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## New Online Discrimination Questionnaire

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) has launched a new option for individuals to use when they seek to file an employment discrimination complaint. This new initiative enables individuals to have access to an online employment discrimination questionnaire, which will provide increased convenience and accuracy. The PHRC worked closely with the Office of Administration's Office of Information Technology to design this new option for the agency.

With more people having access to computers, this step in doing business online is both convenient for the public and increases efficiencies

In order to protect information, individuals interested in filing a complaint online must first register with Keystone ID, the Commonwealth's online registration process for many state services.

To register go to the Keystone ID tab on the right side of the website and click on the tab. Instructions will be provided to walk you through the

process.

When the registration is complete the user will be connected to the online form. The information will be forwarded directly into the PHRC data tracking system and will be assigned a case number for review and action at the regional level.

The PHRC hopes to have other types of discrimination questionnaires online in the near future.

Find out more about filing a complaint by visiting the PHRC website at [www.phrc.pa.gov](http://www.phrc.pa.gov)

## New Website

On October 30, 2015, the PHRC launched their new website. The creation of the new website is part of a Commonwealth wide update to all agency websites and an effort to provide a basic uniform look to all sites throughout the state.



## Advisory Council News

Advisory Councils have been part of the PHRC since the agency was created in 1955. They serve as the PHRC's eyes and ears in the community in regard to discrimination, education equity and providing information and support to the community,

The PHRC is working with the existing advisory councils and are beginning to create new ones in counties that have not had

advisory councils in the past.

Recently, advisory councils have started meeting in Southwest PA (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington Counties), Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties (CDP) and in Lancaster, Lebanon and Berks Counties (LLB).

Montgomery County is holding monthly meetings. York County has restarted their

council by soliciting new members.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming involved in an advisory council in your county, contact Geoff Biringer at the PHRC at [gbiringer@pa.gov](mailto:gbiringer@pa.gov)

*The PHRC promotes equal opportunity for all and enforces Pennsylvania's civil rights laws that protect people from unlawful discrimination. It is our vision that all people in Pennsylvania are able to live, work and learn free from unlawful discrimination.*

*Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
333 Market Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717.787.4410 (phone)  
717.214.0584 (fax)  
[phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov)  
[www.phrc.state.pa.us](http://www.phrc.state.pa.us)*

### Upcoming Meetings for Advisory Councils

**Blair County**

Kings Restaurant  
3000 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. Altoona  
Last Tuesday of the month  
At noon  
No December meeting

**Centre County**

State College Borough Bld.  
S.Allen St. State College  
7:30 PM Second Tuesday  
Each month

**Cambria County**

Johnstown SD Admin. Bldg  
1091 Broad St., Johnstown  
Third Monday every other month

**\*\* Additional meeting dates on page 6**

## Twitter

The PHRC plans to launch Twitter on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Twitter will allow the PHRC to add another media option for communicating with the public about the programs and services it offers for the people living in Pennsylvania.

Please join us during our launch!

Let us know what you think @PAHumanRelations.

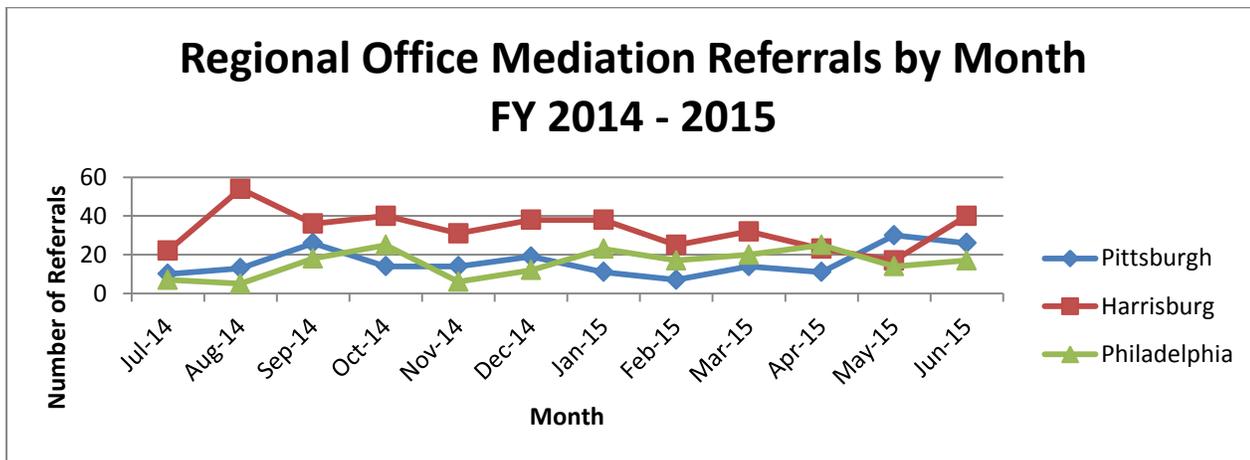
## Mediation Program Update

The PHRC Mediation Program was created to be an alternative in resolving disputes without lengthy investigations, or going through the PHRC hearing process or the courts.

The program is voluntary and continues to help parties involved in a dispute, to explore and resolve their differences together without engaging in an investigation process. The goal is to establish a settlement acceptable to both parties.

