



# Protecting Your Rights

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) was established to protect the rights of people in Michigan to fair and equitable treatment under the law.

**What is MDCR and how do they protect my civil rights?**

Laws are in place to help protect people from discrimination. The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA), the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other provisions in state and federal law provide protection against discrimination for people in Michigan.

MDCR is authorized by law to investigate complaints of discrimination. While investigating a complaint, we are impartial and do not act as an advocate or representative for either party.

**Michigan law prohibits discrimination in:**

Employment

Education

Housing

Public Accommodation (such as restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, retail stores and more)

Public Service (such as government agencies, public libraries and parks, utilities and more)

Law Enforcement

Discrimination occurs when you are treated differently than others because of your race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, genetic information, marital status, familial status, height, weight or arrest record.

**What are some examples of unlawful discrimination?**

A store clerk will not serve you and tells you to "go back where you came from."

Your boss allows co-workers to harass or intimidate you based on your race or national origin.

A real estate agent or rental property owner will not show or sell you the same property they are making available to others.

**What can I do if I have been discriminated against?**

If you believe you have been the victim of discrimination, contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights online at [Michigan.gov/MDCR](https://Michigan.gov/MDCR), email us at [MDCR-INFO@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDCR-INFO@Michigan.gov), or call us at 1-800-482-3604.

**Do I need to be a U.S. citizen to file a complaint?**

No, you do not need to be a U.S. citizen to file a complaint with MDCR. Civil rights laws protect anyone who has been a victim of discrimination while in the state of Michigan.

### Why is it important to file a complaint?

If you are a victim of discrimination, you have a right to seek justice. If you were discriminated against, it is very possible others will be as well if we cannot take action now. We cannot stop discrimination if we do not know about it.

If our investigation shows that discrimination has taken place, we will attempt to reach a resolution between the parties. A successful resolution may result in financial and other forms of compensation for the person who filed the complaint.

### If I file a complaint, will it be kept confidential?

No, but it is a violation of civil rights law if you are retaliated against because you filed a complaint.

If you file a complaint with MDCR, we will investigate, which requires us to communicate with others about your claim. MDCR files are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may be provided to others after the case is resolved, but only after your personal information is removed.

### Do you have interpreters to help me file a complaint?

Yes. If you contact us, we use a service that will allow us to add an interpreter to the call. We will then work with you to determine how to proceed.

### What does MDCR do to help prevent discrimination?

MDCR partners with community and faith-based organizations, advocates and law enforcement agencies to address civil rights issues and build partnerships to promote voluntary compliance with civil rights laws and prevent discrimination before it occurs.

MDCR offers trainings and programs on a range of topics including cultural competency, hate incidents, housing discrimination, bullying, disability, sexual harassment and civil rights law.

# We Are Here To Help

To file a complaint of discrimination, to schedule a training or presentation, or to request help or information related to specific civil rights issues, contact MDCR online or go to [michigan.gov/mdcr](https://michigan.gov/mdcr), by phone at [800-482-3604](tel:800-482-3604), or by email at [MDCR-INFO@michigan.gov](mailto:MDCR-INFO@michigan.gov).

For more information on MDCR initiatives, partnerships and ways we can help, go to [michigan.gov/mdcr](https://michigan.gov/mdcr).

### Find us on social media:

Facebook: [facebook.com/MIDCR](https://facebook.com/MIDCR)

Twitter: [@MiCivilRights](https://twitter.com/MiCivilRights)

Instagram: [@MiCivilRights](https://www.instagram.com/MiCivilRights)