

WHAT IF I WANT TO **SUE** THE PERSON/BUSINESS THAT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST ME?

If you prefer to pursue your case in court, you should speak with attorneys experienced in discrimination claims. You may ask for a notice of right to sue after Iowa City Human Rights has had your complaint for 60 days. However, once that notice is issued, you only have 90 days to file a lawsuit in district court, or you will lose your right to do so.

We strongly suggest that you locate and hire an attorney, and discuss the timing of the request with that attorney, before asking for the notice of right to sue in order to avoid running out of time to file your case in district court.

Please note that a notice of right to sue cannot be issued if (1) there has already been a finding of no probable cause, (2) a conciliation agreement has been executed, (3) the commission has served notice of hearing on the respondent, or (4) the complaint has been administratively closed AND two years have passed since the administrative closing date.



CITY OF IOWA CITY

**CITY OF IOWA CITY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
www.icgov.org/humanrights
356-5022 or 356-5015
humanrights@iowa-city.org

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

*Have I Experienced Discrimination?
What Can I Do About It?*

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IS THE LAW AND YOUR RIGHT
If you believe you have been discriminated against, or you want more information on types of prohibited discrimination, please contact the Human Rights Coordinator at 356-5022 or the Human Rights Investigator at 356-5015.

WHAT DOES THE HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE **DO**?

The staff of the City of Iowa City Human Rights Commission receives its authority from the City of Iowa City Human Rights Ordinance, contained in Title II of the City Code. Staff investigate complaints, coordinate mediation, conduct conciliation, enforce the provisions of the Iowa City Human Rights Ordinance (and, by extension, the provisions of state and federal-level anti-discrimination laws), and determine remedies. The Human Rights Office also engages in educational activities, policy recommendations, and other activities designed to promote equality in the Iowa City community.

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Unlawful discrimination involves treating a person less favorably than another person, because of a protected characteristic, in a protected context. Discrimination can happen when a person is individually treated less favorably than another because of one or more protected characteristics, or when a policy or practice puts a group of people at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic.

WHAT IF I'M **PREGNANT**?

Discrimination because of pregnancy is unlawful. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 specifies that discrimination based on pregnancy is included in the category of sex discrimination.

WHAT IF IT GETS **WORSE** AFTER I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

It is **unlawful** to retaliate against a person for:

- making a complaint of discriminatory treatment,
- lawfully opposing a discriminatory practice, or
- cooperating with or assisting in the investigation of someone else's complaint of discrimination.

If you feel you have been retaliated against for any of the above reasons, you may file a complaint based upon the retaliation alone. You may also include retaliation in an original discrimination complaint to this office.

WHO IS PROTECTED?	AREAS OF PROTECTION				
	Employment	Public Accommodation	Education	Credit	Housing
PROTECTED CLASSES	Age	•	•	•	•
	Color	•	•	•	•
	Creed	•	•	•	•
	Disability	•	•	•	•
	Familial Status				•
	Gender Identity	•	•	•	•
	Marital Status	•	•	•	•
	National Origin	•	•	•	•
	Presence or Absence of Dependents				•
	Public Assistance Source of Income				•
	Race	•	•	•	•
	Religion	•	•	•	•
	Sex	•	•	•	•
	Sexual Orientation	•	•	•	•

WHERE DO I GET A COMPLAINT FORM?

A complaint form may be obtained in several ways:

- Come to the Human Rights Office,
- Go to the complaint page on our website at <http://www.icgov.org/humanrights>
- Call 319-356-5022 or 319-356-5015 and request that a complaint form be mailed to you.

HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT?

Complaints may be filed in several ways.

- Bringing the complaint form to the Human Rights Office, located on the third floor of City Hall.
- Mailing the complaint form to the Human Rights Office, at 410 E. Washington St., Iowa City, IA 52240.
- Emailing a complete, signed, and dated complaint form to humanrights@iowa-city.org.

WHO CAN FILE A COMPLAINT?

If you are unsure whether you fit the requirements listed below, please call 319-356-5022 or 319-356-5015 and speak with a Human Rights staff person.

For complaints of employment discrimination, you may file with Iowa City Human Rights if:

- You work within the geographical boundaries of Iowa City, or
- Your work does not depend on a specific location (for example, you are a nurse who provides care in clients' homes, or you work for a temporary staffing service that might send you to different locations depending on the work available) AND the employer's office is located within the boundaries of Iowa City.

You can file a complaint of public accommodation, housing, or credit discrimination with Iowa City Human Rights if:

- The business, dwelling, or lender is located within the boundaries of Iowa City.

You can file a complaint of education discrimination with Iowa City Human Rights if:

- The complaint concerns a school within the Iowa City Community School District; or
- The school is physically located within the boundaries of Iowa City. (Example: If an educational institution has several locations, you may file a complaint if you attend at the Iowa City campus, but NOT if the main campus is in another city and you attend there.)
- The complaint is NOT against the University of Iowa.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP IF MY SITUATION DOESN'T FIT THE REQUIREMENTS ABOVE?

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) addresses complaints statewide. If the discrimination happened in Coralville, North Liberty, or any other town that does not have a local Human Rights Office, contact the ICRC at 1-800-457-4416. For complaints of discrimination occurring at the University of Iowa, contact the UI Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office at 319-335-0705.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

There is no charge for services provided by Iowa City Human Rights Office.

WHEN CAN I FILE A COMPLAINT?

You must file the complaint within **300 days** after the most recent discriminatory event that you wish to complain about. It is best, however, to file as soon as possible. If you file soon after the discrimination occurs, there is a better chance of documents being available and witnesses remembering what happened.

DO I NEED A LAWYER?

It is not necessary to hire a lawyer to file a complaint. The Human Rights Office does provide guidance and assistance during the complaint investigation process, but does NOT provide legal representation and does not have an advocacy role. You may always hire a lawyer if you wish to, but you will be responsible for the lawyer's fees.

DOES IOWA CITY HUMAN RIGHTS PROVIDE ANY OTHER SERVICES?

Yes. We provide mediation of complaints. This is a voluntary process offered only if both parties agree to mediate in good faith. We also provide educational programming, hold events such as the Human Rights Breakfast and the Human Rights Youth Awards, and engage in other activities that further the goal of eliminating discrimination in our community. If you would like a staff person to give a presentation at your organization or business, please call 356-5022 or 356-5015.