Twenty seven cases were closed during FY 2014 – 2015 which conservatively saved the Commission \$98,649.63.

If you would like to find out more about the program visit our website at [www.phrc.pa.gov](http://www.phrc.pa.gov) or contact Katherine Petruczok at [kpetruczok@pa.gov](mailto:kpetruczok@pa.gov)



## Education Equity Initiative Update

The Education and Community Services division of the PHRC has been working with a number of schools throughout the state to implement the PHRC’s Education Equity Initiative (EEI) that is designed to help ensure equity in education for all Pennsylvania students.

The division is currently working with Reading, Pittsburgh, Central Dauphin, Coatesville, Yough and East Lebanon schools to provide training and development for student leadership programs such as the Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together program (SPIRIT).

One intended outcome of the EEI is to keep all kids in school therefore decreasing the “school to prison” effect. The EEI also offers assistance to administrators and teachers in providing equal education opportunities and a nurturing environment for all students.

To find out more about this initiative, contact Geoff Biringer at the PHRC at 717-772-0523.

## PHRC Outreach and Media

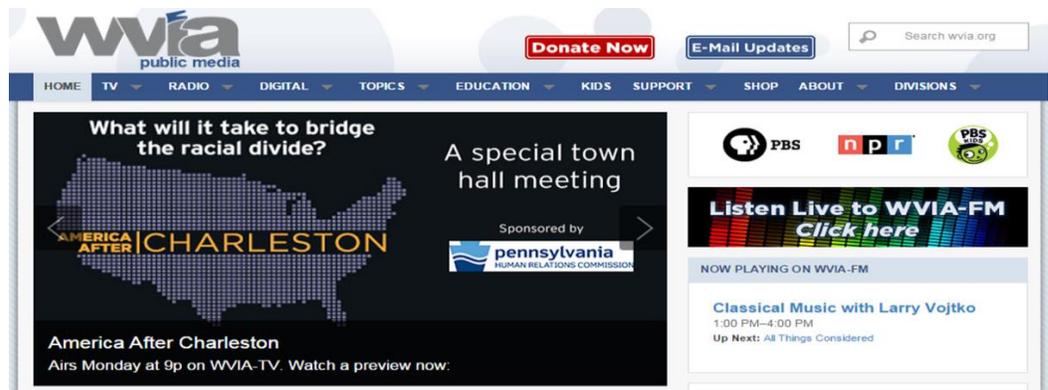
Last spring, the PHRC carried out a media campaign around fair housing. The campaign was successful and we continue to explore other options in the media to get the word out about the services we offer to people living in the Commonwealth.

On October 23, 2015, Chairman Gerald Robinson and Executive Director, JoAnn Edwards visited Blue Ridge Cable Channel 11 to tape a show that was aired on the station's Local Government programming. The station's viewing area is Manheim Central, Warwick, Ephrata, Cocalico, Conestoga Valley townships as well as eastern Lancaster County.

Commissioner Robinson, JoAnn Edwards and Host Bob Miller talk about the PHRC



The PHRC had the opportunity to help sponsor the PBS Town Meeting: America After Charleston on stations throughout the state. The town meeting was hosted on September 22<sup>nd</sup> but has been shown numerous times since then. Below is a screenshot of WVIA's website announcing the Town Meeting. The PHRC sponsorship was for all eight PBS stations in Pennsylvania.



## PHRC Outreach and Videos

The PHRC's Education and Community Service division has been reaching out to community organizations, businesses and schools to provide training and assistance in promoting a better understanding of the PA Human Relations Act. The division has developed eight videos on various types of discrimination. These videos can be viewed on the PHRC's website and are also available in Spanish. We hope these videos are helpful to you. Please feel free to use them in your presentations.

Executive Director, JoAnn Edwards, along with Commissioners, have been visiting heads of state agencies and legislators to discuss PHRC programs and activities.

If you would like training on aspects of discrimination and diversity, contact us at [phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov)

## New PHRC Faces

L-R: Derrick Testa, Carrie Gagliano, Caroline Naft – Pittsburgh Regional Staff; Josh Bartash and Megan Hoffman – Harrisburg Regional Staff



Back L-R: Cory Starr, Ron Polk and Pam Harris - Harrisburg Regional Staff along with Front L-R: Heather Roth, Harrisburg Regional Director and JoAnn Edwards, Executive Director

## PHRC Star Awards Continued from Summer Issue



Mary Jane McMillan – Excellence in Investigation Award (along with JoAnn Edwards, Executive Director and Commissioner/Chair Gerald Robinson



Jinada Rochelle Outstanding Team Leader Award

## Advisory Council Meeting Dates Continued

### ***Upcoming Meetings for Advisory Councils Continued***

**Lebanon/Lancaster/Berks**  
HACC Lebanon Campus  
735 Cumberland St., Lebanon  
January 15, 2016 2:00 PM  
Meet every other month

**Monroe County**  
No meetings scheduled at this time

**Montgomery County**  
Montgomery County Community College  
340 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell  
Thursday of each month  
At 10:00 am  
Next meeting, Dec. 17, 2015

**Southwestern PA (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington Counties)**  
Newly formed –  
Will set meeting dates for 2016

**York County**  
York Administration Bldg.  
28 E. Market St., York  
Third Wednesday of the month Third at 4:00 PM  
Next meeting, Dec. 16, 2015