



# COMMERCIAL PROPERTY PROTECTIONS

## What is a Commercial Property?

The term "commercial property" means:

- any building, structure or facility, used, occupied or is intended, arranged or designed to be used or occupied for the purpose of operating a business, an office, a manufactory or any public accommodation;
- any vacant land offered for sale, lease or held for the purpose of constructing or locating thereon any such building, structure, facility, business concern or public accommodation.

## Protected Classes

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) is empowered to investigate complaints of commercial property discrimination on the basis of:

- race
- color
- familial status
- age
- religious creed
- ancestry
- sex
- national origin
- disability
- disability of an individual with whom the person is known to have a relationship or association
- use of a guide animal because of the blindness or deafness of the user
- use of a support animal because of a disability of the user
- handler or trainer of service or guide animals

Under the **Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA)**, protections are available in employment, housing, commercial property, public accommodations and educational institutions.

Learn more about the PHRC at  
[www.pa.gov/PHRC](http://www.pa.gov/PHRC)

## Examples of Commercial Property Discrimination

- Refusing to sell, lease, finance or otherwise to deny or withhold any housing accommodation or commercial property from any person because of a protected class. This includes Air B&B or VRBO's.
- Discrimination in terms and conditions offered to an individual.
- A landlord or municipality refusing accessible parking or otherwise denying a reasonable accommodation of a person with a disability.
- Denying a loan request based on race, religion, sex, etc.
- Printing, publishing, or circulating discriminatory statements.

## What do I do if I believe that I have been discriminated against?

- File a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission within **180 days** of the date of the act of discrimination.
- Preserve any evidence that you may have to support your complaint (e.g., text messages, pictures, receipts, etc.)
- You have the right to obtain private legal services at your own expense, but this is not required.
- Pennsylvania law also protects you from retaliation. This means no one is allowed to take any action against you for filing a complaint, opposing unlawful activity, or helping with an investigation.

## What does the PHRC do?

- Enforces the PHRA and the PFOA
- Investigates and remedies claims of discrimination
- Holds public hearings
- Facilitates mediations
- Holds townhall meetings and community summits
- Facilitates education and outreach events and training
- Conducts social justice initiatives

To file a complaint, call 717-787-4410 (717-787-7279 TTY)  
or contact the regional office nearest you:

**Harrisburg**  
555 Walnut Street, Suite 808,  
Harrisburg, PA 17101 717-787-9780 |  
717-787-7279 (TTY)



phrc@pa.gov

**Philadelphia**  
110 N. 8th Street, Suite 501  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-560-2496 | 215-560-3599 (TTY)

Follow us:

**Pittsburgh**  
301 5th Avenue, Suite 390, Piatt Place  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-545-5395 | 412-565-5711 (TTY)

