

Upper Dublin Township Human Relations Commission



UDTHRC - Who are we?

- Established in 2017 to ensure that all who live & work in Upper Dublin Township, and all visitors, are protected from unlawful discrimination
- Comprised of seven volunteer Township residents appointed by the Upper Dublin Township Board of Commissioners
- Non-partisan and provides its services free-of-charge
- **You can not be retaliated against for filing a complaint.**

We are here to help you!

Mission Statement

As empowered by the Upper Dublin Township Board of Commissioners, and in accordance with the current Upper Dublin Township Ordinance, the Human Relations Commission shall work toward the elimination of discrimination and harassment through education, communications, mediation, and community outreach. The Commission seeks to promote greater understanding, inclusions, and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, visit, and play in Upper Dublin Township.

Know Your Rights

Discriminatory practices can be related to:

- **Employment** – The opportunity for a person to obtain and maintain employment for which the person is qualified. **This is protected.**
- **Public accommodation** – The opportunity for a person to access food, beverage, lodging, or amusement that is open to the general public. **This is protected.**
- **Commercial property or housing** – The opportunity for a person to buy or rent any commercial or residential property for which the person qualifies. **This is protected.**

Protection extends to actual or perceived membership in a protected class.



Protected Classes:

State Law:

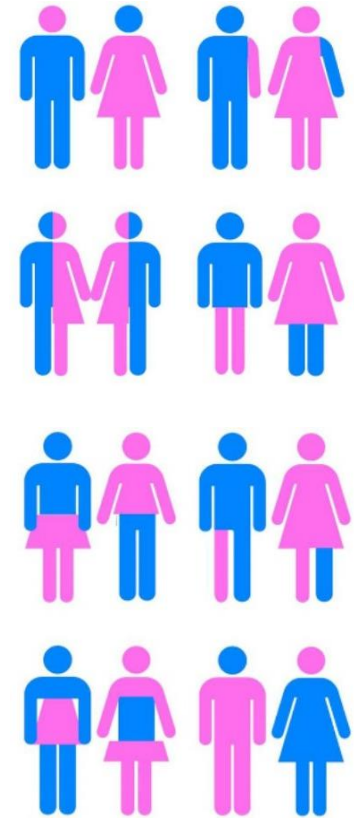
- Race
- Color
- Familial status
- Religious creed
- Ancestry
- Age
- Gender
- National Origin
- Disability
- Use or training of guide animals

Upper Dublin Township:

- Race
- Color
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- Age
- Gender
- National Origin
- Disability
- Use or training of guide animals
- **Sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression**

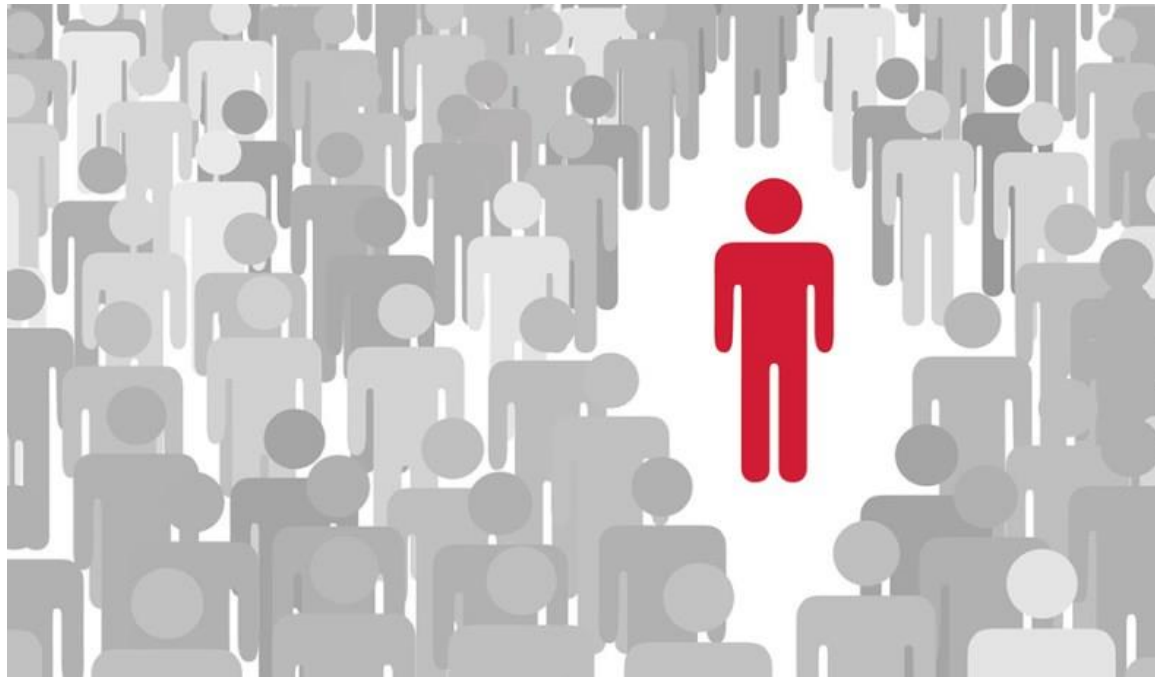
What does the language in our Ordinance mean?

