

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

### EMPLOYMENT

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Employers with more than four employees cannot discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in the terms, condition and privileges of employment. This includes hiring, promotion, referrals for work, firing and other employment actions. In addition, employers have a duty to address on the job harassment of an employee because of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Note that most religious, fraternal, educational and charitable organizations are exempt from complying with the employment discrimination requirements of the Lower Merion ordinance.

### HOUSING

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The Lower Merion ordinance prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression in real estate transactions such as renting or purchasing commercial or residential property. The law also prohibits discrimination in a number of related practices, including lending on discriminatory terms to home purchasers and publishing advertisements. Renters and home purchasers also cannot be threatened or harassed by neighbors because of their sexual orientation or gender identity or gender expression.

### PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

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It is illegal for places of public accommodation to deny anyone the full enjoyment of the establishment's goods, services or facilities on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or gender expression. Places of public accommodation include among other things, stores and restaurants. Government agencies are also included.

### EXAMPLES OF DISCRIMINATION

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- ❖ I worked for the same company for four years, and always received great performance reviews. But a few days after I told my boss I'm gay, I began receiving disciplinary warnings for doing things that other employees do all the time and that no one else ever gets disciplined for. After a month, I was fired.
- ❖ My partner and I went to see an apartment, which had been advertised as being for rent in the local paper. The landlord seemed uncomfortable when we showed up, and tried to rush us out of the apartment. When we asked to rent the apartment, he told us that he doesn't rent to "you people."
- ❖ I recently began living full-time as a woman. When I started to use the women's restroom in a restaurant, an employee told me that I could not use the women's restroom, and instead had to use a unisex restroom on another floor of the building.

### IF YOU EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY OR GENDER EXPRESSION.

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1. **Write it down.** If you think you're being discriminated against, keep a written record of what happened, what was said, when and where the event took place and who witnessed it.
2. **Tell the person about the law.** If you feel safe doing so, let the person who is treating you unfairly know that the law protects you from discrimination in Lower Merion based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
3. **You have the right to file a complaint with the HRC.** The law that protects you, complaint forms and procedures may be found online at [www.lowermerion.org](http://www.lowermerion.org). If you file a complaint, the HRC may offer free mediation. The HRC may also investigate our claim. You may also need to file with State or Federal agencies to protect all of your rights. It is illegal for anyone to retaliate against you for filing. If the HRC finds that illegal discrimination occurred, it has the power to order the violator to remedy his, her or its actions. Remedies can include, among other things, reinstatement, hiring, admission to a place of public accommodation, or payment of damages.
4. **You have the right to sue.** In addition to filing with the HRC, you can file a complaint in state court. However, you must file with the HRC **before** you file in state court for the same matter.

## ABOUT US

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Lower Merion's Human Relations Commission (HRC) is comprised of 7 people appointed by the Township's Board of Commissioners. The HRC was established in 2011 to ensure that all who work, live or visit Lower Merion are protected from unlawful discrimination.

The HRC is non-partisan and provides all of its services free of charge. We are here to help you.

Lower Merion Ordinance 3931  
<http://www.lowermerion.org/Index.aspx?page=1161>

*IT IS ILLEGAL FOR ANYONE  
TO RETALIATE AGAINST  
YOU FOR COMPLAINING  
ABOUT DISCRIMINATION.*

## Lower Merion Human Relations Commission

Lower Merion Human Township prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability or use of guide or support animals because of the blindness, deafness or physical handicap of the user or because the user is a handler or trainer of support or guide animals or because of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in employment, housing and public accommodations.

The Lower Merion Human Relations Commission mediates and investigates complaints of discrimination against members of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender ("LBGT") community in employment, housing and public accommodations. There is no charge for the Commission's services.

Contact through:

Township Manager's Office  
75 East Lancaster Avenue  
Ardmore, PA 19003-2323  
Tel: 610-645-6120

[humanrelationscommission@lowermerion.org](mailto:humanrelationscommission@lowermerion.org)

## *LGBT LEGAL RIGHTS IN THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION*

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A Guide for Members of the  
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and  
Transgender ("LGBT") Community

## Lower Merion Township Human Relations Commission



**KNOW YOUR  
RIGHTS**