

Dispute Resolution Program

The Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) provides mediation, conciliation, counseling, and referral services to individuals, households, and groups that have a dispute with each other.

People who utilize our services are often neighbors, but they can also be business people, coworkers, members of a religious organization, or members of a community group.

Mediation sessions are conducted by a trained and experienced staff mediator. Mediation provides parties with an opportunity to resolve disputes in a neutral and confidential setting

The mediator helps the parties to identify the nature of the conflict and to develop a confidential agreement that describes the parties' future relationship.

The goal of mediation is to provide disputants with the skills to resolve the conflict themselves.

Fair Housing Commission

The PCHR also staffs the Fair Housing Commission (FHC).

The FHC enforces the Philadelphia Fair Housing Ordinance (Chapter 9-800 of the Philadelphia Code) which addresses certain unfair rental practices in the city.

The FHC is a neutral agency that advocates for fairness in rental property relationships.

A complaint may be filed with the FHC if:

- A tenant is being threatened with illegal eviction (Rent must be current.),
- A landlord is raising the rent or a term of a lease is being violated in the face of housing code violations,
- To stop a landlord from retaliating against a tenant for reporting housing code violations to the Philadelphia Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) or in retaliation of filing a complaint with the FHC.



General Information



Center City Office

The Curtis Center
601 Walnut St.
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Phila., PA 19107
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Fax: 215-686-4684

North Phila Office

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Phila., PA 19133
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web: www.phila.gov/humanrelations

Who We Are

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) and Fair Housing Commission (FHC) is the City agency that enforces civil rights laws and deals with all matters of intergroup conflict within the city.

What We Do

- Enforce the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance.
- Enforce the Philadelphia Fair Housing Ordinance.
- Enforce the “Ban The Box” law.
- Address intergroup conflict and mediate neighborhood disputes.
- Life Partnership registry

Central Intake Unit

To file a complaint or concern, a person is first interviewed by a staff member of our Central Intake Unit.

This interview is a detailed and confidential process designed to determine if someone has a complaint that falls within the jurisdiction of either the PCHR or FHC.

Languages

Staff members are fluent in several languages and are able to accommodate most non-English speaking people.

Compliance Division

The Compliance Division enforces the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance, which prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and the delivery of City services.

In employment, it is illegal to discriminate on the bases of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age (40 and over), sex (gender), sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, genetic information, domestic or sexual violence victim status, or familial status.

In housing, the bases of illegal discrimination are the same as in employment except any age, presence of children, and source of income are also covered.

In public accommodations and the delivery of City services, the bases of illegal discrimination are the same as in employment except age is not covered in public accommodations.

All complaints are thoroughly investigated by our staff who make frequent attempts at conciliation. Complaints investigated by the PCHR must be filed no later than 300 days after the last alleged discriminatory act.

Community Relations Division

The Community Relations Division (CRD) deals with intergroup conflict and neighborhood disputes. Staff members provide assessment, intervention, conciliation, and follow-up services during a conflict.

The CRD operates a Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) to resolve disagreements between neighbors, and works with community leaders to prevent intergroup tension incidents (conflicts, violence or vandalism motivated by group hatred).

Efforts to prevent tension, mediate disputes and promote intergroup harmony include, but are not limited to:

- Working closely with local police districts and the Police Conflict Prevention and Resolution Unit, community groups and leaders, both to remain informed about problems and to work cooperatively in the alleviation of neighborhood tensions.
- Working to build lines of communication between individuals and groups.
- Educating the community regarding cultural diversity, intergroup harmony and understanding.