



## Fact Sheet

### Protecting Individuals from Discrimination Based on an Actual or Perceived Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (OCRE) enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, et seq., and its implementing regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 22, which prohibits race, color, and national origin discrimination by recipients of Federal financial assistance from the Department of the Treasury. This fact sheet describes ways this protection covers individuals who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or of another religious group.

#### Title VI's Protection from Discrimination

Title VI *prohibits recipients of Federal financial assistance from discriminating based on race, color, or national origin*. This includes a prohibition on discrimination, including harassment, based on an individual's actual or perceived: (i) shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or (ii) citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity.

Title VI also prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin against individuals of any religion, including those who are *Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, or Buddhist*, when the discrimination, for example, involves:

- Racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes;
- How an individual looks, including skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions;
- An individual's foreign accent;
- An individual's foreign name, including names commonly associated with particular shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or
- An individual who speaks a foreign language.

#### What can a person do if they experience discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics by a program or activity that receives financial assistance from the Department of the Treasury?

Anyone who believes that a recipient of Treasury financial assistance has discriminated against them based on race, color, or national origin can *file* a complaint of discrimination with OCRE *within 180 days* of the alleged discrimination. To file a complaint, send a complaint letter to: U.S. Department of the Treasury, Director, Office Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity, 1500 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Washington, DC 20220 or by email to [crcomplaints@treasury.gov](mailto:crcomplaints@treasury.gov).

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### **What Treasury programs are included in the protection against discrimination based on ancestry or ethnic characteristics?**

Title VI applies to recipients of federal financial assistance, including grantees under programs administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury bureaus, such as the [Departmental Offices \(DO\)](#), [Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#), and the [U.S. Mint](#).

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Additional resources about an individual's right to non-discrimination and related resources can be found on the OCRE civil rights webpage at: <https://home.treasury.gov/about/offices/diversity-equity-inclusion-and-accessibility/civil-rights-and-equal-employment-opportunity/federally-assisted-programs-and-federally-conducted-programs>

Additional compliance information for the recipients of Treasury financial assistance is available by accessing the [https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/306/CR\\_TK\\_OCRE\\_508.pdf](https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/306/CR_TK_OCRE_508.pdf) (Treasury Civil Rights Toolkit)

Other federal agencies enforce laws that expressly prohibit religious discrimination. For example, complaints of religious discrimination in employment can be brought to the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#), in housing to the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#), and by public schools and colleges to the [U.S. Department of Justice \(DOJ\)](#).

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*Please note this resource does not have the force and effect of law. Treasury's enforcement of Title VI stems from Title VI and its implementing regulations.*