

ABOUT THE OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)

Mission

OCR's mission is to ensure equal access to education and promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights.

Activities

OCR advances its mission by:

- handling [complaints](#) from students, parents, employees, advocates, and others alleging discrimination;
- opening agency-initiated directed investigations and compliance reviews;
- publishing "Dear Colleague Letters," frequently asked questions documents, resources guides, fact sheets, and other [documents](#) that provide guidance about laws and regulations OCR enforces;
- providing presentations and technical assistance for stakeholders, including student and parent groups, advocacy and legal organizations, schools and districts, and colleges and universities; and
- collecting and publishing [data](#) about civil rights indicators in elementary and secondary schools.

Jurisdiction

OCR enforces the following federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination based on disability; and
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination based on age.

OCR also enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits discrimination based on disability by public entities, regardless of whether they receive federal financial assistance.

Under these laws and their regulations, OCR has jurisdiction over public schools and districts (including charter schools), state education agencies, and most colleges and universities. OCR also has jurisdiction over some vocational schools, proprietary schools, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, libraries, and museums.

Location

OCR has 12 regional enforcement offices throughout the country. The office in Denver has jurisdiction over recipients and some public entities in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

Additional Information

For additional information, visit www.ed.gov/ocr.