



## District of Columbia Office of Human Rights



prevent discrimination • investigate complaints • secure language access • address bullying

## What we do.

The DC Office of Human Rights is a DC government agency that **mediates and investigates** complaints of discrimination, and works to **prevent discrimination** from occurring. If you believe you were discriminated against in DC, you can **file a complaint** with our office at **no cost**, and we will investigate to determine whether enough evidence exists to show discrimination occurred. If discrimination is found, monetary or other damages may be awarded.

Our office also enforces the DC Family and Medical Leave Act and Parental Leave Act, and oversees implementation of the **Language Access Program** and **Citywide Youth Bullying Prevention Program**.

### How we serve the District

- Investigate complaints
- Mediate complaints
- Prevent discrimination
- Secure language access
- Address bullying
- Raise awareness

## Who we protect.

Whether a resident, a commuter or just a visitor to DC, the DC Human Rights Act **protects you from discrimination** based on 19 traits (exceptions apply):

1. Race
2. Color
3. Religion
4. National Origin
5. Sex
6. Age
7. Marital Status
8. Personal Appearance
9. Sexual Orientation
10. Gender Identity & Expression
11. Family Responsibilities
12. Political Affiliation
13. Disability
14. Matriculation
15. Familial Status
16. Genetic Information
17. Source of Income
18. Place of Residence or Business
19. Status as a Victim of an Intrafamily Offense



## What discrimination looks like.

Discrimination can be obvious. Other times it is more difficult to identify. Here are some scenarios that may be discrimination, depending on the details:



*You are denied a job, refused a promotion, treated differently, or fired because of your protected trait.*



*You are denied service or treated in a hostile way at a restaurant or business because of your protected trait.*



*Your housing application changes or is denied, or you're treated differently than other tenants because of your protected trait.*



*Your college or university holds you to different academic or other standards because of your protected trait.*

## What you can do.

If you believe you were discriminated against because of a protected trait, **file a complaint** with our office by completing the complaint questionnaire **online** at [ohr.dc.gov/page/complaint](http://ohr.dc.gov/page/complaint), or **in-person** at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N.



## What to expect.

1. **Questionnaire:** submit questionnaire to start the process
2. **Intake Appointment:** we contact you and set-up a time to discuss the incident further
3. **Mediation:** mandatory session is held in an attempt to find a resolution
4. **Investigation:** if mediation fails, a full investigation of the incident begins
5. **Decision:** if probable cause of discrimination is found, case sent to Commission on Human Rights

## NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with the DC Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, DC Official Code §§2-1401.01 et seq. (Act), the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of (actual or perceived): race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.



441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N  
Washington, DC, 20001  
Phone: 202.727.4559  
Fax: 202.727.9589

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## When we can help.

Our office can take a discrimination complaint if it meets the four criteria below:

**Criteria I** - The incident occurred in one of the following four areas:



Employment



Public Accommodations



Housing



Educational Institutions

**Criteria II** - The incident occurred in the last year. If you are a DC government employee filing against your employer, it must have occurred in last six months.

**Criteria III** - The incident occurred in DC. However, we cannot accept complaints against the US government.

**Criteria IV** - You were treated differently in a harmful way because of one of the protected traits.

## Services in your language.

Our **Language Access Program** works to ensure people who speak limited or no English can access government services in their language by enforcing the Language Access Act of 2004.

If you speak little or no English and need services or information from a DC agency, you must be offered an **interpreter** and/or **translated documents**. If you are denied assistance in your language, you can **file a complaint online** at [ohr.dc.gov/page/languageaccess](http://ohr.dc.gov/page/languageaccess) or **in-person** at 441 4th Street NW, Suite 570N.



### Then What Happens?

We interview you for more details, and work to ensure you receive the services you were seeking. We mandate remedies in cases where violation of the law occurs.

## Our efforts to address bullying.

Our **Citywide Youth Bullying Prevention Program** assists youth-serving government agencies, grantees and schools with implementing effective bullying prevention policies in compliance with law.

### Definition

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among youth that involves a real or perceived power imbalance, and is repeated or has the potential to be repeated.

Our approach discourages an overreliance on discipline and instead adopts a **public health approach** focused on prevention, supporting at-risk youth and addressing incidents to change behavior.

### How You Can Help

Youth-serving agencies, schools and organizations receiving government grants must have a policy. Ask for it, and see how you can support its objectives.

## We are here for you.

If you have **questions** about the work of our office, how to file a complaint, or you want to request a training or presentation, you can:

Visit our Website  
[ohr.dc.gov](http://ohr.dc.gov)

Call Us  
(202) 727.4559

To view and share our latest **awareness campaigns**, visit [ohr.dc.gov/page/campaigns](http://ohr.dc.gov/page/campaigns).

To receive the latest **updates on our work**, you can follow us on:

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