



CITY OF PITTSBURGH
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
CITY-COUNTY BUILDING

PRESS RELEASE

June 29, 2026

Executive Committee
Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations

Public Statement on the June 18th Memorandum Opinion Regarding Disability Rights and Community Integration

The Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations is deeply concerned by the June 18 memorandum opinion issued by the Counsel to the President, which advances a troubling legal context that appears designed to undermine decades of established disability rights law and policy.

For more than a generation, federal law and court decisions have affirmed the responsibility of governments to ensure that people with disabilities have access to services and supports that enable them to live, work, and participate fully in their communities. In 1999, the United States Supreme Court's landmark *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision recognized that unnecessary institutionalization constitutes discrimination and affirmed that people with disabilities are capable of participating in community life when provided appropriate supports and services.

While this memorandum opinion does not alter existing law, it signals a concerning shift in the interpretation of federal obligations and may serve as a foundation for future decisions that weaken access to community-based services. Such actions threaten to make housing choice, community integration, and independent living increasingly unattainable for many people with disabilities.

Integration is not merely a legal mandate—it is a fundamental measure of our humanity. Services that support independence, self-determination, and inclusion provide dignity and opportunity to a population that has too often been forced to fight for basic consideration and equal treatment.

The Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations hereby denounces the assumptions and implications advanced in this memorandum opinion. We stand in solidarity with disability advocates, civil rights organizations, and community members across the nation in defending the principles established by *Olmstead* and reaffirming the right of all people with disabilities to live, thrive, and belong in their communities.

The Commission remains committed to advancing equity, inclusion, and the full civil and human rights of people with disabilities.

The City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations is the official civil rights enforcement and investigative body for the City of Pittsburgh. If you have any questions, please contact us at (412) 255-2600 or at human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov.

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