Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
9801 Lake Forest Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana 70127
www.dscej.org

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Inc.
Policies and Procedures
last updated: November 21, 2026

Discrimination Complaint and Compliance Review/Grievance Procedure

POLICY *Applies to: General Public*

It is the policy of the DSCEJ to ensure full compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws in all programs and activities. The DSCEJ will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, ethnic group identification, creed, sex (including actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity), disability, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, veteran's status, or age in any DSCEJ programs, services, or activities.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI") prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. The Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504") prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability by state or local government agencies and recipients of federal financial assistance.

Discrimination includes but is not limited to, excluding an individual from participation in or denying an individual the benefits of any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance due to the individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

The DSCEJ does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, ethnic group identification, national origin, creed, disability, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, veteran's status, or sex (including actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity) in the administration of its programs or activities, whether carried out by the DSCEJ directly, through a contractor, or any other entity with whom the DSCEJ arranges to carry out its programs and activities.

The DSCEJ is committed to taking reasonable steps to provide timely and meaningful access for Limited English Proficient Persons coming into contact with the DSCEJ's programs, services, and activities. The DSCEJ will provide free language assistance to such persons.

This Complaint and Compliance Review/Grievance Procedure is established so that any member of the public who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination in the receipt of benefits and/or services from DSCEJ on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, ethnic group identification, national origin, creed, disability, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, veteran's status, or sex (including actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity) and wishes to file a complaint may do so following the outline below.

In addition, the DSCEJ's Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator may, on her own initiative, undertake compliance reviews to investigate compliance of DSCEJ departments with Title VI, the ADA, Section 504, and other federal and state civil rights laws in the absence of a complaint on a periodic basis. The Port is prohibited from retaliating against any member of the public who files a complaint under these procedures and any retaliation will be handled promptly if it occurs.

The complaint shall be in writing and contain information about the complainant and the alleged discrimination such as:

1. The name, address, and phone number of the complainant;
2. The name of the Port department and/or employee(s) against whom the complaint is filed;
3. The location, date, and description of the alleged violation; and
4. The signature of the complainant or his or her designee.

Please see the **TITLE VI/504/ADA and Related Statutes Discrimination Complaint Form** at the end of this Procedure.

If the complainant is unable to submit the complaint in writing, he or she may call the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice's Compliance Coordinator to submit a verbal complaint.

The complaint shall be submitted by the complainant or his or her designee as soon as possible but no later than 180 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

Brigette Sabbs, Deputy Director
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
9801 Lake Forest Blvd
New Orleans, LA 70127
(504) 296-5756
brigettews@dscej.org

If a complaint is submitted directly to a DSCEJ office, or staff member, the DSCEJ office, or staff member shall forward the complaint to the Compliance Coordinator within 5 calendar days.

Within 10 calendar days after receipt of the complaint:

1. the Deep South Center's Compliance Coordinator will make a determination of whether DSCEJ has jurisdiction over the complaint and send the complainant an acknowledgment letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated. This letter will also inform the complainant of his/her right to file directly with the federal agency;
2. for complaints regarding Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, the DSCEJ Compliance Coordinator will forward a copy of the complaint to the appropriate federal agency as required, along with a statement describing all actions taken to resolve the matter and the results thereof, within 15 days of receipt;
3. if the Compliance Coordinator finds jurisdiction, s/he will notify the DSCEJ that is the subject of the complaint and request a response to the complaint and will begin an investigation. The investigation may include interviews of the complainant, employees, contractors, subcontractors, sub grantees, and witnesses to the alleged discrimination, as well as review of any physical or written evidence.

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice Compliance Coordinator may attempt to conciliate and resolve the complaint through a mutually agreeable solution. Any such informal resolution must be signed by both the DSCEJ Program that is the subject of the complaint and the complainant. Absent extenuating circumstances, the DSCEJ Compliance Coordinator will complete his/her investigation and resolution efforts within 30 days after beginning the investigation.

An appropriate, prompt, and impartial investigation of any allegations filed under federal non-discrimination statutes will be conducted. A preponderance of the evidence standard will be applied during the analysis of the complaint.

When the DSCEJ Compliance Coordinator determines that discrimination has occurred, and an informal resolution is not reached, the DSCEJ Coordinator shall determine any necessary remedial actions and order the complained-of program/associate to implement the accepted recommendations.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the DSCEJ Compliance Coordinator will provide a written response to the complaint within 45 calendar days after beginning the investigation. The Coordinator will issue one of three letters:

1. a closure letter summarizing the allegations and stating that there was not a violation and that the case will be closed; or
2. a letter of resolution summarizing the allegations and describing the informal resolution mutually agreed to by the complainant and Deep South Center for Environmental Justice about which the complaint was submitted; or
3. a letter of finding ("LOF") summarizing the allegations and the investigation of the alleged complaint and explaining any remedial action to be taken by the Port.

If the response does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant or the DSCEJ may appeal the decision to the DSCEJ's Executive Director within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response from the DSCEJ Compliance Coordinator. Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the DSCEJ Executive Director or his or her designee will meet with the complainant and the affected program to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. The Executive Director or his or her designee may also interview witnesses and review any physical or written evidence. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting with the complainant and DSCEJ Executive Director or his or her designee will respond in writing to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

If at any time a delay is expected, the Compliance Coordinator will notify the complainant in writing of the reasons(s) for the delay and the expected date for a response.

The Compliance Coordinator shall maintain records of complaints received, informal resolutions, investigation findings, appeals, and appeal decisions. The Compliance Coordinator shall document actions taken to resolve each complaint, communicate complaint activity to the appropriate federal agency as required, and maintain copies of complaints and documentation of their resolution for a period of not less than two (2) years.

The Compliance Coordinator (through the Executive Director) shall furnish a report to the Board of Directors at least annually regarding the number, nature, and status of complaints.

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file a complaint with state or federal agencies, or to pursue litigation for complaints alleging discrimination, intimidation, or retaliation of any kind that is prohibited by law.