

## PROTECTIONS

The **Pennsylvania Human Relations Act** provides protections to ensure that Pennsylvanians do not experience **sexual harassment** in education, employment, housing, commercial property, and public accommodations.

### Harassment vs. Sexual Harassment

**Harassment** is unwelcome conduct based on a person's protected class:

- Race
- Color
- Religious Creed
- National origin
- Ancestry
- Age (40+)
- Disability
- Sex

**Sexual Harassment** is a specific form of harassment that involves:

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Requests for sexual favors.
- Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Both men and women can experience sexual harassment and it can be from persons of the opposite or same sex.**

### PHRC Complaint Process

- A dedicated, neutral PHRC investigator will walk you through the process and help prepare your complaint.
- You **will not** incur any attorney fees during the PHRC's investigatory process, although you have the right to obtain private legal counsel if you choose.
- Complaints of discrimination must be filed with the PHRC within **180 days** of the alleged act of harm.
- Pennsylvania law also protects you from retaliation. This means taking certain actions against you for filing a complaint, opposing unlawful activity, or helping with an investigation is against the law.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment Discrimination

- Unwelcome comments or jokes of a sexual nature from a teacher or fellow student.
- A professor offering better grades in exchange for sexual favors.
- Students circulating rumors or explicit images of another student without consent.
- A supervisor requesting sexual favors in exchange for a promotion (quid pro quo harassment).
- Unwanted touching or physical advances during or outside of work hours.
- A hostile work environment created by persistent sexual comments or innuendos.
- A landlord offering reduced rent in exchange for sexual acts.
- A tenant being evicted or denied repairs for refusing sexual advances.
- A hotel staff member entering a guest's room uninvited and making sexual advances.
- A server or employee touching a customer inappropriately or commenting on their appearance.
- Sexual remarks or catcalling by staff or patrons in a gym or retail store.

### Trainings & Resources

The **Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC)** provides free training to schools, employers, businesses, community groups, etc.

PHRC trainings are tailored to the specific needs of your organization or community. The goal of every training and event is to promote equal opportunity and help communities, public agencies, businesses, and schools prevent or eliminate illegal discrimination.

**To learn more, visit [www.pa.gov/agencies/PHRC](http://www.pa.gov/agencies/PHRC)**

**If you have questions, call 717- 787-4410 (717-787-7279 TTY) or contact the regional office nearest you:**

#### Harrisburg

333 Market Street, 8th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717-787-9780 | 717-787-7279 (TTY)

#### Philadelphia

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

#### Pittsburgh

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