

## The PA Human Relations Act protects you...

### In Employment

- It is unlawful to fire, refuse to hire, refuse to contract with certain independent contractors or discriminate in any term of employment because of race, color, religion, ancestry, age (40+), sex, national origin, non-job related disability, association with a person with a disability or because a person holds a diploma based on a GED.

### In Housing, Commercial Property and Public Accommodation

- It is unlawful to refuse or deny housing or public accommodation or to make different conditions because of the person's race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, association with a person with a disability, use of guide or support animal due to blindness, deafness or physical disability, or because the user is a handler or trainer of such animals. Age and familial status are also protected in housing and commercial property.

## The PA Fair Educational Opportunities Act protects you....

### In Education

- It is unlawful to exclude or limit or otherwise discriminate because of race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, handicap or disability against any student or students seeking admission to educational institutions.
- It is unlawful to expel, suspend, punish, deny facilities or otherwise discriminate against any student because of race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, handicap or disability.

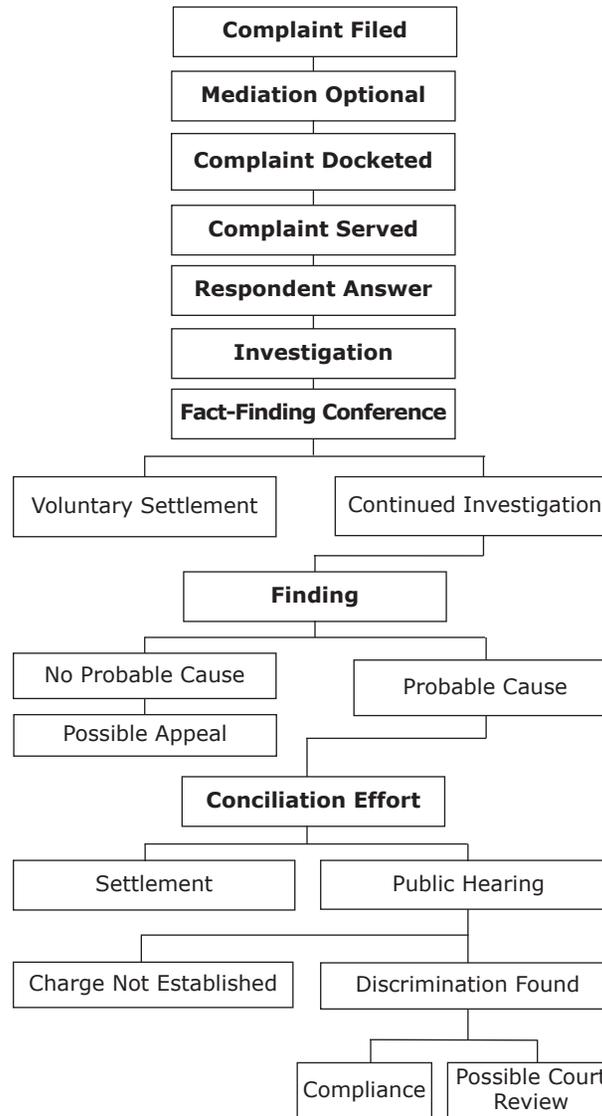
### Retaliation...

It is unlawful to retaliate against an individual because they have opposed a practice forbidden by the PHRA or have participated in matters involving unlawful discrimination.

### Accessibility and Language Translation

If you require an accommodation for a disability, have questions about accessibility, or require language translation, please contact the regional office that serves you for assistance.

## The Complaint Process



**Harrisburg Regional Office**  
717.787.9780

**Philadelphia Regional Office**  
215.560.2496

**Pittsburgh Regional Office**  
412.565.5395

**Central Office**  
717.787.4410

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# PHRC

## How to File a Discrimination Complaint



## What is the Complaint Process?

- You must file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination unless you have a legally justifiable reason why you did not file during this period.
- Once your complaint is received, your complaint will be assigned to an intake representative on a “first come, first serve” basis.
- The respondent (person or company named in your complaint of discrimination) is notified of your complaint when it is officially served.
- The respondent has 30 days to answer the complaint from the day it was served and you will be copied on their response.



## Investigation

### You will need to:

- Provide witness names, addresses and contact information.
- Provide any relevant documents which support your charges.
- Inform the investigator of any change in your address or phone number, as well as your attorney’s information, if applicable.

## Fact-Finding Conference

- The PA Human Relations Commission (PHRC) often holds a fact-finding conference, which you and the respondent may attend to present evidence and documents relating to the case. The fact-finding conference is intended to speed up the investigation.
- A fact-finding conference may not be held in your case, if:
  - The case settles.
  - Either party refuses to participate.
  - The investigator determines a conference is not necessary based on the circumstances.
- The investigator interviews the complainant, respondent and witness/es at the fact-finding conference.

## Results of the Investigation

The investigation may conclude with a finding of no probable cause or probable cause.

### No Probable Cause

- No probable cause means that the investigator did not find sufficient evidence of discrimination.
- If the PHRC dismisses your case due to a no probable cause finding, you will be notified by mail and informed of your appeal rights.

### Probable Cause

- Probable cause means that the investigator found sufficient evidence of discrimination
- If the investigator finds probable cause, PHRC will attempt to conciliate the complaint as soon as possible by asking the respondent to:
  - Cease and desist from unlawful discriminatory practices; and,
  - Provide appropriate remedies including payment for damages, policy changes, etc.

## Public Hearing

If your case does not settle after conciliation efforts, the PHRC may hold a public hearing.

- At the public hearing both sides will present testimony under oath.
- The commission then reviews the record, renders a decision and issues a legally enforceable order.
- The order may be appealed to Commonwealth Court.

## Additional Information

- PHRC may also close your case for other administrative reasons such as lack of jurisdiction, court filing, etc.
- If your complaint has not been dismissed or resolved in one year after it was filed, you have the right to file in court.

**If you feel that you have been a victim of unlawful discrimination you should contact the PA Human Relations Commission. You may access forms for filing a complaint on the agency’s website at [www.phrc.gov](http://www.phrc.gov).**

