



ADA COMPLAINT AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

These procedures cover all complaints filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, for alleged failure to adhere to the requirements of this Act or its supporting regulations in the operation of any program or activity administered by the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST).

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other State or Federal agencies or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and COAST may be utilized for resolution.

Any person, group of people or entity that has a complaint related to the Americans with Disabilities Act as it relates to COAST's services or activities may file a written complaint to the following address:

**ADA Complaint Officer
Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
42 Sumner Drive
Dover, NH 03820
Phone: 603-743-5777
Fax: 603-516-0592**

The following measures will be taken to resolve complaints filed under the ADA and related statutes:

- 1) A formal complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence. Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the individual or his/her legal representative, and will include the Complainant's name, address and telephone number; the name of the person alleged to have engaged in discriminatory behavior ; the basis for the complaint and the date of the alleged act(s). A statement detailing the facts and circumstances must accompany all complaints.
- 2) In the case where a Complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint may be made to the COAST ADA Complaint Officer. Under these circumstances, the Complainant will be interviewed, and the Officer will assist the Complainant in converting the verbal allegations to writing.
- 3) When a complaint is received, the ADA Complaint Officer will provide written acknowledgment to the Complainant within ten (10) days by registered mail.
- 4) If a complaint is deemed incomplete, additional information will be requested, and the Complainant will be provided 60 business days to submit the required information. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.

- 5) Within 15 business days from the receipt of a complete complaint, COAST will determine its jurisdiction in pursuing the matter and whether the complaint has sufficient merit to warrant investigation. Within five (5) business days of the decision to proceed with an investigation or not, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will notify the Complainant and Respondent, by registered mail, informing them of the disposition.
 - a. If the decision is made to not investigate the complaint, the notification shall specifically state the reason for the decision.
 - b. If the complaint is to be investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of COAST's jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
- 6) When COAST does not have sufficient jurisdiction, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will refer the complaint to the appropriate State or Federal agency holding such jurisdiction.
- 7) If the complaint has investigative merit, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will assign an investigator. A complete investigation will be conducted, and an investigative report will be submitted to the Executive Director within 60 days from receipt of the complaint. The report will include a narrative description of the incident, summaries of all persons interviewed, and a finding with recommendations and conciliatory measures where appropriate. If the investigation is delayed for any reason, the investigator will notify the appropriate authorities, and an extension will be requested.
- 8) The Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will issue letters of finding to the Complainant and Respondent within 90 days from receipt of the complaint.
- 9) If the Complainant is dissatisfied with COAST's resolution of the complaint, he/she has the right to file a complaint with the:

**Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Complaint Team
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590**

or

**Intake Department
NH Commission for Human Rights
2 Industrial Park Drive
Concord, NH 03301**