

7-6-2015

You have the right to work, live, and play free from discrimination in Fort Wayne. The Fort Wayne Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, also known as "Metro," is your local civil rights agency and is responsible for enforcing laws that protect you from discrimination. Metro is here in Fort Wayne to ensure that employers, housing providers, schools, and places open to the public do not deny you a job, an apartment, a service, or treat you differently because of certain protected characteristics, such as race, national origin, gender, etc.

7/20/2015

You have civil rights and are protected from discrimination. Civil rights are protections of the law that guarantee you will be treated equally regardless of certain protected characteristics. Groups of people with certain personal characteristics who are legally protected from discrimination fall into what is referred to as protected classes. Every person belongs to one or more protected class. Race, national origin, color, gender, religion, disability, and familial status are protected classes. If you are denied a job, an apartment, or given different rules because you belong to a certain protected class, you are being discriminated against and it is illegal.

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Two major types of discrimination are workplace discrimination and housing discrimination. Here are a few examples of discrimination in the workplace: (1) You do not get the job or a promotion because your skin is too dark, too light or because you wear religious clothing; (2) You are paid differently than other persons doing similar work because you are from a different country or you are female; (3) You are terminated for missing too many days of work when others outside your protected class have missed more days than you and are not terminated; or (4) You are disabled and are denied an accommodation to assist you in doing your job such as, being provided additional equipment or a modified schedule

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If you feel you have been discriminated against, your first step is to contact Metro to begin the intake process. The purpose of the intake process is to gather the information needed to investigate your allegations. There are several ways to begin this process. You may walk in our office during business hours. You may also call (260) 427-1146, or go to our website at [www.fortwaynemetro.org](http://www.fortwaynemetro.org). You will be asked to leave basic information. Within three days, an investigator will call you to discuss and make an appointment for intake.

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During the intake, you will be asked to complete paperwork and explain to the investigator what you believed happened to you. At this point in the process, you do not have to prove your case. Your obligation is to provide the investigator with as much information as possible so that they can conduct a complete and thorough investigation. The charge will be sent to the respondent, the business that you are making the allegations against. The respondent, depending on the type of case, has either ten or twenty days to respond to your charge. You can expect to receive a summarized version of the response. You will then have a chance to respond to what the respondent said. This is called a rebuttal.

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After the Commission receives your rebuttal, the next step in the process is for the investigator to physically go onsite to the respondent's place of business. Based on the information in the charge, the response, and your rebuttal, the investigator will request documents, verify information, and talk to witnesses. After the evidence is gathered, the investigator will write a report and submit it to the determination panel for a decision. If the panel determines there is no evidence that shows discrimination, you will have an opportunity to appeal the decision. If the panel determines the evidence indicates discrimination may have occurred, the Commission will set the matter for a public hearing. Unlike most agencies similar to Metro, you will be given a copy of the report so you can better understand how and why the determination was made