



## Where Do You Send a Complaint?

**mail**

Please mail all civil rights complaints to:

U.S. EPA Office of Civil Rights (1201A)  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

**fax**

Or, by facsimile to:  
(202) 501-1836

## Other Inquiries?

For any other inquiries, please write to OCR at the above address or call OCR at: (202) 564-7272

Additional information about OCR's program may be found at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ocr>

## HOW TO File a Complaint OF Discrimination

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) External Compliance and Complaints (ECC) Program is responsible for enforcing several civil rights laws which, together, prohibit discrimination on the basis of: race, color, or national origin (including on the basis of limited-English proficiency); sex; disability; and age, by applicants for and recipients of federal financial assistance from EPA.

OCR is responsible for ensuring that programs or activities that receive EPA funds provide aids, benefits or services in a nondiscriminatory manner. One important way in which OCR carries out this responsibility is by investigating complaints filed by the public which allege discriminatory conduct by EPA recipients.



## Who Can File a Discrimination Complaint?

Anyone who believes that an entity that receives federal financial assistance from EPA has discriminated against someone on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited-English proficiency), sex, disability or age, may file a complaint. The person or organization filing the complaint need not be a victim of the alleged discrimination but may complain on behalf of another person or group.

## What Civil Rights Laws Does OCR Enforce?

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited-English proficiency) in their programs or activities.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against persons with disabilities under in their programs or activities.
- **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against persons on the basis of sex in education programs or activities; and
- **Age Discrimination Act of 1975**, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against persons on the basis of age in their programs or activities.

OCR is also responsible for enforcing **Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972**, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in programs or activities receiving financial assistance from EPA under the Clean Water Act.

## What Must a Complaint Include?\*

- **The complaint must be in writing**, clearly identify who the sender is, include his or her signature, and must provide OCR with the sender's contact information. We also suggest including a phone number and/or email address for contact.
- **The complaint should identify the entity which allegedly committed the discrimination.** Please note that OCR can only investigate complaints filed against an entity which receives assistance from the EPA.
- **The complaint must allege discrimination prohibited by one of the laws OCR enforces.** Describe with as much detail as possible why you feel the entity discriminated against you or others on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited-English proficiency); sex; disability; and age.
- **The complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the date of the last act of alleged discrimination.** OCR may consider extending the 180-day timeframe for filing, for good cause shown under certain circumstances.

\* For additional information regarding **OCR's complaint processing procedures**, please see **OCR's Interim Case Resolution Manual** (December 1, 2015), at: [http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-12/documents/ocr\\_crm\\_final.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-12/documents/ocr_crm_final.pdf)

