



pennsylvania
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

2018

ANNUAL REPORT



pennsylvania
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

PHRC at a Glance





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PHRC Vision, Mission & Values

VISION

As Pennsylvania's civil rights leader, it is our vision that all people in Pennsylvania will live, work and learn free from unlawful discrimination.



MISSION

The PA Human Relations Commission promotes equal opportunity for all and enforces Pennsylvania's civil rights laws that protect people from unlawful discrimination.



VALUES

Equality - We believe strongly in the equality and dignity of all individuals. We uphold the principles of justice and fairness through our work, conduct and communication.

Service - We subscribe to the highest standards of responsiveness, quality, timeliness and professionalism.

Integrity - We uphold the highest standards of honesty and transparency. We are candid, trustworthy, credible and unbiased.

Excellence - We strive to excel in our work. We endeavor to ensure a highly prepared, diverse, competent and committed workforce.

Teamwork - We build and sustain strong, constructive and collaborative relationships.

Respect - We value employees' talents and differences and treat them with consideration and importance.

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
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A Message from Governor Tom Wolf

This past year, Pennsylvanians confronted unprecedented discrimination and hate-based violence in our commonwealth and we have stood strong together against it. As governor, I am committed to fostering safety, equality and inclusivity for all Pennsylvanians.

In April of 2018, a new Executive Director, Chad D. Lassiter, was hired after a nationwide search, to lead the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC). His vision and direction have reenergized Pennsylvania's commitment to protecting those who are discriminated against. His extensive experience in social justice advocacy will lead to recognition of the Commission as the premier civil rights organization it should be.

Chad has initiated partnerships and educational programs that will allow our citizens and young people to be better equipped to eliminate the hateful rhetoric that seems so pervasive in our society.

In October, I was proud to name Joel Bolstein as Chairman of the Commission. He brings many years of public service and advocacy to this position. He has served as the interim Chair for a significant period of time and has shown his dedication to the mission of the PHRC. Joel has been instrumental in leading the way to accepting the new LGBTQ guidance issued by the PHRC.

Seeing the work the Commission is doing in every corner of Pennsylvania, I am optimistic that 2019 will bring more peaceful, respectful interaction among citizens. I look forward to working with the PHRC, the other representative Commissions, the Legislature and the many organizations in our state that are working towards unity, civil engagement regarding differences of opinion and protections of individual rights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Wolf". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Tom Wolf
Governor



Chairman's Statement

Commissioner - M. Joel Bolstein

The past year has brought several welcome changes to the Commission. On the leadership front, I'm extraordinarily pleased that we hired Chad Dion Lassiter as our new Executive Director in May. He has brought renewed passion and energy to the Commission's work. We've also added two new Commissioners to our ranks -- Aleena Y. Sorathia, Esq., a practicing attorney from the Philadelphia area, and Adrian Shanker, a leader within the LGBTQ community from the Lehigh Valley. Additionally, I'm proud to say that my "interim" designation has been lifted and I officially became Chairperson in October.

As you review this Annual Report, you will note that the Commission has faced several challenges head-on. This year, Pennsylvania experienced an unprecedented level of violence. In October, 11 innocent worshippers at the Tree of Life Synagogue were senselessly murdered simply because they were Jewish. While this act was hateful and despicable, the community in Pittsburgh, including people of all faiths, came together and spoke with one clear voice that Pennsylvania will not tolerate anti-Semitism. Their response touched me deeply because my own grandparents came to America fleeing anti-Semitism.

PHRC stands ready and available to confront hateful acts and to be part of the healing process in communities impacted by discrimination. Although our staff complement is down considerably from several years ago, we continue to investigate and adjudicate thousands of discrimination complaints every year, and we are taking steps to expand the training, outreach and educational work that is critical in confronting the forces of hatred and discrimination in our communities. With the help of our community partners, we are also confronting increasing KKK and hate group activity. We are also proactively protecting the rights of LGBTQ Pennsylvanians. After reviewing thousands of public comments, the Commission enacted LGBTQ policy guidance that makes clear that PHRC will receive complaints from LGBTQ individuals and investigate them as sex-based discrimination.

In short, in this world that we live in, the work of the Commission is more relevant now than ever before. I want to express my personal thanks to Governor Wolf for his leadership and to our friends in the General Assembly for their continued support of PHRC. I look forward to continuing to work with my fellow Commissioners, our Executive Director, Regional Directors and the professional staff in each of our four offices to help make PHRC a leader among states and one of the nation's premier civil rights agencies.

Executive Director

Executive Director - Chad Dion Lassiter

It is a momentous time to step into the role of Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC). In recent months, the civility of our democracy has been threatened by divisiveness while hate and racism have strained the social fabric of our nation and our Commonwealth. As a result, our work enforcing the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and promoting justice, fairness and equality is more important now than it has been for many years.

Yet these challenges only serve to further spark my passion for the mission and values of the PHRC. Coming from a background in social work, sociology, anthropology, research and public advocacy, I am keenly aware of the importance of opening dialogue and creating a sense of community that encourages residents to voice differing opinions in a nonviolent manner.

The responsibility we have to those who have been aggrieved is real. It affects citizens in ways we sometimes don't see. At PHRC we are cognizant of the gravity of that responsibility and do our very best to achieve justice by addressing complaints in a timely and effective manner.

As you read through this Annual Report, I hope you will feel the excitement I do about the new energy at PHRC. Since my arrival in late May of 2018, we have worked to implement innovative initiatives rooted in evidence-based practice that I believe will elevate our profile as a civil rights agency. As we roll out these new initiatives, I am grateful for the expertise, passion and genuine support of our amazing PHRC Commissioners.

As part of this effort, we are restructuring how we respond to incidents of hate in our communities. We introduced a series of Town Hall meetings called "No Hate in Our State". Our first series of three meetings were held in York County, which has recently experienced increased activity by groups such as the KKK, a racially motivated shooting and a case of racial discrimination at a golf club. We also initiated a Social Justice Lecture series that will bring renowned voices of peace and acceptance to our area. In June, we sponsored a lunch-and-learn lecture with anti-racism activist and writer Tim Wise, who addressed white supremacy and the divisive tone and tenor of our country.

In October, we invited various stakeholders from the Pittsburgh area to the second event in our Social Justice Lecture Series with noted scholar Dr. Michael Eric Dyson of Georgetown University. The evening included a dialogue with the audience about race. We will continue to hold these lectures around the Commonwealth on timely topics that are relevant to our mission.





“Justice is what love looks like in public.”

- Dr. Cornel West

Additionally, we continue to work with our Federal partners, including the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, to train our staff to use the Fair Housing Act as a tool for justice and find effective ways to address housing discrimination, redlining, and predatory lending. Furthermore, we are looking to collaborate further with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

We are also creating a space where we can bring other organizations and agencies together on a regular basis to share information and find solutions to issues facing the Commonwealth. By nurturing these partnerships and a sense of shared responsibility, we are better equipped to respond to situations in every community.

PHRC is also engaging more with the 11 Advisory Councils that serve as our eyes and ears on a local level. We are empowering them to be more impactful in their catchment areas, while providing the tools they need to combat hate where it lives.

We are already seeing the benefits of these partnerships. PHRC now has a Racial Tension Reduction Response Team that collaborates with our existing Interagency Task Force to better track and respond to hate crimes.

While much has been accomplished in my short time with the agency, we know there is a great deal more work to be done and we are eager to take it on. We have rededicated ourselves to working smarter and staying informed. We have begun to upgrade our equipment and practices to better serve Pennsylvania. We are expanding our outreach team so that we can offer training in more areas and we are branding PHRC so that everyone knows who we are and what we do. Most importantly, we are seeking innovative and effective ways to impact legislation and further engage in critical areas affecting Pennsylvania residents including racism and anti-Semitism, fair housing, educational access, LGBT equality.

