

YOUR RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM SEXUAL ORIENTATION DISCRIMINATION

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Sexual orientation refers to a person's physical or emotional attraction to another person. People may define their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, queer, straight or another term.

YOUR RIGHT TO BE SAFE AT SCHOOL

- You have the same right to be safe in school as every other student. If you are being bullied:
 - keep notes for yourself of when and where you are bullied;
 - tell a teacher, a principal, or counselor about it;
 - report the bullying in writing to your principal or superintendent; and
 - read our [bullying factsheet](#).
- Your school's actions may be discrimination if:
 - a school staff member is treating you badly because of your sexual orientation, or
 - another student is treating you badly because of your sexual orientation and your school does not stop it.

YOUR RIGHT TO BE OUT AND YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY

- You have the right to be open about your sexual orientation. Your school cannot tell you to be silent about your sexual orientation or punish you for expressing it.
- Your school should not out you to anyone without your permission.

YOUR RIGHTS WHEN INTERACTING WITH SCHOOL POLICE OR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

- School police officers cannot search you or your bag without a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. They cannot search you just because of your race or sexual orientation.
- You should email or write a letter to your principal and your city's police review board if a school police or resource officer is inappropriate with you. In Philadelphia, you can submit an [anonymous complaint online](#).

YOUR RIGHT TO EXPRESS YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION AT SCHOOL

- You have the right to form and meet as a Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) at school if they allow other non-academic clubs to meet at school.
- Your school cannot stop you from going to prom or another school activity with your date just because your date is the same gender as you.

The Education Law Center-PA ("ELC") is a non-profit, legal advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all children in Pennsylvania have access to a quality public education. Through legal representation, impact litigation, trainings, and policy advocacy, ELC advances the rights of vulnerable children, including children living in poverty, children of color, children in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, children with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ students, and children experiencing homelessness.

ELC's publications provide a general idea of the law. However, each situation is different. If questions remain about how the law applies to a particular situation, contact ELC or an attorney of your choice. Visit www.elc-pa.org/contact or call 215-238-6970 (Philadelphia) or 412-258-2120 (Pittsburgh).