

# U.S. Department of Education – Office for Civil Rights

## Discrimination, Civil Rights Violations, and Violations of Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

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*The mission of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is to ensure equal access to education and to promote education excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights.*

OCR serves student populations facing discrimination. An important responsibility is resolving complaints of discrimination. The OCR enforces several Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin is prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; sex discrimination is prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and age discrimination is prohibited by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. These civil rights laws enforced by OCR extend to all state education agencies, elementary and secondary school systems, colleges and universities, vocational schools, proprietary schools, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, libraries, and museums that receive U.S. Department of Education funds. Areas covered may include, but are not limited to: admissions, recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student treatment and services, counseling and guidance, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, vocational education, recreation, physical education, athletics, housing, and employment. OCR also has responsibilities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (prohibiting disability discrimination by public entities, whether or not they receive federal financial assistance). To view OCR's guidance please visit the [Policy Guidance Portal](#). In addition, as of January 8, 2002, OCR enforces the [Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act](#) (Section 9525 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). Under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, no public elementary school or State or local education agency that provides an opportunity for one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society.

If you have reason to believe an education institution that receives federal financial assistance has discriminated against someone<sup>1</sup> on the basis of race, national origin, sex, disability, or age, you may file a complaint via facsimile to 214-661-9587, or by writing a letter to:

**U.S. Department of Education  
Civil Rights Division  
Renaissance Tower  
1201 Elm St., Suite 1000  
Dallas, TX 75270  
(214) 661-9600**

You may also file a complaint electronically by accessing OCR's online complaint form at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>.

For additional information on how to file a complaint and OCR's complaint process, please visit: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>.

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<sup>1</sup> The person or organization filing the complaint need not be a victim of the alleged discrimination but may file a complaint on behalf of another person or group.