidation or retaliation. Individuals who have cause to think that they have been subjected to intimidation or retaliation can file a complaint of retaliation following the same procedure for filing a discrimination complaint.

A complaint must be filed with Union County no later than 180 days after the following:

1. The date of the alleged act of discrimination; or
2. The date when the person(s) became aware of the alleged discrimination; or
3. Where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued of the latest instance of the conduct.

Once the complaint is received, Union County will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. A copy of each Title VI complaint received will be forwarded to the agency's Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office.

Union County has forty-five (45) days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, Union County may contact the complainant requesting further information. The complainant has five (5) business days from the date of the letter to send the requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within five (5) business days, Union County can administratively close the case.

After the investigator reviews the complaint, the agency will issue one of two (2) letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF).

- ✓ A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed.
- ✓ A letter of finding (LOF) summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision they must direct the appeal back to the agency. The complainant has thirty (30) days after receipt of the closure letter or the letter

of finding to do so. The appeal will be investigated and decided by a separate party than the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator. The appeal process information will be included in the letter.

Written Title VI Complaints, or any questions regarding Title VI protections, should be forwarded to:

Jennifer Mahan, Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator  
706-439-6000  
Email: [ucexec@uniongov.com](mailto:ucexec@uniongov.com)  
or our administrative office at  
65 Courthouse Street, Suite 1, Blairsville, GA 30512

If information is needed in another language, please contact 706-439-6000.

*Si necesita información en otro idioma, por favor llame (706-439-6000).*

**Section 5: Title VI Complaint Form**

**Union County, Georgia  
Title VI Complaint Form**

<b>Section I:</b>			
Name:			
Address:			
Telephone (Home):		Telephone (Work):	
E-Mail Address:			
Accessible Format Requirements?	Large Print		Audio Tape
	TDD		Other
<b>Section II:</b>			
Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?		Yes*	No
*If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section III.			
If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining:			
Please explain why you have filed for a third party:			
Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party.		Yes	No
<b>Section III:</b>			



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

**Title VI:**  Race     Color     National Origin (including language)

**Section 504:**  Disability    **Title IX:**  Sex

**Age Discrimination Act of 1975:**  Age

**DHS regulation 6 C.F.R. Part 19:**  Religion

**Other (specify):** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you 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 use the back of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section IV**

Have you previously filed a Civil Rights related 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:

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

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

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

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

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

If marked Yes in Section V, please provide information about a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Title:</b>
<b>Agency:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Telephone:</b>
<b>Section VI</b>
Name of agency complaint is against:
Contact person:
Title:
Telephone number:

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

**Signature and date required below.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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

**Union County, Georgia  
Jennifer Mahan  
Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator  
65 Courthouse Street, Suite 1  
Blairsville, GA 30512  
706-439-6000  
ucexec@uniongov.com**

**Section 6: List of Title VI and Civil Rights Violation Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits**

Union County maintains a list or log of all Title VI and Civil Rights Violation investigations, complaints and lawsuits, pertaining to its programs or activities.

	<b>Date</b> (Month, Day, Year)	<b>Summary</b> (include basis of complaint)	<b>Status</b>	<b>Action(s) Taken</b>
<b>Investigations</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				
<b>Lawsuits</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				
<b>Complaints</b>				
1.				
2.				
3.				

## **Section 7: LEP Data**

As a recipient of federal and state funding, Union County takes reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to our programs and activities by limited English proficient (LEP) persons.

### **What does it mean to be Limited English Proficient (LEP)?**

Limited English Proficient (LEP) refers to persons for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. This includes those who have reported to the U.S. Census that they speak English less than very well, not well, or not at all.

LEP individuals do not speak English as their primary language and therefore have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. Many LEP persons are in the process of learning English and may read, write, speak, and/or understand some English, but not proficiently. LEP status may be context-specific – an individual may have sufficient English language skills to communicate basic information (name, address etc.) but may not have sufficient skills to communicate detailed information in English.

### **Framework for Deciding when Language Services are Needed**

Union County will take the following three steps to ensure meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities for LEP individuals in a manner that balances the following three factors.

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the agency;
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the agency's services and programs;
3. The nature and importance of the agency's services and programs in people's lives; and

### **1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be serviced or likely to be encountered by Union County Government**

The first step in determining the appropriate components of a Language Assistance Plan is understanding the proportion of LEP persons who may encounter our agency's services, their literacy skills in English, their native language, and if any are underserved as a result of a language barrier.

To do this, the agency evaluated the level of English proficiency and to what degree people in its service area speak a language other than English and what those languages are. Data for this review is derived from the United States Census and the American Community

Survey. The most recent data available for the state were the ACS 2018-2022 five-year estimates.

### Service Area Overview

Union County's services, activities, and programs are provided to an estimated population of 27,127 people spread over 322.09 square miles. Union County's service area includes the City of Blairsville and Suches and the service area's population includes four different language groups. Of the total service area 1.47% of the population of residents, report speaking English less than very well. Of that 1.47%, 1.20% of the LEP population is Spanish speaking. A breakdown of the language groups, and those speaking English less than very well, are shown below.

