

## *Title VI Plan*

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### GATES COUNTY INTER-REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (GITS)

Adopted on: 1/7/2015

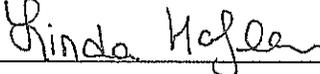
Adopted by: Gates County Board of County Commissioners

Revised on: (insert date)

*This policy is hereby adopted and signed by:*

#### **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System**

Executive Name/Title: Linda Hofler, Commissioner Chairperson

Executive Signature: 

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#### **Policy Statement**

The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System (GITS)** as a recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant dollars either directly from FTA or through the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) and the U.S. Department of Transportation implementing regulations.

#### **Title VI Plan Elements**

The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** Title VI plan includes the following elements:

1. Evidence of Policy Approval
2. Notice to the Public
3. Complaint Procedure
4. Complaint Form
5. List of transit related Title VI Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits
6. Public Participation Plan
7. Language Assistance Plan
8. Minority Representation Table and Description

Note: Additional materials will be attached, if required.

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**TITLE VI Notice to the Public**

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The GITS, Gates County Inter-Regional System's Notice to the Public is as follows:

Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

**THE GATES COUNTY INTER-REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (GITS)**

- ✓ The **GITS System** operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System (GITS).
- ✓ For more information on the GITS' civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact 252-357-4487, (TTY 800-735-2962); email [title.vi.complaint@gatescountync.gov](mailto:title.vi.complaint@gatescountync.gov); or visit our administrative office at 714 Main Street, Gatesville, NC 27938. For more information, visit [www.gatescountyoffice2.gov](http://www.gatescountyoffice2.gov).
- ✓ A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor-TCR 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC, 20590.
- ✓ If information is needed in another language, contact 252-357-4487.  
*Si se necesita informacion en otro idioma de contacto, 252-357-4487.*

The GITS' Notice to the Public is posted in the following locations:

- Agency website [[www.gatescountyoffice2.gov](http://www.gatescountyoffice2.gov)]
- Public areas of the GITS office (common area, public meeting rooms, etc.)
- Inside vehicles
- Other, County Manager's Office

## Title VI Complaint Procedure

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The (GITS) Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's Title VI Complaint Procedure is made available in the following locations: *(check all that apply)*

- Agency website, either as a reference in the Notice to Public or in its entirety
  - Hard copy in the GITS office
  - Available in appropriate languages for LEP populations, meeting the Safe Harbor Threshold.
  - Other, County Manager's office
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Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin by the **GITS** may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the agency's Title VI Complaint Form.

The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System (GITS)** investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident. **GITS** will process complaints that are complete.

Once the complaint is received, **GITS** will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office within fourteen (14) days.

GITS has 90 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the county may contact the complainant.

The complainant has 10 business days from the date of the letter to send 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 15 business days, the county can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

After the investigator reviews the complaint, she/he 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, she/he has 30 days after the date of the letter or the LOF to do so.

A person may also file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, at FTA Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

If information is needed in another language, then contact 252-357-4487. *This statement should be stated in English and in any other language(s) spoken by LEP populations that meet the Safe Harbor threshold.*

## Title VI Complaint Form

The Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's Title VI Complaint Procedure is made available in the following locations:

- Agency website, either as a reference in the Notice to Public or in its entirety
- Hard copy in the transportation office
- Available in appropriate languages for LEP populations, meeting the Safe Harbor Threshold.
- Other, County Manager's office

<b>Section I:</b>				
Name:				
Address:				
Telephone (Home):			Telephone (Work):	
Electronic 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):				
<input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Color <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin				
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.				
_____				
_____				
<b>Section IV</b>				
Have you previously filed a Title VI complaint with this agency?			Yes	No



## List of Transit Related Title VI Investigations, Complaints and Lawsuits

<b>Subrecipient:</b> Gates County		
<b>Contact Person:</b> Natalie Rountree	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 12/12/2014

**Check One:**

There have been no investigations, complaint and/or lawsuits filed against us during the report period.