As we move forward, I am eager to work with all of you to foster greater equality, fairness and justice throughout Pennsylvania.

Commissioners



Chairman M. Joel Bolstein

“I am very grateful to Governor Wolf for appointing me Chairperson and allowing me to continue in a leadership role alongside my fellow Commissioners, our wonderful new Executive Director, Chad Dion Lassiter, and our very talented and extremely dedicated professional staff.”



Vice-Chair & Commissioner Raquel O. Yiengst

“My hope for PHRC is that it will continue to be the government agency that promotes civil rights, eradicates discrimination for all, and upholds Equal Educational Opportunity for all children so that we can create a better future for all.”



Secretary & Commissioner Mayur Patel, Esq.

“I am proud to be part of a group of individuals whose singular focus is to ensure that the people of our Commonwealth are being treated fairly and with respect. This area of focus is now more important than ever.”



Commissioner Radheshyam M. Agrawal, M.D.

“When rights of human beings are compromised, they lose the opportunity to a productive life.”



Commissioner George B. Dawson

“The road to justice should be free of impediments.”



Commissioner Kathleen Dormer

“Everyone deserves to live in a society free of discrimination.”



Commissioners



Commissioner Michael Hardiman

“Every day presents new opportunities!”



Commissioner Curtis Jones

“From the White House to our house, human relations is an important aspect of the quality of our life. Fairness, in housing, employment and racial and religious tolerance is an essential responsibility of our organization.”



Commissioner Gerald S. Robinson, Esq.

“Even though our task is daunting we can meet it”



Commissioner Adrian Shanker

“The role PHRC plays is essential to the freedom to live, work, play, and visit Pennsylvania without fear of discrimination.”



Commissioner Aleena Y. Sorathia, Esq.

“There is no justice when some—because of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, or disability, among others—are denied a safe place to live, learn, work, and socialize. I am proud to serve on a Commission that strives to build a Commonwealth full of communities free of hate and discrimination.”

Executive Office Staff



Anja Velemir has been with the agency for over a year and works directly with the Executive Director and Communication Director. She is the liaison between our agency and HR, OA and the Governor's Office for all agency related actions. She is responsible for Executive Team planning and maintains our calendars. She is solely responsible for posting open positions and maintaining job descriptions. Anja oversees all our purchasing and maintains the budget for reporting purposes. Anja coordinates special projects as directed by the Executive Director in addition to her normal course of work.



Devin Heckman joined PHRC 9/17/18 as an Administrative Assistant. Devin comes to us by way of several other State Agencies including OGC, Probation and Parole and the Bureau of Mine Safety. His experience brings a new perspective to the Commission. He will work closely with the leadership team helping us to reach our goals. He is responsible for assisting Anja and the Executive Director with budget, purchasing, travel, and HR. He also handles special requests and projects. He has been instrumental in moving our brand forward and updating technology.





“If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity.”

- John F. Kennedy

Office of Chief Counsel



Office of Chief Counsel

Kathy W. Morrison
Esquire, Chief Counsel

The Office of Chief Counsel is comprised of its Chief Counsel and nine attorneys across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The attorneys in PHRC’s Central Office provide general legal counsel to the PHRC regarding its administrative and operational functions, oversee the Commission’s mediation program, support policy and legislative agenda, and handle all cases involving allegations of discrimination in education. Other PHRC attorneys are embedded in regional offices across the Commonwealth where they work closely with investigative and management staff. These attorneys provide legal assistance to complainants appearing before the PHRC, furnish legal education to PHRC staff and members of the public, and enforce the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA), including prosecuting violations of the PHRA.

Central Office Highlights

In the past year, PHRC attorneys helped procure expert witnesses and social justice lecturers, administered PHRC’s mediation program, drafted and managed public comment response to proposed PHRC policies regarding discrimination

based upon sex, litigated education discrimination cases, and designed and implemented Continuing Legal Education (CLE) throughout the Commonwealth. Highlights include:

- Drafting PHRC policy guidance interpreting discrimination based on sex relating to claims by LGBTQ individuals. Reviewed, prepared and coordinated Commission response to 8,000 public comments. The Commission approved the policy guidance in August 2018.
- Securing contracts for author Tim Wise and anti-racism activist and Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, author, professor, and civil rights activist for a social justice lecture series.
- Coordinating mediation in 29 cases and successfully mediated 16 cases. While settlements and details of mediation are confidential, the settlements usually included both monetary and non-monetary relief.
- Along with other remedies, securing nearly \$500,000 in monetary relief through conciliation and settlement for students in education cases.





Regional Office Highlights

In 2018, PHRC attorneys reviewed approximately 700 complaints of discrimination and provided over 300 formal legal opinions to investigative staff relating to cases already appearing before the agency. Regional attorneys also prosecuted public hearing cases. Highlights include:

- Successfully defended a petition related to employer discrimination in Commonwealth Court in which PHRC ordered an employer to pay in excess of \$100,000.
- Successfully defended a final order of the PHRC in Commonwealth Court related to protecting the rights of citizens with disabilities.
- Defended a PHRC Order in Commonwealth Court related to housing discrimination.
- Conducted various trainings and Continuing Legal Education (CLE) workshops across the Commonwealth including:
 - A PHRC Update CLE workshop at the annual Employment Law Institute sponsored by the Pennsylvania Bar Association;
 - A panel discussion on sexual harassment in the #MeToo era at this year's Office of General Counsel annual attorney CLE event;
 - A Sexual Harassment Prevention CLE panel workshop for the Dauphin County Bar Association;
 - A lecture on housing discrimination and emotional support animals for Pennsylvania Bar Institute (PBI) Landlord Tenant CLE workshop;
 - A panel presentation at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's bi-annual training and CLE event for employers and attorneys; and
 - Three regional full-day CLE trainings on Practice Before the PHRC for the PBI.



2017-2018 Annual Report Information from the Office of the Hearing Examiner



Office of the
Hearing Examiner
Carl Summerson
Hearing Examiner

1.) Number of Motions	80	8.) Number of Days of Public Hearings	4
2.) Cases Closed on Motion	8	9.) Rules to Show Cause Issued	38
3.) Cases Placed on the Public Hearing Docket	15	10.) Cases Returned to Investigation – Answer Received	33
4.) Cases Settled after Public Hearing Approved	21	11.) Rules to Show Cause Resulting in Liability Findings	4
5.) Pre-Hearing Conferences Conducted	14	12.) Final Orders after Public Hearings	ORDERS 2
6.) Public Hearings Conducted	3	Siebert – October 2017 Blaine – November 2017	
7.) Number of Days of Pre-Hearing Conferences	12	13.) Subpoenas	128

*“Until we get equality in education,
we won’t have an equal society.”*

- Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor



Education Division



Education Division

Geoffrey Biringer
Director

Education is inextricably tied to social and economic opportunity and the right to be free of discrimination in educational settings is profoundly important. In Pennsylvania, it is PHRC’s Education Division that responds to cases of educational discrimination.

For several years, the division has been committed to addressing the inequity in services received by English language learners in the public school system. Our goal is to assist school districts in developing best practices that will leave no child behind because of a language barrier. To that end, this year, the division worked with a Finnigan Fellow who helped identify the most underfunded school districts with regard to English Language Learners and to advocate for a fairer funding formula. His research resulted in an informative White Paper and executive report, which was shared with the legislature, public and PHRC partners. These efforts led to a summit for these underfunded districts and new partnerships with the Superintendents of the 15 school districts with the highest number of English language learners.

