



Human Rights Commission Meeting

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Agenda

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. This meeting will be held on November 19, 2024 at 6:00 PM. Location: 3rd Floor Conference Room
- B. Public may comment through email: dnewton@watertown-ma.gov
- C. The public may join the meeting virtually at this link: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/81204528989>

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- 1. Call to Order
 - 2. Roll Call
 - 3. Acceptance of Minutes
 - A. Minutes 10.15.24
 - 4. Discussion
 - A. Participation in Massachusetts Human Rights Commission
 - B. Participation in International Association of Human Rights Agencies
 - C. Meet Your HRC event with World in Watertown; December 10th proposed date.
 - D. Update on Disability Awareness event with Watertown Free Public Library
 - E. Screening of Borderland: The Line Within with Watertown Free Public Library
 - F. Watertown Unity Breakfast on January 20th, 2025
 - G. Public Exposure for HRC: School Committee, DEI Council, Community Engagement Specialist
 - H. Commission statement on immigrant protection
 - I. Anti-Bias Coalition meeting dates
 - J. Guide to Boards and Commissions distributed to Commission
 - 5. Committee Report
 - A. Rules Committee
 - 6. Date of Next Meeting
 - 7. Adjournment

Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024

1. Call to Order

Chair Sarah Zoen called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

2. Roll Call

Municipal Policy Analyst Doug Newton called the roll .Present were Corey Barr, Gabriel Camacho, Lisa LaPlante, Susan Musinsky, Mel Poindexter, Xin Peng, and Sarah Zoen. Elizabeth Brusie had informed the Commission prior to the meeting that she could not be in attendance. Doug Newton was present as staff for the Committee.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes for the September 9th meeting were approved unanimously.

4. Confirmation of Co-Chairs

Mel Poindexter was confirmed as Co-Chair alongside Sarah Zoen unanimously.

5. Discussion

a. Participation in Massachusetts Human Rights Commission

Corey Barr mentioned that she attended a recent meeting of the Massachusetts Human Rights Commission and told them about the formation of Watertown's Commission. She noted that their meetings are during working hours. Mel Poindexter asked Commission members to consider if they can attend the Massachusetts Commission meetings. Sarah Zoen, Lisa LaPlante and Susan Musinsky expressed that they may be able to attend future meetings.

b. Community Table at Watertown Farmer's Market

Mel Poindexter asked who on the Commission would be able to attend. Sarah Zoen and Mel Poindexter each expressed availability.

c. Update on Community Table at Faire in the Square

Mel Poindexter expressed that the event went well.

d. Meet Your HRC Event with World in Watertown

Xin Peng explained that this would be an event in which the public can meet members of their Human Rights Commission and that World in Watertown would do the legwork of organizing the event.

e. Co-sponsoring Disability Awareness Event with Watertown Free Public Library on 11/2

Xin Peng explained that this event will be an opportunity for the Commission to engage in community outreach. Mel Poindexter and Sarah Zoen expressed that they will try to attend.

f. Screening of Borderland: The Line Within with Watertown Free Public Library

Human Rights Commission Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024

Corey Barr explained that she has seen a trailer for Borderland: The Line Within on immigrant rights and reached out to the library to see if they would be able to host a screening. The library said that they could do this and can do the legwork and marketing. Gabriel Camacho said that he will be more than happy to help plan the event.

g. Watertown Unity Breakfast

Xin Peng explained that this is another program organized by World in Watertown and that it will be held in person on January 20th, 2025 for the first time since the pandemic. World in Watertown would like Commission members to attend and perhaps be part of the planning committee.

Lisa LaPlante suggested that the Committee discuss membership in the International Association of Human Rights Commissions which will be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Committee Report

a. Rules Committee

Lisa LaPlante explained that the Open Meeting Law has made the process of establishing the Committee's rules difficult and lengthy. She presented the slate of rules that the Rules Committee has already discussed and took input from the members. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the process that has been ongoing and express support for the slate of rules that the Rules Committee has agreed to already. Member of the public Russ Arico expressed displeasure with the Open Meeting Law.

7. Municipal Policy Analyst's Report

Municipal Policy Analyst Doug Newton noted that most of what he had intended to share in his report had already been discussed in the meeting. He added that the Commission has a budget of \$5,000 in FY25 and that they can sponsor events monetarily or non-monetarily. He shared that the next Rules Committee meeting is via zoom on November 7th. He also noted that the main sticking point in their discussions has been establishing a process to handle resident concerns and if the Committee should be able to take such concerns on an anonymous basis.

8. Public Comment

Russ Arico spoke about his concern that the snow removal ordinance in Watertown is a violation of the human rights of disabled homeowners, as well as a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.



OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL
MASSACHUSETTS

How to be an Effective Member of a Public Board or Commission



Guide for Members of Public Boards and Commissions

Jeffrey S. Shapiro, Esq., CIG
Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

October 2024

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About the Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (OIG) is an independent agency charged with preventing and detecting fraud, waste and abuse in the use of public funds and public property. The OIG investigates allegations of fraud, waste and abuse and identifies vulnerabilities and opportunities for improvement.

The **OIG Academy** offers professional training on a broad range of topics including public procurement, fraud awareness and prevention, and contract management. The class on Boards and Commissions helps public board members oversee their organizations and understand the importance of transparency, efficiency and accountability when making decisions, spending money and using public resources.

CONTACT US

www.mass.gov/ig



Office of the Inspector General
One Ashburton Place, Room 1311
Boston, MA 02180



617-727-9140

ma-igo-training@mass.gov



@MassOIG

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Guide for Members of Public Boards and Commissions

Congratulations on your appointment to a public board or commission (public board). Your service to the residents of Massachusetts is essential to good government. This guide provides an overview of your duties and responsibilities as a board member and is meant to serve as a starting point for your preparation to serve.

If your board has oversight of or provides advice to an entity that uses public funds and/or public property, use this guide to understand your duties and obligations. Your work is important, whether you are advising a public organization on policy matters, approving salaries, reviewing the budget, or assessing the executive director’s performance. Your participation, insights and engagement as a resident and active decision-maker are essential to ensuring that your public organization fulfills its mission and uses public resources appropriately.

Public boards take many forms, such as:

- *Public university boards of trustees*
- *Redevelopment authority boards of trustees*
- *Municipal light department boards of commissioners*
- *Housing authority boards*
- *Town finance committees*
- *Library boards of trustees*
- *Municipal select boards*

This guide outlines practices, such as upholding fiduciary principles, that will help you effectively perform your role. It also provides an overview of the laws that apply to your position. These laws relate to the meetings your board holds, your official acts and communications, and your individual conduct. These laws serve to promote open, transparent and accountable government, all of which are essential elements to our representative democracy.

The appendix at the end of this guide contains additional resources, including contact information for state agencies that interpret and enforce the laws applicable to you and your board.

Thank you again for your commitment to fulfilling your duties and responsibilities as a public board member.

Practices for Effective Board Members

The following practices will help you succeed in fulfilling your obligations as a public board member.

Learn about the public organization.

When you are first appointed, learn about the public organization's mandate or mission, which may be found in state law or a local ordinance. A public organization's mandate often identifies the scope of its authority to carry out its public purpose or service, as well as any procedures governing how it achieves its mission and any regulations or by-laws that its officers or appointees must follow.

In addition, learn *how* the public organization fulfills its mission. Relevant information can be found in past annual reports and budgets, as well as a current organizational chart. Learn about recent achievements and upcoming initiatives or special projects.¹



What is the public organization's mission or mandate?

What rules, regulations or by-laws govern the public organization, if any?

How does the organization carry out its mission or purpose?

The answers to these questions will help you understand how the public organization operates and will enable you to become an effective and involved board member.

¹ The State Auditor conducts periodic audits of state agencies, quasi-state agencies and housing authorities. If you serve on such a board, check the State Auditor's website, available at www.mass.gov/auditor, for audit reports on your public organization.



How is the organization structured?

What is the organization's annual budget? Who sets the budget and who decides how it is spent?

Who are the senior officials in the organization and what are their roles?

What are the major projects or objectives that the public organization is considering over the next few years? What will be the projected cost of these projects?

