

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.

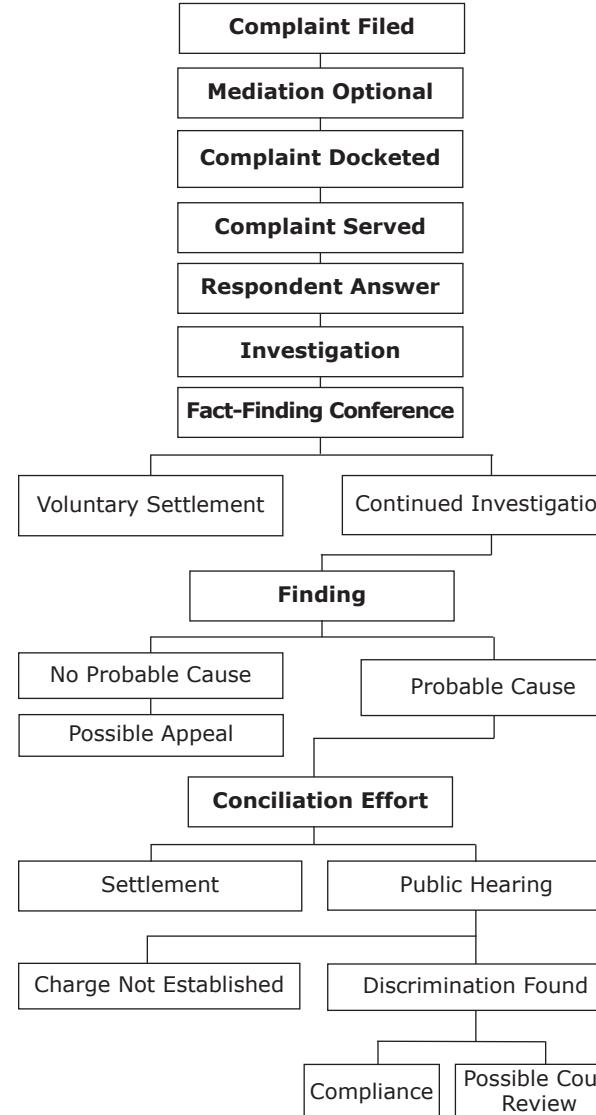
Retaliation...

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



How to File a Discrimination Complaint

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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pennsylvania
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

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.

