



Georgia Ports Authority

Procedure for Non-Employee Discrimination Complaints/Grievances

Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) complies with all applicable laws and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, or sex in the administration of its programs or activities. GPA is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning the non-discrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and other applicable federal non-discrimination laws, including, but not limited to, Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, and 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 (hereinafter referred to collectively as, federal non-discrimination laws).

This document outlines complaint procedures for non-employees relating to the GPA's provision of programs and services. (GPA's procedures for employees to complain about employment-related matters is stated in a separate policy). GPA's Non-Discrimination Coordinator (listed below) shall be responsible for the coordination and oversight of federal non-discrimination laws. The Non-Discrimination Coordinator and/or his/her designee will receive and review complaints, communicate with complainants, investigate complaints or arrange for the investigation of complaints, issue letters and notices, and perform other actions necessary to fulfill GPA's obligations under federal non-discrimination laws.

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Any person who believes he/she has been discriminated against with respect to a GPA program or activity may file a complaint using the below procedures. An appropriate, prompt, and impartial investigation of allegations filed will be conducted.

Any individual who files a complaint or testifies, assists, or participates in a discrimination investigation, proceeding, or hearing may not be intimidated or retaliated against by the GPA or its employees for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege guaranteed by law, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504, or other civil rights statutes, or by GPA.



The GPA's procedures for non-employee discrimination complaints and retaliation complaints are as follows:

1. Any person who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination may file a written complaint with the GPA's Non-Discrimination Coordinator.
 - a. Complainants also have the right to complain directly to the appropriate federal or other government agency; however, the complainant must do so within the time provided by law.
2. The complainant may download the complaint form at www.gaports.com or request the complaint form from the Non-Discrimination Coordinator. In lieu of the complaint form, the complainant may submit to the Non-Discrimination Coordinator a written statement that contains all of the information identified in Sections 3a through 3f below.
3. The complaint should include the following information, if known:
 - a. Name, address, and telephone number of the complainant.
 - b. The basis of the alleged discrimination (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability).
 - c. The date or dates on which the alleged discriminatory event or events occurred.
 - d. Description of the alleged incident, including what led complainant to feel discrimination was a factor.
 - e. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons who may have knowledge of the event.
 - f. If a complaint has been filed with an agency or court, the agency or court where it was filed and contact name.
 - g. Complainant's signature and date.
4. If the complainant is unable to submit a complaint form or a written complaint, the Non-Discrimination Coordinator should be contacted.
 - a. GPA will make reasonable accommodations in its policies and procedures which are necessary to allow a person with disabilities full access to the complaint filing and investigative process. Such accommodations may include, but not be limited to, large print, Braille, audio tape, or assisting the complainant in preparing his or her written complaint. Anyone needing such an accommodation may contact the Non-Discrimination Coordinator by the best means available.
5. Once a complaint is filed, an acknowledgement letter will be issued to the complainant within five (5) business days.
6. The GPA will investigate the complaint promptly, and endeavor to complete the investigation within 60 days, but may take more time when necessary. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the Non-Discrimination Coordinator may contact the complainant, who shall, where practical, respond within seven days, or such other reasonable time period specified by the GPA. Failure to promptly provide requested information may result in the dismissal of the complaint or the closing of the investigation. A case can also be administratively closed if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue his/her case.



7. At the conclusion of the investigation, GPA will notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation.
8. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, he/she has ten (10) days after the date of notification of the result. to do so. Appeals should be made to and will be decided by GPA's Chief Human Resources Officer.

The Non-Discrimination Coordinator may attempt to conciliate and resolve the complaint through a mutually agreeable solution. Any informal resolution must be signed by the GPA Chief Human Resources Officer and the complainant.

All written complaints received by the Non-Discrimination Coordinator, appeals to the Chief Human Resources Officer, and responses from these two individuals will be retained by the GPA for at least three (3) years.

These procedures do not limit or deny the complainant's right to file a formal complaint with an outside enforcement agency. In addition to the procedures above, any person who feels that he/she has been discriminated against with respect to a GPA program or activity may contact the appropriate federal agency.