Are the proposed projects and objectives consistent with the mission of the public organization and with the organization's budget and other priorities?

Educate yourself about the role of your board and your role as a board member.

To be an effective public board member, you need to understand your board's role with respect to the public organization. Some boards provide direct oversight to ensure that the public organization operates effectively and in accordance with its mandate, while others work in an advisory capacity to help guide a public organization toward particular goals and outcomes. The board's role is usually set out in a statute, local ordinance or other enabling document.



What is the scope of the board's authority and what is the source of that authority?

What matters typically come before the board?

Based on the board's role with respect to the organization, are there other matters that should be brought before the board?

You should also understand how the board operates, including how often it meets, how the agenda is established and the procedures that govern the meetings. As a starting point, read the meeting minutes from at least the past four board meetings.



How often does the board meet? Is the board required to meet on a specific schedule and, if yes, what is that schedule?

Who sets the agenda for the meetings? Can board members submit topics for the agenda?

Does your board follow written procedures for meetings, such as *Robert's Rules of Order*?

How does the board vote? Are all votes conducted in the same manner?

Furthermore, take steps to learn how the chairperson and other officers are selected, if there are limits for serving as an officer and whether your board may establish committees. Request lists of all current board members and committees.

Uphold fiduciary principles and act in the best interests of the public organization.

In some instances, the law may consider you a fiduciary. A fiduciary is someone who owes a particular duty of care, known as a fiduciary duty, to an entity or individual – in this case, a public organization. A fiduciary duty requires an individual to act with good faith, loyalty and due care. A fiduciary must act in the best interests of the public organization.

Even if you are not a fiduciary under the law, fiduciary principles should guide the decisions that you and your board make. Adhering to fiduciary principles will help the board recognize that it is a steward of the public funds entrusted to the organization, and that the board plays a vital role

A fiduciary is “someone who is required to act for the benefit of another person on all matters within the scope of their relationship; one who owes to another the duties of good faith, loyalty, due care, and disclosure.” Black’s Law Dictionary 10th ed. (2014).

in ensuring the public organization fulfills its mission. As part of upholding fiduciary principles, the board should always act independently, with care and in the best interests of the organization.

Board members who adhere to the fiduciary principles will be active

participants in board matters, will stay informed and will act in the best interests of the organization. Fiduciary principles remind the board that it must act on behalf of the organization, not its executive. They will lead the board to actively oversee the executive and to expect accountability from the executive, which will help the public organization operate effectively, transparently and in accordance with its mission.

Exercise care when making decisions and voting.

To be an active and effective board member, you must be informed. Consequently, before your board meets, arm yourself with accurate information to make thoughtful decisions. Take time to prepare for meetings in advance; read the materials that are distributed and think about the issues on the agenda.



How far in advance does the board receive meeting materials so that you can properly prepare for pending actions before voting on a matter before the board?

What is the procedure for requesting the organization to provide additional information, either in advance of or at a meeting?
What is the procedure for asking individuals from the organization to attend the meeting to provide additional information?

Public discourse, analysis and debate are expected, whether public board members are trustees of a public college or commissioners of a local housing authority. When your board meets, ask probing questions that are relevant to the issue and debate the issue at hand during meetings to get information that will help you make informed decisions. If the chair of the board or an official in the organization does not provide you with the necessary information to make an informed decision, ask for it. If you do not receive the information you need, ask to change the date of the vote.

Before voting on a matter, ask:



What statutes or regulations apply to the requested action?

What internal procedures apply to the requested action and were those procedures followed?

Does the requested action align with the public organization's mission, responsibilities, priorities and

budget?

Do you need additional data so that you can make an informed decision?

Do you need to hear from others in the organization? For instance, does legal counsel or human resources have information necessary to make this decision?

Finally, exercise your own judgment and always act in the best interests of the public organization. Do not allow yourself to be marginalized by an executive or fellow board member who may assert knowledge or expertise above yours or who simply does not agree with you. Do not rubber stamp official acts that come before your public board – your work is important and you need to be informed.

Actively oversee the executive who leads the organization.

It is likely that your public organization is run by an executive, such as a public college president, a director or other professional, and that your board is responsible for overseeing the executive. If so, respect the trust the public placed in you. While you do not want to micromanage the day-to-day management of the public organization, you do want to make certain that the executive's actions align with the objectives of the public organization. The executive reports to you and is accountable to the board. Be an active overseer.

Expect the executive to timely inform the board of major projects, expenditures and initiatives. Use board meetings to discuss substantive issues with the executive, such as budget planning, capital projects and significant policy matters. Ask questions, seek clarification and get back-up documentation. Collaboration with the executive will require open communication and information-sharing.



What are the executive's objectives and priorities for the organization?

Do these objectives align with the organization's mission and values?

What are the financial costs of achieving these objectives?

To help both the executive and the organization, your board should conduct an annual performance evaluation of the executive. It also must establish a system to track and account for the executive's vacation, sick and work time. Both the performance assessment and the mechanism used to account for the executive's time should be established in writing. The board also should ensure that the organization can track other expenses and requests for reimbursements.

Consider establishing an independent audit committee that reports to the board. Among other duties, the committee could periodically audit reimbursements and expenses at the executive level.

The board should approve the executive's expenses and reimbursements (at least those above a certain dollar threshold). This includes reviewing the back-up documentation for the executive's expenses and reimbursements. Staff who report to the executive are not in a position to question the executive's performance, expenditures or conduct; the board's independence and oversight in this regard are therefore critical.

Similarly, perform your due diligence before signing the executive's contract – whether it is the executive's first contract or a renewal. Your board should do its own, independent research to ensure that the salary and other benefits offered, including vacation time, sick leave and other fringe benefits, are reasonable and consistent with standard practices. Make sure that they are comparable to those of other executives with like experience and expertise who work in similar public settings. And very importantly, ensure that the compensation is consistent with the public organization's budgetary commitments.

Finally, apply the same due diligence if you must recruit a new executive for the public organization. Conduct an appropriate search that provides you with a talented applicant pool. As part of the selection process, speak with references and conduct a background check.



What is the organization's budget for the executive's salary?

How much time is the executive required to devote to the public organization?

How does the organization document and verify the executive's work, vacation and sick leave hours?

What is the public organization's expense reimbursement policy?

Is it consistent with the public organization's mission and objectives?

Does it clearly define how the executive's expenses are reviewed and approved?

Do the executive's reimbursement requests match legitimate expenses related to the public organization's public purpose?

Actively monitor and protect public expenditures.

Your board may be responsible for approving budgets, capital projects and other expenditures. If that is the case, your public board ensures that a public organization utilizes its finite public resources wisely and complies with the laws that govern the use of those resources. You are the steward of those resources as a public board member.

As a starting point, learn to read a financial statement. You do not need to be an accounting expert, but understanding financial statements is essential to ensuring that your organization is using its public resources appropriately. If accounting is not your area of expertise, consider asking a professional from within the organization to give the board a tutorial on reading financial statements. Be sure to not only look at the figures in the financial statement, but also be sure to review the accounting firm's notes regarding litigation and other matters that may affect the financial soundness of the organization. Also, when financial material is presented at a board meeting, ask questions to clarify any unclear information.

Chances are high that if you are uncertain about the information, other board members are, too.

You also should understand the public bidding laws that apply to your organization. In Massachusetts, many public organizations must follow particular laws and procedures before undertaking construction projects; buying supplies, services and real property; or disposing of surplus supplies and property. The Legislature designed these laws to ensure that all qualified vendors have a fair and equal opportunity to compete for public contracts and that taxpayer money is spent wisely. To the extent you can, educate yourself or obtain training on these laws. Additional resources to help you understand these laws are available in Appendix A at the end of this guide.

The Office of the Inspector General provides several resources, including procurement charts and manuals, to help you understand public bidding and construction laws. For more information, please visit the Office's website, available at www.mass.gov/ig.



What laws must the public organization follow related to purchasing or disposing of goods, services and real property?

What laws must the public organization follow in connection with construction projects?

What are the public organization's written procurement policies?

What audit procedures are in place to ensure that the organization is complying with state law and its internal procedures?