The Education Division also works closely with local Advisory Councils and an Inter-Agency Task

Force to better respond to acts of discrimination and hate. Currently, 11 counties have Advisory Councils and the Commission aims to establish one in every county. These Advisory Councils represent the Commission’s eyes and ears on the ground, reporting incidents of discrimination and bias. PHRC advises the Councils on civil rights issues and empowers them to expand the Commission’s outreach and training opportunities by coordinating forums to educate the public on civil rights and discrimination.



The Inter-Agency Taskforce is comprised of representatives of government agencies, nonprofit partners and community advocates who share information about incidents of discrimination and civil tension in their areas, to enable PHRC to monitor and respond. This year, the Task Force partnered with the Governor’s Commission on African American Affairs to host a Black History Month event that both informed and supported the community.

Finally, the division hosts cultural programs and conducts public outreach and training on such topics as implicit bias, fair housing and conflict resolution.



Implicit Bias Training

Designed by PHRC, this training encourages self-awareness and proper response to one's own bias. Participants receive certification for Continuing Legal Education credits and Law Enforcement Officer Training hours. This year, the division trained:

- 500 officers from 15 police departments
- 30 county commissioners
- Local HRCs
- PHRC Regional Offices
- PHRC Commissioners

SPIRIT Program

This conflict resolution program was designed by our partners at the Department of Justice to teach students how to get along even when they are different. This year, the program reached:

- 165 students in the Philadelphia region
- 100 Students in the Harrisburg region
- 35 students in the Pittsburgh region

Anti Bullying Program

This program was designed by PHRC to reduce bullying and discrimination directed to protected classes by students and educators. This year, PHRC provided the training to more than 1,000 children at:

- 20 schools
- 4 camps
- 5 faith-based organizations

Leaders of Tomorrow Mentoring Program

PHRC offers an ongoing program designed by the National Black MBA on a weekly basis at Steelton/Highspire High School. The program, which is also open to surrounding school districts, reaches 150 students.

Police Community Relations Training

15 Police Departments received this Diversity, Harassment and Respect Training, designed to improve interactions between police and the communities.

Public Awareness Events

1,000 people received information about PHRC and its programs at events hosted by legislators, advocacy groups and other departments.

Fair Housing Five Book Reading Sessions

The Fair Housing Five is a book that helps educators and parents initiate empowering conversations with children about opportunity, the Civil Rights Movement, and the role that all members of a community can play in advocating for justice. This year, to address the HUD mandate to affirmatively further fair housing, PHRC held book readings at:

- Chief Shikellamy School
- Scott School
- St. Barnabas Day Camp
- Chris Franklin Basketball Camp
- The African American Read-In at the Harrisburg School District

Cultural Programs

- Black History Month
 - The State of Civil Rights: A Retrospective & Progressive View from Advocates Across the Generational Divide
- Pride Month
 - Pride & Prejudice: The Impact of LGBTQ Legislation on Civil Rights
- Women's History Month
 - A Woman's Worth: Equal Pay for Equal Work, Sexual Harassment and the Impact of the #METOO movement.

“The challenge of social justice is to evoke a sense of community that we need to make our nation a better place, just as we make it a safer place.”

- Marian Wright Edelman



Enforcement Division



Enforcement/ Compliance Office

Jinada Rochelle - Director

As an agency that enforces both federal and state laws, it is critical that PHRC maintain accurate and complete records. The Enforcement/Compliance Division is responsible for:

- Recording and retaining case information;
- Processing Right to Know requests, subpoenas and documents;
- Recording PHRC meeting minutes; Preserving historic information about the Commission; and
- Preparing closed cases for records retention, in compliance with the policies of the Commonwealth and partner agencies.

The Division also works closely with PHRC's federal partners, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to train PHRC staff and protect legal rights of aggrieved parties.

2018 Highlights

- 1285 processed cases for closure.
- Planned PHRC's 2nd annual Fair Housing Conference themed *50 years of Fair Housing: Moving Forward* in Harrisburg.

Featured presentations included:

- *The Future of Fair Housing, Advocating the Cause* by Sara Pratt, Esq, Relman, Dane and Colfax, PLLC;
- *Redlining and its Continuing Impact on Communities* presented by Kristina Musante, Esq., National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC);
- *The Use of Big Data and Screening and the Implications of Fair Housing* by Jason Richardson, NCRC; and
- *Metropolitan Equity Planning, Furthering the Goal of Inclusive Communities* by Janis Risch, Mt Airy Business Improvement District.
- Provided fair housing training for 630 real estate professionals, property managers, business owners and community partners.
- Worked closely with Office of Administration-IT to complete the development and release of PHRC's upgraded Content Management System,
- Conducted and coordinated training for newly hired investigators.
- Participated in several statewide and national Conferences including:
 - The EEOC regional conference;
 - The International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies Annual Conference; &
 - Pennsylvania Association of Realtors quarterly business meetings.



“Communication is the key to understanding and peace.”

- James Bryce

Communications and Public Relations



Communications and Public Relations

Renee Martin
Director

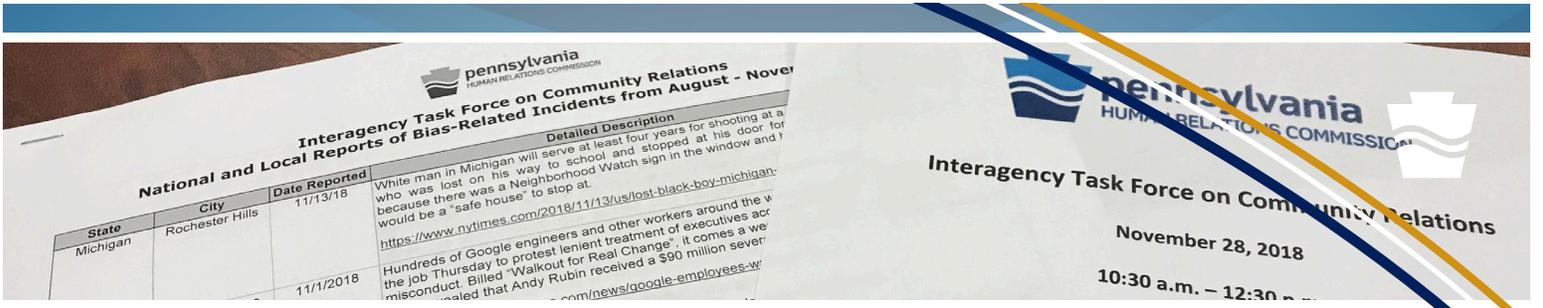
The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) is responsible for protecting Pennsylvania citizens from unlawful discrimination. Discrimination takes many forms. It can be related to race, sex, gender, disability, age, or even family relationship. It may occur in a variety of settings including employment, housing or public accommodation. Unfortunately, too many victims of discrimination do not get support or assistance. These individuals may be uncertain about who can help, indecisive about whether they should tell anyone, or afraid of retaliation. That's why it is imperative that all Pennsylvania residents know that PHRC is the go-to agency in the Commonwealth for remedy related to discrimination.

Under Director Lassiter's leadership, PHRC is working to increase awareness of its services and better engage the public in a dialogue that will lead to greater trust and understanding among residents of the Commonwealth.

Through its communications efforts, the Commission seeks to:

- Educate citizens about their right to confront discrimination in education, housing, employment and public accommodation.
- Facilitate a conversation about addressing hate and bias that engages individuals of all perspectives.
- Increase public awareness about other organizations also working to eliminate discrimination in their communities.