Label	Estimate	Percent
Total:	23,941	
Speak only English	23,045	96.26%
<b>Spanish:</b>	587	2.45%
Speak English "very well"	299	1.25%
Speak English less than "very well"	288	1.20%
<b>French, Haitian, or Cajun:</b>	81	0.34%
Speak English "very well"	81	0.34%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>German or other West Germanic languages:</b>	64	0.27%
Speak English "very well"	56	0.23%
Speak English less than "very well"	8	0.03%
<b>Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages:</b>	51	0.21%
Speak English "very well"	20	0.08%
Speak English less than "very well"	31	0.13%
<b>Other Indo-European languages:</b>	26	0.11%
Speak English "very well"	0	0.00%
Speak English less than "very well"	26	0.11%

<b>Korean:</b>	0	0.00%
Speak English "very well"	0	0.00%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese):</b>	0	0.00%
Speak English "very well"	0	0.00%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Vietnamese:</b>	0	0.00%
Speak English "very well"	0	0.00%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Tagalog (incl. Filipino):</b>	47	0.20%
Speak English "very well"	47	0.20%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Other Asian and Pacific Island languages:</b>	10	0.04%
Speak English "very well"	10	0.04%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Arabic:</b>	30	0.13%
Speak English "very well"	30	0.13%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%
<b>Other and unspecified languages:</b>	0	0.00%
Speak English "very well"	0	0.00%
Speak English less than "very well"	0	0.00%

**2. The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with Union County services and programs.**

Union County employees do not frequently come in contact with individuals unable to communicate in English.

### **3. The importance of Union County's services to people's lives**

Union County services, activities, and programs likely affect every community member and citizen in some way. Services, activities and programs are used daily by people who may have limited English proficiency. It is vital for all community members and citizens, regardless of their ability to speak English, to have access to all services, activities and programs as they are important to LEP person's lives.

## **Section 8: Language Assistance Plan**

Union County's Language Assistance Plan includes the following procedures to provide access to and participation in any and all County programs, activities or services.

1. Identify LEP person's language and communication needs.
2. Provide notice to LEP persons of the availability of language assistance.
3. Provide language assistance through use of interpreter services. All interpreters or translators needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served.
4. Any other need for translated documents or interpretation services will be provided on an as-needed basis. That is, anyone requesting specific information in a non-English language will be provided it upon request. The agency will use its internal resources to meet this need, when available. Otherwise, the agency will reach out to the network of resources it has developed, or hire a translator or interpreter as needed.

In order to ensure that LEP individuals are aware of Union County's language assistance measures, Union County provides:

- The Language Assistance Plan is on the website and hard copies in the office of the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator.
- The agency's website includes language stating, "If you need assistance or information in another language, please contact 706-439-6000. This message is provided in both English and Spanish.

The LAP Plan in conjunction with the Title VI Plan will be reviewed and updated at a minimum once every three (3) years.

Updates will include the following:

- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed.
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning Union County's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals

## **Section 9: Reasonable Accommodations**

Union County is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from Union County programs, activities, and services. Individuals may request reasonable modifications and accommodations from Union County that they believe will enable them to have such equal opportunity to participate in our programs, activities, and services.

A reasonable modification is a change or modification to afford a qualified individual with a disability full enjoyment of Union County programs or activities, unless modifications of policies, practices, and procedures would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity, or result in undue financial and administrative burdens to Union County Government.

### **Notice to Program Beneficiaries**

Any individual with disabilities may request reasonable modifications from Union County Government that they believe will enable them to have such equal opportunity to participate in our programs, activities, and services. Information can be found on the Union County, GA government website <https://www.unioncountyga.gov/> under the Notice and Frequently Asked Questions about Reasonable Accommodations for individuals with Disabilities.

Information on reasonable modifications and the request form is available in alternative format and language on the website and as per Union County LEP policy.

### **Accepting and Responding to Requests for Reasonable Modifications**

Reasonable modifications may be requested by phone, email, mail, or in person. It is requested but not required that an individual complete the Request for Reasonable Modification Form. The form is available on the Union County, GA Government website at [www.unioncountyga.gov](http://www.unioncountyga.gov) or can be picked up at the Union County Commissioner's Office located at 65 Courthouse Street, Suite 1, Blairsville, GA 30512. The requestor should complete the Request for Reasonable Modifications Form. No further documentation is necessary to file a request. The form may be sent to the compliance officer via mail, email, or hand delivered. The request must be phoned in, filed, emailed, or mailed 14 days prior to the program, activity, and/or service.

