

# Civil Rights

## **General Overview**

The eight-member Civil Rights Commission was established by the State Constitution of 1963. Members of the bipartisan Commission are appointed by the Governor. The Commission is directed by the Constitution to investigate “alleged discrimination against any person because of religion, race, color or national origin and to secure the equal protection of such civil rights without such discrimination”. The Commission appoints the Director of the Department who carries out the mission through the Department.

The Department of Civil Rights investigates alleged discrimination based on religion, race, color, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, arrest record, physical disability, or mental disability against any person in employment, public accommodations, public service, education, or housing, as provided by the State Constitution, civil rights laws, and the Governor’s executive orders. The Department also seeks to prevent discrimination through educational programs encouraging voluntary compliance with civil rights laws. The Department provides information and services to businesses regarding diversity issues and equal employment law. Regional offices are located in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Flint, and Marquette.

## **Major Divisions and Programs**

**Michigan Women’s Commission.** This Commission was created by Public Act 1 of 1968. The Commission encourages the study and review of the status of women throughout the State, directing attention to critical problems confronting women. It recommends methods of overcoming discrimination against women in public and private employment and civil and political rights. The Commission also works to secure appropriate recognition of women’s accomplishments and contributions to the State. The Commission has 19 members. Fifteen members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor. There are four ex officio members who are appointed by the respective departments that they represent.