

City of Ashford, Alabama

Grievance Procedure for Allegations of Discrimination

Effective Date: June 16, 2025

Approved By: Ashford City Council

I. Purpose

The City of Ashford is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program, service, or activity on the basis of **race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability**, in accordance with applicable federal civil rights laws.

This grievance procedure provides a prompt and fair process for any **individual or group** to file a complaint alleging discrimination related to City services, programs, or activities.

Any claims of intimidation or retaliation related to the complaint process will be handled promptly and fairly pursuant to the below procedure and in the same manner as other claims of discrimination

II. Applicability

This procedure applies to:

- Program participants or beneficiaries
 - Members of the public accessing city facilities or services
 - Contractors, vendors, and subcontractors
 - Anyone affected by city programs or activities, regardless of employment status
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III. Filing a Complaint

1. **Written Complaints Required:**

All grievances must be submitted **in writing** to the City Clerk, who serves as the designated **Civil Rights Compliance Officer**.

2. **Contact Information:**

Complaints should be addressed to:

City Clerk / Civil Rights Compliance Officer

Janet Rumley
City of Ashford
525 North Broadway Street
Ashford, Alabama 36312
cityclerk@cityofashford.com
334-899-3366

3. **Deadline:**
Complaints must be filed within **180 calendar days** of the alleged act of discrimination.
 4. **Complaint Content:**
The written complaint should include:
 - Name and contact information of the complainant
 - Date(s) of the alleged discriminatory act
 - A detailed description of the incident
 - Names of involved parties (if known)
 - The desired resolution or remedy
 5. **Accessibility:**
The City will provide assistance upon request to individuals with disabilities or limited English proficiency to ensure they can complete and submit the complaint.
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IV. Investigation and Resolution

1. **Initial Review:**
The CR Compliance Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **7 calendar days** and will determine if the complaint meets jurisdictional requirements.
2. **Informal Resolution:** The Civil Rights Compliance Officer may attempt to conciliate and resolve the complaint through a mutually agreeable solution. Any such informal resolution must be signed by both the Compliance officer and the complainant.
3. **Investigation:**
The CR Compliance Officer will conduct a prompt and fair investigation, which may include reviewing documents, interviewing witnesses, and gathering other relevant information. This will be completed within **180 calendar days**.
4. **Findings and Response:**
A written determination and findings will be issued to the complainant within **180 calendar days** of receipt of the grievance, unless extended for good cause. The preponderance of the evidence standard will be applied during the analysis of each complaint.
5. **Corrective Action:**
If a violation is found, the City will take appropriate corrective action to remedy the situation.
6. Any claims of intimidation or retaliation related to the complaint process will be handled promptly and fairly pursuant to the below procedure and in the same manner as other claims of discrimination

V. Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may submit a written appeal to the **Civil Rights Compliance Officer** within **15 calendar days** of receiving the City's response.

VI. External Filing Options

Complainants may also file complaints directly with external governmental agencies to include but not limited to the following federal agencies:

- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**
 - **U.S. Department of Justice – Civil Rights Division**
 - **U.S. Department of Transportation – Office of Civil Rights**
 - **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Office of Fair Housing**
 - **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office for Civil Rights**
 - **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Office of External Civil Rights Compliance**
 - **The Federal Emergency Management Agency**
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VII. Records and Confidentiality

All records related to complaints and investigations will be maintained for a minimum of **three years**. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigation.

VIII. Published Notice

The following will be posted and published as required by law regarding the city's policy and procedures herein.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The City of Ashford does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, or sex in administration of its programs or activities, and, The City of Ashford does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised their rights to participate in actions protected, or oppose action prohibited, by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

Janet Rumley (City Clerk) is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by federal non-discrimination laws.

If you have any questions about this notice or any of The City of Ashford's non-discrimination programs, policies or procedures, you may contact:

Janet Rumley, City Clerk and Civil Rights Compliance Officer

525 North Broadway Street, Ashford, Alabama 36312
cityclerk@cityofashford.com
334-899-3366

If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a City of Ashford program or activity, you may contact the Compliance Officer named above identified above or visit our website at www.cityofashford.com to learn how and where to file a complaint of discrimination.

The Company's Nondiscrimination Policy and Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis, and revised as necessary, to ensure prompt and fair resolution of discrimination complaints and ongoing compliance with 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7.