

CITY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Annabel Palma, Commissioner/Chair



WHAT WE DO

The New York City Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) enforces the New York City Human Rights Law (NYCHRL), educates the public about their rights and responsibilities under the NYCHRL, and encourages positive community relations. The NYCHRL prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations and is one of the most comprehensive antidiscrimination laws in the country. CCHR achieves its mission through law enforcement, community outreach, media, legislative, and policy work. CCHR's Law Enforcement Bureau (LEB) impartially investigates alleged violations of the law; negotiates and resolves matters; provides early intervention in cases of ongoing discrimination, retaliation, as well as to ensure accommodations; and, where appropriate, tries cases before an independent administrative law judge. Mediation services are offered through the independent Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution (OCMR). CCHR's Community Relations Bureau (CRB) educates the public on rights and responsibilities under the NYCHRL and cultivates deep community relationships through roundtable discussions, workshops, trainings, and other sustained engagements. CRB also collaborates with the small business community, including chambers of commerce, merchant associations, and business improvement districts to facilitate compliance with the NYCHRL. CCHR's Office of the Chair is the Commission's policy, legislative, and adjudicatory hub. The Office convenes public hearings and stakeholder discussions, interfaces with sibling agencies, publishes reports and public-facing materials on key issues, publishes legal guidance and promulgates rules, issues final decisions and orders, and develops media campaigns.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

The Commission's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is the cornerstone of the agency's work. The first four months of Fiscal 2024 saw immediate gains due to concerted efforts in the prior year to expand outreach and intake services in order to reach a larger audience. During this reporting period, CCHR provided live responses to phone calls from the public made during regular business office hours; over half of the people who called CCHR seeking information or help spoke to an enforcement staff person immediately.

CCHR's Source of Income Unit, which was launched in 2018, expanded significantly and now has successfully resolved 55 pre-complaint interventions to address source of income discrimination, or housing discrimination against voucher holders. This work to address housing discrimination is in addition to settlement agreements which provided for 58 set aside units for voucher holders and a settlement with a housing provider to have all their open units set aside for 18 months so that voucher holders have access to rental units. In addition to its enforcement work on source of income discrimination, CCHR ran a multilingual campaign to raise awareness of laws prohibiting source of income discrimination called "Vouchers Pay. Discrimination Doesn't." Concluded in July 2023, this campaign garnered an estimated 35 million impressions and 144 thousand visits to the CCHR website. In September 2023, CCHR launched a first-of-its-kind partnership with Fordham University's Real Estate Institute resulting in a continuing education course to stop illegal voucher discrimination.

Pursuant to the Commission's authority to initiate its own investigations, CCHR's enforcement staff initiated 10 new complaints during the first four months of Fiscal 2024 relating to New York State's salary transparency law, which went into effect in September 2023. CCHR also used the opportunity presented by the salary transparency law to create a new reporting tool on the CCHR website where certain Commission-initiated complaints are uploaded when they are filed.

Additionally, following two successful cohorts, CRB launched the third cohort of the Youth for Equity and Solidarity (YES) Council. Finally, recognizing the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the City's economic health, and the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on immigrant New Yorkers and people of color, CCHR deployed its research mandate to understand and make recommendations on how the CHRL affects worker cooperatives. This project resulted in a report identifying recommendations for enhancing economic justice and addressing intergroup relations and bias prevention.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Enforce the NYC Human Rights Law.

Goal 1a Investigate, prosecute and resolve complaints of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and bias-based profiling in a timely and efficient manner.

SERVICE 2 Educate the community on the NYC Human Rights Law.

Goal 2a Increase community awareness of the NYCHRL through workshops, campaigns, hearings, and outreach aimed at the general public, employers, small businesses, and housing providers.