There have been investigations, complaints and/or lawsuits filed against us. *See list below. Attach additional information as needed.*

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

## Public Participation Plan

<b>Subrecipient:</b>  Gates County		
<b>Contact Person:</b> Natalie Rountree	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 12/12/2014

### Strategies and Desired Outcomes

To promote inclusive public participation, the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will use its resources available to employ the following strategies, as appropriate:

- ✓ Provide for early, frequent and continuous engagement by the public.
- ✓ Expand traditional outreach methods. Think outside the box: go to hair salons, barbershops, street fairs, faith-based institutions, libraries, etc.
- ✓ Select accessible and varied meeting locations and times
- ✓ Employ different meeting sizes and formats
- ✓ Provide childcare and food during meetings, if possible.
- ✓ Use social media in addition to other resources as a way to gain public involvement
- ✓ Use newspaper ads that serve LEP populations. Outreach to LEP populations may also include audio programming available on podcasts.

### Documented Public Outreach

The direct public outreach and involvement activities conducted by GITS are summarized in the table below. Efforts include *meetings, surveys, focus groups, etc.*

Information pertinent to each event and/or activity will be provided to NCDOT upon request. Examples include copies of: meeting announcements, agendas, posters, attendee list, etc.

Event Date	Transit System Staffer(s)	Event	Date Publicized and Communication Method (Public Notices, Posters, Social Media)	Outreach Method (Meeting, Focus Group, Survey, etc)	Notes (Meeting size and format, location, Number of Attendees, etc)
12/11/2014	Director	LEP Program Fair	Sent letters Nov 2014 to LEP families	Meeting/School Sponsor	6

## Language Assistance Plan

### Plan Components

As a recipient of federal US DOT funding, the Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System, GITS, is required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to our programs and activities by limited-English proficient (LEP) persons.

**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.

**The (GITS) Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** Language Assistance Plan includes the following elements:

1. The results of the *Four Factor Analysis*, including a description of the LEP population(s), served.
2. A description of how language assistance services are provided by language
3. A description of how LEP persons are informed of the availability of language assistance service
4. A description of how the language assistance plan is monitored and updated
5. A description of how employees are trained to provide language assistance to LEP persons
6. Additional information deemed necessary

### Methodology

To determine if an individual is entitled to language assistance and what specific services are appropriate, GITS has conducted a *Four Factor Analysis*<sup>1</sup> of the following areas: 1) Demography, 2) Frequency, 3) Importance and 4) Resources and Costs.

#### *LEP Four Factor Analysis*

- **Factor 1: Demography:** What is the number or proportion of LEP persons served and the languages spoken in the service area?

#### Overview

The first factor of the *Four Factor Analysis* is the basis of the Language Assistance Plan. It requires GITS to review its US Census data to determine if it meets the *LEP Safe Harbor Threshold*.

#### US Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Data<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> DOT LEP guidance <https://www.civilrights.dot.gov/page/dots-lep-guidance>

<sup>2</sup> The ACS publishes data in many forms on the Census Bureau American Fact Finder website <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml>

GITS did the following:

1. Analyzed the LEP demographic data for the **(GITS) Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** program and/or service area by calculating the *Safe Harbor Threshold* for two to three of the largest language groups identified other than English.
    - a. The *Safe Harbor Threshold* is calculated by dividing the population estimate for a language group that "Speaks English less than very well" by the total population of the county.
      - i. The *LEP Safe Harbor Threshold* provision stipulates that for each LEP group that meets the LEP language threshold (5% or 1,000 individuals, whichever is less) GITS must provide translation of vital documents in written format for the non-English users.
      - ii. Examples of written translation of vital documents include the Title VI policy statement and/or Notice to the Public (Appendix 2), Title VI Complaint Procedure (Appendix 3), Title VI Complaint Form (Appendix 4), and ADA paratransit eligibility forms.
  2. Explained the results of the analysis of the county LEP data in the demographic section of the *Four Factor Analysis*.
- ✓ **Factor 2: Frequency:** How often does your staff (and/or contractor/lessee) come into contact with LEP persons?

Overview

LEP persons are persons identified as speaking English less than very well, not well or not at all. Just because a person speaks a language other than English doesn't mean they don't speak English or are identified as LEP. The summary below discusses the frequency with which **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** staff, and/or its contractor/lessee come into contact with LEP persons. It also provides information on the how staff is instructed to meet the needs of LEP persons.

