



**PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
**Advocating for Social Change**  
**Eradicating Racial Discrimination**

**The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (“PHRC”) enforces laws that protect certain rights pertaining to where someone lives, works, learns, and obtains services offered to the public. All citizens of this Commonwealth, regardless of race, have the right to equal opportunity and to live free from discrimination under the law. In addition, at the request of the Governor, the PHRC may investigate claims of excessive use of force by police in civil rights protest activities.**

**PHRC IS LISTENING**

The PHRC is saddened by the tragic events that have continued to negatively impact individuals of color across the nation because of racism. The PHRC holds town halls and social justice events throughout the Commonwealth to hear the concerns of its citizens and to promote equality. To be a part the community of PHRC advisors, you can contact the PHRC directly through our website at <https://www.phrc.pa.gov/Pages/contact-us.aspx> , attend one of our local events, or connect with one of our partners:

**Monthly Commission Meetings:** Unless otherwise noted, the PHRC holds public meetings on the fourth Monday of every month. A quorum of Commissioners representing the PHRC are in attendance along with our Executive Director. Periodically, the PHRC public meetings are held in locations other than Harrisburg. When this happens, the public session of such meetings begins at 5:00 p.m. to expand the opportunity for public comment. In the “In Your Community” section of the PHRC’s website you can find information about the scheduled commission meetings as well as the scheduling of other events. You can also directly contact the PHRC at (717) 787-4410.

**Advisory Councils:** Advisory councils have been operating throughout the Commonwealth since the creation of the PHRC in 1955. The PHRC Advisory Councils were created to extend the PHRC’s ability to reach communities to

promote a better understanding of what the PHRC does, what is happening in local communities, and to create partnerships at the local level. To find an advisory council in your area visit: <https://www.phrc.pa.gov/About-Us/Pages/Advisory-Councils.aspx#.VfhpERFVhBc>

**Report Bias and Hate Crimes:** PHRC does not charge or investigate hate crimes or other criminal offenses. However, PHRC tracks incidents reported to the Commission and informs the PA Interagency Task Force on Community Activities and Relations of what occurred. The task force is comprised of various state agencies and other interested organizations who work to prevent and respond to civil tension and violence arising from conflicts between ethnic or cultural groups and when there are public expressions of bias or hate. The primary function of the group is to address civil tension when conflicts occur, and to promote positive community relations quickly and appropriately among various groups to prevent tension. The task force would like everyone to know exactly what a hate crime is under the crimes code in Pennsylvania and that if someone is a victim of a hate crime, that there are specifically designed civil remedies available.

### **PHRC IS EDUCATING AND ADVISING**

The PHRC regularly provides training free of cost to employers, housing providers, educational institutions, public accommodations, advisory councils, and local human relations commissions about the laws we enforce. Additionally, we provide training on implicit bias, hate crimes, and other civil rights topics.

PHRC's website contains publicly short videos explaining what discrimination entails. Watch here: <https://www.phrc.pa.gov/Resources/Pages/Videos.aspx>. PHRC's Executive Director, Chad Dion Lassiter, is nationally recognized in the field of American Race Relations. He has worked on peace, poverty and race related issues in Africa, Israel, Canada, Haiti and Norway. He is a frequent guest on both international and national television and radio.

<https://www.lehighvalleylive.com/opinion/2020/06/how-do-we-renew-our-nations-failing-human-rights-commitment-three-ideas-opinion.html>

<https://www.ydr.com/story/opinion/2020/03/11/there-another-viral-pandemic-spreading-across-america-hatred/5021032002/>

<https://6abc.com/6abc-town-hall-race-rage-and-healing-sharrie-williams-gray/6234985/>

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1970875>

## **RACIAL JUSTICE: WHAT CAN YOU DO**

### **LEARN MORE ABOUT RACISM**

One of the first steps to take to help advocate for racial justice is to become educated about racism, what it is, where it comes from, and how to combat it. There are a lot of good books and resources from non-profit organizations that can help provide this type of education. Consider utilizing some of the resources that follow.

### **Books for Adults**

1. "The Color of Law," by Richard Rothstein
2. "The New Jim Crow," by Michelle Alexander
3. "So You Want to Talk About Race," by Ijeoma Oluo
4. "Stamped from the Beginning," and "How to Be an Anti-Racist ,"By Ibram X. Kendi
5. "White Fragility," by Robin Diangelo
6. "White Rage," by Carol Anderson
7. "Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria," Beverly Tatum
8. "Race Matters," by Cornel West
9. "Police Brutality An Anthology," by Jill Nelson
10. "America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the New Bridge to a New America," by Jim Wallis
11. "Racism: A Short History," by George M. Fredrickson
12. "Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression," by Joe R. Feagin

