I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Allegany County, New York Public Transit System (ACCESS Allegany) is committed to providing non-discriminatory service to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in the receipt of its services on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or Vietnam-era veteran status.

A. SCOPE AND GUIDANCE

ACCESS Allegany’s Civil Rights Policy Statement directs that the requirements of Articles 15 and 15-A of New York State Executive Law, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act, and all other relevant laws and executive orders are fully integrated into all of ACCESS Allegany’s and sub-recipients’ activities. State and Federal nondiscrimination laws are the cornerstones of ACCESS Allegany’s strategy to ensure equal opportunity and fair and equitable programs and services to the public.

All employees and Third Parties (sub-contractors) must assist in the prevention and elimination of any discriminatory practices and are encouraged to report allegations of discrimination to the Allegany County Administrator for review and appropriate action.

B. COMMUNICATION OF POLICY AND RIGHTS TO CONSUMERS

ACCESS Allegany notifies the public of its Title VI obligations through various media that includes, but is not limited to:
2. Prominently posted in each bus used in public transportation.
3. Published annually in two local newspapers: Wellsville Daily Reporter and the Cuba Patriot.

The following language is used in the notice(s):
ACCESS ALLEGANY is committed to providing non-discriminatory service to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in the receipt of its services on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or Vietnam-era veteran status. To request additional information on ACCESS Allegany’s Civil Rights Policy, or if you believe you have been subjected to discrimination and would like to request a Complaint of Discrimination Form, you may contact: Allegany County Administrator, County Office Building, Room 207, 7 Court Street, Belmont, New York 14813. Phone: 585-268-9217 Fax: 585-268-9623.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

ACCESS Allegany encourages public participation in decisions that affect service and accessibility to all through means that include, but are not limited to:
1. Surveys that are designed to capture information on past performance and future opportunities.
2. Public meetings whenever significant changes to service area or schedule are anticipated. These meetings are advertised using seat drop notices, social media, newspaper notices and website announcements.
3. Advisory Committee made up of multi-sector representatives.

Reviewed and Approved by Allegany County Mobility Management Committee: April 4, 2017
D. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

ACCESS Allegany recognizes that access to public transportation for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) is crucial. Although the number of persons reporting that they “speak English less than very well” in recent census data is small for Allegany County (less than 5% of population across all languages other than English), ACCESS Allegany provides language assistance in ways that include, but are not limited to:

1. Critical information is posted in both English and Spanish.
2. Website can be translated into 90 languages using drop down menu.

II. PROCEDURE

Allegany County maintains this Civil Rights Complaint Procedure to ensure that no person using the Allegany County, New York public transit system be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program administered by Allegany County and all Third Party contractors. All civil rights and related statute complaints are considered formal as there is no informal process. Complaints will explain as fully as possible the facts and circumstances surrounding the claimed discrimination. In the event that a person makes a verbal complaint of discrimination to Allegany County or any Third Party Contractor, the person will be directed to complete a Complaint of Discrimination Form and follow the procedure as outlined.

Any person and/or entity who believes they have been subjected to discrimination will be directed to carry out the following:

1. Complete a “Complaint of Discrimination Form” (Appendix A) which is available on the ACCESS Allegany website, or can be obtained upon request from the Mobility Management Planner. The complaint may be filed by the individual and/or their representative. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination, unless the filing time is extended by the US Secretary of Transportation in accordance with CFR49 Section 21.11(b).

2. The Complaint of Discrimination Form must be completed in full and signed by the person(s) or their representative and either brought to, mailed, or faxed to:
   Allegany County Administrator
   County Office Building, Room 207
   7 Court Street
   Belmont, New York 14813
   Fax: 585-268-9623

3. All civil rights complaints must be reported to NYSDOT within 24 hours of receipt.

4. An Acknowledgement Letter (Appendix B), Notice of Rights (Appendix C) and Complainant Consent and Release Form (Appendix D), will be sent to the complainant.
   a. The Acknowledgement Letter notifies the Complainant that their complaint has been received.
   b. The Notice of Rights provides a description of the Complainants rights and protections.
   c. The Complaint Consent and Release Form documents the Complainant’s understanding of the information that may be shared and with whom, and allows them to either Consent or Deny release of this information.

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5. Upon receipt of the Consent and Release Form:
   a. If consent is received, an acknowledgement letter (Appendix E) will be sent to the
      Subrecipient/Respondent informing the Subrecipient/Respondent of the discrimination complaint and
      outlining the responsibilities of the Subrecipient/Respondent as stated in Section 5.d. of the Required
      Contract Provisions for Federal-Aid Construction Contracts or other applicable requirements; e.g.
      consultant contracts, local agreements or modal program grants. A copy of this letter will also be sent to
      the complainant.
   b. If consent is denied, investigation and attempted resolution of the complaint will proceed as far as
      possible without disclosing the identity of the complainant. The complainant acknowledges that this
      may result in the complaint case being closed if sufficient evidence cannot be substantiated.

6. All actions taken to resolve the complaint will be documented in the Resolution Agreement between
   Complainant and Subrecipient/Respondent (Appendix F). This document must be signed by Complainant,
   Subrecipient/Respondent and Allegany County’s Civil Rights Compliance Officer and becomes part of the
   permanent file regarding the incident. Both the complainant and the respondent are encouraged to work
   together to resolve the discrimination complaint to the satisfaction of both parties. Allegany County will make
   every attempt to resolve complaints promptly by taking action within 21 business days. If at any time during
   the investigation evidence indicates other persons were affected by the alleged discriminatory actions, all
   corrective actions will include such other persons.

7. A log of all civil rights discrimination complaints (Appendix G) will be kept current and available for
   NYSDOT and/or FTA inspection at all times.