**Factor 3: Importance:** How does the program, service or activity affect people's lives?

Overview

The summary below discusses how GITS' program and services impact the lives of person's within the community. GITS will specify the community organizations that serve LEP persons, if available.

✓ **Factor 4: Resources and Costs:** What funding and other resources are available for LEP outreach?

## Overview

The summary below discusses the low cost methods used by GITS to provide outreach to LEP persons as well as train staff (and/or its contractor/lessee) on Title VI and LEP principles.

### *Additional Required Elements*

In addition to the *Four Factor Analysis* (listed below as item #1), GITS will address the following elements:

- Item #2:* A description of how language assistance services are provided by language
- Item #3:* A description of how LEP persons are informed of the availability of language assistance service
- Item #4:* A description of how the language assistance plan is monitored and updated
- Item #5:* A description of how employees are trained to provide language assistance to LEP persons

*And, any additional information deemed necessary.*

## **GITS – Summary of the Language Assistance Plan Components**

<b>Item #1 – Results of the Four Factor Analysis</b> <i>(including a description of the LEP population(s) served)</i>
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### **Example**

#### **Factor 1 – Demography**

**GITS does not contract with a transit provider to provide transportation service for the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** and in Gates County.**

*The US Census Bureau – American Fact Finder (2008-2012) reports there are numerous languages spoken in USA County. Some of these languages include Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, Hmong, and Vietnamese. After English, the second largest language group is Spanish.*

*The Safe Harbor Threshold is calculated by dividing the population estimate for a language group that "speaks English less than very well" by the total population of the county. The LEP Safe Harbor Threshold provision stipulates that for each LEP group that meets the LEP language threshold (5% or 1,000 individuals, whichever is less), GITS must provide translation of vital documents in written format for non-English speaking persons.*

*In Gates County, with a population estimate of 11,500, persons have identified themselves as Spanish speaking and "speaks English less than well". This language group is less than 1% and below the 5% or 1,000 person threshold. This means GITS is not required to provide written translation of vital documents. All of the other language groups listed above are also below the safe harbor threshold. This means, at this time, GITS is also not required to provide written translation of vital documents in these languages.*

~~Because GITS is below the safe harbor threshold and is not required to provide written translation of vital documents, they are not currently provided.~~

*In the future, if GITS meets the Safe Harbor Threshold for any language group, it will provide written translation of vital documents in such languages and also consider measures needed for oral interpretation.*

**Factor 2 – Frequency**

*GITS (and its contractor/lessee, if relevant) will be trained on what to do when they encounter a person that speaks English less than well. GITS and/or its contractor/lessee will track the number of encounters and consider making adjustments as needed to its outreach efforts to ensure meaningful access to all persons and specifically to LEP and minority populations of the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** programs and services.*

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** provides rides to many persons each year. While formal data has not been collected, the system has indicated it has encountered (0) zero LEP persons using the service within the last six months.*

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** has an open door policy and will provide rides to any person who requests a ride. If an individual has speech limitations, the dispatcher or driver will work with the Transit Director and the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System**, if needed to ensure the individual receives access to the transportation service.*

**Factor 3 – Importance**

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** and our contractor/transit provider understands an LEP person with language barrier challenges also faces difficulties obtaining health care, education or access to employment. A transportation system is a key link to connecting LEP persons to these essential services.*

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** assessment of what programs, activities and services that are most critical included contact with community organization(s) that serve LEP persons, as well as contact with LEP persons themselves to obtain information on the importance of the modes or the types of services that are provided to the LEP populations.*

**Factor 4 – Resources and Costs**

*Even though the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** does not have a separate budget for LEP outreach, it will work with our contractor/transit provider to implement low cost methods of reaching LEP populations meeting the Safe Harbor threshold. For example, the **Transportation System** will contract a LEP speaking person as needed to translate information to LEP persons meeting the Safe Harbor threshold. In addition, the **Transit System** and our contractor/transit provider work with local advocacy groups to reach LEP populations.*

**Item # 2 – Description of how Language Assistance Services are Provided, by Language**

**Example**

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will utilize translation websites and/or contractors as needed to reach populations that meet the Safe Harbor threshold. In addition, we work*

~~with our contractor/transit provider to ensure mechanisms are in place to reach LEP persons in the service area. For example, we will provide a special brochure to assist LEP populations in understanding the transportation service for populations that meet the Safe Harbor threshold.~~

