

ARE YOU physically or sexually assaulted, intimidated, or called names in your job or apartment because you have a disability?

CAN YOU not go to your local favorite restaurant because the building is inaccessible to wheelchairs?

HAVE YOU been denied a job or housing because you have a disability?

WILL businesses or service providers not accept your requests for a reasonable accommodation?

If so, you may be a victim of discrimination.

WE CAN HELP YOU

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 pursuing administrative and legal remedies. All ERC services are provided free of charge and are fully confidential.

File a complaint today:

- Call the ERC directly at (202) 234-3062, or
- Complete the ERC Complaint Form online at www.equalrightscenter.org/complaint.

Stay an informed resident by becoming an ERC member today:

- Call the ERC directly at (202) 234-3062, or
- Complete the ERC Membership Form online at www.equalrightscenter.org/membership.



www.equalrightscenter.org



The Equal Rights Center (ERC) is a comprehensive non-profit civil rights organization dedicated to identifying, challenging, and eliminating discrimination. With more than 25 years of advancing civil rights, today the ERC and our thousands of members address issues of discrimination in six areas: fair housing, fair employment, disability rights, access to public accommodations, access to government services, and immigrant rights.

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HAVE YOU BEEN A VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE YOU HAVE A DISABILITY?



EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER

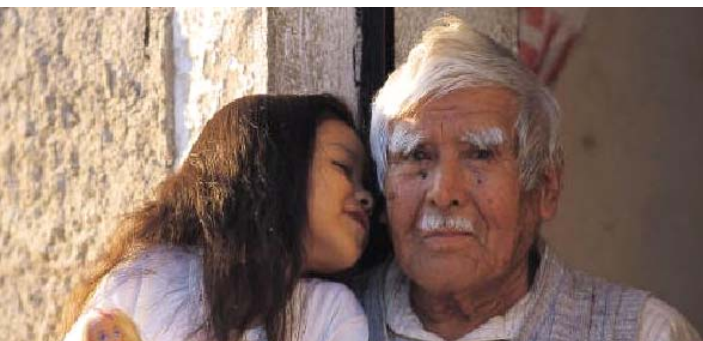
ADVANCING CIVIL RIGHTS

THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Today, more than 55 million people in the United States, approximately one in five, have some form of disability. Since 1973, federal, state and local human rights acts have prohibited discrimination based on physical or mental disability.

Yet this huge segment of the population still remains a frequent target of discrimination. Daily, people with disabilities are denied the right to enjoy the same choices – where to work, eat, shop, sleep, and receive reasonable services – that able-bodied people take for granted.

Discrimination against people with disabilities is so pervasive that many individuals have stopped making formal complaints about the discrimination they experience. Today, renewed encouragement and action are essential in order to advance change.



www.equalrightscenter.org

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

People with disabilities are protected against illegal discrimination in **employment, public accommodations, government services, transportation**, and **telecommunications**. This means that places of business and employment and other public accommodations are required to make

- 1) A reasonable modification, and/or
- 2) A reasonable accommodation, in order for people with disabilities to enjoy day to day living on an equal basis as the rest of the population.

A **Reasonable Modification** is a structural change at a property which affords a person with a disability full use and enjoyment of the facility. Examples include: installing a ramp to an entrance door, widening doorways, lowering countertops, or installing grab bars.

A **Reasonable Accommodation** is a change in a rule, policy, practice, or service in order to give a person with a disability equal choice and opportunity. Examples include: assigning accessible parking spots, allowing service animals in “no pets allowed” areas, or reading a menu or instructions to someone who is blind.

People with disabilities are also protected from discrimination in **housing** in several ways. You cannot be denied housing merely because you, or a family member, have a disability. As well, apartments and condominiums are required to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, and to allow a tenant at his or her own expense to make reasonable modifications to improve accessibility.

Federally protected classes include:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Religion
- Whether one has children
- Mental or Physical Disability

State or locally protected classes may also include:

- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- Source of Income
- Domestic Violence Survivor
- Age

THE ERC IMPACT

- The ERC, in response to complaints from people with disabilities, has:
 - 1) Forced developers to make **nearly 20,000 housing units accessible**, and
 - 2) Forced owners and operators to make **more than 10,000 retail stores, restaurants, and hotels accessible**.
- In June 2008, the ERC and 14 plaintiffs won a groundbreaking settlement against MetroAccess, the Washington D.C. area public transportation system for people with disabilities. As a result, \$14 million will be used to improve the training, equipment, and policies of MetroAccess.

“Prior to this legal intervention, I had a feeling of ‘helplessness’ - that no one would recognize our plight, intercede, nor make [MetroAccess] provide us the same quality transit service that the non-disabled were currently receiving... When I heard the wonderful news, the feeling of ‘helplessness’ immediately dissipated.”

- Mary Wright, ERC client