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## Employment Discrimination Frequently Asked Questions

### What is employment discrimination?

- Employment discrimination means you were treated unfairly at work or when you applied for a job.
- This can happen because of your disability. There can be other reasons, too.

### What laws protect me at work?

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- The Civil Rights of 1990
- The RI Civil Rights Act of People with Disabilities Act

### Can I get help at work?

You can ask for a **reasonable accommodation**. This means a change at work that helps you do your job or apply for one. You must need the change because of your disability. The change must be reasonable. That means it is not a serious problem for the employer or costs too much money.

### What can I do about discrimination at work?

You have the right to file a complaint. This is called a “charge of discrimination.”

You can file a **Charge of Discrimination** with:

- The **Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights (RICHR)**
- The **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**.

### Important Deadlines!

- You have **180 days** after the discrimination to complain to the EEOC. You may have more time if you complain about state law. You should talk to a lawyer as soon as you can so you do not miss your deadline.

- You must complain to RICHR within one year (**365 days**). Use the RICHR Intake Questionnaire.

### What happens after I file with RICHR?

- An Information Officer may ask you for more information.
- If your case is about federal law, RICHR will send your charge to the EEOC.
- If RICHR accepts your case, an **Investigator** will get facts from you and the employer.
- The employer will be able to respond.
- You may be offered **mediation** – a meeting to help you and the employer make an agreement. Mediation only happens if both sides agree.
- If the RICHR does **not** take your case, you will get a **“Right to Sue”** letter. This means you can go to state or federal court. You must file within **90 days** of the date on the letter.

### How do I file a charge of discrimination with the EEOC?

You can file in three ways:

1. **Online:** Go to the EEOC’s Public Portal: <https://publicportal.eeoc.gov/portal/>.
2. **In person:** Find the closest EEOC office: <https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office>.
  - Use the Public Portal to make an appointment: <https://publicportal.eeoc.gov/portal/>.
  - At your appointment, a staff member will interview you and help you write your charge.
3. **By mail:** Write a letter to the EEOC that includes:
  - Your name, address, email, and phone number
  - The employer’s name, address, email, and phone number
  - How many people work for there (if you know)
  - A short description of what happened
  - When it happened
  - Why you believe it was discrimination
  - Your signature