**Item # 3 - Description of how LEP Persons are Informed of the Availability of Language Assistance Service**

**Example**

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** and its contractor/transit provider does the following to inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance services: publishing timetables and route maps in languages other than English, provide pictograms and other symbols in relevant published materials, striving to employ multilingual staff, and creating and posting multi-language announcements, posters and other information for any LEP populations that meet the Safe Harbor threshold.*

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** and our contractor also attend any Latino festivals and functions in the area for the LEP population. The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will continue to reach out to LEP populations by visiting local elder housing sites with concentrations of Latinos as well as visiting any local non-English speaking churches and/or events.*

**Item # 4 – Description of how the Language Assistance Plan is Monitored and Updated**

**Example**

*The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** reviews its plan on an annual basis or more frequently as needed. In particular, the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will evaluate the information collected on encounters with LEP persons as well as public outreach efforts to determine if adjustments should be made to the delivering of programs and services to ensure meaningful access to minority and LEP persons.*

*In addition, if relevant, the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will meet with its contractor/transit provider on an annual basis to ensure the Title VI requirements are met.*

**Item # 5 - Description of how Employees are Trained to Provide Language Assistance to LEP Persons**

**Example**

***Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** employees are oriented on the principles of Title VI and the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** Language Assistance Plan. New employees will be provided guidance on the needs of clients served and how best to meet their needs. The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will ensure that any contractor/transit provider also educates its staff on Title VI requirements, and specifically LEP provisions.*

*An important discussion point is that of language assistance. If a driver, dispatcher or employee needs further assistance related to LEP program participants, her/she will work with the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** Title VI Coordinator and/or its contractor/transit provider to identify strategies to meet the language needs of the participants of the program or service.*

As part of our annual check in meeting, if relevant, the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** will meet with any contractor/transit provider to discuss updates in the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's Language Assistance Plan**.

### Minority Representation Information

#### A. Minority Representation Table

The table below depicts the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System's** board related to transit: the **GITS Advisory Board**.

Body	Caucasian	Hispanic	African American	Asian American	Native American
Population	63.9%	1.8%	33.1%	.2%	.5%
GITS Advisory Board	40%	0%	60%	0%	0%

#### B. Efforts to Encourage Minority Participation

The **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System (GITS)** understands diverse representation on committees, councils and boards results in sound policy reflective of its entire population. As such, **GITS** encourages participation of all its citizens. As of December 2014, most races residing in the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** were represented on Advisory Board. As vacancies on boards, committees and councils become available, **GITS** will make efforts to encourage and promote diversity. To encourage participation on its boards, committees and councils, **GITS** will continue to reach out to community, ethnic and faith-based organizations to connect with all populations. In addition, **GITS** will use creative ways to make participating realistic and reasonable. Such as, scheduling meetings at times best suited to its members and providing transportation, if needed for its members.

*Minority Representation Data Collection Form*

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**GITS Advisory Board**

Date: January 5, 2015

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Dear Member,

As the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** is a recipient of federal funds, we are required under Title VI of the Civil Rights statute to ascertain the racial/ethnic make-up of any non-elected boards, commissions, councils, etc.

Data from this section is used for statistical and reporting purposes. The information may be subject to disclosure under federal or state law or rule.

**Anti-Discrimination Notice**

It is unlawful for the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System** to fail or refuse to provide services, access to services or activities, or otherwise discriminate against an individual because of an individual's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or veteran status.

As a council under the jurisdiction of the **Gates County Inter-Regional Transit System**, we invite council members to voluntarily self-identify their race/ethnicity in order for us to comply with FTA Title VI regulations. This information will be used according to the provisions of applicable federal and state laws, executive orders and regulations, including those requiring the information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement purposes.

**Race/Ethnicity**

If you choose to self-identify, please mark the **one box** describing the race/ethnicity category with which you primarily identify:

*Asian or Pacific Islander*: All persons having origins in any of the peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands and Samoa.

*Black and/or African American* (not of Hispanic origin): All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

*Hispanic*: All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

*American Indian or Alaskan Native*: All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

*Caucasian* (not of Hispanic origin): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa or the Middle East.