HOW WE PERFORMED

- During the first four months of Fiscal 2024, demand for CCHR's enforcement services remained robust. CCHR received 4,466 inquiries, an 18 percent increase compared to the 3,773 received during the same period of Fiscal 2023, due in part to CCHR's provision of live responses to calls made from the public beginning in July 2023. Similarly, matters initiated increased 10 percent compared to the same time frame in Fiscal 2023. Additionally, InfoLine staff, who provide front line responses to the public and are frequently the first point of contact with the Commission, responded to over 3,700 phone calls and met with over 150 individuals who sought advice in person without an appointment.
- Over the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the value of damages and civil penalties ordered by the Commission was valued at \$1,078,150 million and \$313,000 respectively, compared to \$1,031,133 and \$241,500 during the same time frame in Fiscal 2023. These indicators can vary widely from month to month, so with only four months of data available in this report, any deviation from previous years is difficult to attribute to a specific factor.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, 121 complaints were filed, an increase of 42 percent compared to the same period of Fiscal 2023. Part of this increase is related to the amendment of the City Human Rights Law to add salary transparency obligations; during the reporting period, the Commission filed 44 complaints against employers that failed to file a salary range in their job postings.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the number of complaints closed fell 12 percent, from 188 in the same period of Fiscal 2023 to 166 in Fiscal 2024. This is due in part to increased demand in other aspects of CCHR's work, including the greater numbers of complaints filed, which necessitated more intake and filings from staff focused on complaints.
- CCHR's new testing metrics track the process of examining and determining an entity's compliance with the Human Rights Law, a cornerstone of CCHR's work. In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, 471 tests were attempted, with a total of 395 tests completed. A total of 354 entities were tested.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, CRB reached 40,002 people, reflecting CRB's ongoing work with community partners to engage and educate hard-to-reach communities. While the number of people reached is lower than during the same period last year, CRB held 750 outreach sessions (including 71 targeting youth) in this reporting period, compared to 663 during the same period last fiscal year, a 13 percent increase. To reach people who still hesitate to congregate in larger settings, CRB staff met New Yorkers in vulnerable communities for grassroots outreach, leading to more outreach sessions, even if the number of people reached per session was comparatively lower.

SERVICE 1 Enforce the NYC Human Rights Law.

Goal 1a Investigate, prosecute and resolve complaints of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and bias-based profiling in a timely and efficient manner.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Inquiries received	9,055	11,942	12,190	*	*	3,773	4,466
Matters initiated	881	449	801	*	*	290	320
Pre-complaint resolutions	214	196	347	*	*	125	100
Modifications for accessibility for people with disabilities	46	27	111	*	*	56	25
★ ● Complaints filed	643	318	340	*	*	85	121
Complaints closed	895	667	471	*	*	188	166
– Complaints closed (%) - no probable cause determination	0%	0%	0%	*	*	0%	2%
– Complaints closed (%) - probable cause determination	22%	13%	25%	*	*	32%	17%
– Complaints closed (%) - administrative cause	48%	56%	42%	*	*	40%	49%
– Complaints closed (%) - settlement	30%	31%	33%	*	*	28%	32%
Complaints successfully mediated	47	45	28	*	*	8	9
Complaints referred to the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings	13	4	1	*	*	1	0
Value of damages for complainants (\$)	\$8,069,100	\$6,166,414	\$4,679,207	*	*	\$1,031,133	\$1,078,150
Value of civil penalties imposed (\$)	\$1,678,000	\$878,500	\$887,500	*	*	\$241,500	\$313,300
Open matters	2,411	1,555	1,180	*	*	1,446	1,241
Open complaints	1,012	773	733	*	*	708	730
Average age of complaint caseload (days)	427	503	514	*	*	501	522
Complaints pending by age — less than one year	546	268	302	*	*	175	301
Average days to completion for an Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution case	154	124	117	*	*	113	112
Tests attempted for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations	NA	NA	1,433	*	*	NA	471
Tests completed for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations	NA	NA	1,242	*	*	NA	395
Testing completion rate for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations	NA	NA	87%	*	*	NA	84%
Entities tested for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations	878	734	1,082	*	*	NA	354
Phone calls received by InfoLine staff	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	3,734
Walk-ins assisted at CCHR offices	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	409
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇕ Directional Target * None							

SERVICE 2 Educate the community on the NYC Human Rights Law.

