

WINSTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR DISCRIMINATION UNDER 40 C.F.R. PARTS 5 AND 7

PURPOSE

This policy is established to ensure that all programs, activities, and operations funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and administered by the Winston County Board of Supervisors are conducted in compliance with 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7. These regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), sex, disability, and age. This grievance policy provides a formal procedure for individuals who believe they have been subjected to discrimination under these regulations to file a complaint and seek resolution.

DESIGNATION OF COMPLIANCE OFFICER

The Winston County Board of Supervisors hereby appoints Tony Green, Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, 106 Miley Drive, Starkville, MS 39759, telephone 662-324-7860, as the Compliance Officer (Grievance Officer) responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring compliance with 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7. The Compliance Officer will be the point of contact for all grievances related to discrimination under EPA-funded programs.

FILING A COMPLAINT

Eligibility to File: Any individual who believes they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in any program or activity funded by the EPA and administered by the Winston County Board of Supervisors may file a grievance.

Timeframe: Complaints must be filed within 30 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory act. Complaints submitted after this period may not be considered unless extraordinary circumstances are demonstrated.

Submission: Complaints must be submitted in writing and should include the following:

- The complainant's name, address, and contact information.
- A detailed description of the alleged discriminatory act, including the date(s) of occurrence.
- The names of any individuals involved, if known.
- Any relevant supporting documentation or evidence.
- All complaints must be personally signed by the complaining party.

Complaints should be mailed to the designated Compliance Officer at the following address:

Tony Green
Golden Triangle Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 828
Starkville, MS 39760

INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION

Acknowledgment of Complaint: Within 15 calendar days of receiving a complaint, the Compliance Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing and provide an outline of the next steps in the grievance process.

Investigation: The Compliance Officer will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of the complaint. This may include interviews with the complainant, witnesses, and other relevant parties, as well as a review of relevant documents and records.

Resolution: Within 45 calendar days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer will issue a written determination of the findings. The determination will include:

A summary of the investigation process.

The findings of the investigation.

Any corrective actions or remedies to be implemented if discrimination is found.

A statement informing the complainant of their right to appeal.

APPEALS PROCESS

Appeal Submission: If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, they may file an appeal with the Winston County Board of Supervisors within 15 calendar days of receiving the determination. The appeal must be submitted in writing and should include a detailed explanation of the reasons for the appeal.

Board Review: The Winston County Board of Supervisors will review the appeal and all relevant documentation. The Board may, at its discretion, request additional information or hold a hearing to further examine the appeal.

Final Decision: The Board of Supervisors will issue a final written decision within 45 calendar days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Board will be final as no further formal appeals exist within the county government structure.

NON-RETALIATION

The Winston County Board of Supervisors strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who file a complaint or participate in the grievance process. Any individual found to have engaged in retaliatory actions will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Policy Availability: This Grievance Policy will be made readily available to the public and will be provided to all participants and beneficiaries of EPA-funded programs administered by the Winston County Board of Supervisors.

Amendments: The Winston County Board of Supervisors reserves the right to amend this policy as necessary to ensure continued compliance with federal regulations and to address any changes in program administration or legal requirements.

This Grievance Policy was adopted by action of the Board of Supervisors taken on September 3, 2024, and shall be effective immediately. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure its effectiveness in providing for prompt and fair resolution of discrimination complaints and to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws and federal regulations.