



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
- handicap or disability
- handicap or 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 physical handicap of the user
- handler or trainer of support or guide animals.

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

Under the **Pennsylvania Fair Educational Opportunities Act (PFEOA)**, protections are available for most post-secondary schools. Coverage may otherwise be available under the PHRA, except those schools that are fully private.

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 VBRO'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 feel 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 PHRC do?

- Enforces the PHRA and the PFEOA
- 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

Learn more about the PHRC at www.phrc.pa.gov

To file a complaint, 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)