At the state level, the Massachusetts Comptroller maintains "CTHRU," a comprehensive electronic database of state expenditures, including state salaries and payments made to vendors by state agencies. Use this database, available at www.macomptroller.org, to learn more about your agency's expenditures or to compare your organization's expenses to other public organizations.

If you are a member of a local board that serves a local public organization, inquire about whether there is an electronic resource like

CTHRU, so that you may have more information at your fingertips about the budget, salaries and spending of the organization. This will help you make meaningful determinations about financial matters that come before your board.

Detect and report suspected fraud, waste or abuse of public resources.

Any misuse of public funds and resources affects a public organization's financial well-being, reputation and ability to accomplish its mission. As a public board member, you have an important role in preventing and detecting fraud. You and your fellow members are custodians of the public trust. You have the responsibility to protect public resources, including money, assets, real property, employee time, digital records and other types of data. Massachusetts residents have entrusted these public resources to your care.

Although most employees are honest and hardworking, fraud and other misconduct still occur, so you must diligently apply preventative measures – often referred to as internal controls – to help safeguard public assets and taxpayers' interests. As a result, all organizations need internal controls. Every internal control must be based on the specific organization. Some common elements of an internal control plan to protect public resource include the following:

- The segregation of duties performed by employees to ensure no one individual can commit and cover up their own wrongdoing.
- Approval processes for expenditures, with increased oversight for larger expenditures.
- Methods to track and monitor employee time and attendance, including the use of leave time.
- Controls to track the public organization's acquisition and disposition of public assets, such as vehicles, equipment, supplies and petty cash.
- Fraud-reporting mechanisms, including a telephone or email hotline or an independent complaint review process.
- An anti-fraud policy, as well as employee training on the policy and annual reminders to follow the policy.

- A code of conduct with standards related to conflict of interest and other professional standards that align with the public organization's mission.
- Tone at the top: communication from the organization's administration about its commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards.
- Careful vetting of employees – both before and after hiring – to ensure that their background and professional certifications meet the entity's standards and support the entity's mission.

Further, you should determine whether the board has an internal audit committee to check and verify expenses. If not, advocate for the creation of one. The board needs to set the "tone at the top," and communicate that the public organization has zero tolerance for fraud and other inappropriate activity. An ethical work environment with internal controls is essential to the proper use of public resources.



What fraud risks exist in the public organization your board oversees?

What types of internal controls are in place to properly monitor the use of public resources?

Does the public organization or your board perform compliance reviews or audits?

Does your public organization have an anti-fraud program that includes training, policies, new-hire background checks and a fraud hotline or other fraud-reporting mechanisms?

Report suspected fraud, waste or other misuse of public funds on our online [form](#), by telephone at (800) 322-1323, or email at

IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov.

All reports are confidential.

Legal Obligations of Public Board Members

As a member of a public board, you are subject to certain laws with which you should become familiar.

Conflict of Interest Law

The state's conflict-of-interest law is designed to ensure that all public employees act for the benefit of the public organization, free from personal bias or gain. The law impacts your conduct as a board member, as well as certain activities you undertake separate from your board membership. For instance, the law:

- Restricts you from discussing or voting on matters in which you or an immediate family member, or your private business has a financial interest.
- Restricts you from accepting gifts and gratuities, if given because of some official act or because of official position, even if the gift or gratuity would not influence your actions as a board member.
- Requires you to disclose in writing any appearances of a conflict of interest prior to performing your official duties and prohibits favoritism toward a family member or friend or bias against anyone.
- Restricts you from representing business or other interests before your board.
- Requires annual training on the conflict-of-interest law and acknowledge receiving a summary of the conflict-of-interest law.
- Requires board members to file disclosures in certain instances involving actual and potential conflicts of interest.

The State Ethics Commission provides free advice to all public employees on the conflict-of-interest law. Its website, available at www.mass.gov/ethics, also contains helpful advisories, guides and rulings.

Open Meeting Law

Like the conflict-of-interest law, the open meeting law applies to both your individual conduct and the board's operations. The open meeting law promotes transparency in government and contains specific notice requirements to ensure that the public knows – prior to the meeting – when and where the board will meet and what topics will be discussed at the meeting.

Specifically, the law states that:

- Public boards must give advanced notice of the topics that will be discussed at a meeting.
- Meetings of public boards must be open to the public, although in limited circumstances members *may* hold certain aspects of the meeting in closed session, away from public view (see Appendix B).
- Discussing certain matters with other board members outside of a properly noticed meeting – such as by email or telephone – will likely violate the open meeting law.

The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO) is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the open meeting law. It produces a comprehensive guide to the open meeting law, as well as helpful educational material and rulings. The AGO also provides in-person and online trainings about the open meeting law. Visit the AGO's website, available at www.mass.gov/the-open-meeting-law, or contact the AGO's Division of Open Government at (617) 963-2540, to learn more about the open meeting law.

Public Records Law

The public records law supports transparency of the decision-making process and promotes the accountability of public employees, public boards and government officials to the taxpayers.

Consequently, the law requires that certain records are retained for a period of time, and that those records are turned over in response to a public records request. *All records related to the board's business are considered public even if they are on a personal computer, personal cellphone or personal email account.*

All public boards receive and generate public records in the regular course of business. You also generate public records when you operate in your official capacity as a public board member. If you communicate with another individual in your official capacity or exchange information about matters under your board's purview, for instance, you may create a public record even if you use your personal email, voicemail or video recording to transmit that information. A common misperception exists that communications on personal email accounts or via text messages are not subject to the public records law; this is incorrect as all board-related communications are subject to public disclosure.

For more information on the state's public records law, please contact the Public Records Division at the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office at (617) 727-2832. The Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office also has developed a free, comprehensive guide to the public records law. The guide, titled *A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law*, is available on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website at www.sec.state.ma.us.

Conclusion

The OIG would like to thank the Office of the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the State Ethics Commission for their assistance in creating this guide. We hope you find it helpful and will call any one of the agencies on the following page for assistance with fulfilling your important role as a public board or commission member.

Thank you for your service and may you find meaning and fulfillment as you serve the public as a Board Member or Commissioner. The Commonwealth is fortunate to have you serve. Please accept the appreciation for your service from the Office of the Inspector General.

Appendix A: Sources of Advice and Assistance

Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General interprets and enforces the open meeting law.

www.mass.gov/service-details/open-meeting-law-training-videos.

Telephone: 617-963-2540

Email: openmeeting@mass.gov

Website: www.mass.gov/ago

Office of the Comptroller

The Office of the Comptroller is responsible for developing internal control guidelines for Commonwealth departments, including state agencies and quasi-state agencies.

Telephone: 617-727-9140

Email: comptroller.info@mass.gov

Website: www.mass.gov/comptroller

Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General is an independent agency that prevents and detects fraud, waste and abuse of public resources.

Telephone: 617-727-9140

Email: MA-IGO-Training@mass.gov

Website: www.mass.gov/ig

Secretary of the Commonwealth

The Secretary of the Commonwealth administers the public records law.

Telephone: 617-727-2832

Email: pre@sec.state.ma.us

Website: www.sec.state.ma.us

State Ethics Commission

The State Ethics Commission administers and enforces financial disclosure and conflict-of-interest law. It also renders written advisory opinions upon request.

Telephone: 617-371-9500

Website: www.mass.gov/ethics

Appendix B: Reasons for Entering Executive Session

While all meetings of public bodies must be open to the public, certain topics may be discussed in executive, or closed, session. The open meeting law, G.L. c. 30A, § 21, sets out ten permissible reasons for entering executive session:

1. To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual;
2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel;
3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares;
4. To discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto;
5. To investigate charges of criminal misconduct or to consider the filing of criminal complaints;
6. To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body;
7. To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements;
8. To consider or interview applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening;
9. To meet or confer with a mediator, as defined in section 23C of chapter 233, with respect to any litigation or decision on any public business within its jurisdiction involving another party, group or entity, provided that:
 - (i) any decision to participate in mediation shall be made in an open session and the parties, issues involved and purpose of the mediation shall be disclosed; and

- (ii) no action shall be taken by any public body with respect to those issues which are the subject of the mediation without deliberation and approval for such action at an open session.

