

Transit Public Participation Plan Outline

1. Brief description of provider's activities and services

Independence, Inc. provides door-to-door service for residents of Douglas County. Our accessible transportation provides transport for shopping, medical appointments, prescription pick-up, work, and recreation. We also provide weekly transportation to medical appointments in Topeka, Leavenworth, and Kansas City.

2. Brief description of activities that would warrant public participation (i.e. fare changes, changes to service hours, route adjustments, service area changes).

Independence, Inc. notifies the public of any fare changes, service hour changes, demand response service, and policy or procedure changes at least 30 days before any changes are made. We have a public comment/community input agenda at our monthly Board Meeting.

3. Brief description of the proactive public participation strategies would be used.

All public notifications are as follows:

- *Public meetings are held monthly (i.e., Board Meeting) at our accessible location*
- *Various advertising platforms are utilized (Lawrence Journal World, 60 & Better Newsletter, KLWN, website, twitter, and Facebook.)*
- *A database of contacts is maintained, and every new consumer is entered into this database*
- *When possible, an email would be sent to various list serves, including Lawrence Area Partners in Aging membership, Douglas County Coalition on Aging participants, etc.*
- *Direct mailings to the donor mailing list.*

4. Title VI and DOT regulations prohibit recipients from intentionally discriminating against people on the basis of race, color, or national of origin. Include a brief description of how your agency intends to address any need for language translation services in order to provide agency communication to the general public and minority populations in their service area (i.e. translation of public meeting materials, providing translation services if requested, targeted media messages in low income neighborhoods of service area, Work with existing neighborhood and advocacy organizations).

- *Spanish translation of our transportation brochure outlining services and ridership policies*
- *Translation services available upon request for brailing and sign language*
- *Outreach to rural community/low-income areas through community alliances and coalitions*

5. Brief description of the desired outcomes of the agency's public participation efforts.

- *The agency desires to have actively engaged riders, stakeholders, and members of the general public in the decision-making process.*
- *The agency strives to have given adequate public notice of public participation activities and allowed proper time for public review and comment at key decision points.*
- *The agency desires to provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to transit riders, stakeholders, and members of the general public*
- *The agency will provide responses to all public input as appropriate.*
- *The agency will have facilitated effective communication among a diverse group of stakeholders.*
- *The agency will have established a timetable for review of the Public Participation Process to ensure it provides full and open access to all.*

6. Brief summary of recent outreach efforts over the past three years.

We conduct annual satisfaction surveys to our past and present ridership, our community partners, and act upon any concerns disclosed.

Title VI Complaint Procedures

The following pertains only to Title VI complaints regarding the services of Independence, Inc.

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. At the heart of the regulation is the statement that:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Independence, Inc. has in place a Title VI Complaint Procedure, which outlines a process for local disposition of Title VI complaints and is consistent with guidelines found in Chapter III of the Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B, dated October 1, 2012. If you believe that Independence, Inc.

federally funded programs have discriminated against your civil rights on the basis of race, color, or national origin you may file a written complaint by following the procedure outlined below:

1. Submission of Complaint.

Any person who feels that he or she, individually or as a member of any class of persons, on the basis of race, color, or national origin has been excluded from or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination caused by Independence, Inc. may file a written complaint with Independence, Inc. (Title VI Coordinator/Director/CEO). A sample complaint form is available for download at(independenceinc.org) and is available in hard copy at the offices of Independence, Inc. Upon request, Independence Inc. will mail the complaint form. **Such complaints must be filed within 180 calendar days after the date the discrimination occurred.**

Notes: Assistance in the preparation of any complaints will be provided to a person or persons upon request and as appropriate. If information is needed in another language, then contact (Jill Enyart (785) 841-0333. (This note should be stated in English and in any other language(s) common to the service area.)

Complaints should be mailed to or submitted by hand to:

***Independence, Inc
2001 Haskell Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66046
ATTN: Executive Director***

2. Referral to Review Officer

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Executive Director of Independence, Inc. shall appoint one or more staff review officers, as appropriate, to evaluate and investigate the complaint. If necessary, the Complainant shall meet with the staff review officer(s) to further explain his or her complaint. The staff review officer(s) shall complete their review no later than 45 calendar days after the date the agency received the complaint. If more time is required, the Executive Director shall notify the Complainant of the estimated timeframe for completing the review. Upon completion of the review, the staff review officer(s) shall make a recommendation regarding the merit of the complaint and whether remedial actions are available to provide redress. Additionally, the staff review officer(s) may recommend improvements to the Independence, Inc.'s processes relative to Title VI, as appropriate. The staff review officer(s) shall forward their recommendations to the Executive Director for concurrence. If the Executive Director concurs, he or she shall issue the Independence Inc.'s written response to the Complainant. This final report should include a summary of the investigation, all findings with recommendations, and corrective measures where appropriate.

Note: Upon receipt of a complaint, Independence, Inc. shall forward a copy of this complaint and the resulting written response to the appropriate KDOT and FTA-Region 7 contacts.

3. Request for Reconsideration

If the Complainant disagrees with the Executive Director's response, he or she may request reconsideration by submitting the request, in writing, to the Executive Director within 10 calendar

days after receipt of the Executive Director's response. The request for reconsideration shall be sufficiently detailed to contain any items the Complainant feels were not fully understood by the Executive Director. The Executive Director will notify the Complainant of his or her decision in writing either to accept or reject the request for reconsideration within 10 calendar days. In cases where the Executive Director agrees to reconsider, the matter shall be returned to the staff review officer(s) to reevaluate in accordance with Paragraph 2 above.

4. Appeal

If the request for reconsideration is denied, the Complainant may appeal the Executive Director's response by submitting a written appeal to Independence, Inc. Board of Directors no later than 10 calendar days after receipt of the Executive Director's written decision rejecting reconsideration. The Independence, Inc. Board of Directors will then make a determination to either request re-evaluation by the staff review officer(s) or forward the complaint to KDOT for further investigation.

5. Submission of Complaint to the State of Kansas Department of Transportation.

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the Independence, Inc.'s resolution of the complaint, he or she may also submit a written complaint within 180 days after the alleged date of discrimination to the State of Kansas Department of Transportation for further investigation.

KDOT Office of Civil Rights Compliance
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 Southwest Harrison
3rd Floor West
Topeka, KS 66603