



## **MDCR**

For Victims of Unlawful Discrimination

### **Civil Rights Guarantees in Michigan**

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) was established to identify and eliminate unlawful discrimination. This fact sheet outlines the civil rights guaranteed by law, and discusses the services available to every Michigan citizen in the protection of those rights.

### **Civil Rights Guaranteed by Law**

Michigan law prohibits discrimination in employment, education, housing, public accommodations, and public service. The Michigan Department of Civil Rights has authority to accept complaints based on unlawful consideration of religion, race, color, national origin, arrest record, genetic information, sex, age, height, weight, marital status and disability. Discrimination on the basis of disability must be related to the person's ability to perform on the job or use facilities which cannot be reasonably altered (1963 Const., Art. II, and Art. V, Section 29; 1976 PA 220 and PA 453; and Rules Governing Organization and Procedures of the MCRC).

The Commission has the power to order remedies appropriate to the findings of unlawful discrimination.

### **Rights to Equal Employment Opportunity**

A complaint may be filed if, for reasons of religion, race, color, national origin, genetic information, age, sex, marital status, height, weight, arrest record, or disability, a person has been:

- refused employment
- paid less money for equal work
- harassed or subjected to unequal treatment on the job

- denied membership in a labor organization
- expelled from a labor organization
- denied promotion
- denied representation in a grievance
- fired without just cause
- denied admission to a training program

In employment, all jobs must be open to both men and women unless the employer proves that sex is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ--see the Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide in the Publications section of our site). A woman may not be excluded legally from a job for any of these reasons:

- assumption that women are unable or unwilling to do the work
- preference of co-workers, employers, clients, or customers
- the job has been traditionally restricted to men
- the work involves heavy physical labor, manual dexterity, night hours, overtime, or work in isolated locations or unpleasant surroundings
- the work involves travel, or travel with co-workers
- physical facilities are not available for both sexes
- the job requires personal characteristics (tact, charm, aggressiveness)

## **Rights to Equal Opportunity in Education**

A complaint may be filed if, for reasons of religion, race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, or disability, a person has been:

- denied admission, services, activities or programs
- disciplined or expelled as a student without just cause
- denied employment
- forced to work or attend school-segregated facilities
- treated unequally in terms of quality of education
- treated unequally in working conditions

## **Rights to Equal Opportunity in Housing**

A complaint may be filed if, for reasons of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, familial status, or disability, a person has been:

- unable to obtain available housing
- denied purchase or rental of housing
- discriminated against with regard to housing conditions (unequal charges, restrictions, harassment)
- evicted or threatened with eviction due to religion, race, etc., of visitors
- unable to obtain a housing loan, though financially qualified
- denied housing because of minor children or if an advertisement for housing limits sale or rental for any of the above reasons

## **Rights to Public Accommodation or Public Service**

A complaint may be filed if, because of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or disability, a person has been:

- denied admission privileges, or equal use of facilities, in places made available to the public
- subjected to unequal treatment when admitted
- denied goods, services, or advantages on an equal basis by a public facility, department, agency, board or commission, owned, or operated, managed, or licensed by the state, a political subdivision, or an agency thereof, including law enforcement agencies, or a tax exempt private agency established to provide services to the public

## **Where and How to File Complaints**

A complaint may be filed at any of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights offices if the alleged act of discrimination occurred within the past 180 days. If you believe you were unlawfully discriminated against within the 180 day period, and the allegation relates to a continuing violation, you may be able to include those charges in your complaint as well. Departmental staff can answer questions about the protections guaranteed by law. The Department is staffed with English and Spanish-speaking personnel. You can also visit our website at [www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr) to file a complaint online.

## **If You Have Questions**

If you have questions, please contact us by telephone or email:

Phone: 313-456-3700

Toll-free: 800-482-3604

TTY: 887-878-8464

Email: [MDCRServiceCenter@michigan.gov](mailto:MDCRServiceCenter@michigan.gov)



**For Victims of Unlawful Discrimination**

Copyright State of Michigan