10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive or other proprietary information provided:

in the course of activities conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier under a license granted by the department of public utilities pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 1F.

Public Body Checklist for Entering Into Executive Session

Issued by the Attorney General's Division of Open Government March 12, 2013

- ☐ Executive session listed as a topic for discussion on meeting notice, including as much detail about the purpose for the executive session as possible without compromising the purpose for which it is called. See G.L. c. 30A, § 20(b); 940 CMR 29.03(1)(b).
- ☐ Public body convened in open session first. G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b)(1).
- ☐ Chair publicly announced the purpose for executive session, citing one or more of the 10 purposes found at G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a). (see above)
- ☐ Chair stated all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called. G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b)(3). For example, the Chair identified the party a public body may be negotiating with, or the litigation matter the public body will be discussing.
- ☐ Chair stated whether the public body will adjourn from the executive session or will reconvene in open session after the executive session. G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b)(4).
- ☐ For Executive Session Purposes 3, 6, and 8:
 - Chair publicly stated that having the discussion in open session would have a detrimental effect on the public body's negotiating position, bargaining position, litigating position, or ability to obtain qualified applicants. G.L. c. 30A, §§ 21(a)(3), (6), (8).
 - A majority of members of the body voted by roll call to enter into executive session G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b)(2).

Note that this checklist is intended as an educational guide and does not constitute proof of compliance with the Open Meeting Law. For questions, please contact the Attorney General's Division of Open Government at 617-963-2540 or via email at openmeeting@state.ma.us.



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

RED FLAGS FOR FRAUD

WHAT IS FRAUD?

Fraud is a knowing misrepresentation of the truth or a deliberate concealment of important information that causes another to act and results in harm, such as a monetary loss.

WHAT ARE "RED FLAGS" AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

A red flag is a sign that something is out of the ordinary and that a closer look may be needed. When a red flag arises, an organization should confirm that its preventive systems are working properly and consider whether increased oversight of a particular person or vendor may be needed.

Note, however, that red flags alone are not evidence of fraud.

WHAT IS THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL?

The Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is an independent agency that prevents and detects fraud, waste and abuse of public funds and property.

To help the public and public employees identify and prevent fraud in their jurisdictions, the OIG has created this flier and has a number of guides and resources available at www.mass.gov/ig.

Do you suspect fraud may be occurring in your organization?

Call the OIG's Fraud Hotline at (800) 322-1323

or email IGO-FightFraud@mass.gov

www.mass.gov/ig

EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORAL RED FLAGS

- Willingness to cut corners or be deceptive in business dealings.
- Reluctance to share information or control over vulnerable areas.
- Annoyance or defensiveness when questioned about files, decisions or business practices.
- Sudden changes in personal spending.
- Financial pressures, including significant personal debt and credit issues.
- Drug, alcohol or gambling problems.

MANAGEMENT RED FLAGS

- One individual or small group that dominates decisions.
- Ability of one person to make major decisions without knowledge or approval of second person or group.
- Use of an excessive number of bank accounts.
- Missing documents (especially original versions).
- Inventory discrepancies.
- Irregular or questionable transactions.
- Expenses over budget.

VENDOR RED FLAGS

- Lack of physical address or providing a wrong or fake address.
- Online complaints, including with the Better Business Bureau and other review sites.
- Use of blocked phone number.
- Unprofessional employees.
- Irregular charges on invoices, or bills that you can't understand.
- Absence in common business directories.
- Giving of gifts to key decision makers.
- "High pressure" or aggressive sales tactics.

The Watertown Human Rights Commission affirms that human rights are universal and inalienable; indivisible; interdependent and interrelated. All of these rights, whether civil, political, economic, social or cultural, are inherent to the dignity of every person. All of these rights all have equal status in the City of Watertown.

The purpose of the Watertown Human Rights Commission is to affirm that our city is an inclusive community that values freedom from

- discrimination,
- disrespect,
- bigotry,
- hatred and
- oppression.

The Watertown Human Rights Commission reaffirms the city's commitment to uphold and defend everyone's right to free and equal exercise of their human and civil rights and privileges.

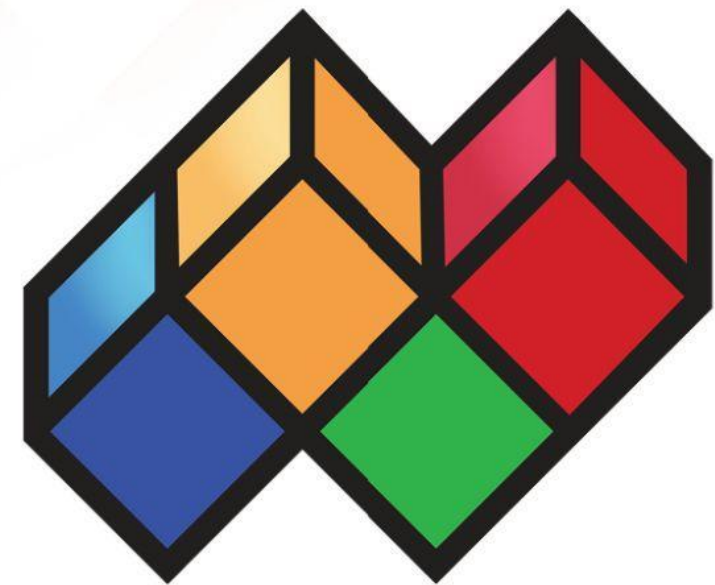
The Watertown Human Rights Commission strives to ensure that everyone enjoys equal opportunity to , including (but not limited to)

- housing,
- employment,
- education,
- public accommodation,
- access to city services,
- insurance,
- credit,
- banking and
- health care
- and other civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights

The Watertown Human Rights Commission strives to ensure everyone enjoys these opportunities equally, regardless of

- race,
- color,

- ancestry,
- national origin,
- sex,
- sexual orientation,
- gender identity or expression,
- citizenship,
- age,
- religion,
- disability,
- health status,
- marital or familial status,
- military or veteran status,
- socioeconomic status,
- ex-offender status,
- genetic, and/or
- “protected class” status.



Anti-Racism Action Plan

September 2021



Canadian
human rights
commission

Commission
canadienne des
droits de la personne

Contact the Canadian Human Rights Commission

For more information about human rights, contact:

NATIONAL OFFICE

344 Slater Street, 8th Floor, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1E1

Telephone: 613-995-1151

Toll Free: 1-888-214-1090

TTY: 1-888-643-3304

Fax: 613-996-9661

For media inquiries, contact Media Relations at 613-943-9118

Note: All complaint-related inquiries will be transferred to the Commission's national office.

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Introduction

This updated version of the Canadian Human Rights Commission's (the Commission) Anti-Racism Action Plan incorporates feedback from employees, unions and consultants. It represents the Commission's commitment to anti-racist action, both within and outside of the organization. We thank all those who provided thoughtful feedback into the first draft of this plan. We took great effort to incorporate as many suggestions as possible.

The work to implement the commitments outlined in the Plan is well underway. In some cases, the work has been completed. A detailed [progress report](#) is available on the [Anti-Racism work](#) section of the Commission's website.

As Canada's human rights watchdog and national human rights institution, the Commission is dedicated to meeting the highest standards of equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, dignity and respect within an anti-racist context.

Over the last few years, we have undertaken an organization-wide evaluation of our structure and our processes. This Action Plan is the result of an ongoing commitment by the Chief Commissioner, our commissioners, our leadership team and all our staff to "walk the talk" of addressing the effects of societal systemic racism and discrimination across our three roles: **employer, service provider and regulator**, and **human rights advocate**. The key to the success of this work is that it be never-ending. It must be continuous, it must be evergreen, and it must be sustainable. Together, each Director General will oversee the implementation of this plan, led by our anti-racism co-champions: the Executive Director and Chief Commissioner.

In this updated version of our Action Plan, we have reorganized our commitments and actions according to our three unique and interconnected roles.

