

# DISCRIMINATION?

**CAN YOU not join friends and family at a favorite local restaurant because the entrance is not accessible, or the tables do not accommodate your wheelchair?**

**CAN YOU not shop in a certain clothing store because your wheelchair cannot maneuver around the clothing racks?**

**HAVE YOU been denied service, or treated poorly, at a business because of your accent, religion, race, sexual orientation, or disability?**

**If so, you may be a victim of discrimination.**

## we can HELP!

**Call The Equal Rights Center (ERC) today!**

We will investigate your complaint and determine whether a violation has occurred. If appropriate, the ERC will assist you in protecting your legal rights. **All ERC services are provided free of charge and are fully confidential.**

File a complaint today:

- Call the ERC at **(202) 234-3062**, or
- Complete an ERC Complaint Form online at **[www.equalrightscenter.org/complaint](http://www.equalrightscenter.org/complaint)**.

Stay informed by becoming an ERC member today:

- Call the ERC at **(202) 234-3062**,
- Complete the ERC Membership Form online at **[www.equalrightscenter.org/membership](http://www.equalrightscenter.org/membership)**.

**[www.equalrightscenter.org](http://www.equalrightscenter.org)**



**The Equal Rights Center (ERC)**  
is a national non-profit civil rights organization dedicated to promoting equal opportunity for all. The ERC, and our thousands of members across the country, address issues of discrimination in housing, employment, disability rights, immigrant rights, LGBT rights, and access to public accommodations and government services.

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Have you been a  
victim of discrimination in  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS  
or GOVERNMENT SERVICES?



The Equal Rights Center

Advancing Civil Rights for All

# the NEED for CHANGE

The ability to freely move throughout society and partake in all services and activities is a right afforded to all residents. Yet today, thousands of people face barriers when they travel, eat out, shop, and more.

Whether it is a business owner who refuses service to members of a certain religion, a club that deters or denies members of a certain race, or a restaurant without a wheelchair-accessible entrance, discrimination in the public arena takes place on a daily basis.

For this reason, protections against illegal discrimination in public accommodations and government services are a crucial component to civil rights law. As a member of a protected class, you are guaranteed equal enjoyment and participation in public life.

# know YOUR RIGHTS

Based on your membership in a protected class, businesses cannot:

- 1) Deny you service,
- 2) Offer a worse service, or
- 3) Physically or sexually assault you, tell offensive jokes, intimidate, or call you names.

Additionally, so that people with disabilities have full enjoyment of services, businesses must make:

**1) Reasonable modifications:**

structural changes, such as installing an entrance ramp, and/or

**2) Reasonable accommodations:**

changes in rules, policies, or practices, such as assigning accessible parking.

Examples of public accommodations include:

Restaurants

Doctors' Offices

Retail Stores

Day Care Centers

Hotels

Funeral Homes

Movie Theaters

Homeless Shelters

Private Schools (but not religious schools)

Recreation facilities: sport stadiums, fitness clubs, etc.

Convention Centers

Transportation Depots

Places where courses and examinations are provided

Zoos

## Transportation

Discrimination is also prohibited in programs, services, and activities of the federal, state and local governments.

# who is PROTECTED

Federal, state, or local laws may protect against discrimination based on:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Religion
- Whether one has children
- Mental or Physical Disability
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- Source of Income
- Status as a Domestic Violence Survivor

## the ERC IMPACT

In response to complaints from people with disabilities about access to public places, the ERC has forced owners and operators to make more than 10,000 retail stores, restaurants, and hotels accessible.

Additionally, the ERC has helped many people assert their requests and mediate a positive resolution.

Donna, for example, came to the ERC after her request for a reasonable accommodation, to modify her phone bill for her disability, went ignored. After talking to the service provider, the ERC was able to secure Donna's request.

*"I had been turned away by other organizations. But I came to the ERC and they were able to handle the problem quickly and to my full satisfaction."*

-Donna Simms, ERC client