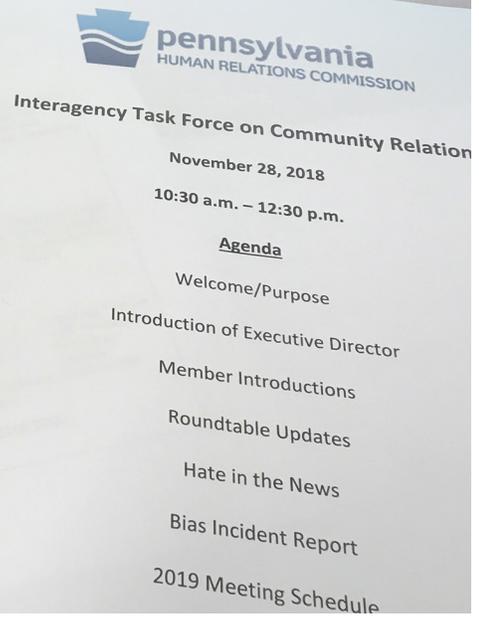
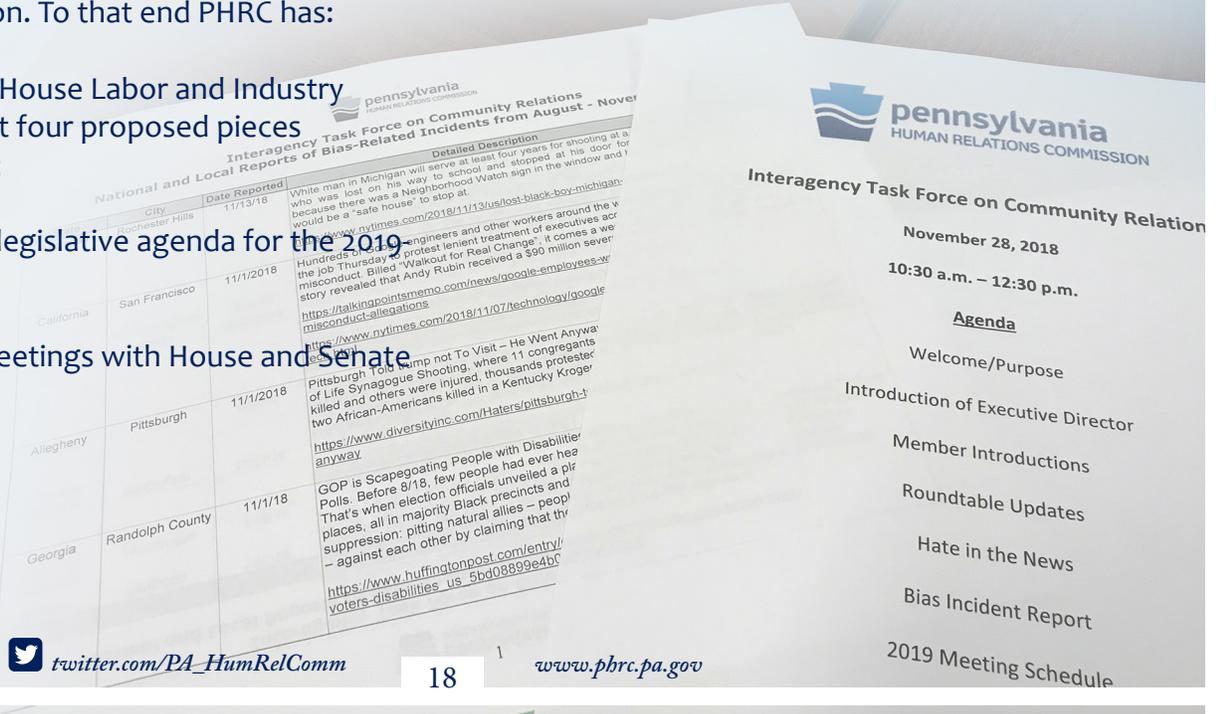
PHRC is taking a multifaceted approach to achieve these goals. We are growing our brand recognition to ensure that all citizens know PHRC is the resource for information and accurate data that reflects the standard of the top civil rights agency in Pennsylvania. We are increasing the Commission's visibility by enhancing our contact with both traditional and nontraditional media outlets and expanding our social media footprint. We have upgraded our website and added updated content. We're also working to make the site more user-friendly. Finally, we've created two fact sheets that provide important information about training resources and how to make a complaint, and we are continually developing new materials to help keep the public informed.

PHRC also serves as a liaison between the constituents of the Commonwealth, the Legislature and the Governor's Correspondence Office. In this capacity, we work to identify inconsistencies in our statutes and ensure that the Legislature understands the impact of proposed legislation. To that end PHRC has:

- Partnered with a Senator and House member to address concerns of a constituent who was being targeted with death threats;
- Improved the timeliness with which the Commission responds to the Governor's inquiries by increasing the number of staff who can address questions; and
- Responded to 37 legislative inquiries.

While PHRC is aggressively working to enhance its outreach to residents, we recognize that communication is a two-way street. The citizens of the Commonwealth serve as our eyes and ears on the ground. We rely on you for information and input and welcome your suggestions and feedback. It is only by working together that we can eliminate discrimination and improve relationships among all people in Pennsylvania.

- Testified at a House Labor and Industry hearing about four proposed pieces of legislation;
- Developed a legislative agenda for the 2019-20 session;
- Held three meetings with House and Senate members;



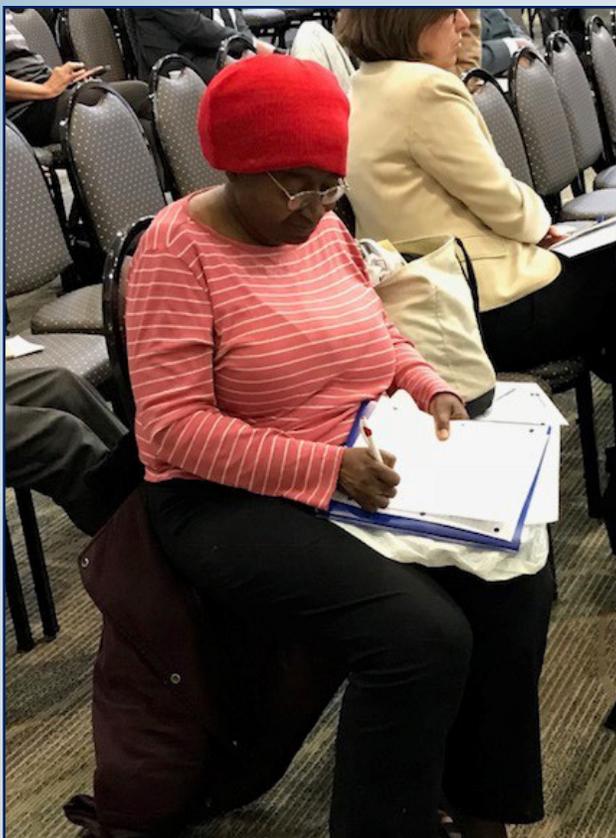


“Let us remember we are all part of one American family. We are united in common values, and that includes belief in equality under the law, basic respect for public order, and the right of peaceful protest.”

- Barack Obama

Social Justice in the Community

Fifty-four years after the signing of the Civil Rights Act, the majority of Pennsylvanians believe real progress has been made in the fight against discrimination and prejudice. But as events such as the recent mass shooting in Pittsburgh make painfully clear, there is still much work to be done. Under the leadership of Executive Director Chad Dion Lassiter, PHRC has strengthened relationships with its community partners and developed several new initiatives to promote and advance social justice within the Commonwealth.



