



**Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR)**  
**U Visa and T Visa Certification**  
**Procedures and Information**

**Requesting a U Visa or T Visa Certification**  
**from Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR)**

A U Visa and a T Visa are forms of temporary non-immigrant status available to non-citizen victims of certain crimes. Congress created the U Visa and the T Visa as part of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, in order to strengthen the ability of law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute certain crimes against immigrants and to offer protection to victims who fear cooperating with law enforcement due to their immigration status. The U Visa and T Visa programs are administered by the US Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS). Refer to DHS' website for more information, <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-human-trafficking-and-other-crimes>.

The CCHR is Chicago's Civil Rights Agency. CCHR investigates discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations. As such, the CCHR accepts requests for U Visa and T Visa certification, but only when there is or was a pending discrimination complaint filed here. This packet explains the CCHR's process and procedures for requesting that the CCHR provide a certification.

**Please note, you must file a discrimination complaint with the CCHR to request a U visa or T visa certification.**

This packet includes the following:

1. Instructions on how to file a discrimination complaint with the CCHR;
2. Instructions on how to submit a Request for a U visa or T visa certification;”
3. An optional form to use for your Request for a U visa or T visa certification; and
4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the process.

For questions, please contact Marisol Gallegos, Director of Human Rights Compliance, 312-744-9678, [Marisol.Gallegos@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Marisol.Gallegos@cityofchicago.org).

## How to File a Discrimination Complaint with CCHR

The Chicago Human Rights Ordinance and the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, credit transactions, and bonding, as well as retaliation.

### ***Who can file a complaint with CCHR:***

You can file a complaint with CCHR if you have experienced discrimination or sexual harassment in your employment, housing, or at a place of public accommodation or in your housing within the city of Chicago. There is no minimum number of employees. There is no cost to file.

### ***Types of Discrimination Basis Covered (Protected Classes):***

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Race                              | Gender Identity                               |
| Color                             | Marital Status                                |
| Religion                          | Parental Status                               |
| Sex (including sexual harassment) | Source of Income                              |
| National Origin                   | Military Status                               |
| Ancestry                          | Credit History (employment only)              |
| Age                               | Criminal History (employment only)            |
| Disability                        | Bodily Autonomy (housing and employment only) |
| Sexual Orientation                | Retaliation                                   |

### ***Adverse Actions Covered:***

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Refusal to Hire   | Different Terms and Conditions |
| Refusal to Promote  | Unequal Compensation           |
| Discipline  | Harassment                     |
| Discharge   | Failure to Accommodate         |
| (Based on your membership in one of the above listed protected classes) |                                |
| Refusal to rent, renew lease, or sell                                   | Lease Termination              |
| Steering  | Discriminatory Advertising     |

### ***When:***

You must file a complaint within 365 days of the alleged discrimination, for incidents of discrimination occurring on or after June 4, 2022.

### ***How:***

Complaints may be filed in person, by mail, fax, email, or online. The Complaint form is available on CCHR's website. Intake staff is available to assist preparing complaints in person.

#### **Filing Hours:**

Monday through Friday  
9:00 - 5:00 (2 copies of all filings required)

Interpreter services are available. For accommodation requests, please contact 312-744-4111.

#### **Intake Hours:**

Monday through Friday  
9:00 - 3:00

### ***Where:***

Chicago Commission on Human Relations  
740 N. Sedgwick, Suite 400  
Chicago, IL 60654  
(312) 744-4111 (General), 312-744-4474 (*Intake line – questions about filing Complaints*)  
(312) 744-1088 (TTY)  
(312) 744-1081 (FAX)  
cchrfilings@cityofchicago.org  
[chicago.gov/cchr](http://chicago.gov/cchr)

## How to Request a U visa or T visa certification from CCHR

**Step 1:** To request a U visa or T visa certification from CCHR, a discrimination complaint must be filed with CCHR. Refer to the instructions on page three about how to file a complaint.

