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## BLOGS

Archives;Discrimination

# New EEOC Online Filing Portal Up and Running

On Nov. 1, 2017, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) launched an [online intake portal](#) to allow individuals to quickly and directly submit inquiries and intake interview requests to the EEOC. It remains to be seen whether online access to the EEOCs intake and inquiry process will lead to an increase in discrimination charges, but the new reporting mechanism undoubtedly provides potential claimants with easier access to the EEOC.

Previously, in order to file a charge with the EEOC, an individual needed to visit an EEOC office in person, visit a state or local fair employment practice agency to file a charge, submit a letter by mail, or initiate the process over the telephone. Clearly, having an alternative online process will make it substantially easier to begin the charge process.

According to the EEOC, the online portal enables individuals to carry out the first steps necessary to filing a charge in an online format, ask questions of EEOC representatives about whether their rights have been violated, and go through the standard complaint intake process. The EEOC has stated that, in fiscal year 2017, it responded to more than 550,000 calls to the toll-free number and 140,600 inquiries in field offices, reflecting a significant public demand for EEOCs services. EEOC Acting Chair Victoria A. Lipnic called the new online system a giant leap forward in providing online services. This secure online system makes the EEOC and an individual's charge information available wherever and whenever it is most convenient for that individual, Lipnic said.

The new system does not permit individuals to file charges of discrimination not prepared by the EEOC, but does allow individuals to digitally sign and file a charge prepared by the EEOC after the intake process is complete. After a charge has been filed, the charging party can use the portal to provide and update their contact information, agree to mediate the charge, upload documents to the charge file, receive documents and messages related to the charge from the EEOC, and check on the status of the charge. These features are available for newly filed charges and for charges that were filed on or after Jan. 1, 2016, that are currently in investigation or mediation.