

WHAT WE DO

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) is a DC government agency that investigates, mediates, adjudicates, and prosecutes complaints of discrimination. Additionally, OHR works to prevent discrimination through outreach and awareness campaigns. If you believe you have been discriminated against in DC in the areas of employment, housing, or educational institutions, public accommodations/government services, or educational institutions, you can file a complaint with our office at no cost. OHR investigates docketed cases to see if there is probable cause to believe discrimination may have occurred. If probable cause is found, the case will be certified for a full hearing on the merits to see whether there has been a violation of the law. If discrimination is found, monetary or other damages may be awarded. Throughout the process, OHR offers various mediation and conciliation opportunities.

HOW WE SERVE THE DISTRICT

- Investigate complaints
- Mediate complaints
- Prosecute probable cause cases (private sector)
- Prevent discrimination through education and training
- Ensure Compliance
- Address youth bullying
- Secure Language Access
- Create Safer Spaces

WHO WE PROTECT

The Human Rights Act (HRA) prohibits discrimination based on the following protected traits in educational institutions, employment, housing, and places of public accommodation:

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|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Race | 6. Age | 11. Family responsibilities |
| 2. Color | 7. Marital status | 12. Political affiliation |
| 3. Religion | 8. Personal appearance | 13. Disability |
| 4. National origin | 9. Sexual orientation | 14. Homeless Status |
| 5. Sex | 10. Gender identity or expression | |

Additional Traits Applicable to Some Areas include:

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| 14. Matriculation (applies to housing, employment and public accommodations only) | 20. Credit Information (applies to employment only) |
| 15. Familial Status (applies to housing, public accommodations and educational institutions only) | 21. Status as a Victim or Family Member of a Victim of Domestic Violence, a Sexual Offense, or Stalking (applies to employment only). |
| 16. Genetic information (applies to employment and public accommodations only) | 22. Status as a Victim or Family Member of a Victim of Domestic Violence, a Sexual Offense, or Stalking (applies to employment only). |
| 17. Source of Income (applies to housing, public accommodations and educational institutions only) | 23. Sealed Eviction Record (applies to housing only) |
| 18. Place of Residence or Business (applies to housing and public accommodations only) | |
| 19. Status as a Victim of an Intrafamily Offense (applies to housing only) | |

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.
- You are denied admission to school or do not get the same access to programs or benefits because of your protected trait.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you believe you were discriminated against because of a protected trait, or have knowledge of a violation of the laws OHR enforces, file a complaint with our office by completing the complaint questionnaire online at ohr.dc.gov/page/complaint or in-person at 441 4th St NW, Suite 570N.

1. Questionnaire: submit questionnaire to start the process
2. Intake Appointment: we contact you and setup 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 into the incident begins
5. Decision: if probable cause of discrimination is found, case is sent to an Administrative Law Judge for a hearing on the merits.

WHEN WE CAN HELP

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

- **Criteria One:** The incident occurred in one of the four areas: employment; public accommodations/ government services; housing; educational institutions
- **Criteria Two:** The incident occurred in the last year. If you are a DC government employee, you must first report the complaint to your EEO counselor within 180 days of the incident.
- **Criteria Three:** You were treated differently in a harmful way because of one of the protected traits or other local or federal law we enforce.

SERVICES IN YOUR LANGUAGE

Our Language Access Program works to ensure that 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 vital documents. If you are denied assistance in your language, you can file a complaint online at ohr.dc.gov/page/language-access or in-person at 441 4th St NW, Suite 570N.

After filing a complaint, we will 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.

CREATING SAFE SPACES

Our Creating Safer Spaces Unit works to secure compliance in two specific areas: (1) Sexual Harassment Prevention Training in the tipped wage industry, as mandated under the Tipped Wage Workers Fairness Amendment Act of 2018 (TWWFA); and (2) Non-Discrimination Training Session for Seniors living with HIV and LGBTQ+ Seniors in long term care, as mandated under the Care for LGBTQ Seniors and Seniors with HIV Amendment Act of 2020.

Our work in these areas includes providing education through factsheets and raising awareness through outreach interventions. By creating safe spaces, we eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity, and protect human rights of those who live, work, and visit the District of Columbia.

OUR EFFORTS TO ADDRESS YOUTH 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. 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.




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
Call us: 202-727-4559

To view and share our latest awareness campaigns, visit ohr.dc.gov/page/campaigns

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

-  Facebook: facebook.com/dcohr
-  Twitter: twitter.com/dchumanrights
-  Instagram: instagram.com/dchumanrights

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 base of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, nation 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, credit information, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual offenses or stalking 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.