

CALIFORNIA SECURITY CASE LAW LIBRARY

Filing a Complaint with CRD or EEOC: Process and Deadlines

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Security officers who believe they experienced discrimination, harassment, or retaliation can file a complaint with the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) or the U.S. EEOC, generally within strict time limits, and may later receive a right-to-sue letter allowing a civil lawsuit.

Two agencies, overlapping coverage

CRD handles complaints under California's FEHA, while the EEOC handles complaints under federal laws like Title VII, the ADA, and the ADEA.

Because of work-sharing agreements, filing with one agency often cross-files with the other, but confirming this in writing is worthwhile.

Both agencies can investigate, attempt resolution, or issue a right-to-sue notice allowing the worker to pursue a private lawsuit.

Typical filing deadlines

Agency	General deadline	Notes
CRD (FEHA)	3 years from the discriminatory act	Deadlines can vary by claim type
EEOC (Title VII/ADA/ADEA)	300 days in California	Extended deadline applies due to state agency

General steps to file

- Gather dates, documents, and witness names
- Submit an intake form online or by phone with the chosen agency
- Participate in any intake interview
- Request a right-to-sue letter if you wish to pursue litigation

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representation.

Deadlines and requirements can change and vary by claim, so confirm current rules with CRD, EEOC, or a licensed California attorney before relying on any date here.

Quick answers

Do I need a lawyer to file with CRD or EEOC?

No, both agencies accept complaints directly from individuals without a lawyer.

What is a right-to-sue letter?

It is a notice from the agency allowing the individual to file a civil lawsuit regarding the claim.

Can I file online?

Both CRD and EEOC offer online intake portals.

What happens after I file?

The agency may investigate, offer mediation, or close the case and issue a right-to-sue letter.

Primary sources — read the official text

How to file a complaint	California Civil Rights Department	https://civildrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess/
File a charge of discrimination	U.S. EEOC	https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination
Right-to-sue notices	California Civil Rights Department	https://civildrights.ca.gov/right-to-sue/
EEOC time limits	U.S. EEOC	https://www.eeoc.gov/time-limits-filing-charge

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