



OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

October 9, 2025

Marlene Hopkins, Commissioner
City of Chicago Department of Buildings
121 North LaSalle Street, Room 906
Chicago, IL 60602
via email: marlene.hopkins@cityofchicago.org

RE: Referral of EPA Complaint No. 07Rr-25-R5

Dear Commissioner Hopkins:

As you are aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication (OCRA), External Civil Rights Division (ECRD) received the above-referenced complaint against the City of Chicago, Department of Buildings (Chicago, DOB). This letter serves to notify you that ECRD is rejecting the complaint.

Pursuant to EPA's nondiscrimination regulation, ECRD conducts a jurisdictional review of external civil rights complaints. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(d)(1). To be accepted for investigation, a complaint must meet the jurisdictional requirements described in EPA's nondiscrimination regulation.

First, a complaint must be in writing. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(1). Second, the entity that the complainant identifies as allegedly engaging in discrimination must be an applicant for, or recipient of, EPA financial assistance. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.15.

Third, the complainant must file the complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(2). Fourth, a complainant must describe an alleged discriminatory act that, if true, may violate EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. An alleged discriminatory act is one based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. *Id.*

After careful consideration, ECRD cannot accept the instant complaint, because Chicago, DOB is not a recipient of EPA financial assistance. Accordingly, ECRD must reject the instant complaint for investigation.

Pursuant to EPA's non-discrimination regulations at 40 C.F.R. 7.120(d), and due to the subject matter of the allegations, the claim may fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). ECRD has notified Complainant that Complainant may contact HUD at:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
FHEO Region 5 (Upper Midwest)
Ralph H. Metcalfe Federal Building
77 West Jackson Boulevard, Rm. 2202
Chicago, IL 60604
<https://www.hud.gov/reporhousingdiscrimination>

Finally, EPA's regulation prohibits applicants, recipients, and other persons from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or engaging in other discriminatory conduct against an individual because they have acted or participated in an action to secure rights protected by the civil rights requirements that EPA enforces. See 40 C.F.R. 7.100. Any individual that opines a recipient has engaged in such misconduct can file a complaint with ECRD.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Case Manager Jamillah Harris at harris.jamillah@epa.gov or Trinita Mason at mason.trinita@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JuanCarlos M. Hunt".

JuanCarlos M. Hunt, Director
Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication
U.S. EPA

cc: Cheryl Newton, Deputy Regional Administrator/Deputy Civil Rights Official
Robert Kaplan, Regional Counsel
U.S. EPA Region 5