As an employer, we are committed to creating an open, healthy, safe and inclusive workplace that has at its core the principles of anti-racism and equity. We value and respect the diversity of our commissioners, leadership and staff. We are mindful of the various historic and structural inequities that have created societal barriers for Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people. We are committed to ensuring that anti-racism and equity measures continue to promote full participation of our diverse staff.

As a service provider and regulator, we are committed to safeguarding equity and inclusion, and providing access to justice for everyone in Canada. This includes continuous improvement of our systems, and ongoing identification and elimination of barriers to the human rights programs we deliver. To achieve this, we rely on meaningful engagement with stakeholders and rights holders to hear their feedback on how we can best adapt our systems to reduce the impacts of systemic racism, discrimination and inequality on access to human rights justice. In protecting and upholding human rights in our role as a regulator, we are committed to helping and supporting federally-regulated employers and service providers to proactively identify and remove barriers to accessibility, equity and inclusion.

As a human rights advocate, we are committed to being bold in speaking out on human rights issues, and in amplifying the voices of people in marginalized and vulnerable situations in Canada. This work includes raising awareness of the systemic inequalities and barriers facing Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people. It also means being an ally and a valued partner and collaborator with Canada's strong community of human rights organizations, anti-racism experts, stakeholders and rights holders.

Through all our anti-racism efforts, these guiding values will remain at the core of our decisions and actions:

- Being open, clear and accountable:** We are committed to transparency and accountability in our efforts to bring about sustainable anti-racist organizational change.
- Leadership:** We will integrate equity principles into our decision-making regarding policies, practices, programs, partnerships, and services and will continue to address systemic barriers and historic challenges.
- Inclusiveness:** We will foster a welcoming, barrier free environment, and build and nurture relationships with communities through targeted outreach activities.
- Responsiveness:** Our programs, activities and services will meet and respond to the varied needs of the diversity of people in Canada.
- Sustainability:** We commit to sustainable anti-racist action — embedding anti-racism values, strategies and actions in our governance and operations, and continuously identifying, removing, and mitigating barriers that result from systemic racism in Canada.

This Action Plan is an evergreen, foundational document that will continue to evolve through our ongoing anti-racism efforts. It is an important step in our collective effort to take meaningful anti-racist action, both within and outside of our organization.

We are determined to be a leader and hold ourselves to the highest standard and utmost transparency and accountability.

We are committed to continuing our journey of listening, learning, and taking meaningful action.

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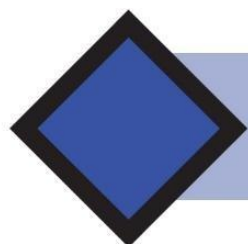
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1. Anti-Racism Action as an employer

The Commission commits to fostering a workplace that represents Canada’s diversity and ensures an inclusive and welcoming work environment that promotes a sense of value, belonging, and well-being for all employees.

Enhancing Internal Accountability & Leadership at the CHRC

Action	Milestones
1.1 Appoint a senior executive to develop an action plan and to support the implementation of key pieces of work with key partners in the organization for a one-year period. Develop a transition plan to ensure ongoing commitment and coordination of this work.	A senior executive is appointed during the calendar year 2020 to carry out this work. A draft action plan is developed by the executive team based on existing feedback by December 2020. Feedback from bargaining agents, employees and external consultant is sought by March 31, 2021. Updated version is drafted and shared with bargaining agents, employees and relevant consultants. Plan is further reviewed on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that the results of an independent employment equity audit and any other assessments and/or feedback are incorporated appropriately. A transition plan is established by September 2021 to ensure the coordination of this work as part of regular operations of the Commission. Going forward, each Director General will oversee the implementation of this plan, led by our anti-racism co-champions: the Executive Director and Chief Commissioner.

Action	Milestones
1.2 Establish an internal consultation committee comprising Indigenous, Black and other Racialized employees. The Committee will be consulted by the executive team on the implementation of the Commission's anti-racism work. The perspectives of members with lived experience will also be sought and incorporated in the development of policies and other program initiatives. The Committee will also assist in the continued identification and elimination of barriers.	A call out for 8 employees and 1 employee co-chair is made in early January 2021. One executive co-chair and one executive member will also be sought during this timeframe. Members reflect a variety of different lived experiences, different classification groups and levels, and represent a variety of program areas from within the organization. Local union representatives are consulted on membership and preliminary terms of reference are drafted by January 31, 2021. Committee is functional (including adopted terms of reference) by April 30, 2021.
1.3 Tie this plan's progress to executive performance management.	Performance objectives in regard to the implementation of this plan are added to executives' performance accords starting in fiscal year 2021–22.
1.4 Report regularly on the progress of this plan.	Monthly progress updates are requested and provided at Commission Executive Management Committee (CEMC) meetings on a regular basis, starting in January 2021. (CEMC comprises all Commission directors, Directors General, as well as the Executive Director and the Chief Commissioner.)
1.5 Provide regular updates to Commission staff on this plan's progress.	Periodic reporting on the progress of this plan is shared with staff and made public as of June 2021. Reporting is done at least twice a year. CEMC members and Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee members to provide updates on the implementation of this plan at regular division meetings and/or branch meetings.
1.6 Explore leadership and behavioral competency related to diversity and inclusion for all Commission staff. .	Discussions with Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat on the creation of both a leadership and behavioural competency to reflect diversity and inclusion commitments in the public service are initiated during fiscal 2021–22. The Commission provides support to Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat as needed on the development of this work.

Making Policies & Procedures Inclusive

Action	Milestones
1.7 Ensure awareness of major religious and spiritual observances by sharing resources. Those in management positions will refrain from scheduling mandatory events on those days if they have a team member(s) observing the religious or spiritual holiday. Employees are encouraged to proactively identify religious and/or spiritual observances requiring accommodation to their direct supervisor as soon as practicable.	A Microsoft Outlook Calendar solution to include religious holidays is pushed out to all calendars in early 2021. All Executives & Team Leaders add additional days of observance to their Outlook calendars by March 31, 2021. IT is working to integrate an expanded, inclusive calendar into the Help Desk onboarding process by July 26, 2021, to ensure the continuity of this inclusion with new employees. Managers are actively consulted and seek input from employees prior to scheduling mandatory events.
1.8 Develop and implement a plan to ensure that the 13 Factors of Psychological Health & Safety take into account the perspectives of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized employees either through consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee or through other means.	An updated Mental Health Action Plan is developed based on the results of the assessment of the 13 Factors of Psychological Health & Safety by December 31, 2021. This new version is inclusive of the perspectives of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized employees through appropriate consultation.
1.9 Ensure that the development of IM/IT services and solutions includes consultation with diverse groups of stakeholders early in the development process as well as engagement through User Acceptance Testing at the later stages of the development process for new products or services. This will help ensure representation of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people in the governance boards that are responsible for IM/IT investment and decision-making.	IM/IT Steering committee is in place by March 2021, and its work is informed by diverse groups of stakeholders. Development and testing of new products or services is carried out in consultation and collaboration with diverse external stakeholder groups with a view to ensuring that products and services are responsive to their needs. Anti-racism considerations are also part of the IM/IT business intake process which will promote the use of an anti-racism lens for all IM/IT projects and investments.

Increasing Diversity & Removing Barriers in the Workplace

Action	Milestones
1.10 Engage an external facilitator to meet with Indigenous, Black and other Racialized employees to gain their perspectives and views on barriers that may exist within the Commission, with the goal of eliminating systemic barriers and instituting anti-racist organizational change.	An external facilitator is retained, has met with Indigenous, Black and other Racialized employees on a voluntary basis and delivers a verbal briefing by August 31, 2021.
1.11 Engage an external organization to conduct an independent employment equity audit in order to evaluate the Commission’s hiring, promotion and retention of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people, as well as people with disabilities, at all levels of our organization using a GBA+ lens. An Employment Equity Plan will be developed to address the identified gaps. As part of this work, the Commission will pay particular attention to potential gaps in the area of frontline staff, team leaders and executives. The Commission recognizes that the Employment Equity Act is a minimum legal requirement regarding diversity levels in the workplace and continues to strive to exceed these requirements.	Internal Employment Equity Act audit is completed by March 31, 2021. An Employment System Review is completed by December 31, 2021. An Employment Equity Plan is developed by March 31, 2022 in consultation with local representatives of bargaining agents and the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee. Employment equity gaps identified by Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat in its annual list are reported by the Human Resources Division to each Branch by May of each year to inform recruitment efforts.
1.12 In order to further enhance transparency and fairness in staffing as well as to broaden the pool of eligible candidates, ensure that the use of non-advertised appointments does not act as a barrier to Racialized individuals in search of opportunities.	Develop criteria for the use of non-advertised processes by December 31, 2021. These criteria will be developed to ensure that non-advertised processes do not act as a barrier to employment opportunities and/or promotional opportunities for equity deserving groups, particularly Indigenous, Black and other Racialized peoples. Approval of these criteria will be sought from the executive team by January 28, 2022 with a view to consistent implementation by hiring managers by April 1. 2022. Continued efforts will be made to increase the use of advertised processes where this meets both the Commission’s diversity objectives and operational requirements.