**Step 2:** Individuals or their advocates or representatives seeking a U visa or T visa certification should send a written request (you may use the **optional Request form** provided herein), to the attention of Marisol Gallegos, Director of Human Rights Compliance, via mail, fax or email to:

Chicago Commission on Human Relations  
740 N. Sedgwick  
Suite 400  
Chicago, IL 60654  
(312) 744-4111  
(312) 744-1088 (TTY)  
(312) 744-1081 (FAX)  
cchrfilings@cityofchicago.org

### **Requests should:**

- (1) Include the name and date of birth of the Requestor.
- (2) Identify the respondent(s) involved in the relevant CCHR investigation or litigation.
- (3) Provide the assigned case number of their Complaint filing with the CCHR.
- (4) Provide a copy of the Complaint filed with the CCHR.
- (5) Include the Requestor's contact information.
- (6) Provide a description of how the requestor may have been the victim of a qualifying crime; specifically, how the elements of that crime relate to the Requestor's claims for discrimination. Provide facts and relevant case law/statutes.
- (7) Provide a description of any known or documented injury the Requestor suffered.
- (8) Provide information on the ways in which the Requestor has or is continuing to cooperate with CCHR's investigation.

It is the exclusive responsibility of federal immigration officials to determine whether a person is eligible for a U visa or T visa. Issuance of a certification by the CCHR simply verifies information relevant to the federal immigration benefit sought, including information relevant for federal immigration officials to determine eligibility for the visa. By issuing a certification, the CCHR confirms that a Complaint of discrimination with elements of victimization of a qualifying crime has been filed, that the complaint was or is currently being investigated by the CCHR, and that the requestor has complied with reasonable requests for assistance.

For questions about requesting a U visa or T visa certification, contact Marisol Gallegos, Director of Human Rights Compliance, 312-744-9678, [Marisol.Gallegos@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Marisol.Gallegos@cityofchicago.org).



City of Chicago  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS**  
740 N. Sedgwick, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60654  
312/744-4111 (Voice), 312/744-1081 (Fax), 312/744-1088 (TDD)  
[www.Chicago.gov/cchr](http://www.Chicago.gov/cchr), [cchrfilings@cityofchicago.org](mailto:cchrfilings@cityofchicago.org)

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**U VISA and T VISA CERTIFICATION REQUEST FORM**

|   |                                     |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>COMPLAINANT'S NAME</b>   | <b>TELEPHONE</b><br>Email:          | <b>DATE OF BIRTH</b><br>MM/DD/YYYY: |
| <b>STREET ADDRESS</b>   | <b>CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE</b>        |                                     |
| <b>RESPONDENT'S NAME(S)/WORKPLACE</b>   | <b>TELEPHONE</b>                    |                                     |
| <b>STREET ADDRESS</b>   | <b>CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE</b>        |                                     |
| <b>ASSIGNED CCHR CASE NUMBER</b>  | - -                                 |                                     |
| <b>QUALIFYING CRIME</b>   |                                     |                                     |
| <b>REQUESTOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION</b>  |                                     |                                     |
| <b>PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW YOU WERE A VICTIM OF A QUALIFYING CRIME, SPECIFICALLY HOW THE ELEMENTS OF THAT CRIME REALTE TO YOUR CLAIMS FOR DISCRIMINATION. PROVIDE FACTS AND RELEVANT CASE LAW/STATUTES</b> |                                     |                                     |
|   |                                     |                                     |
| <b>PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF ANY KNOWN OR DOCUMENTED INJURY YOU SUFFERED.</b>  |                                     |                                     |
|   |                                     |                                     |
| <b>PROVIDE INFORMATION OF THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU HAVE COOPERATED WITH CCHR'S INVETSIGATION.</b>  |                                     |                                     |
|   |                                     |                                     |
| <b>REQUESTOR'S SIGNATURE:</b>   | <b>DATE SIGNED</b> (month/day/year) |                                     |

**IF YOUR COMPLAINT WAS PREVIOUSLY FILED, PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY OF YOUR COMPLAINT FORM.**

**Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Support for U Visa and T Visa Certification Requests to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q1: Does the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) accept requests for U visa and T visa certification for individuals who may have been victims of a qualifying crime in the workplace.**

A1: Yes. The CCHR considers requests on a case-by-case basis. The CCHR supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) use of discretion to further the enforcement of laws within the CCHR's jurisdiction.