Requests may be addressed to:

**Union County, Georgia**



**Jennifer Mahan**  
**Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator**  
**65 Courthouse Street, Box 1**  
**Blairsville, GA 30512**  
**706-439-6000**  
[ucexec@uniongov.com](mailto:ucexec@uniongov.com)

The request shall be evaluated to determine if the reasonable modification may be granted. The evaluation may include a consultation with the requester in order to clarify the request and to determine the appropriate modification. Requests may be modified, in writing, after consultation. The requesting individual shall be notified within 10 business days if the modification is to be granted. Union County is committed to providing reasonable accommodations as soon as possible; however, there may be situations where interim accommodations must be put into place due to time constraints and/or the program, activity, and service provided. These situations shall be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The reasonable modifications provided by Union County to enable individuals with disabilities to participate in our programs, activities, and services shall be at no cost to the person requesting or effected parties.

All requests, inquiries, modifications, and accommodations shall be received and performed while maintaining the strictest confidentiality and without the disclosure of any personally identifiable information (PII) in the requests for reasonable modifications. All matters concerning reasonable modifications or accommodations will remain secure and will only be accessed by recipient employees with a need to know.

All requests for modification or accommodations shall be evaluated to determine the need for future reasonable modifications or accommodations at similar Union County programs, activities, and services. The evaluation shall be included in the request and disposition documentation.

### **Monitoring the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations**

Union County shall incorporate a record keeping system that shall include:

- The number and type of requests for reasonable modification and accommodations
- The number of requests for reasonable modification and accommodations that were denied including the reasoning behind the denial
- The number and type of accommodation that were provided
- A summary of circumstances regarding any denials based upon a determination of fundamental alteration or undue burden to Union County

## **Notice and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about Reasonable Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities**

### **NOTICE**

Union County Government is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an **equal opportunity** to participate in and benefit from Union County Government’s programs, activities, and services.

Individuals may request **reasonable accommodations** from Union County Government that they believe will enable them to have such equal opportunity to participate in our programs, activities, and services.

To request reasonable accommodations, contact:

**Jennifer Mahan**  
**Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator**  
**65 Courthouse Street, Suite 1**  
**Blairsville, GA 30512**  
**706-439-6000**  
[ucexec@uniongov.com](mailto:ucexec@uniongov.com)

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

The following FAQ provides information on requesting reasonable accommodations in Union County Government’s programs and activities.

### **1. What is a reasonable accommodation in Union County Government’s program?**

A reasonable accommodation is a change or modification to afford a qualified individual with a disability full enjoyment of Union County Government’s programs or activities, unless modifications of policies, practices, and procedures would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity, or result in undue financial and administrative burdens to Union County Government.

### **2. How do I request a reasonable accommodation?**

If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact:

**Jennifer Mahan**  
**Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator**  
**65 Courthouse Street, Suite 1**  
**Blairsville, GA 30512**  
**706-439-6000**  
[ucexec@uniongov.com](mailto:ucexec@uniongov.com)

### **3. Does my request for a reasonable accommodation need to be in writing?**

No, you do not need to put your request in writing, however, making a written request can be helpful documentation for ensuring that Union County Government provides the desired

accommodation. In addition, you do not need to use the specific words “reasonable accommodations” when making your request.

#### **4. When should I request a reasonable accommodation?**

You may request a reasonable accommodation from Union County Government at any time. However, making the request in advance of a meeting, conference call, or visit will help ensure that Union County Government is able to fulfill the request for an accommodation. For certain requests, such as requests for sign language interpretation, Union County Government requests at least two week’s advance notice.

#### **5. May someone request a reasonable accommodation on my behalf?**

Yes, anyone can request a reasonable accommodation on behalf of an individual with a disability who seeks to interact with Union County Government staff or participate in its programs or activities.

#### **6. What will Union County Government do upon receiving my request for a reasonable accommodation?**

Union County Government may contact you to obtain more information about your request and to better understand your needs. In addition, Union County Government may review your request to determine:

- Whether the requested accommodation will be effective in allowing you to participate in the activity or program in which you are seeking participation;
- Whether the requested accommodation is reasonable, or an equally effective alternative to the requested accommodation is available; and
- Whether providing you with the requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of Union County Government’s program or impose undue financial or administrative burdens on Union County Government.

In addition, in some cases, Union County Government may consult with you in an interactive process to determine on a case-by-case basis what accommodations can be made.

If Union County Government determines that your requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or impose an undue financial or administrative burden, Union County Government may deny your request. However, in the unlikely event that this occurs, Union County Government will work with you to identify an alternative accommodation that allows you to effectively participate in Union County Government’s program, activity, or service.

**7. May Union County Government request medical documentation from you after receiving your request for a reasonable accommodation?**

No, Union County Government may not request medical documentation after receiving your request for a reasonable accommodation. Union County Government's questions will be limited to understanding the barrier to your ability to participate in the program or activity in which you are interested and the nature of an accommodation that will remove this barrier.

**8. May Union County Government charge you the cost of providing the reasonable accommodation?**

No, you are not responsible for the cost of an auxiliary aid or service Union County Government provides to you.