Social Justice Lecture Series:

To help raise community awareness about the effect of discrimination, the Commission implemented a Social Justice Lecture Series aimed at sparking conversation and inspiring more balance and compassion within the Commonwealth. The series debuted in June with a presentation by Tim Wise, a nationally recognized author and podcaster, who spoke about Racism and Resistance in a Divided America to a crowd of 125 at the Forum Auditorium in Harrisburg. A second event held in Pittsburgh featured guest speaker Michael Eric Dyson who engaged an audience of 150 in a discussion about the reality of discrimination and hate through several different lenses. The Commission is planning additional sessions for the coming year.



HRC Crisis Response:

A new Racial Tension Reduction Response Team better equips the Commission to respond efficiently and effectively to incidents of racial tension. As part of this initiative, PHRC will become a repository for real-time data tracking tensions in the community. This information will be shared with PA HRC’s community partners resulting in a proactive collective response that works to avoid escalation of issues.

Since May of 2018, the team has responded to numerous incidents including the recent mass shooting in Pittsburgh, KKK activity, a mock lynching in a school, sex discrimination in public office, discrimination related to access to education, a shooting in York, and several other acts of violence and hate.



Examples include:

- In response to an uptick in acts of hatred, discrimination and violence in York, the PHRC held three town hall meetings themed No Hate in Our State. The meetings sought to examine the incidents that occurred, provide information about the civil rights of citizens, encourage coalition building and bring healing to the community. Participants, including the Mayor, faith-based leaders, the NAACP, the PA Jewish Coalition and members of the Latino community, discussed how hate and discrimination have affected them. A wide range of ideologies and perspectives were shared including, unexpectedly, comments from the Grand Dragon of the KKK.
- A public hearing focused on an incident involving police at the Grandview Golf Club in which five African American women were asked to leave because of “slow play,” despite the fact that no complaint was made by patrons.
- Initial planning for a series on Social Justice Healing through Faith in response to the mass shooting in Pittsburgh.

Partnerships:

The struggle for social justice cannot be achieved alone. PA HRC is continually working to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new collaborations.

Our partners include:

- Local Human Relations Commissions and diversity organizations

- The PA Department of Corrections
- The PA Department of Education
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- US Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission
- The State Police and local law enforcement agencies
- United Ways and YWCAs
- Interfaith organizations
- Advisory Councils
- Interagency Taskforce
- Attorney General’s Office
- Governor’s Office
- PA General Assembly
- Office of Administration/Human Resources





“Racism is man’s gravest threat to man – the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.”

- Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

Pittsburgh Regional Office



Pittsburgh Regional Office

Lyle Wood
Director

The Pittsburgh Regional Office (PRO) works continuously to enforce the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA) and the Pennsylvania Fair Educational Opportunities Act (PFEOA) and to fulfill the mission of the Commission. In October 2018, the Pittsburgh area was faced with the horrific shooting at Tree

of Life Synagogue. During this time of tragedy, PHRC was able to respond immediately with technical assistance and support to community organizations and the public.

The PRO participated in vigils, memorial services and Shabbat to support our Jewish community partners. We have moved in partnership with the Jewish Federation, Anti-Defamation League and others to put forth a program of healing in this community called “Healing in the Context of Faith.” Our strong relationships with organizations and agencies at the local, state and federal levels expand our reach and enhance our ability to respond effectively to situations that arise.

Pittsburgh Highlights Addressing Discrimination

518

discrimination cases are under investigation

227

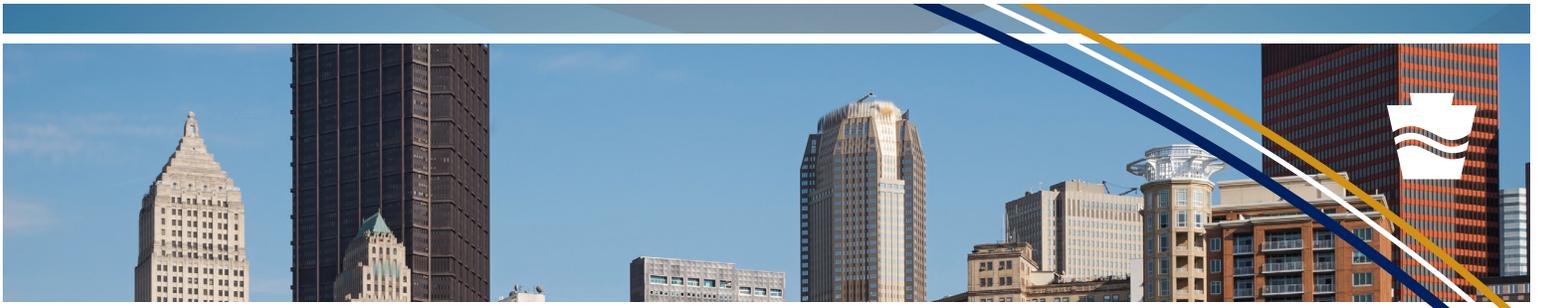
cases were closed

\$650,265

was secured for complaining parties

PRO

PRO reached an agreement with a large corporation that allows PHRC to monitor certain company practices affecting people with disabilities and to ensure the company is in compliance with the law.



Pittsburgh Highlights Informing the Community

The Pittsburgh Regional Office conducts trainings, serves on educational panels, and provides technical assistance involving the statutes and regulations we enforce. Topics addressed this year include:

- ▶ The PHRA, its jurisdiction and the filing of complaints;
- ▶ Fair housing, college student rights, reasonable accommodation/modification for disability, and coverage for LGBTQ individuals under the PHRA;
- ▶ Ethnic intimidation in the school setting; and
- ▶ Sexual harassment.

Among the trainings conducted this year were:

- ▶ A guest lecture at Duquesne University for attorneys and law students about how to address legal issues through the PHRC;
- ▶ A training for civil rights leaders and government officials in Erie about the rights afforded to individuals under the PHRA, as well as a presentation about the expansion of PHRC presence and partnerships in the region; and
- ▶ Technical assistance for members of the Homewood Community about the PHRA. In appreciation of this training, the Homewood Concerned Citizen's Council presented Regional Director, Lyle Wood, with a Community Achievement Award.





“Racism is still with us. But it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet, and, hopefully, we shall overcome.”

- Rosa Parks

Harrisburg Regional Office

Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities, as well as several other state agencies, as a part of the steering committee for the PA Disability Employment and Empowerment Summit.



Harrisburg Regional Office

Heather Roth
Director

The Harrisburg Regional Office (HRO) is steadfastly committed to enforcing Pennsylvania’s anti-discrimination laws. Perhaps the most important work we do is to investigate complaints of discrimination. Our thorough investigative process ensures that all cases are reviewed from every angle with a neutral and unbiased

perspective. This work is critical because it allows those who have experienced discrimination to obtain remedy. Without the efforts of the regional offices, many complaints of unlawful discrimination would go unresolved.

