

Polk TDSP -- DRAFT-- Grievance and Complaint Procedures

The Polk Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD-LCB) conducts an annual review of the Grievance and Complaint Procedures to ensure compliance and effectiveness. This review has been carried out during board meetings on 9/20/2021, 6/27/2022, 6/12/2023, 6/17/2024, 6/16/2025 and most recently on 6/15/2026.

Citrus Connection is the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Polk County, Florida. The CTC will provide a toll free telephone number for comments/complaints to the CTC and disclose the toll free telephone number for comments/complaints to the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged Ombudsman. These toll free numbers will be listed in the user's guide along with information on how to file a complaint.

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to provide participating users, funding agencies and transportation providers with a local impartial body to hear unresolved complaints and make recommendations on disputes concerning services. The CTC's complaint process includes advising dissatisfied persons about a second impartial body to hear complaints, i.e., the Commission's Ombudsman Program. An appeal to the Grievance Committee may be filed only after the complainant has sought satisfaction from the Polk County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). A complaint or appeal to the Commission's Ombudsman Program may be made anytime.

The Polk County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board) has established a Grievance Committee consisting of one (1) of its voting members who would serve as the chairperson, one (1) CTC representative (not involved in the original complaint), and one (1) planning agency representative. The Committee processes, investigates and assists in the resolution of formal grievances. In addition, the Committee verifies that the CTC implements and follows these grievance procedures.

The CTC Program Manager is on the Committee as an advisory member and the Committee receives staff support from the Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO).

In accordance with the CTC complaint process, if a complaint is not resolved within thirty (30) calendar days, the CTC will inform the grievant about the availability of the Coordinating Board's grievance procedure and that they may contact the TPO for additional information on how the grievance procedure is initiated. The TPO will inform the grievant requesting the information that they may present their grievance to the Committee by completing a grievance form provided by the TPO. The grievance form constitutes a written appeal to the Committee and shall include the following:

1. Name and address of the complainant.
2. Statement of the ground(s) for the grievance specifying areas of disagreement with the CTC's decision regarding the complaint.
3. Supplemental supporting documents, as available.
4. Appropriate, a statement regarding a possible violation of a specific law, regulation, or contractual arrangement; and
5. Explanation of the relief desired by the complainant.

Upon receipt of the completed form, the TPO has ten (10) working days to contact Committee members and set a hearing date. The grievant will be notified at least seven (7) working days prior to the hearing date by certified mail, return receipt requested.

At the grievance proceedings, a quorum (three voting members) of the Committee shall be present for any official actions. No member will vote on an issue that is deemed a conflict of interest. The committee will gather information and take testimony relating to the grievance. Committee meetings are open to the public and minutes shall be kept for the public record.

The committee reviews the material presented and recommends a resolution to the parties involved. A written copy of the Committee's decision will be forwarded to the Coordinating Board and the parties involved within ten (10) days from the date of the decision. The written decision will include the following information:

1. Statement that a meeting was held at which the involved parties were given an opportunity to present their positions;
2. Description of the issues discussed; and
3. Committee's recommendation and reasons for the Committee's decision.

If the grievance cannot be resolved by the Committee process, the grievant may notify the TPO that they want to file an appeal with the Coordinating Board. Once an appeal has been filed with the TPO, the Coordinating Board shall meet to render its decision within thirty (30) days of the date the appeal was filed. The grievant shall be notified in writing of the date, time and place where the appeal shall be heard. The written notice shall be mailed at least ten (10) working days in advance of the meeting.

Following the meeting where the appeal was heard, a written copy of the Coordinating Board's decision will be forwarded to the grievant and all parties involved within ten (10) days from the date of the decision. If the grievant is still unsatisfied, they may continue the appeal process with the TD Ombudsman Program.

Polk County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board
Grievance Form

Please provide this information

1. Name and address of the complainant.
2. A statement of the ground(s) for the grievance specifying areas of disagreement with the Polk County Community Transportation Coordinator's decision regarding the complaint.
3. As appropriate, a statement regarding a possible violation of a specific law, regulation, or contractual arrangement.
4. An explanation of the relief desired by the complainant.
5. Attach supplemental supporting documents, as available.

Mail completed form to:

Cindy Mitchell
Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
Drawer TS05
P.O. Box 9005
Bartow, FL 33831-9005

If you have any questions, contact the Polk TPO at (863) 534-6486
Or email to: cindymitchell@polkfl.gov