Action	Milestones
1.13 Ensure staffing decisions take into account human rights experience, education and lived experience. The Commission recognizes the value of human rights experience and education as well as the lived experience of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized individuals. This will continue to guide staffing decisions in a number of ways, including by: - ensuring diversity across the organization and in every business unit; and - ensuring that those hired in human rights positions have the required expertise.	Human rights experience and education are identified as a criterion for staffing where relevant to the core functions of a position. The value of a candidate's diverse lived experiences is considered across all staffing processes. A value statement is added to job posters by the Human Resources team. Job requirements are examined to ensure they are necessary for the position and do not inadvertently perpetuate systemic barriers.
1.14 Ensure diversity in the composition of the Commission's hiring boards. Particular efforts will be made to ensure representation of Indigenous, Black or other Racialized board members when hiring for positions where a gap exists and at the EX (-1) level.	Hiring boards for positions are diverse in their make-up — especially where employment equity gaps exist — and include the representation of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized executives or staff members. A list of potential qualified Indigenous, Black and other Racialized staffing board members from other federal organizations is created by the Human Resources Division.
1.15 Reach out to relevant equity-seeking communities and stakeholders where gaps exist in representation and no Indigenous, Black or other Racialized candidates apply.	Where gaps exist, the area of selection in job advertisements is restricted to specific employment equity groups. External postings are shared with targeted stakeholder groups where employment equity gaps exist.

Expanding Professional Development & Training

Action	Milestones
1.16 Develop mentorship opportunities in consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee; explore the possibility of collaboration with other small agencies and human rights commissions to expand the number of mentors available to employees both at the CHRC and those agencies.	A senior official is chosen to champion this initiative by December 31, 2020. The development of a mentorship initiative is underway by September 30, 2021 in consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee.
1.17 Engage in discussions with staff regarding performance, career advancement, learning needs and areas where improvement is required in order to be successful in their current position, as well as to obtain career advancement opportunities.	Performance assessments are held twice a year and discussions regarding career goals, learning needs and talent management are held as part of regular performance assessment meetings.
1.18 Grant training opportunities that are required for an employee's current position and/or for their career advancement to the extent that operational and budgetary constraints allow.	Funding for training is allocated fairly and in an equitable manner (note: the Commission's Commission Executive Management Committee (CEMC) will review special training requests that exceed the normal amount allocated per employee and/or exceed more than 5 business days). A policy to support fair distribution of the Commission's training budget (including second language training) is developed by March 31, 2022.
1.19 Provide mandatory unconscious/implicit bias training for commissioners and staff. Additional, ongoing training will be provided as needed to continue to build awareness and develop cultural competencies.	Mandatory unconscious/implicit bias training is delivered to all staff and commissioners by March 31, 2020. CEMC members, together with staff, identify additional training needs in order to continue building awareness and developing cultural competencies. The identification of training needs involves a staff survey and/or working group.
1.20 Provide unconscious/implicit bias training to all new CHRC employees during the first six to twelve months (maximum) of their employment, ideally through the Canada School of Public Service.	100% of new employees (including term employees and, when possible, students and casuals) complete unconscious/implicit bias training within their first year of employment with the Commission. Self-paced/online courses are tested by Human Resources to see whether they meet our requirements by August 31, 2021. Executive team to agree on appropriate list of mandatory courses by September 30, 2021. Updates are provided every 4 months to CEMC members on completion of mandatory training. Onboarding material is reviewed to identify opportunities to make diversity and inclusion expectation clear.

Action	Milestones
1.21 Facilitate workplace conversations about race within an anti-racist framework. The Commission recognizes that priority must be given to preventing renewed or re-triggered Racialized trauma or alienation. The Commission will take the necessary steps to facilitate these discussions appropriately, as needed, within an anti-racist framework. The Commission will also address the impact that these discussions have had on workplace relationships in a way that promotes both a positive working environment and a continued openness to, and engagement on, anti-racism issues.	A dedicated trauma-informed counsellor is available to employees who feel they have experienced the effects of racism as of February 2021. Opportunities are provided to staff to meet with executives, team leaders and external facilitators to provide feedback about the workplace, and to work towards resolution of concerns raised together by August 31, 2022. Following August 2022, staff will continue to be able to meet with executives and team leaders to provide feedback.

Advocating for Diversity and Inclusion in External Processes

Action	Milestones
1.22 Advocate for the appointment of Indigenous, Black or other Racialized commissioners.	As part of the selection process for Governor in Council appointments to the Commission, the Commission continues to advocate for the implementation of recruitment strategies that are free from bias and seek to attract diverse candidates.
1.23 Request that Health Canada's Employment Assistance Program (EAP) identify counsellors with expertise in dealing with discrimination related trauma and ask that they be consistently, reliably and confidentially available to employees.	Communication initiated to Health Canada by December 31, 2021. A proposal, developed in consultation with Health Canada, is completed for CORE's consideration by Winter 2021. (CORE comprises the Commission's senior-executive team of Directors General, commissioners, the Executive Director and the Chief Commissioner.)



2. Anti-Racism Action as a service provider and regulator

The Commission commits to ensuring access to justice by improving: the accessibility of the Commission’s complaints processes; the identification of patterns and trends in complaints outcomes; and the advancement of strategic litigation to ensure the continued development of anti-racism case law in federal jurisdiction. The Commission also commits to ensuring that federal employers and service providers proactively identify and remove barriers to accessibility, equity and inclusion.

Enhancing Internal Accountability

Action	Milestones
2.1 Develop a communications plan and provide regular updates on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan. This will include public reporting on the Commission’s anti-racism work using a variety of means which may include the CHRC’s Annual Report, social media and website.	A communications plan is developed by June 30, 2021. At least 10 individual communications products promoting anti-racism are published and widely distributed each year, including through the Commission’s Annual Report to Parliament, statements, social media posts and speeches. Progress reports on this plan are released at least twice a year.
2.2 Participate actively in Government of Canada anti-racism working groups.	The Commission regularly participates in interdepartmental working groups and other fora that promote and share anti-racism information and work to implement anti-racism and diversity and inclusion initiatives.
2.3 Establish a national network of stakeholders representing Racialized people to consult and provide updates on the work of the CHRC. This may include: improving access to the CHRC’s human rights complaints process; implementing proactive human rights legislation, such as the new Pay Equity Act and the Accessible Canada Act; implementing our new housing mandate, per the National Housing Strategy Act; and developing opportunities for collaboration and advocacy, among other topics.	Criteria are established for the composition of this network by August 31, 2021. Relevant stakeholders representing Racialized communities are identified by August 31, 2021. Email invitation to network participants is sent by September 30, 2021. A national meeting is held at least once annually starting in 2021.
2.4 Establish an external mechanism for screening complaints against the CHRC.	An inter-delegation agreement with a provincial or territorial human rights commission is entered into, and Governor in Council approval is sought during fiscal 2020–21. Employees continue to have access to a grievance process, staffing complaint process, harassment coordinator and complaint system, and statutory protections from reprisal. In addition, employees have access to an Informal Conflict Management System to raise and discuss concerns informally.