HRO is also actively working to increase awareness of disability rights. As a member of the Mid-Atlantic ADA Leadership Network, Regional Director Heather Roth receives ongoing training about the Americans With Disabilities Act and, in turn, conducts outreach and technical assistance on behalf of the organization. Additionally, this year, the HRO partnered with the Governor’s Cabinet and the

Harrisburg Highlights Resolved Cases

557

new cases were accepted for investigation

679

cases closed

189

cases settled resulting in \$1.6 million dollars in monetary settlements



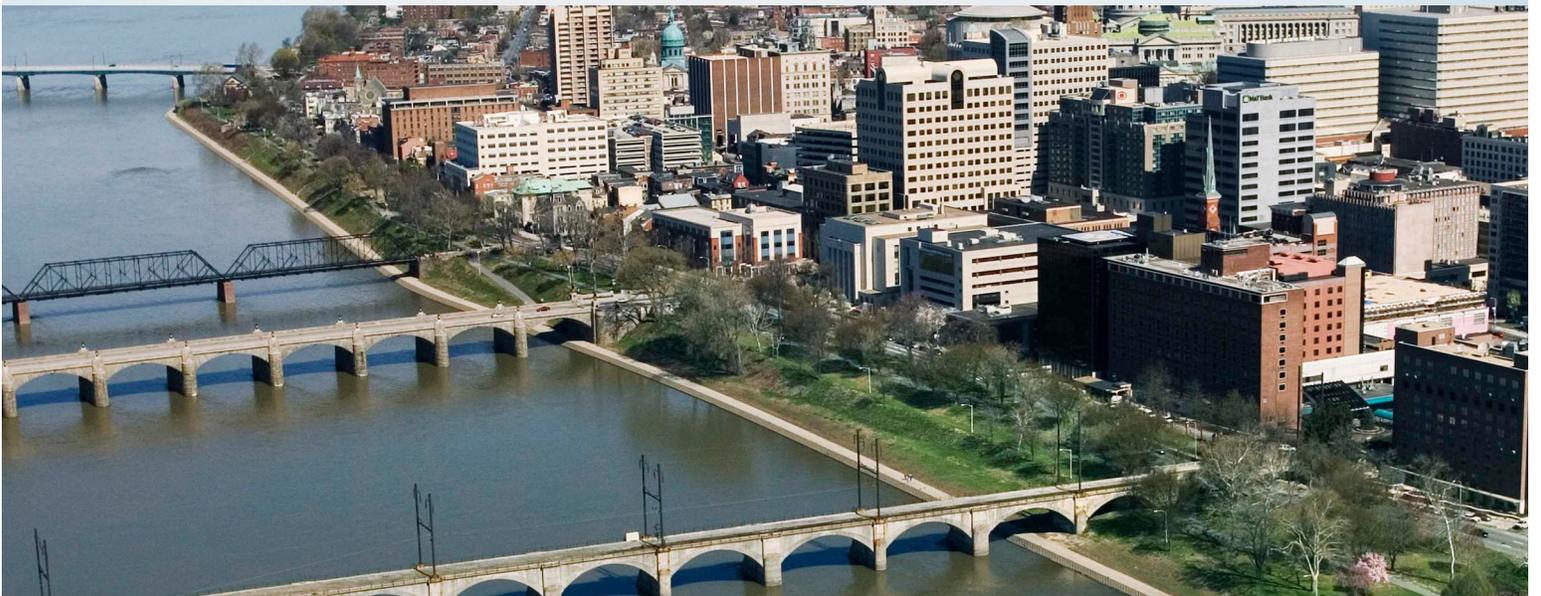
Harrisburg Highlights Informing the Community

39 trainings/outreach sessions were conducted including:

- 16 anti-harassment trainings reaching 515 people;
- Diversity and Cultural Professionalism training for 50 legislative staff members.

Implemented quarterly staff team-building/training events covering topics such as:

- Interviewing witnesses;
- Retaliation;
- Dealing with difficult callers; and
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)).





“No individual, regardless of where they live or whom they love, should suffer discrimination.”

- Kate Brown

Philadelphia Regional Office



Philadelphia Regional Office

Diana Medley
Director

The Philadelphia Regional Office (PHLRO) addresses discrimination cases related to employment, housing, commercial property, public accommodation and education in the five-county area of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia. The office responds to a wide variety of complaints

including: discharge from employment, failure to hire, failure to rent, failure to promote, eviction, compensation, and failure to provide reasonable accommodation. This year, the Philadelphia Regional Office was particularly active in working to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive necessary home modifications. As part of this work, it offers training on reasonable accommodation to assist landlords and others who might benefit from information related to compliance with the Americans for Disabilities Act. Staff also monitor and respond to tensions in the communities they serve by attending demonstrations and other events to ensure peacefulness and civility is maintained while enabling all sides to express their views.

Philadelphia Highlights Resolving Cases

387

complaints were drafted for investigation

327

cases were advanced to closure of which:

- 41% were settled including 18 cases alleging harassment based on age by a state agency. The agency was ordered to pay \$12,500 to each complainant, a total of \$225,000
- 46% were completed investigations
- 13% were administrative closures

13%

were administrative closures

46%

were completed investigations



Philadelphia Highlights Informing the Community

Staff provided information, training and outreach at several community events including:

▶ The grand opening of Councilman Kenyatta Johnson’s Satellite Office in Southwest Philadelphia.

▶ Latino Behavioral Health Coalition’s 2018 Anger to Action event sponsored by the Office of State Senator Vincent Hughes and Councilman Curtis Jones.

▶ The Annual Community Appreciation Street Festivals sponsored by Councilman Kenyatta Johnson.

▶ Beyond The Walls: Reentry Summit on Prison Healthcare

▶ Anti-Discrimination training for State Senator Art Haywood’s office in Philadelphia. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA).

Responding to Complex Cases

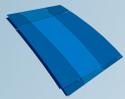
The office implemented a new initiative called Think Tank Tuesday, which is helping to advance complex cases. As part of the initiative, a team of staff members, the supervisor and regional director “dissect” a complex case, review all secured documents and develop a comprehensive plan to complete the investigation.





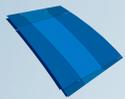
Staff Recognition

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission annually recognizes staff who exceed our already high standards with Star Awards. The program honors partners that have been instrumental in supporting our efforts to provide public service to those seeking relief from unlawful discrimination. The 2018 Star Award honorees were recognized during a luncheon at the December Commission Meeting. They include:



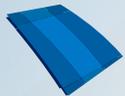
Administrative Star Award - Demora Wallace

Recognizing an administrative staff member for providing outstanding customer service as well as exhibiting exemplary conduct and performance that supports the Commission's operations. Administrative staff includes Clerks, Clerk Typists, Administrative Assistants and Administrative Officers performing in a clerical capacity.



Education and Outreach Award - Jelani Cooper

Recognizing a PHRC employee whose training and outreach efforts have a profound impact on the lives of citizens of the Commonwealth.



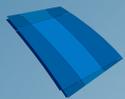
Legal Star Award - Jelani Cooper

Recognizing an attorney who routinely goes the extra mile to serve his/her assigned investigative/intake teams, is a role model for his/her commission-wide peers and works hard every day to bring justice to those who have been harmed by discrimination.



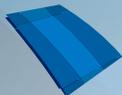
Partnership Star Award – Individual - Sgt. William Slaton, Pennsylvania State Police

Presented to an individual serving with an advisory council, local human relations commission or other agency or an individual volunteer who works closely with PHRC to achieve its goals of eradicating discrimination and promoting equal opportunity.



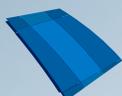
Partnership Star Award – Organization - PA Office of General Counsel Mediators

Presented to an advisory council, local human relations commission or other agency that works closely with PHRC to achieve its goals of eradicating discrimination and promoting equal opportunity.



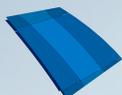
Homer C. Floyd Pinnacle Award - Ms. Alma Fox, Past President Pittsburgh Chapter NAACP

The highest honor presented by the Commission, this award is presented to an individual who has advanced the cause of civil rights through a lifetime of distinguished service to the mission of equal opportunity for all.



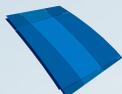
PHRC Longevity Awards - Lyle Wood (30 years), Diana Medley (20 years), Abraham Shaw (20 years), Demora Wallace (20 years), Tameka Hatcher (20 years)

Presented to employees who attain 20, 25, 30, 35 or 40 years of PHRC Service.



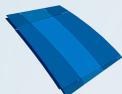
Rookie Star Award - Sara Barr

Recognizing a new employee (with two years or fewer of tenure at PHRC) who strives daily to exemplify the mission, vision, and values of the Commission, treats everyone with respect, and addresses his/her workload with a sense of urgency.



