

## Here's what you can do to help SOCR resolve your complaint

- Please schedule all your appointments with us ahead of time, and arrive for your scheduled appointment on time.
- Notify us of any changes to your address or telephone number. Tell us if you will be unavailable for more than 2 weeks.
- Provide your investigator with details of the incident(s), names and phone numbers of witnesses, and copies of documents that support your charge.

## Perhaps you're wondering ...

### *When should I file a complaint?*

As soon as possible after the incident(s)! SOCR cannot accept cases that are more than 180 days old.

### *If I file a complaint, will the details be made public?*

No information is released while a case is still open. After a case is closed, some information can be released, but only if there is a specific written public disclosure request.

### *What if they retaliate against me after I file a complaint?*

Retaliation is illegal. If it occurs, you can file another complaint. SOCR investigates complaints involving retaliation and harassment regardless of the outcome of the original complaint.

## The City of Seattle investigates allegations of discrimination in:

- Housing
- Employment
- Public Accommodations
- Contracting

Unlawful discrimination may be occurring if you are treated differently from others because of your:

- Race
- Color
- Sex
- Religion
- Age
- Creed
- Ancestry
- Political ideology
- National origin
- Marital status
- Parental status
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Gender
- Use of a guide dog or service animal
- Use of a Section 8 certificate



If your experience occurred within the last 180 days, stop by or call us:

**Seattle Office for Civil Rights**  
(206) 684-4500 TTY (206) 684-4503

810 3rd Ave., Suite 750  
Seattle, WA 98104-1627

[www.seattle.gov/civilrights](http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights)

**Information can be made available in alternative formats on request**

# Discrimination.

## Had enough?

## Filing a Complaint with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights

### A step by step guide



City of Seattle  
Greg Nickels, Mayor

**Seattle Office for Civil Rights**  
Julie Nelson, Director  
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# Reporting Discrimination: Step by Step



## 1. Contact us

Call or stop by our office to make an appointment.

## 2. Tell us your history

Explain to our intake investigator why you believe you were discriminated against.

## 3. You file a charge

If the facts of your case call for a full investigation, we will draw up an official charge for you to sign. The final decision to file a charge is up to you.

## 4. We investigate your case

- You sign the charging papers.
- SOCR contacts the “Respondent” – the person or group that you are charging with discrimination.
- An investigator meets with you to go over your case in detail.
- The investigator conducts interviews and gathers evidence.

## 5. Case outcomes

Ways that your case can go

“**Reasonable Cause**” – SOCR finds that the evidence supports your charge of illegal discrimination.

“**No Reasonable Cause**” – SOCR finds that not enough evidence was found to support your claim of discrimination.

**Settlement** – You and the Respondent sign a negotiated agreement, which can include remedies.

**Withdrawal** – You withdraw your charge.

**Administrative Closure** – SOCR closes the case if we cannot complete the investigation, or if you choose to file your case in court.

### Referral:

If your case does not qualify for our investigation, we will refer you to another agency for help.

### Reaching an agreement:

At any time during the investigation, SOCR can help you and the Respondent settle the case through our Facilitated Resolution Process.

### Remedies:

If SOCR finds “reasonable cause”, we will work with you to decide the best remedies for your case. Remedies can include payment of back rent, mandatory training for management and employees, etc.

### Appeal

If SOCR finds “no reasonable cause”, you can appeal the decision within 30 days to the Seattle Human Rights Commission.

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**Our offices are accessible to people with disabilities.**