



**FEDERAL COORDINATION AND COMPLIANCE SECTION
CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Ensuring consistent and effective Title VI enforcement across the federal government

Dear Colleague,

I'm writing to announce the launch of **Title VI Civil Rights News @FCS**. As part of the Justice Department's coordination responsibilities under Executive Order 12250 – and in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act – the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section (FCS) of the Civil Rights Division will now be providing periodic emails highlighting noteworthy Title VI developments from across the government. For this first installment, we want to share with you some of the important and interesting work of our office, FCS.

Watch for future emails highlighting the work of other agencies, sharing helpful Title VI resources (including updated chapters of our Title VI Legal Manual), and much more. We are migrating this outreach to Govdelivery.com* for future distribution.

Courts Language Access Resolutions Reached: The Justice Department recently reached an agreement with the Rhode Island Judiciary to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) individuals will have access to timely and competent language assistance at no charge in all court proceedings, services and programs throughout the state court system. The press release, which details the efforts to be undertaken in order to ensure comprehensive language assistance throughout the court system, is [here](#), the full agreement can be accessed [here](#), and the Rhode Island judiciary's language access plan can be found [here](#).

The Justice Department also recently reached an agreement with the New Jersey Judiciary to provide comprehensive language assistance services to LEP individuals resolving a Justice Department review that was opened in response to complaints by court users that courthouses in two counties in New Jersey were not fully accessible to LEP individuals. The full Justice Department press release outlining the actions and initiatives that the New Jersey Judiciary has implemented to respond to concerns raised during the federal review and the efforts they will undertake to ensure the ongoing provision of comprehensive language assistance throughout the court system is [here](#), and the full agreement is [here](#).

Environmental Justice Website Launched: Also, under the leadership of the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section, the Title VI Committee of the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice posted a [new page](#) dedicated to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the role enforcement can play in addressing environmental justice issues. Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, directs "each Federal agency [to]... make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations." All federal agencies, in accordance with Title VI, are obligated to ensure the programs and activities they fund that affect human health and the environment do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The [new webpage](#) includes resources to support Title VI enforcement and compliance activities and educate recipients and the public about the intersection of Title VI and Executive Order 12898.

Title VI Statements Of Interest Filed: We also wanted to share with you two Statements of Interest we have filed in cases alleging national origin discrimination in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

of 1964. We filed a statement of interest in *Faith Action for Community Equity v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation*, a case alleging that the Hawai'i Department of Transportation denied LEP individuals a meaningful opportunity to take the Hawai'i driver's license examination. We urged the court to find that the allegation, if proven, constitutes intentional discrimination on the basis of national origin and therefore is a proper subject for a private lawsuit to enforce Title VI. The full Statement of Interest can be found [here](#).

We also filed a statement of interest in *Torres v. City of New York*, a case alleging that the New York City Police Department refused to communicate in Spanish with LEP Spanish-speaking victims of domestic violence. We argued that the allegations, if true, constitute national origin discrimination under Title VI and therefore the police department's motion to dismiss should be denied. The full Statement of Interest can be found [here](#).

New Tools to Access: The Federal Coordination and Compliance Section has released a number of Translation and Interpretation Procurement Series (TIPS) tools

- [Before You Hire - Ask Yourself: "What are my Project's Language Needs?"](#) - TIPS to making language service hiring decisions. (PDF)
- [TIPS on Hiring the Right Telephonic Interpretation Vendor](#) - TIPS to finding a high-quality telephone interpretation vendor. (PDF)
- [TIPS for Working with Telephone Interpreters](#) - TIPS for planning, placing, and troubleshooting phone-calls with telephone interpreters. (PDF)
- [What Does it Mean to be a Certified Linguist?](#) - TIPS to discovering vendor and linguist qualifications. (PDF)

In addition, we have released a new tool to help state and local courts assess and improve their language assistance services for LEP litigants, victims and witnesses who need access to court services. The tool can be found [here](#).

Sign up Now for 50th Anniversary Tweets: And last, we want to let you know that we will be launching a 50 Days of Civil Rights Tweeting project in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. You can follow the tweets via the Civil Rights Division's twitter feed, @CivilRights, <https://twitter.com/CivilRights>.

Thank you,

Deeana Jang
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