

# CLAIM YOUR RIGHTS

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION OF LGBT STUDENTS SHOULD BE REPORTED!

**Have you or someone you know experienced lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ)-based bullying, harassment, or discrimination in school?** You are not alone. Approximately 85% of high school students report being harassed in school because of their real or perceived sexual orientation, 64% of students report being harassed because of their real or perceived gender identity, and 31% of LGBT students report being harassed for their perceived gender expression. Even more troubling: only 18% of LGBT students report that their schools have policies which offer comprehensive protections. Clearly, many school communities are in desperate need for a way to address LGBTQ-based bullying, harassment, or discrimination. Without adequate statewide protections, what can we—the stakeholders in school communities across the nation—do about protecting the rights of all students subject to bullying, harassment, and discrimination based on real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression?

## Take Action

If you have experienced school-based bullying, harassment, or discrimination, file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Education Department today.

### Things to know about filing a complaint:

- **You are entitled to file a claim.** Nearly every public school receives some level of federal funding and is therefore protected under Title IX, which entitles you to file a bullying, harassment, or discrimination claim with OCR.
- **Time is of the essence.** A complaint must be filed within 180 days of when the bullying, harassment, or discrimination occurred.
- **Your confidentiality is assured.** Every claim remains confidential and will not be shared without permission.
- **A third party may file a claim on behalf of another person.** In other words, the person making the complaint doesn't have to be the one who experienced the harassment. A friend, family member or school faculty member can file the complaint.
- **It's safe.** The school cannot retaliate against anyone who has made a complaint, or testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under Title IX.
- **You must complete the entire form in order for the report to be counted.** Make sure to fill out the entire form. Incomplete information will result in a dismissal of your complaint.

### How to file a complaint:

- Go to <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html> to file your complaint online. Read the instructions and click [Continue to Complaint Form](#) at the bottom of the page to get started.

## Contact Us

If you have questions on how to take action, **please don't hesitate to contact us:**

- PFLAG National: Diego Sanchez, Director of Policy - Phone: 202.467.8180 ext. 221, Email: [dsanchez@pflag.org](mailto:dsanchez@pflag.org), [pflag.org](http://pflag.org)
- GLSEN Public Policy Office: Nathan Smith, Director of Public Policy - Phone: 202.621.5815, Email: [nathan.smith@glsen.org](mailto:nathan.smith@glsen.org), [glsen.org](http://glsen.org)
- Washington DC (Metro) Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: Phone - 202.453.6020, TDD - 877.521.2172, Email - [OCR.DC@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.DC@ed.gov)