Addressing Systemic Racism as Part of the Commission’s Regulatory and Compliance Enforcement Work

Action	Milestones
2.5 Conduct a horizontal audit on the employment of Racialized public servants in management and executive positions in the federal public service.	A sector-wide employment equity audit report on representation rates of Racialized public servants at the executive and management levels in the federal public service is published by June 2022.
2.6 Ensure the application of an intersectional lens as part of the Pay Equity and Accessibility Commissioners’ engagement activities and measurement strategy to the extent that the mandates and data collection allow. Strive towards diverse representation and ensure that the perspectives of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized groups are part of stakeholder consultations and program development. The Pay Equity program will ensure that attention is paid to how it will address pay equity for women (Indigenous women, Racialized women, women with disabilities) in the most vulnerable situations and if there are any GBA+ considerations for the implementation of the Pay Equity Act (PEA).	The list of stakeholders for both the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) and Pay Equity Act (PEA) programs is reviewed with a view to increasing the representation of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized stakeholders in order to consult on engagement and communication strategies by August 31, 2021. The annual reports for ACA and PEA (as soon as they are required under both legislations) include reporting on intersectionality with a particular focus on the intersections between people with disabilities, women, and Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people. In cooperation with Employment and Social Development Canada, the analysis of a proposed measurement strategy for ACA is completed by June 30, 2021. Engagement with diverse women, using a GBA+ lens, is undertaken by the Pay Equity unit to better understand how intersectional factors affect their economic outcomes.

Improving Disaggregated Data Collection

Action	Milestones
2.7 Ensure that the collection of disaggregated race data is part of the Commission’s forward looking data strategy; ensure that the Commission’s new case management system allows for this collection and reporting.	A Data Strategy is completed by March 31, 2021. The new Case Management System is developed and will allow for the organization to collect disaggregated race data.
2.8 Collect retroactive data (disaggregated by race) on the users of the CHRC’s complaints screening process for the period of 2019–20 as baseline. Integrate forward collection of disaggregated race data of the users of the CHRA complaints system. N.B. This data will be collected based on voluntary user self-identification.	A survey is developed in consultation with stakeholders by December 31, 2020 (stakeholders include: Statistics Canada, the Privacy Commission, the Public Service Alliance of Canada and representatives of a variety of Racialized communities). Survey is conducted with complainants who filed during the April 2019 – March 2020 period and completed by March 31, 2021. The Commission will consider expansion of this timeframe if operationally feasible. Report on data collected is prepared by June 30, 2021. Plans for future use of survey at the point at which complaints are officially accepted are drafted by March 31, 2021. Report on retrospective baseline data is available by September 30, 2021. Plans for the long-term goal of integrating survey with online complaint form and case management system are drafted by October 31, 2021. Develop a plan by December 31, 2021 to integrate the collection of race-based data at the moment a complaint is filed. Integration of race-based data collection with current online system is completed by 2023.
2.9 Monitor and report on the outcomes of discrimination complaints filed on the ground(s) of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin (RCNEO).	The processing of RCNEO discrimination complaints is monitored and reported on an ongoing basis: regularly at Complaints Support Committee meetings; annually in the CHRC’s Annual Report and during scheduled meetings with the External Stakeholder Network.
2.10 The Commission will explore options to collect disaggregated race data in its Pay Equity and Accessibility programs when possible. This will allow for a better understanding of the pay equity and accessibility challenges faced by Indigenous, Black and other Racialized groups in the workplace or in the provision of services.	The scoping for data collection options is completed for both programs, including the analysis of the proposed measurement strategy for Accessibility, by June 2021. All project plans for the development of tools to collect information, submissions or complaints for the Pay Equity and Accessibility programs include a specific analysis of race data options based on allowable data collection.

Advancing Access to Justice through the Human Rights Complaint Process

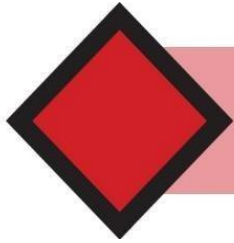
Action	Milestones
2.11 Improve access to justice by: enhancing our online complaint form; ensuring that materials are easily understandable and accessible; and simplifying our processes and providing additional supports, including translation services where possible, to those in vulnerable circumstances.	A project team is established to guide and support efforts by December 31, 2020. The online complaint form is improved and expanded, and a new version launched by March 31, 2022. Complaints services modernization, access to justice and simplification of processes initiatives are implemented. (This includes the increased use of s.49 of the Canadian Human Rights Act to allow for expeditious referrals to Tribunal when a basis in fact or law exists. It further includes the ongoing review of existing Commission template correspondence to ensure that they are written in clear, accessible and gender-neutral language). New complaints services products for the public are easily understandable and accessible upon publication. Translation services for vulnerable complainants are provided, when and where possible.
2.12 Include a diverse group of employees, including Indigenous, Black and other Racialized staff, in early triage discussions on complaint files. Provide executive guidance and oversight through the Complaints Support Committee (CSC). Promote the dismantling of potential barriers for Indigenous, Black and other Racialized complainants by using an Internal accountability and governance framework, consistent with the Values and Ethics Code.	Terms of reference for the triage team and the CSC are updated by December 31, 2020 and include reference to: - anti-racism and equity as guiding principles, - inclusion of members with lived experience, and - standards for the proper conduct of discussions. Terms of reference are understood, accepted and followed by current and new members of the triage team and breaches are addressed as part of regular performance management reviews. Regular guidance and oversight of triage is provided through the CSC on an ongoing basis. CSC is briefed quarterly on the functioning of the triage team by the chair. An Internal report is drafted by December 31, 2021.
2.13 Revise complaints screening tools in order to ensure that the necessary evidence, both individual and systemic, is gathered and considered effectively in all complaints, including those alleging racism.	Complaints services tools are revised and updated by December 2020.

Action	Milestones
2.14 Provide policy and legal expertise in order to support effective screening of complaints, including those with allegations based on race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.	Policy and legal support are consistently available to various complaints processing teams, such as the triage team, the complaint assessment teams, and the Complaints Support Committee. (This will continue to be achieved either by legal and policy participation in relevant meetings and/or the assignment of policy and legal advisors to complaints teams to ensure access to these supports).
2.15 Implement innovations to the Commission’s complaints process in order to assist in the improved screening of all complaints, including complaints alleging racism. This includes moving towards evaluative mediation when appropriate and requiring parties to provide their submissions earlier in the process.	Improvements to the complaints process are implemented and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Procedures that allow for the earlier collection of responses and rebuttals to complaints are drafted by September 30, 2021. Information about updates to the CHRC complaints screening process are made available: 1) internally on a quarterly basis; 2) through departmental results reporting to central agencies; and 3) during scheduled meetings with the External Stakeholder Network.
2.16 Participate fully in the litigation of systemic race cases to the extent that resources allow. Strategic litigation will focus on a number of areas including, for example: - Alleged discrimination in or by policing and other security and enforcement bodies; - Treatment of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized prisoners including the use of security classification tools, administrative segregation, access to mental health services; - Underrepresentation in employment, particularly at senior levels; - Equality of services on First Nation reserve lands; and - The intersectionality of race with other grounds of discrimination, including for incarcerated women. Where relevant, the Commission will incorporate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation’s Calls to Action and the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls’ Calls for Justice into its legal submissions and arguments.	The Commission is fully participating at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in complaints that allege systemic discrimination on the basis of race, colour, and national or ethnic origin, particularly focusing on files involving novel and complex legal arguments. Policy input and support is provided throughout the litigation of systemic race cases.

Action	Milestones
2.17 Continue to build capacity and expand/advocate for community supports to assist complainants in accessing the federal human rights system. This will involve exploring and engaging in partnerships with pro bono and legal aid organizations as well as Indigenous, Black and Racialized community stakeholders. In addition, the Commission will continue to advocate for the availability of legal supports for vulnerable complainants.	Steps are taken to create a proposal for the striking of a distinction-based network of Indigenous stakeholders by March 31, 2022. The Commission will continue to engage with Indigenous community organizations to support improved access to the federal human rights system, including NGOs with mandates to support complainants who wish to submit human rights complaints. Support to vulnerable complainants is provided through external partners, when and where possible. A list of Frequently Asked Questions is developed by December 31, 2021, which may include video vignettes. A list of community-based resources is developed in consultation with stakeholders by December 31, 2021.