- **Sexual orientation** - A person's attraction to other people and behavior expressing those attractions.
- **Gender identity** - A person's inner understanding of what gender(s) they belong to or identify with.
- **Gender expression** - The external manifestation of one's gender identity usually through masculine, feminine, or gender variant behavior; clothing; haircut; voice; or body characteristics.



What does discrimination look like?

- Discrimination is *action*, not thoughts.
- Think about what it *feels* like.



Example of Discrimination on the Basis of Race:

“My spouse and I are people of color.

We went to see an apartment that was advertised for rent. I called in advance and the landlord said to come right over.

When we arrived, the landlord seemed uncomfortable and said that the apartment was no longer available.”

Example Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation:

“I worked for the same company for several years and received outstanding reviews.

Shortly after my boss learned that I am gay, I began receiving disciplinary warnings for things others frequently do and for which no one is ever disciplined.

After a month, I was fired.”

Example Discrimination on the Basis of Disability:

“I use a wheelchair and have a service dog. I recently went to a local restaurant, but the manager would not let me in with my dog and said the dog could sit outside.

I tried to explain that it is my legal right to bring my dog anywhere I go, but the manager still would not let me enter.”

How can the Upper Dublin Township HRC help?

- Educate our community to understand that despite our differences, we are all entitled to dignity and respect.
- Help diffuse tensions by facilitating open dialogue motivated by respect and the desire to come to a mutually satisfying result.
- Mediate disputes where necessary.



Mediation

- Mediation is a process in which a neutral third party acts as a facilitator to get people on both sides of a dispute talking.
- The goal is to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.
- The complaining party retains the right to go to court, but our hope is that, through this process, we can help those in Upper Dublin Township resolve their differences without cost or delay.
- **Mediation is always confidential.**

How can we better understand each other?

- Start by understanding the power of language – **words make a difference!**
- Know what the words mean.

Pronouns Matter

- How we identify people and how we refer to them is important and impactful.
- If you don't know, ask: "what are your affirming pronouns?"

Contemporary Terms for Gender Diversity

- **Queer:** an umbrella term used by some to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Historically used as a slur, it is now being reclaimed by some members of the LGBTQ community.
- **Transgender/Trans:** an umbrella term for people who know themselves to be a gender different from what they were assigned at birth.
- **Gender Non-Binary:** a gender-variant person whose gender identity does not conform to the gender binary of male or female. They may identify as neither male nor female, between or beyond genders, or some combination of genders.
- **Gender-Fluid:** denotes or relates to a person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender; a non-binary gender identity that is capable of changing over time.
- **Cisgender:** having a gender and gender identity that is the same as one's assigned sex at birth.

Contemporary Terms for Gender Diversity

- **Transition** is different for everyone and includes some or all of the following cultural, legal, and medical adjustments: telling people, changing one's name/sex on legal documents, hair removal, hormone therapy, and surgery.
- **Transman:** a person who appeared to be female at birth, but knows himself to be male and wishes to or lives that way some or all of the time.
- **Transwoman:** a person who appeared to be male at birth, but knows herself to be female and wishes to or lives that way some or all of the time.

Talking About People With Varying Abilities:

“People First” Language

- People with varying abilities are **people** first.
- Why use “People First” language?
 - What we say influences how we **think**, and what we think influences how we **behave**.
- The message is: People with disabilities are people who just **happen to have** a varying ability.

Choosing Appropriate Words

- Say **“person with a varying ability”** instead of “disabled” or “retarded.”
- Say **“person who uses a wheelchair”** or **“wheelchair user”** instead of “wheelchair-bound” or “confined to a wheelchair.”
- Say **“accessible bathroom”** or **“accessible parking”** instead of “handicapped,” as in “handicapped bathroom” or “handicapped parking.”



Upper Dublin Township and the Human Relations Commission recognize the inherent dignity and worth of all people. Therefore, the HRC strives to ensure, through education, mediation and community outreach, that all members of the community enjoy equality and equal protection under the law.

Upper Dublin Township Human Relations Commission

Questions?

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<https://www.upperdublin.net/government/human-relations-commission/>