

Human Relations

The City of Anderson Human Relations Department reflects the commitment of the City of Anderson to the preservation of equal rights for all people. It is responsible for promoting equal opportunity both for city employees and the general public. This is accomplished through voluntary affirmative action policies, enforcement, education, community involvement and development programs. These programs are carried out by a combination of paid staff and volunteer citizen panels appointed by the mayor with the advice and consent of the City Council.

The Anderson Human Relations Commission receives and investigates complaints and seeks to resolve them through conciliation, findings of probable cause or no probable cause of discrimination, recommendations of damage payments or criminal prosecution.

It is the public policy of the City of Anderson to provide all of its citizens equal opportunity for education, employment, access to and use of public accommodations and equal opportunity for acquisition of real property, as these are declared civil rights. Denying these rights to persons because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, or disability is contrary to principles of freedom and equality of opportunity and are considered discriminating practices. The promotion of equal opportunity is the purpose of this commission.

The Anderson Human Relations Commission is composed of eleven members representative of the racial, ethnic, religious, economic, sexual and educational groups from the Anderson City Community. These members are volunteer citizens appointed by the mayor with the advice and consent of City Council. Each commissioner serves a three-year term.

The commission is charged with implementing the city's policy against discrimination and with guiding the enforcement of the city's affirmative action and antidiscrimination ordinances. It also works to promote positive intergroup relations.

The director works closely with the commissioners to effectively carry out the duties of the commission. The commission meets the fourth Wednesday of each month at 4:15 p.m. in the City Building, 120 East 8th Street in Room 201. The meetings are open and the public may attend.

The commission is responsible for implementing, enforcing and promoting equal opportunity. The Commission has the power to subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, administer oaths and take testimony of any person under oath. They may also prevent any retaliatory actions from occurring toward any person who has filed a charge of discrimination or testified in any hearing before the commission.

The Anderson Human Relations Commission enforces the City's Ordinance 39-80, as amended, which prohibits any form of discrimination in employment based on race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry or disability.

If unlawful discrimination is found in the area of employment, the employer will be required to conciliate with the discriminated party. The conciliation may include reinstatement to position (if the person was released from employment), retroactive pay, neutral references and other affirmative actions taken concerning fair employment.

In order to eliminate prejudice among the various racial, religious and ethnic groups in the city and to further good will among such groups, the commission, in cooperation with the Anderson City School Corporation, local colleges and universities may prepare a comprehensive educational program, designed to emphasize cultural awareness, identify the origin of prejudice among such minority groups, its harmful effects, and its incompatibility with the principles of equality.

It is deemed unlawful in the City of Anderson to discriminate in places of public accommodation because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry or disability. This applies to all public places of entertainment, amusement or recreation; restaurants; hotels; health facilities and all establishments which cater to or offer services, facilities, or goods to or solicit patronage from members of the general public.

The City of Anderson upholds and enforces public policy concerning equal rights to housing and the acquisition of real property. The commission investigates complaints of discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability and familial status. It is considered an act of unlawful discrimination to refuse to rent, sell or lease property to persons because of these distinctions.

If unlawful discrimination is found in the area of housing or acquisition of real property, the Commission may impose such fines and penalties as provided for in Ordinance 20-88 (Fair Housing Ordinance) and Ordinance No. 3-90, as amended and/or direct the Commission's Attorney to seek injunctive relief, actual damages, and punitive damages for and on behalf of the Complainant.

The City of Anderson supports the belief that the disabled should be given equal opportunity to choose and prepare for occupations compatible with their abilities and potentialities and that they should be given equal opportunity in selection, appointment and advancement in employment. It also believes that disability should not be a barrier to full and equal participation in all phases of community life.

A "disabled person" refers to anyone who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (i.e. caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and work); (2) has a record of such impairment (has a history of, or has been classified as having a mental or physical

impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities); or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

The commission assists in receiving complaints of discrimination against the disabled and works to ensure that city facilities are accessible to those with physical disabilities and that reasonable accommodation is made for disabled employees.

City of Anderson
Human Relations Department

Who:

Any United States citizen claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory practice or act within Anderson city limits may file and sign a complaint with the commission.

When:

A complaint must be filed within 180 days from the date of the last occurrence of the alleged discriminatory practice. The complaint must be signed and notarized by a notary public. A notary public is available within the department.

Where:

The Human Relations Department
P.O. Box 2100
20 E. 8 St.
Anderson, IN 46018

How:

Complaints will be accepted and may be filed by either personal delivery or by mail. The commission's staff will be available and will provide assistance in drafting and filing the complaint if needed.

Referrals of Complaints

Any United States citizen claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory practice or act and the act did not take place within the Anderson city limits, the citizen may still file a complaint with the Anderson Human Relations Commission. In return, the commission will forward the complaint to the appropriate agency. The appropriate agency may be the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or the Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC).

Training

Upon request, the staff may provide training for your employees, students, etc. Examples of seminar topics that can be addressed are as follows:

1. Sexual Harassment
2. Americans with Disability Act of 1990
3. Cultural Diversity
4. Recruitment & Selection

5. Civil Rights Act of 1991
6. Managing within the Law
7. Fair Housing
8. When to File a Complaint
9. Legal Employment Practices
 - A. Applications
 - B. Fair Labor Standard Issues
 - C. Interviewing

The City of Anderson Human Relations Department is here to serve you with answers to questions you might have concerning equal opportunity or affirmative action.

If you want more information or if you have any questions about filing a complaint or Equal Employment Opportunity laws, please contact:

City of Anderson
Department of Human Relations
P.O. Box 2100
120 East 8th Street
Anderson, IN 46018

Or call 765-648-6135 for more information.