

PRINCE WILLIAM
Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

FY2024



Board of County Supervisors*

Deshundra Jefferson, Chair At-Large
Kenny A. Boddy, Vice Chair
Victor S. Angry
Andrea O. Bailey
Margaret Angela Franklin
Tom Gordy
Bob Weir
Yesli Vega

Human Rights Commission

Curtis Porter, Chairman
Evelyn BruMar, Vice Chair
Ramunda Young, Parliamentarian
Benjamin Baldwin
William A. Johnston, III
Dr. Erika Laos
Aaron Muz
Padreus Pratter
Victor L. Ginoba, Jr.

Human Rights Office Staff

Raul Torres, Executive Director
Shelia Venning, Assistant Director
Oliver Demery, Investigator
Dennis Sumlin, Investigator
Kimberly Sparkes, Outreach and Education Coordinator
Tiffany Jones, Administrative Specialist

* This reflects the Board, the Commission, and Staff as of June 30, 2024

Human Rights Commission
Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2024

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Prince William County Human Rights



2024 Human Rights Commissioners: Left to Right - William Johnston, Chair Curtis Porter, Vice Chair Evelyn BruMar, Victor Ginoba, Ramunda Young, Aaron Muz, Benjamin Baldwin, and Padreus Pratter. Not pictured: Dr. Erika Laos.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

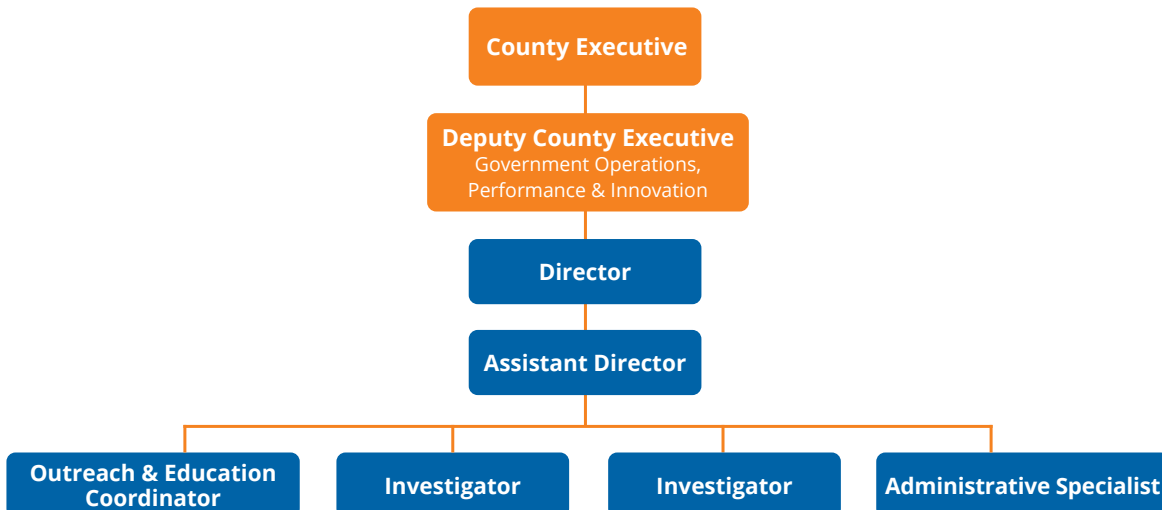
The enactment of the Human Rights Ordinance of 1991 created the Human Rights Commission. The Commission is made up of nine members, appointed by the Board of County Supervisors for three-year terms and represent the diversity of our community. The Commission enforces federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws. The Commission also engages and educates our community about civil and human rights and advises the Board of County Supervisors on civil and human rights matters. Most of its powers have been delegated to the county's Human Rights Office.

HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

The Human Rights Ordinance of 1991 created the Human Rights Office (HRO). The HRO opened its doors to the public on January 15, 1993, to investigate complaints of discrimination on behalf of the Human Rights Commission and to execute its outreach and education programs. It has an Executive Director appointed by the Board of County Supervisors and a staff of six full-time employees. The HRO staffs the Human Rights Commission and works under the direction of the County Executive for day-to-day operations.









MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Prince William County Human Rights Commission is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity for all persons within the county through education.



The Year in Review

FY24 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

-  Human Rights Office designated as a Certified Fair Employment Practice Agency by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
-  Held community dialogues with the Jewish and Muslim communities about their present issues and concerns.
-  Completed the 8th Cohort of the award-winning Student Leadership Council with the participation of 37 students from all Prince William County public high schools, home schools, and private schools.
-  Published and distributed three newsletters and held four webinars on human and civil rights topics, including sexual harassment in the workplace, mental health in the workplace, human trafficking, the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.
-  Partnered with 80 community organizations and businesses.
-  Recognized several residents and community organizations for their contributions to advancing human rights at our annual Human Rights Awards Program.
-  Closed 98% of cases within a year of filing.
-  Conducted outreach to 26,000 residents.
-  Conducted Fair Housing Testing.