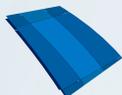
Excellence in Intake - Shaheeda Wilks, Christopher Young, Samantha Lopez

Recognizing intake investigators who interact daily with the public in a professional, caring, and compassionate manner; pay attention to detail; are great listeners and writers; and act with a sense of urgency when serving the public.



Excellence in Investigation - Joseph Warner, Pamela Harris, Ronnessa Edwards

Recognizing investigators who consistently go the extra mile to provide great customer service, are dependable and who serve as role models for their peers. Their passion for PHRC is evident in how they serve the public and work diligently every day to bring justice to others.



Outstanding Team Award - HRO Compliance Team 4 Michael Goldstein, Team Leader

Recognizing outstanding teamwork among a group of employees, this award promotes the spirit of teamwork within the Commission and the benefits of teamwork to the clients we serve. A team is defined as a unit within the Commission or several units working together to achieve a goal.



External Recognition

Many of our staff members are also active and engage their communities outside of PHRC. The following staff members were recognized in 2018 for their personal accomplishments not related to our work.

Tameka Hatcher: 100 Women of Distinction, Trailblazer award

Debbie Walters: Emerging Leaders Program, Graduate

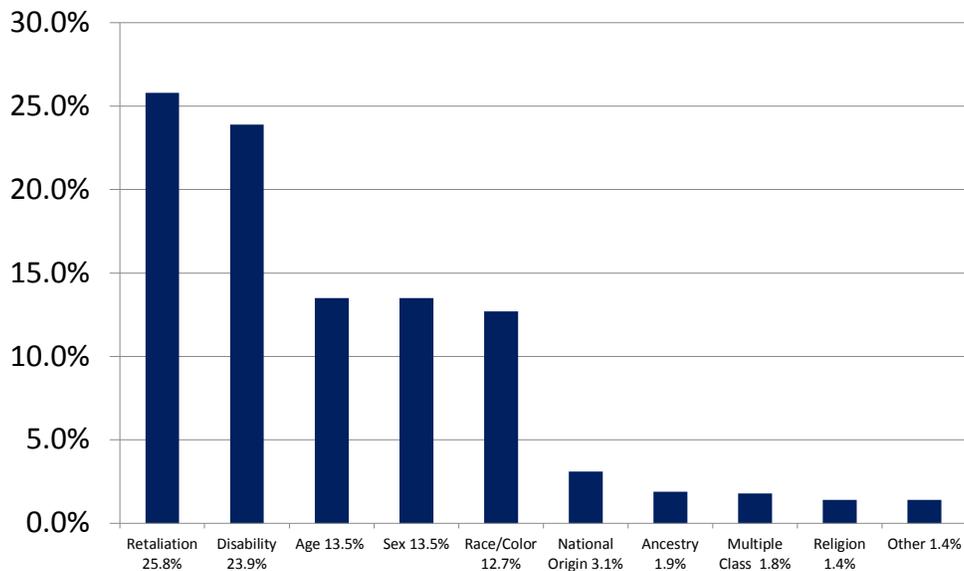


CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

Complaints Docketed by Subject Area - FY 2017-2018

		
Subject Area	Number of Cases	Percentage of Total Cases
Employment	943	78%
Commercial Property	0	0%
Education	34	3%
Housing	180	15%
Public Accommodations	51	4%
Total	1,208	

Basis of Complaints - FY 2017-2018



CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

Top Three Complaint Bases of the Four Categories - FY 2017-2018

HOUSING

1. Disability
2. Retaliation
3. Race/Color

EDUCATION

1. Disability
2. Retaliation
3. Race/Color

EMPLOYMENT

1. Retaliation
2. Disability
3. Age

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

1. Disability
2. Race/Color
3. Retaliation and National Origin (tied)

Case Statistics - FY 2017-2018

Settled After Probable Cause Finding
29 (2%)

Settled Before Probable Cause Finding
365 (28%)

Administrative
224 (17%)

No Probable Cause
666 (52%)

Total = 1,285

Administrative Closings 2017-18
Filed in Court
122

Court of Common Pleas
41

Federal Court
81

Average Case Age (July 1, 2018)
617 Days
(433 if you exclude cases submitted for PH)

Probable Cause Findings Approved
20

CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

E - Employment | H - Housing | PA - Public Accommodations | ED - Education

Age					
Age	E	H	PA	ED	Total
40-42	9				9
43-45	9				9
46-48	16				16
49-51	27	2			29
52-54	46				46
55-57	38	1			39
58-60	47	1			48
61-63	47				47
64-66	37				37
67-69	18				18
70-72	18				18
73-75	10	1			11
76-78	5				5
79-86	5	4			9
Total	332	9			341

Ancestry					
Ancestry	E	H	PA	ED	Total
American or United States	1			1	2
Hispanic	38	4	1		43
Latino	4				4
Puerto Rican	4				4
Samoan			1		1
Palestinian	3				3
Acadian/Cajun	1				1
Total	51	4	2	1	58

CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

E - Employment | H - Housing | PA - Public Accommodations | ED - Education

Race					
Race	E	H	PA	ED	Total
African American	222	26	19	8	275
American Indian	2				2
Asian	1		1		2
Bi-Racial			1	2	3
Black	2	1			3
Caucasian	38	1	2		41
Complainants Race and the known association with another person	2	1		4	7
Total	267	29	23	14	333

Sex					
Sex	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Female	206	6		6	218
Female Pregnant	23				23
Male	50	12	6	1	69
Total	279	18	6	7	310

Religion					
Religion	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Christianity	3				3
Hinduism			1		1
Islam	20	1	3		24
Judaism	5	1			6
Non-Christian	3				3
Non-Jewish	1				1
Sikh	2				2
Wiccan	3				3
Total	37	2	4		43

CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

E - Employment | H - Housing | PA - Public Accommodations | ED - Education

National Origin					
National Origin	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Africa	1			1	2
Albania	3				3
Algeria	2				2
Bahamas	1				1
Benin	3				3
Cameroon	2				2
China	3				3
Croatia	2				2
Dominican Republic	4	1	1		6
Ethiopia	2				2
Ghana	1		1		2
Haiti	10				10
India	3	1			4
Iran - Islam Republic of	5				5
Iraq	3				3
Jamaica	2				2
Liberia	2				2
Mali	1				1
Mexico	1				1
Morocco				1	1
Palestinian Territory	1				1
Philippines	2				2
Puerto Rico	7	3			10
Russian Federation	1		3		4
Saudi Arabia		2			2
Sudan				4	4
Sri Lanka	2				2
Ukraine		1	1		2
United States	7	2			9
Zimbabwe	2				2
Total	73	10	6	6	95

CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

E - Employment | H - Housing | PA - Public Accommodations | ED - Education

Retaliation					
Retaliation	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Assisted	21	24	1		46
Filed a PHRC Complaint	23	6			29
Otherwise Opposed Unlawful Activity	198	20	5	15	238
Provided Information	34	4			38
Total	276	54	6	15	351

Miscellaneous Class					
Miscellaneous Class	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Trainer of Guide/Support Animal					0
Use of Guide/Support Animal		8	11		19
Total		8	11		19

Familial Status					
Familial Status	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Designee Of Such Parent Or Other Person Having Custody		8			8
Individual Not Yet 18 Living With Parents Or Guardian		5			5
Parent Or Other Person Having Legal Custody		3			3
Domiciled with		3			3
Process of Obtaining Legal Custody of Someone Under 18		1			1
Total		20			20

