

## Chalk Talk: *What to Do If You Think You Have Been Discriminated Against* (Pat Griffin)

1. If you are an employee, do not resign. If you are a team member do not quit the team. Challenging discrimination is much more difficult if you resign or quit.
2. If you are being fired from your job or dismissed from a team and you believe the reason for this action is your perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, ask for the reasons for your dismissal and ask that the reasons be put in writing.
3. Consult with legal resources, school office, LGBT resource center or other resource that can provide informed advice on your legal options.
4. If you are a staff member, obtain a written copy of the grievance/appeal process from your school or, if you are a student, the procedure in the student handbook (or student athlete handbook) for reporting discrimination. This is the first step initiating action. Guidance for completing these forms is available from the [National Center for Lesbian Rights](#). Be aware that often there is a time limit for the filing of complaints so take action as soon as you feel other avenues of discussion are not effective.
5. Identify colleagues, friends or teammates you can count on and who will provide emotional support to you.
6. If meetings are scheduled with you and the coach or administrator who you believe is discriminating against you, bring a teammate, colleague or legal advisor to the meetings to serve as support and witness. Avoid attending such a meeting alone.
7. If you are a student-athlete and you are out to your parents, tell them what is happening. Parents can be essential advocates and supports for you. Ask your parents to attend meetings with athletic department personnel with you.
8. Keep a diary of everything that someone has said or done that you think is discriminatory. Include dates and times.
9. If others were present when the incident(s) occurred, ask them to support you if you challenge the discrimination or harassment.
10. Find out what kind of protections are in place in your state that address discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. If your state has no legal protections, consider the federal laws that might apply (See [Chalk Talk on Laws and Legal Resources](#)).
11. Consult with one of the national legal advocacy groups listed in the [Chalk Talk on Laws and Legal Resources](#).
12. Look for ways to resolve the situation informally: meet with coaches or administrators. If this fails, consider more formal steps to resolve the situation like talking to the school principal, school board, or university president.

13. If these actions fail to resolve the situation, consider filing a lawsuit in consultation with legal representation.
14. Remember you have a right to be treated with respect and fairness. When you stand up and demand to be treated fairly, you will help to make athletics a safe, respectful and fair place for others too.