

Complaint Policy and Procedures for Fixed Route and Complementary Paratransit Services

The RBA has three types of complaint procedures:

1. General Non-Operational Complaint
2. Operations/Service Complaint
3. Title VI Civil Rights Complaint

Complaints related to fixed route and complementary paratransit services should utilize the Operations/Service Complaint. For convenience, the information related to this type of complaint is repeated below.

- The initial complaint, whether verbal, written, mailed, or submitted by email, should be directed to the Planning and Transit Director, within thirty (30) days of the incident/most recent occurrence. **Assistance in completing the complaint form is available upon request; assistance may also be provided by a Rider's advocate if desired.** Forms are available on all Regional Bus Authority (RBA) vehicles, at the Dan Rabin Transit Plaza, 425 Sibley Street, Hammond, IN 46320, at the RBA Main Offices, 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN 46368, upon request of any Triple A Express or First Transit, Inc. driver, on the RBA website at www.rba-nwi.org, or in Appendix D of the RBA ADA Policy and Procedures Manual. In the event a complaint is received verbally, it should be documented in writing using the designated complaint form and a copy of the completed form should be provided to the rider.
- If the complaint relates to a service provided by the RBA, the Planning and Transit Director will handle the disposition of the complaint. A response will be given to the complainant (unless the complaint has been filed on an anonymous basis) within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint. A copy of the disposition of the complaint will be kept on file at the RBA. Disciplinary action taken upon a RBA employee is subject to the Full Board of Directors. Should the complainant not be satisfied with the resolution of the complaint an appeal can be sent to the Executive Director at 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN. 46368.
- If the complaint relates to a service provided by an RBA contractor the complaint will be forwarded to the General Manager, or responsible person for the contractor for investigation and disposition. The responsible person for the contractor will respond to the complaint, if required, within sufficient time for the RBA Executive Director to forward the response to the complainant within thirty (30) days. A copy of the disposition of the complaint will be kept on file at the RBA. Disciplinary action taken upon a contracted employee is subject to the contractor's personnel policy, and the provisions of the service contract.
- The RBA will acknowledge receipt of all service complaints in writing within ten (10) days and provide a written response within thirty (30) days. All other complaints will be responded to within thirty (30) days. The written response shall include:
 - A copy of the initial complaint;
 - If the issue has been resolved, a description of the resolution; and
 - If the issue is still under investigation, an estimate of the additional time needed to complete the investigation.
 - Decision and resolution of complaint with dates and times of future committee meetings

- All complaints to be assigned to a RBA Committee for purposes of reviewing any appeal related to the complaint. The complainant shall be notified as to which committee will be reviewing the complaint appeal.
- A record of all complaints will be maintained by the RBA and reviewed on an annual basis by the Planning and Transit Director.
- **EMERGENCY COMPLAINTS:** The RBA or its contractors, shall have a designated person available during normal hours of operation (as well as one hour after operations are completed) to promptly handle and investigate all- telephone inquiries and/or complaints regarding complementary paratransit service that require immediate action. The appropriate telephone number for such inquiries/complaints shall be provided on the rider's certification card. Circumstances requiring immediate action may include, but are not limited to, inquiries about the whereabouts of a vehicle that is at least fifteen (15) minutes late, riders that are stranded without transportation, instances where the driver is incapacitated or other instances where the rider's safety might be affected. Such complaints will be given immediate attention and investigation. Such complaints will be recorded in writing and written responses will be completed in an expeditious manner.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint an appeal may be made. Appeal forms are available at the, Dan Rabin Plaza, 425 Sibley Street, Hammond, IN 46320 (219) 853-6513, at the RBA Main Office, 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN. 46368 (219) 762-4767, in the ADA Policy Manual under Appendix E, or on the RBA website at rba-nwi.org.

1. The complainant must appeal the decision, whether verbally, in writing, by mail, or by email, no later than sixty (60) days after receipt of written response to the complaint. If a complainant cannot write or has difficulty filing an appeal he or she can contact the Regional Bus Authority, Deputy Manager and/or Planning and Transit Director at (219) 853-6513 within the sixty (60) days and file the appeal by phone call. Appeals taken over the phone shall be documented on the appropriate Appeal Form in Appendix E of this Manual and a copy will be provided to the complainant. Additionally, complainants have the right to use an advocate to assist them in filing an appeal.
2. Appeals will be held in a closed session, but are subject to the Indiana Open Door Laws. When an appeal is received and assigned to a Committee the Complainant will be provided meeting dates to select for the appeal review. All meetings shall be held at accessible locations near transit routes.
3. The RBA has two Committees that will review the appeal in a closed session. The Operations Committee shall review all appeals related to operations and services. The Management Committee shall review all appeals related to personnel and policy issues. If an appeal has multiple issues then the Management Committee shall hear the appeal.

Once the appeal has been reviewed, the Committee will forward a written decision regarding the appeal to the complainant no later than 30 days from the date of the Committee meeting that the appeal was reviewed.

4. A copy of the written appeal will be kept on file.
5. The complainant has sixty (60) days to file a final appeal to the Full RBA Board of Directors. The same Appeal Form in Appendix E of this manual is to be used. Final Appeals shall be heard during open regular Board Meetings.
6. Upon formation of the Council on Accessible Transportation, these procedures will be revised to reflect the role the council will play in the appeal process.
7. The Appeal Form is in Appendix E of this Manual.