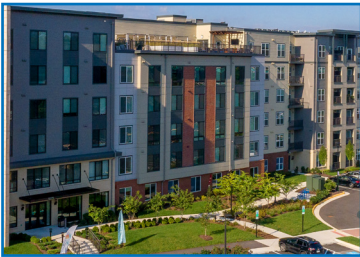
ADMINISTRATION



The HRO operates with a budget of \$979,045 and a staff of six full-time employees. It receives federal financial support from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The mission of the Prince William Human Rights Commission (PWHRC) is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity for all persons within the county through education. During FY24, the HRO received 88 complaints of discrimination and closed 39 of them. The HRO has a very efficient investigation process and a robust outreach and education program. See additional details of complaint closures statistics on page 8.

FAIR HOUSING TESTING



The HRO conducted Fair Housing testing on race and national origin in eastern Prince William County. Testing was done through a regional testing contract sponsored by one of our partners, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. The baseline testing consisted of 65 rental tests located in various zip codes in eastern Prince William County. The test results revealed no systemic issues. The findings showed no differences in treatment in both the race or national origin tests. The results of the testing can be found at pwcva.gov/department/human-rights/fair-housing-reports.



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAM

The Human Rights Community Liaison Program is a community referral network program which supports the mission of the Human Rights Commission. It makes referrals of possible discrimination issues to the HRO for evaluation and investigation, participates in the HRO's outreach and education events and helps with the dissemination of literature and information to the community.



INTERNSHIP

The HRO hosted two college interns this fiscal year. One of the interns attends the University of Virginia and is majoring in Public Policy and Leadership. The other intern attends George Mason University and is majoring in Criminology. Both interns assisted with investigations, participated in outreach and education activities and carried out administrative tasks in the office. Both of them learned about the importance of the enforcement of human rights in our community.



COMPLAINT REVIEWER

The HRO and the Geospatial Technology Services, a division of the Prince William County Department of Information Technology, developed an online application to track complaints filed with the HRO. Complaint data from the HRO is logged in a secure internal cloud environment and connected to Power BI dashboards, with various attributes such as category, discrimination type, fiscal year and complainant demographics. Data is displayed on maps, charts, and graphs and can yield a table of data points associated with the complaint of interest. The dashboards allow staff and future public users to summarize data and visualize patterns and trends. The Complaint Reviewer's primary purpose is to collect and aggregate data to help better target our outreach and education programs.

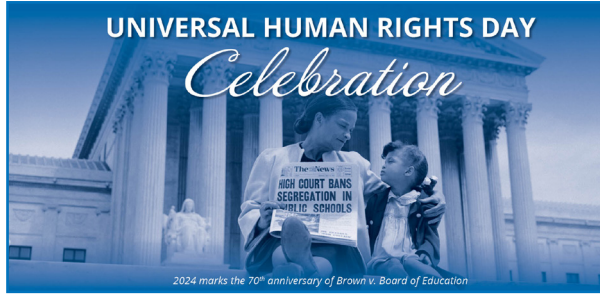


TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The HRO conducted or participated in the following trainings in FY24:

- Equal Employment Opportunity training
- Webinar Series: Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, Mental Health in the Workforce, and Human Trafficking: Know your Rights
- Agency Records Center (ARC) - refresher training
- Fair Employment Practice Agency (FEPA) Conference
- Cyber security training
- Educational Newsletters: Focus on Human Rights - Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), Mental Health and Human Trafficking
- Procurement training

In the Community



UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Annually, the PWHRC honors candidates chosen from the community for their outstanding contributions to equality and civil rights for all people in Prince William County.

On January 13, 2024, the PWHRC celebrated Universal Human Rights Day and the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. The guest speaker for the event was Ralph Smith, Manassas City Councilman. Ralph is an advocate for social justice, advocating for equity in education, economic opportunity, and full involvement in the

political processes from voter registration and empowerment to candidacy.

The PWHRC celebrated the 70th anniversary of the landmark civil rights decision of 1954, better known as Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, which which unanimously ruled that segregation was unconstitutional.

The Human Rights Day theme was "Freedom, Equality and Justice for All," chosen to remind everyone of the initial mission of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Traditionally, the PWHRC celebrates the day by recognizing persons and/or organizations that by their actions express and promote the principles of Human Rights. The following individuals and groups were recognized: Chrissy Fauls, Rabbi Elizabeth Goldstein (Congregation Ner Shalom), MATCH UP (Rania Lateef), the Prince William County Community Foundation (Dr. Vanessa Gattis) and the Prince William County Police Women's Mentorship Program, (Lieutenant Astrid Robinson and Detective Michelle McAllister).



