



AAPI PROTECTIONS

What does AAPI stand for?

A diverse group of identities, including those with heritage or ties to Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Protected Classes

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of:

- race
- color
- ancestry
- national origin

Under the 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 distinctly private.

Examples

- Verbal harassment, shunning, slurs, and physical attacks.
- Targeting Asian women through verbal harassment that reflect the intersection of racism and sexism.
- COVID-19 related bullying & discrimination.
- Assuming a person cannot speak English, criticism for speaking a language other than English in public.

What does the 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

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

- If you believe that you have experienced illegal discrimination, file a complaint with the PHRC.
- 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.

What if I believe it's a hate crime?

- In Pennsylvania, a hate crime is defined as a criminal act, such as assault or property damage, motivated by ill will or hatred. If you are reporting a hate crime, contact the police.
- The PHRC does not charge or investigate hate crimes or criminal offenses. However, we do track incidents reported to us to inform the Pennsylvania Interagency Task Force on Community Activities and Relations.
- The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) Civil Rights Outreach Division addresses civil tensions, conflicts, and incidents in communities across the Commonwealth and promotes anti-racism through education and outreach.

Learn more about the PHRC at www.pa.gov/en/agencies/PHRC

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)