

Menlo Park Fire Protection District



Civil Rights Policy

I. PURPOSE

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its service on the basis of race, color or national origin as provided under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. In addition to Title VI, the District also prohibits discrimination based on sex, age, disability, religion, medical condition, marital status or sexual orientation.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to any member of the community seeking District services, and/or access to District sponsored programs, activities or community training and preparedness classes.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act** – Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. The rights of women, the elderly, and the disabled are protected under related statutes.
2. **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** - is a term used to describe individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. The District will make efforts to provide language assistance to individuals who request language assistance.
3. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** - is a comprehensive piece of civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and guarantees those with disabilities the same rights and opportunities as other citizens.

IV. POLICY

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District is committed to providing meaningful access to District services, programs, and activities by all persons, including those with limited English proficiency (LEP). The District will ensure that the level, quality and accessibility of service is provided without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, medical condition, marital status or sexual orientation. In addition, the District will not prevent, deny, reduce, or delay benefits related to programs and activities affecting minority and low-income populations.

The Title VI Coordinator is responsible for providing leadership, direction, and compliance with Title VI and related statutes. For more information contact the Title VI Program at 650-223-7771.

V. PROCEDURE

Any person who believes they may have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation or English proficiency may file a complaint with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District's Administrative Office. The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the complainant and alleged discrimination, such as:

1. The name, address, and phone number of complainant;
2. The name of the division and/or employee(s) against whom the complaint is filed;
3. The location, date, and description of the alleged violation; and
4. The signature of the complainant or his or her designee.

The complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination date. Written complaints may be sent to Menlo Park Fire Protection District, 170 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025 or via email to fhunt@menlofire.org.

After receipt of the complaint:

1. The Coordinator, or designee, will timely make a determination of whether the District has jurisdiction over the complaint, and send the complainant an acknowledgement letter informing them whether the complaint will be investigated;
2. If the Coordinator finds jurisdiction, they will notify the District division that is the subject of the complaint and request a response to the complaint, and will begin an investigation. The investigation may include interviews of the complainant, District employees, contractors, subcontractors, subgrantees, and witnesses to the alleged discrimination, as well as review of any physical or written evidence.

The Coordinator, or designee, may attempt to conciliate and resolve the complaint through a mutually agreeable solution. Any informal resolution must be signed by both the Fire Chief and the complainant. An appropriate, prompt, and impartial investigation of any allegations filed under Title

VI or related federal non-discrimination statutes will be conducted. A preponderance of the evidence standard will be applied during the analysis of the complaint.

When the Coordinator, or designee, determines that a violation has occurred and an informal resolution is not reached, the Coordinator shall make a recommendation to the Fire Chief for remedial actions. The Fire Chief will accept, revise, or reject the Coordinator's recommendations and order the complained-of District division to implement the accepted recommendations.

The Coordinator will provide a written response to the complainant at the conclusion of the investigation. The Coordinator will issue one of three letters:

1. A closure letter summarizing the allegations and stating that there was not a violation and that the case will be closed; or
2. A letter of resolution summarizing the allegations and describing the informal resolution mutually agreed to by the complainant and the department or agency about which the complaint was submitted; or
3. A letter of finding (LOF) summarizing the allegations and the investigation of the alleged complaint, and explaining any remedial actions to be taken by the District.

If the response does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant has the right to file their complaint with the associated federal or state agency. The District shall maintain records of complaints received, informal resolutions and investigation findings. These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file a complaint with state or federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination, intimidation, or retaliation of any kind that is prohibited by law.