13. "From Slavery to Freedom," by John Hope Franklin
14. "Dismantling Racism: The Continuing Challenge To White America," by Joseph Brandt
15. "White-Washing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society," by Michael K. Brown, Martin Carnoy, Elliott Currie, Troy Duster, David B. Oppenheimer, Majorie M. Schultz and David Wellman
16. "Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice," by Paul Kivel
17. "White Collar Factory: Black Education In Urban America," by Jack Washington
18. "White Privilege and Black Rights," by Naomi Zack
19. "Promoting Racial Literacy In Schools: Differences That Make A Difference," by Howard C. Stevenson
20. "Just Mercy," by Brian Stevenson
21. "Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Black Social Gospel," by Gary Dorrien
22. "The Great Wells of Democracy: The Meaning of Race In American Life," by Manning Marable
23. "Democracy In Black: How Race Still Enslaves The American Soul," by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

### **Books for Children and Teens**

1. "A Kids Book About Racism," by Jelani Memory
2. "This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do The Work," by Tiffany Jewell
3. "Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You: A Remix" by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
4. "Fair Housing Five & The Haunted House" Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center

### **Helpful Anti-racism/Racial Justice Organizations:**

1. SURJ – Showing Up for Racial Justice,  
<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/>
2. Non-Profit Anti-Racism Coalition (NPARC),  
<https://www.501commons.org/resources/consultants-other-nonprofit-specialists/non-profit-anti-racism-coalition-nparc>

### **Guides and Resources:**

1. The Racial Justice Resource Guide is helpful:  
[www.racialjusticeresourceguide.org](http://www.racialjusticeresourceguide.org)
2. A Short Cartoon Video on Inequity: “The Unequal Opportunity Race”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX\\_Vzl-r8NY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX_Vzl-r8NY)
3. Center for Urban Education, Implicit Bias in Action  
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=implicit+bias+test&docid=608010005654799234&mid=58A1BE610D38EBF2D6AE58A1BE610D38EBF2D6AE&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>
4. Test Implicit Bias (unconscious attribution of qualities to certain groups)  
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
5. Glossary of Terms Used in Anti-Bias Resources, Anti-Defamation League  
<https://www.adl.org/media/4663/download>

## **SUPPORT SOCIAL JUSTICE CHANGE**

**Share What You Learn & Question What You Believed:** An important step after educating yourself about racism is to share what you have learned and to be willing to see other perspectives. To learn you must first listen. Listen to the voices of the people who experience racism. Sometimes this may be uncomfortable, but change is often hard or uncomfortable. The PHRC encourages you to talk to your friends and family members and to share resources with them that you have uncovered. **Ideas:** start a book club on

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the topic of racism or oppression attend social justice events and invite others to come with you, and teach your children about the experiences of others.

**If You See Something Say Something:** This familiar phrase is very applicable here. To achieve social change, advocates and allies must be willing to speak up about what is right and not let victims of bias, discrimination, or hate stand alone. **Offer to help.** Do not let racism go unchecked even when minorities are not present. Expressing bigotry or hate should be uncomfortable. Those who express bigotry or hate should be made to feel uncomfortable each and every time.

**Apologize When Warranted:** All human beings make mistakes. If you make one, or are told that you did, **listen** to the criticism, **learn, apologize**, and see what you can do to make it right. It may take a lifetime to unlearn and combat unconscious (implicit) bias.

**Demand Equal Opportunity:** Whatever your political views are, and whomever your elected officials may be, **engage** them. Ask what they are doing to create and maintain a community free of bias, discrimination, and hate. Ask about their social justice, equity, and policy initiatives. Demand equal opportunity for all. Demand equity and justice. **Vote like it is a privilege** that everyone does not have and support initiatives that ensure all Americans are heard.

**Donate:** If you are fortunate enough to have extra time or resources, **donate** your time, talent, and/or money to causes for social change that you believe in. Consider supporting victims of discrimination as they advocate for change themselves rather than starting your own initiative.

**Think Before You Comment & Share:** Social media has put close friends, acquaintances, and strangers at our fingertips. Social media can be a source for the dissemination of good or a painful instrument of hate. Before sharing on social media, consider what is being said critically and whether that is the message you seek to convey.



**See Humanity in People:** Work harder to find things in common with others than to identify differences or justify long held beliefs. Listen and learn about other perspectives from reputable sources (i.e. websites ending in .org or .edu instead of questionable sources like social media).

### **STAY INFORMED**

If you would like to receive information about the PHRC's social justice events or to stay informed about what the PHRC is doing, please contact us to join our mailing list at:

**[phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov)**

**ALL THOSE WHO ARE CONCERNED MUST ACT  
RACIAL JUSTICE IS NOT INEVITABLE  
SILENCE IS CONSENT**

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