Members of the Human Rights Commission and second from left, Christopher Shorter, County Executive, Deshundra Jefferson, Board of County Supervisors Chair At-Large, front row left, Bob Weir, Gainesville District Supervisor and Andrea Bailey, Potomac District Supervisor



Chrissy Fauls and Commissioner Ramunda Young



Dr. Vanessa Gattis and Commissioner Benjamin Baldwin



Rania Lateef (fourth from left) founder of MATCH UP and staff



Rabbi Elizabeth Goldstein



Members of the Human Rights Commission and Ralph Smith, Manassas City Councilman (front row, second from left)

Outreach and Education



Calling all high school sophomores, juniors and seniors!

Join our 2023 Human Rights Commission

LEAD & LEARN
COHORT 8
Student Leadership Council

Your Vision, Your Voice on Human Rights

Interested in learning more about government through the lens of Human Rights?

Interested in expanding what you've learned in civics class while gaining leadership skills?

[Click here or scan the QR code to learn more and apply.](#)



Cohort Dates: October 2023-April 2024
Application Deadline: October 1, 2023

We proudly offer this opportunity in collaboration with Prince William County Public Schools. These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by Prince William County Public Schools.

PRINCE WILLIAM
Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL - COHORT 8

The HRO has been dedicated to cultivating the Human Rights Student Leadership Council (HRSLC) into an award-winning platform for high school students to develop their leadership skills and explore their interests and knowledge about human rights, civil rights and anti-discrimination laws that impact our community.

The program is designed to prepare high school students for community leadership roles while broadening their perspectives as prospective employees, tenants and consumers in the community. Cohort 8 consisted of 37 students from Prince William County's public schools, home schools and private schools. Some of Cohort 8 activities included assisting the PWHRC with its annual Universal Human Rights Day program, attending Equal Employment and Fair Housing seminars, sharing unique experiences and promoting diversity through small group discussions and oral presentations of issues of concern to the PWHRC.



Outreach and Education (cont.)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

During FY24, the HRO participated in more than 50 educational and outreach activities, human rights campaigns and partnerships, and marketing activities, to engage with the community. Some of these include the following:

- Casa BruMar Foundation's 2nd Annual Building Bridges LGBTQ+ Symposium
- Latino Heritage Festival - Pavilion
- Haymarket Day
- Fall Festival - Trunk or Treat
- Antisemitism Community Dialogue
- Dumfries Christmas Parade
- Elder Care Resource Fair
- Northern Virginia Housing Expo
- Seals on Wheels - Dale City Library
- Equality Prince William Pride Event
- Muslim Community Dialogue
- Webinars:
 - Harassment in the Workplace
 - Mental Health in the Workforce
 - Human Trafficking PWC
- Newsletters:
 - Focus on Human Rights: Fair Housing Month: PWFA/Affirmative Action
 - Focus on Human Rights: Pregnant Workers Fairness Act
 - Focus on Human Rights: HRC on Mental Health
 - Focus on Human Rights: Human Trafficking



The Human Rights Office



ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION: MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION

The HRO uses two types of Alternative Dispute Resolution: mediation and conciliation. The HRO offers mediation to both parties at the filing of any discrimination complaint. Mediation is conducted by in-house certified mediators. Investigators perform conciliation at any stage during the processing of a complaint. Both alternative resolution methods are accessible to all parties throughout the investigation process. Also, if requested, Human Rights certified mediators have been available to other county agencies to mediate employment-related issues.



ENGAGEMENT, COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The HRO renewed its partnership with the EEOC for the investigation of dually-filed cases and with the Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development for Fair Housing testing and training. The HRO works with the EEOC outreach division to provide compliance training pertaining to civil rights laws.

The HRO has established new partnerships with the following:

- Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District
- Conservation in the Community
- Cokesbury United Methodist Church
- Manassas Park Housing Program
- The Village Resource Foundation
- Pawsitive Behavior Solutions
- Mobile Overflow Shelter
- MAPA Inc. Virginia Chapter

The HRO conducted outreach activities in the community, including: PWC Mental Health Awareness Event, Trick or Treatment, Dumfries Fall Festival, Employee Expo, ADC Resource Fair, Northern Virginia Housing Expo, Lunch & Learn - Social Services, Seals on Wheels - Bull Run Library, Community Safety - Open House, 275th Carter Day Celebration Festival, CASA - Heritage Festival - Spring Fling, and CHINN Library Job Fair.