**Q2: Can the CCHR provide me advice about whether I should request a U visa or T visa certification?"**

A2: No. The CCHR cannot provide any individual with advice to request a U visa or T visa certification. We recommend that you consult with an immigration attorney. The CCHR is a neutral agency. For a list of recognized organizations and accredited representatives, visit:

<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/942306/download#ILLINOIS>

**Q3: How can an individual or their representative request a U visa or T visa certification from CCHR?**

A3: Individuals or their advocates or representatives should send a written request that the CCHR complete a U visa or T visa certification. Such requests should be sent to the attention of the CCHR's *Director of Human Rights Compliance*, Marisol Gallegos, via mail, fax or email to:

Chicago Commission on Human Relations  
740 N. Sedgwick  
Suite 400  
Chicago, IL 60654  
(312) 744-4111  
(312) 744-1088 (TTY)  
(312) 744-1081 (FAX)  
cchrfilings@cityofchicago.org

There is an optional Request Form included in this packet.

**Q4: What information should be included in the request for a U visa or T visa certification?**

A4: Requests should:

- (1) Include the name and date of birth of the Requestor.
- (2) Identify the respondent(s) involved in the relevant CCHR investigation or litigation.
- (3) Provide the assigned case number of their Complaint filing with CCHR.
- (4) Provide a copy of the Complaint filed with CCHR.
- (5) Include the Requestor's contact information.
- (6) Provide a description of how the Requestor may have been the victim of a qualifying crime, specifically how the elements of that crime relate to the requestor's claims of discrimination.
- (7) Provide facts and relevant case law/statutes.
- (8) Provide a description of any known or documented injury the Requestor suffered.
- (9) Provide information on the ways in which the Requestor has or is continuing to cooperate with the CCHR's investigation.

Requests should NOT:

- (1) Provide personally sensitive identifiable information such as Social Security Numbers.
- (2) Provide the Requestor's immigration history.

**Q5: What factors will the CCHR consider when deciding whether to certify an individual's request for U visa or T visa with DHS?**

A5: The CCHR promotes appreciation of Chicago's diversity and works to eliminate prejudice and discrimination. Protecting the civil rights of individuals who participate in the CCHR's investigations and/or administrative hearings is fundamental to fulfilling its enforcement obligation. The CCHR supports requests for U visas and T visas on a case-by-case basis where such requests support preventing and remedying unlawful employment discrimination. The CCHR will take into consideration the following factors: (1) whether the request relates to an open or closed CCHR investigation or litigation; (2) whether the facts in the case support an alleged qualifying crime; and (3) whether the requestor has provided reasonable assistance in the investigation. If so, the CCHR, at its discretion, may provide a U visa or T visa certification.

**Q6: Must there have been a substantial evidence finding by the Commission in the individual's case in order for the CCHR to complete a U visa or T visa certification?**

A6: No. There does not need to be a finding of substantial evidence by the CCHR. However, there must be a formal Complaint filed with the CCHR and the requestor will need to provide information as it relates to an open or closed CCHR investigation or litigation and how the facts in the case support the alleged qualifying crime.

**Q7: How long does it take to get a response back regarding my request for a U visa or T visa certification from CCHR?**

A7: The CCHR shall inform the requestor whether it will provide a U visa or T visa certification no later than 30 days from the date of the request. Requests for expedited completion of a U visa or T visa certification need to be affirmatively raised by the requestor in writing and the Director of Human Rights Compliance will determine if the request is eligible for expedited review.

**Q8: Does a U visa or T visa certification provide any immigration status, protection, or relief?**

A8: No. Issuance of a U visa or T visa certification by the CCHR simply verifies information relevant to the federal immigration benefit sought, including information relevant for federal immigration officials to determine eligibility for the visa requested. It does not provide any immigration status, protection, or relief. It is the exclusive responsibility of federal immigration officials to determine whether to grant the visa.

**Q9: What happens after the CCHR issues a decision on an individual's request for a U visa or T visa certification?**

A9: If a request is granted, the CCHR will provide the completed U visa or T visa certification to the individual or their advocate or representative so they may include the certification form with their petition for the visa with DHS. If the request is denied, the CCHR will provide written notice to the individual or their advocate or representative explaining why the available evidence does not support a finding that the person is a victim of qualifying criminal activity. The Director of Human Rights Compliance shall submit the notice to the address provided in the request and shall provide information on the appeal process. CCHR will respond to the appeals within 30 business days.