Multiple Class					
Multiple Class	E	H	PA	ED	Total
African American Female	22	6	1	2	31
African American Male	24			4	28
Total	46	6	1	6	59

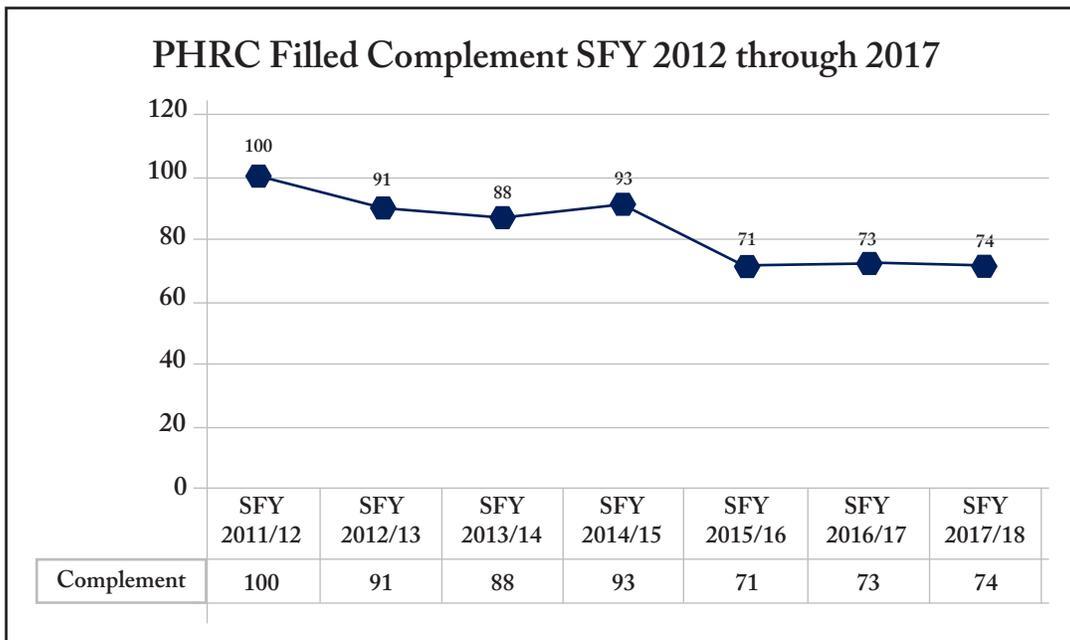
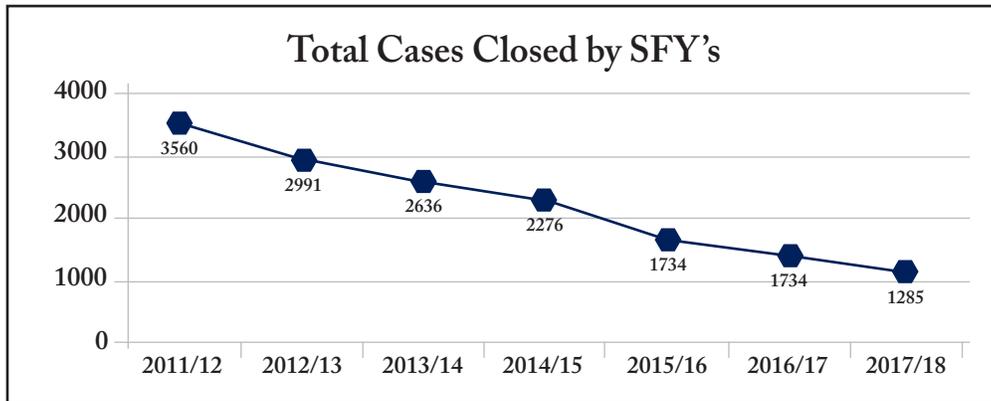
CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

E - Employment | H - Housing | PA - Public Accommodations | ED - Education

Disability					
Disability	E	H	PA	ED	Total
Agent Orange	1	2			3
Alcoholism-I	5	1			6
Allergies	2	1			3
Anxiety Disorder	35	6	1	3	45
Arthritis	21	3			24
Asthma	4				4
Attention Deficit Disorder	15		2	3	20
Autism	7	8		3	18
Back	28	8			36
Bi-Polar	20	7		2	29
Brain/Head Injury	2				2
Brain/Head Injury Traumatic	3				3
Cancer	34	3		2	39
Cerebral Palsy	1	3		3	7
Cervical Discogenic Injury	2				2
Chemical Sensitivities		2			2
Dementia	1	1			2
Depression	11	3		1	15
Diabetes	10	3			13
Dyslexia	1				1
Emphysema	3				3
Epilepsy	2	1	1		4
Extremities Impairment	27	6			33
Fibromyalgia	8				8
Gastrointestinal	5				5
Hand Injury	6				6
Hearing	25	4	5		34
Heart/Cardiovascular	11	2	3		16
Hernia	1				1
Hip Replacement	3	1			4
Kidney	5				5
Learning Disability	6	1	2	3	12
Lupus	4				4
Lyme Disease	5	1			6
Macular Degeneration	1				1
Mental - Other	11	8	1		20
Mental Retardation	2	2	1		5
Migraine	8				8
Multiple Sclerosis	9	1	2		12
Obesity	6	2			8
Nonparalytic Orthopedic	1				1
Other	92	65	1	3	161
Other Blood Disorder	4				4
Other Neurological	1				1
Other Respiratory	1	1			2
Panic Disorder	2				2
Paralysis	3	1	2		6
Parkinsons Disease		1			1
Polio		3			3
Post Traumatic Stress	4	2			6
Renal Dysfunction				2	2
Respiratory Pulmonary Disorder	2	2			4
Seizure Disorder	3	1			4
Shoulder Impairment	15			1	16
Sleep Apnea	1				1
Sleep Disorder	5				5
Speech			1		1
Spinal Stenosis	1	1	2		4
Stroke	8				8
Tendinitis	1				1
Tourettes Syndrome	1				1
Vertigo	1				1
Vision	13	6	2		21
Total	510	163	26	26	725

CASE STATISTICS - FY 2017-2018

Closed Cases vs. Complement



SFY	Total Cases Closed by SFY	PHRC Filled Complement
2011/2012	3560	100
2012/2013	2991	91
2013/2014	2636	88
2014/2015	2276	93
2015/2016	1734	71
2016/2017	1372	73
2017/2018	1285	74



NO HATE IN OUR STATE

Free Events!



NO HATE IN OUR STATE HELLAM TOWNSHIP, YORK COUNTY, PA

"We must heal our communities and stand together against violence that grows from deep rooted hate, society will not survive otherwise."

-Chad Dion Lassiter, PHRC Executive Director

CONFRONTING RACISM IN A RACIALLY DIVERSE REGION

In this the third of three Town Hall discussions to take place across York Co, the PHRC along with Local Organizations and the Faith Based Community will facilitate a community discussion about healing after the senseless murder of Chad Merrill who stood up against the racist verbal attack of his African American friend.



Free Event Social Justice Town Hall Series

When:
Thursday
January 31, 2019
6:30-8:30pm

Where:
Hellam Twp. Fire Dept.
163 E. Market Street
Hellam, PA 17406

Who We Are:
The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission is the agency that enforces the law that prohibit discrimination in the areas of employment, education, housing & commercial property and public accommodations.

CONTACT:
RENEE MARTIN
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
717.787.4410
renmartin@pa.gov
www.phrc.pa.gov

"We must heal our communities and stand together against violence that grows from deep rooted hate, society will not survive otherwise"

- Chad Dion Lassiter, PHRC Executive Director

CONTACT:

Renee Martin
Communications Director

717.787.4410

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pennsylvania

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION



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