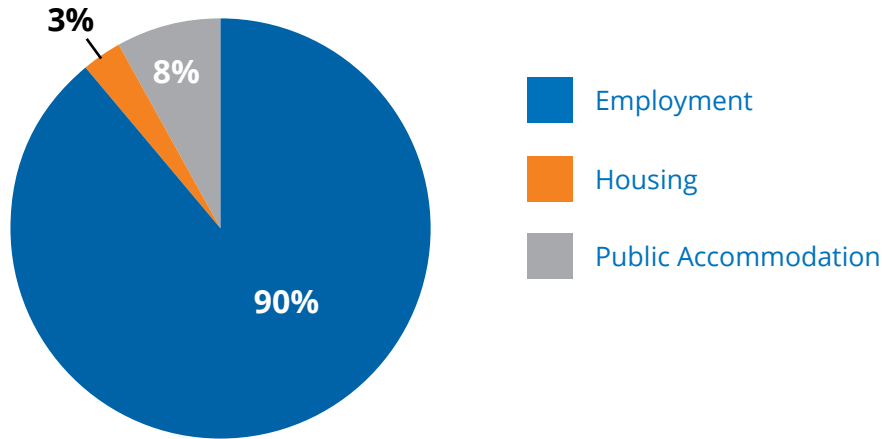


RESOLUTIONS

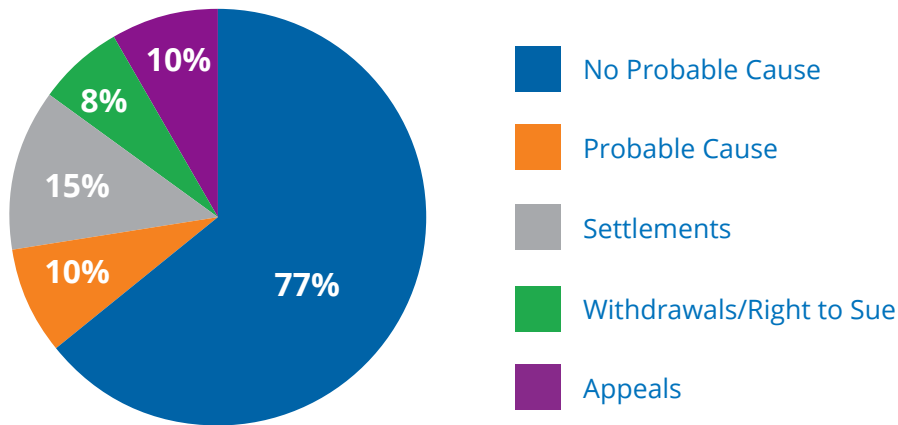
The Human Rights Commission passed the following resolutions for FY24:

- Recognizing February 2024 as Black History Month
- Recognizing March 2024 as Women's History Month
- Recognizing April 2024 as Arab American Heritage Month
- Recognizing May 2024 as Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Month
- Recognizing June 2024 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning (LGBTQ+) and More Pride Month
- Recognizing the 19th of June 2024 as Juneteenth Day
- Recognizing September 15 to October 15, 2024, as Hispanic Heritage Month
- Recognizing October 2024 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- Recognizing November 2024 as Native American Heritage Month
- Recognizing the 11th of November 2024 as Veterans Day

CASE CLOSURES



REASONS FOR CLOSURES



FY24 Statistics	
# of Cases Filed	88
Cases Closed	39
% Closed w/in One Year of Filing	98%
Resolved through Settlements (6)	15%
No Probable Cause (30)	77%
Probable Cause (4)	10%
Appealed (4)	10%
Withdrawals/Right to Sue (3)	8%
Appeals Upheld	100%
Settlement Amount	\$44,000

The Human Rights Office’s statistics for FY24 reveal that 90 percent of the complaints closed were employment-related, 8 percent claimed public accommodation issues, and 3 percent were housing related.

During FY24, 15 percent of the cases were settled. These settlements represented \$44,000 in monetary benefits to those who made complaints.

In FY24, 98 percent of the cases were closed within one year of filing. Only 10 percent of the cases closed during FY24 were appealed and 100 percent of the decisions made by the Executive Director were upheld by the Human Rights Commission after hearing the appeals.

**PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OATH**

I, (my name), do solemnly vow, to commit myself to the following:

I pledge to recognize the dignity, equality and inalienable rights to the pursuit of happiness for all members of the human family.

I pledge to support the principles of freedom, justice and peace in Prince William County.

I pledge to promote social progress and higher standards of living for all individuals.

I pledge to address the needs of families in our community in a shared partnership, as well as show love and fight intolerance and bigotry.

I pledge to respect the honor and reputation of humankind and not participate in rumors, hearsay, backbiting or bearing false witness.

I pledge commitment to the community effort that will serve as a beacon to the goal of human justice and global harmony.

To these principles, I make this solemn pledge.

“The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.”

- John F. Kennedy



Prince William County Human Rights Commission

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pwcva.gov/HumanRights