

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION FACT SHEET

The Purpose of the Civil Rights Commission:

The Princeton Civil Rights Commission is an advisory board of the Municipal Council created to work cooperatively among people and groups, to aid in the elimination of discrimination between people based on; race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or expression, disability or atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait or the liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States and the nationality of any individual.

How Does the Civil Rights Commission Work to Achieve its Purpose?

- It recommends ways and means of initiating and improving municipal programs for coordination of community efforts to address problems involving tensions in the community.
- It develops community education programs that foster open and effective dialogues about race relations.
- It makes recommendations to the Princeton Mayor and Council for the development of policies, procedures and programs that will aid in the prevention and elimination of all types of discrimination in Princeton.
- It takes an active role in promoting and protecting civil rights by either initiating community dialogues and/or collaborating with other organizations to co-sponsor relevant programs and events.
- It provides an informal mechanism to resolve complaints through a facilitated dialogue by any persons claiming to be aggrieved by discrimination.

Can the Civil Rights Commission Make a Determination about Discriminatory Actions or Enforce Anti-Discrimination Laws?

No, only state and federal agencies have the authority to make a determination on discrimination. The Princeton Civil Rights Commission can provide information about how to seek protections based on state and federal law. However, the Civil Rights Commission does provide an informal mechanism for parties to work together to resolve issues surrounding discrimination.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION FACT SHEET- Page Two

How do I seek assistance from the Princeton Civil Rights Commission?

If you believe you have been subject to discrimination you can make an application for assistance through a number of avenues:

- You may go to the Human Services Department in person Monday through Friday between 9 am – 5 pm and make an application for assistance. The office is located at 1 Monument Drive.
- You may contact a member of the Civil Rights Commission who will provide you with assistance preparing the application and forwarding it to the Human Services Department for processing.
- You may go to the Municipal Clerk's Office and file an application Monday through Friday between 9 am – 5 pm. The office is located at 400 Witherspoon Street.
- You may make an application online through the municipal website at www.princetonnj.gov.

Once the application is received by the Human Services Department they will provide the following assistance:

- Provide information about your legal rights concerning discrimination.
- Gather information concerning the alleged discrimination from all parties involved.
- If all parties involved agree, they may elect to participate in the Civil Rights Commission's informal dispute resolution processes:
 - Outside voluntary mediation or
 - Informal conflict resolution – Provided through the Civil Rights Commission.

Will the Civil Rights Commission Impact My Legal Rights Under Anti-Discrimination Laws?

No, the Princeton Civil Rights Commission is an informal process to mutually resolve discrimination and has no legal authority. The Commission encourages anyone seeking a legal remedy to use the State of New Jersey Civil Rights Commission to resolve their issue. All parties will be advised that regardless of any informal process, you have only 180 days from the date the discrimination occurred to make a claim with the NJ Civil Rights Commission or Superior Court.