Goal 2a

Increase community awareness of the NYCHRL through workshops, campaigns, hearings, and outreach aimed at the general public, employers, small businesses, and housing providers.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Training and outreach sessions	1,683	1,794	2,172	1,500	1,500	663	750
Training and outreach sessions targeting youth	293	169	220	250	250	77	71
★ People reached	102,121	107,136	132,507	95,000	95,000	52,193	40,002
Online trainings completed by members of the public	NA	NA	NA	*	*	280,247	179,612
People reached (youth events)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	5,621
Outreach sessions in Manhattan (% of total)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	20%
Outreach sessions in Staten Island (% of total)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	20%
Outreach sessions in Brooklyn (% of total)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	10%
Outreach sessions in Queens (% of total)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	6%
Outreach sessions in the Bronx (% of total)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	17%
Outreach sessions conducted virtually (%)	NA	NA	NA	*	*	NA	21%
Website visits	NA	4,223,207	2,330,417	*	*	NA	1,562,866

★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Customer Experience							
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	98.0%	100.0%	100.0%	*	*	100.0%	100.0%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	99.0%	99.0%	100.0%	*	*	100.0%	100.0%
Completed customer requests for interpretation	1,519	1,373	1,414	*	*	499	740
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	0	0	5	*	*	2	10
CORE facility rating	100	98	96	*	*	NA	NA

★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2023 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24 ¹	FY25 ¹	FY23	FY24
Expenditures (\$000,000) ²	\$11.9	\$11.2	\$11.1	\$14.1	\$12.9	\$13.6	\$3.8	\$3.9
Personnel	120	101	101	143	140	140	104	107
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$4	\$1	\$0	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$0	\$0

¹January 2024 Financial Plan. ²Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available

SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Where possible, the relationship between an agency's goals and its expenditures and planned resources, by budgetary unit of appropriation (UA), is shown in the 'Applicable MMR Goals' column. Each relationship is not necessarily exhaustive or exclusive. Any one goal may be connected to multiple UAs, and any UA may be connected to multiple goals.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY23 ¹ (\$000,000)	January 2024 Financial Plan FY24 ² (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals ³
Personal Services - Total	\$9.1	\$10.4	
001 - Personal Services	\$4.9	\$4.4	All
003 - Community Development	\$4.2	\$6.0	All
Other Than Personal Services - Total	\$2.0	\$2.6	
002 - Other Than Personal Services	\$0.4	\$0.7	All
004 - Community Development	\$1.6	\$1.8	All
Agency Total	\$11.1	\$12.9	

¹Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023. Includes all funds. ²Includes all funds. ³Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. "NA" Not Available * None

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- The indicators 'Tests attempted for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations,' 'Tests completed for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations,' 'Testing completion rate for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations,' and 'Entities tested for Human Rights Law violations in housing, employment, and disability accommodations' were added to Goal 1a to capture CCHR's testing work in published metrics for the first time.
- The indicators 'Phone calls received by Infoline staff' and 'Walk-ins assisted at CCHR offices' were added to Goal 1a to capture CCHR's intake and customer service efforts.
- Goal 1a was renamed from 'Investigate, prosecute and resolve complaints of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and bias-based profiling in a timely and efficient manner' to 'Investigate, prosecute and resolve violations of the City Human Rights Law in a timely and efficient manner.'
- The indicators 'Online trainings completed by members of the public' and the six new indicators on the percentage of outreach sessions conducted in each borough and online were added to Goal 2a.
- Goal 2a was renamed from 'Increase community awareness of the NYCHRL through know-your-rights presentations aimed at the general public; through know-your-obligations presentations aimed at housing providers, employers, and small businesses; and other initiatives' to 'Increase community awareness of the NYCHRL through workshops, campaigns, hearings, and outreach aimed at the general public, employers, small businesses, and housing providers.'
- The indicator 'Bias/hate prevention and intervention' was removed from Goal 2a because it is overly broad and duplicative of other indicators.
- The indicator 'Conferences, workshops and training sessions' was renamed to 'Training and outreach sessions.' Previously published figures remain unchanged.
- The indicator 'Youth-based training sessions conducted' was renamed to 'Training and outreach sessions targeting youth' for clarity. Previously published figures remain unchanged.
- The indicator 'People served' was renamed to 'People reached' to clarify that this indicator refers to people reached through training and outreach efforts. Previously published figures remain unchanged.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The Social Indicators and Equity Report, EquityNYC:
<http://equity.nyc.gov/>

For more information on the agency, please visit: www.nyc.gov/cchr.

