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RTD Proposed Service Changes

May 13th 2025

2025 Civil Rights Title VI Proposed Policy Changes

Agenda

- Overview of Title VI and the Civil Rights Act
- Proposed Policy Changes
 - Major Service Change Policy
 - Low-Income Definition
 - Fare Equity Policy
- Council Request
- Next Steps



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964



“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.”



Transit Equity Goals | Title VI



- Equity means fairness or justice in the way people of different races, colors, languages spoken, etc. are treated, and how benefits and burdens are distributed among them
- Fair distribution of transit services
- Full, fair participation in public transportation decision making
- Meaningful access to transit-related programs for linguistically diverse populations
- Ensure people of color and low-income customers are not unfairly affected by agency level decisions or projects



RTD Title VI Civil Rights Program

- RTD's compliance approach
 - Follows guidelines set by the Federal Transit
- Administration (FTA Circular 4702.1B)
- Includes policies, standards and analysis to prioritize equity
- Tools and plans for compliance
- Equity analysis: evaluating impacts on different communities
- Service monitoring: assessing equitable service delivery
- Community engagement: incorporating public feedback (e.g., Public Participation Plan and Language Access Plan)



Proposed Policy Changes

- Major Service Change Policy
- Low-Income Definition
- Fare Equity Policy



Service Changes

Major Service Change Policy

- **RTD reviews, proposes, and implements changes to its service schedules three times a year**
 - Typically take effect in January, May/June, and September
- Service changes support multiple objectives: improve on- time performance, account for changes in ridership, advance RTD's System Optimization Plan
 - Five categories:
 - Route adjustment
 - Seasonal adjustment
 - Service increase
 - Service reduction
 - Schedule timing



Proposed Major Service Change Policy

Current Policy

- A major service change is defined as a 25% increase or decrease in service hours on a route or line lasting 12+ months

Proposed Changes

- A major service change will include any 25% change (+/-) in service hours, route
- miles, service span and frequency Includes changes made at one time or cumulatively over a 36-month period
- It also applies to implementation, elimination or discontinuing a route or line



Low-Income Definition

Current Policy

- A household is considered low-income if their income is at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines

Proposed Change

- Increase threshold to at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

2024 Poverty Guidelines Household Income Per Year		
Household Size	150%	200%
1	\$22,590	\$30,120
2	\$30,660	\$40,880
3	\$38,730	\$51,640
4	\$46,800	\$62,400
5	\$54,870	\$73,160
6	\$62,940	\$83,920



Current Fare Equity Policy

Current Policy

- **When fare prices change, or when several fare changes are averaged together**, they should not negatively impact BIPOC or low-income individuals by more than 5% compared to the overall ridership
- Additionally, if **fare payment methods (e.g., passes or electronic payments) are changed or discontinued**, RTD's equity analysis should include how these changes affect access to fare options, such as **vending machines or online payment methods**



Proposed Additions to Fare Equity Policy

- **Define "fare change" to include:**
 - Any change in fare prices
 - Types of fare media (e.g., cash or electronic payments)
 - Fare products (e.g., day or monthly passes)
 - Different fare levels (e.g., standard or airport pricing)
 - Customer categories (e.g., seniors or youth)
 - Ticket Vending Machine access (e.g., payment options or fees)



Our Request of Council

- Support the proclamation supporting these proposed changes

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council wholeheartedly supports the 2025-2028 Title VI Program to include proposed updates to the major service change, disparate impact, and fare equity policies as well as updates to RTD's Public Participation Plan and Language Access Plan.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that copies be transmitted to the Atlantis Community and to the Regional Transportation District.



WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 stands as a cornerstone of civil rights, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, have equal access in any program, service or activity receiving federal financial assistance;

WHEREAS, The Regional Transportation District (RTD), a recipient of federal financial assistance, provides critical services to the residents of the City and County of Denver by ensuring that mobility is not a barrier to accessing places of employment, education, or healthcare; and

WHEREAS, Upholding the values and goals of Title VI is an iterative process that requires proactive stewardship, on-going action and periodic review to support implementing Title VI regulatory directives to the highest standards; and

WHEREAS, RTD must ensure equal access, uphold nondiscrimination requirements and demonstrate compliance with federal regulatory requirements as put forth by the Federal Transit Administration by submitting its Title VI Program every three years; and

WHEREAS, RTD's proposed 2025-2028 Title VI Program is comprised of a collection of policies, plans and other initiatives that promote fair, accessible and equitable public transportation for all customers; and

WHEREAS, RTD's proposed policy updates will proactively identify and mitigate potential inequities before implementing fare or service changes by expanding the definition of major service changes to better capture cumulative impacts, add clarity to the types of major service changes, clarify what counts as a fare change and raise the income threshold to more accurately reflect Denver's cost of living; and

WHEREAS, RTD's updated 2025-2028 Language Access Plan will ensure meaningful access to linguistically diverse customers by strengthening partnerships with community organizations that serve newcomer communities, exploring opportunities to help frontline staff overcome language barriers through training and resources and improving accessibility through the implementation of website and mobile app language tools.