

Discrimination Complaint Resources

The City of Valparaiso strives to be a City without discrimination. We hope that you never encounter discrimination from a landlord, employer or provider of public accommodation in Valparaiso, or from the City itself, but if you do, we want you to know options that are available to you.

Where do you go when you need to file a complaint of discrimination?

There are times when a resident may encounter, or become a victim of, discrimination. Whether the act of discrimination be due to gender, religion, race, age or a facet of many other circumstances that are included in diversity, there are resources available to residents who wish to file a formal complaint. These are listed below.

Please note, if you feel like you are in a dangerous or threatening situation for your personal safety or the safety of others, call the [Valparaiso Police Department](#) immediately by dialing 9-1-1. Additionally, it may be best to consult legal advice before proceeding with an official complaint process.

First Responders

The Valparaiso Advisory Human Relations Council has a subcommittee called the First Responders. This is a group of local residents who are dedicated to providing support and/or resources to victims of discrimination or bias-motivated incidents that occur in the city. The First Responders acts within the confines of confidentiality.

If you would like to receive service from the First Responders, send an email to Maggie Clifton, Community Engagement Director, at mcclifton@valpo.us.

Indiana Civil Rights Commission

The [Indiana Civil Rights Commission](#) (ICRC) enforces the Indiana civil rights laws and provides education and services to the public in an effort to ensure equal opportunity for all Hoosiers and visitors to the State of Indiana. View the [2018 ICRC brochure](#) to learn more. The Commission was established by Indiana legislature to investigate and resolve discrimination complaints in the areas of:

- [Employment](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Public Accommodation](#)
- [Credit](#)
- [Education](#)

The State of Indiana enjoys laws and regulations aimed at eradicating discrimination, promoting fairness and equality and embracing the concepts of inclusion and tolerance. Whenever individuals allege discrimination and unfair treatment, ICRC enforces the Indiana Civil Rights laws by conducting a comprehensive, neutral investigation. This six-step process may include: intake/the filing of the complaint, investigation, mediation, legal analysis and determination, public hearing and final order. Click here to begin filing a complaint with their office. Click [here](#) to begin filing a complaint with their office.

The ICRC offers services to all citizens of the State of Indiana.

Valparaiso Human Rights Ordinance

The [Human Rights Ordinance](#) (HRO) was established in 2016 and is a local civil rights law that offers all of Valparaiso's citizens a local and accessible option for pursuing a remedy should they experience discrimination where they shop, eat, work, learn or reside.

A complaint may be filed at no cost with the City's Clerk-Treasurer Office. The complaint must be filed within sixty (60) days of the alleged HRO violation. Copies of the complaint are available at the Clerk-Treasurer Office at 166 Lincolnway or [online](#). [Learn more](#) about the Human Rights Ordinance.

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Housing discrimination is illegal. If you believe you have experienced discrimination in renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, obtaining housing insurance, seeking housing assistance or in other housing-related activities, you can file a complaint with the [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD). The Fair Housing Act prohibits this discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status and disability.

HUD's Office of [Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity](#) (FHEO) works to eliminate housing discrimination and promote civil rights and economic opportunity through housing. FHEO enforces fair housing laws. One of its roles is to investigate complaints of housing discrimination. If you believe you have been discriminated against in violation of any of these federal fair housing laws, you can file a complaint with FHEO. [Learn more](#) about filing a complaint online.

Equal Employment Opportunity; U.S. Department of Labor

[Equal Employment Opportunity](#) (EEO) laws prohibit specific types of job discrimination in certain workplaces. The Department of Labor has two agencies which deal with EEO monitoring and enforcement, the Civil Rights Center and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. You can gain access and more information on how the U.S. Department of Labor can help you by visiting their website [here](#).

The [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) (EEOC) is an independent federal agency that promotes equal opportunity in employment through administrative and judicial enforcement of the federal civil rights laws and through education and technical assistance. Applicants and employees of most private employers, state and local governments, educational institutions, employment agencies and labor organizations may be assisted by the EEOC.

Additional Resources

- [Valparaiso Police Department](#) should be your first call if you feel your safety or the safety of others is at risk. If the discrimination was a criminal event such as graffiti, physical altercation, etc., please report through the VPD. Additionally, the VPD offers a [citizen complaint](#) form for residents who wish to file a complaint against a member of the department.
- [Valparaiso University](#) offers a bias incident reporting system for students, faculty and visitors that experience discrimination on campus.
- [Porter County Sheriff's Department](#) if an incident occurs outside of city limits.