Training for the Complaints Team and Supporting Advisors

Action	Milestones
2.18 Offering training to complaints staff, as well as supporting legal and policy advisors, to continue to build on their understanding of conscious and unconscious/implicit bias, systemic racism, and the discriminatory impacts of racism, including trauma.	Training in understanding racial trauma and trauma-informed engagement is offered to all complaints staff and supporting legal and policy advisors by March 31, 2021 and all executives by June 30, 2021. The “Right to Respect Policy” is finalized and training delivered by June 30, 2021 with the goal of supporting staff who experience racism and other forms of discrimination and harassment in the provision of services to the public.
2.19 Offer training to complaints staff and supporting legal and policy advisors on revised complaints assessment tools over a two-month period. The objective is to provide an interactive and longer-term opportunity to use and refine the application of these tools. Ongoing training will be provided pursuant to review and assessment of needs.	The training of human rights officers is completed by December 2020. The training of policy and legal advisors is completed by March 31, 2021. Ongoing training of officers involved in complaints processing is made available via recorded training sessions and written material. Spot audits are performed by an external auditor every two years to ensure that guidance is being well implemented in the Commission’s screening process.



3. Anti-Racism Action as a human rights advocate

The Commission is committed to actively engaging in public dialogue and advocacy for equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism in Canadian society, in its laws and in its workplaces.

Applying an anti-racist lens when engaging, advocating and monitoring

Action	Milestones
3.1 Participate in public dialogue on anti-racism in Canada; and amplify issues of importance as identified by Racialized stakeholders. This advocacy work includes: appearances before, and submissions to, Parliamentary Committees; engagement and collaborative work with other human rights commissions across the country; the release of public statements and engagement with the media, when appropriate; submissions and statements to United Nations bodies; and participation in other public engagement opportunities.	Opportunities for engagement with Parliamentarians on issues of importance raised by Racialized stakeholders are identified. Opportunities to work with colleagues from the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) on issues of common importance related to race are identified. Submissions to UN bodies include a focus on issues of importance identified by Racialized stakeholders. Relevant speaking opportunities and/or opportunities to collaborate with partners and stakeholders in co-hosting events to raise awareness are identified, e.g., external advisory groups, law schools, legal aid clinics, public policy courses. Annual updates on race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin (RCNEO) discrimination case law are provided by legal counsel to commissioners, Commission employees, and to Racialized stakeholders, where operationally feasible.

Action	Milestones
3.2 Advocate for, and participate in the review and modernization of, the Employment Equity Act.	The CHRC collaborates with Employment and Social Development Canada and the Labour Program in the review of the Act. The Commission develops recommendations in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including on how to further the collection and reporting of disaggregated data for designated groups.
3.3 Continue to advocate for Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to provide disaggregated data to allow more accurate audits of the federal public service.	Work with the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer on the collection and sharing of disaggregated data on employment equity in the public service continues.
3.4 Monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with an intersectional lens, and ensure the perspectives and priorities of Indigenous, Black and other Racialized persons with disabilities are reflected throughout. As part of its work in developing the framework, targeted engagement with Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people with disabilities will be undertaken.	Draft framework and work plan is completed by March 31, 2021. Targeted engagement with Indigenous, Black and other Racialized persons with disabilities takes place on an ongoing basis. Advocacy efforts, including in submissions to UN bodies and in other reports, take an intersectional approach with a focus, where appropriate, on Indigenous, Black and other Racialized persons with disabilities.

Supporting Anti-Racism Work through the Commission’s Publications

Action	Milestones
3.5 Develop a guide on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partners.	Stakeholders and partners are consulted to determine needs and views on what should be included in the guide. A guide is drafted on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace by the end of 2022.
3.6 Release a guide on special programs that considers the situations faced by Indigenous, Black and other Racialized peoples or other groups experiencing socio-economic disadvantages due to historical social disadvantage.	The ‘Leveling the Field’ guide providing guidance for employers or service providers who are seeking to develop or implement targeted programs consistent with special programs under section 16 of the Canadian Human Rights Act is finalized and completed by December 31, 2021.

Building Inclusive Processes

Action	Milestones
3.7 Design and implement a public submission process that will allow the Federal Housing Advocate to gain a better understanding of systemic housing issues faced by populations in vulnerable circumstances, including Indigenous, Black and other Racialized people. Research will be conducted in order to provide public guidance on how to tailor laws, policies and programs in order to address identified challenges. Members of the public making submissions will have the option to self-identify.	A submission process, including an appropriate data collection instrument, is in place in time for the appointment of the Advocate. The Commission continues to advocate that Statistics Canada expand disaggregated data. Guidance is provided as part of consultations with Statistics Canada on the National Housing Survey and the Canadian Census. Disaggregated data is collected on a voluntary basis from members of the public using the submission process.



Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission Calendar Year 2024 Work Plan

Prepared in accordance with Commission By-laws, Article 10

2024 QUARTER	GOAL OR ACTIVITY (refer to goal or activity description page for more detail)	ORDINANCE	ACTION TAKEN	EST. COST (See Notes)	ACTUAL
Q1 Jan – March <i>Possible events/ recognitions: International Women’s Day – Black History Month -</i>	Marketing & Awareness - Press Release - Banner purchase			\$600	
	Creation of New Commissioner Onboarding Process -Programming & Presentations workgroup to define and develop specific training materials or personnel for new and existing Commissioners -Reports at commission meetings to improve knowledge about commission duties, human rights issues, and human rights concerns			\$100	
	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City			-	
	Collaboration Opportunities for 2024—2025			-	

	Intentional discussion around areas for connecting and collaborating with other organizations, entities, businesses, Commissions, and Departments. Initial suggestions include: - International Women's Day (March) - Mental Health / NAMI - Homelessness				
	Development of Juneteenth & Pride Event Task Forces				
	Quarter Total			\$700	
Q2 April – June <u>Possible events/recognitions:</u> <i>Stomp the Stigma – Mental Health Awareness Month – Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month – LGBTQ+ Pride Month</i>	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws		\$100	
	Development of Indigenous People's Day Event Task Force Reminder work group should meet with prior to school summer break and begin conversation on support needed			-	
	Support Juneteenth Day Event -Recognize <i>Freedom Day</i> , including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination in our community by assisting in public awareness and celebration events -Banner request to city!	Sec. 2-303(3)		\$2,000	
	Support Pride Day Event/s Awareness - Look for opportunities to be involved in and/or support community events, outreach, or publication			\$1,000	
	Quarter Total			\$3,100	

Q3 July – Sept <u>Possible events/recognitions:</u> ADA / Disability Pride month – Hispanic Heritage Month	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten		\$100	0
	Collaboration Opportunities with City / Community - Community Connect - Fair booth - Tall Timber Days - Neighborhood Block Party				
	Marketing & Awareness - Press Release				
	2024 Work Plan Review – DUE JULY				
	Quarter Total			\$100	
Q4 Oct – Dec <u>Possible events/recognitions:</u> (Nov) Native American Heritage Month – International Day of Persons with Disabilities – Human Rights Day	Training and Collaboration Provide at least one (1) of each following area to support growth, development, and collaboration: - Onboarding topic - Presentation + Q&A - Current event or “hot topic” item for presentation and discussion - Protected class topic or event - Connect with other commission / department within City	City code Division 6 Commission Bylaws, including Article Ten		\$100	0
	Indigenous People’s Day Cosponsor activities or publications to further human rights purposes with regard to indigenous people in the city -Don’t forget banner request to City!	Sec. 2-303(1, 3) Article(10)(3, 5)		\$3,000	
	2025 Planning & Budgeting - Include presentation to city council				
	Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (Dec 10)	Sec. 2-301		\$500	

	75th Anniversary -Community Conversations -Possible tie to school collaboration -Possible speakers and presentations - Possible Event	Sec. 2-303(5)			
	Quarter Total			\$3,600	
	2024 Commission Budget	\$7,500			
	Budgeted Expenditures			\$7,500	
	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURES				

Notes:

- A. The time needed to organize and arrange the components for many activities will result in most listings involving more than one calendar quarter
- B. The estimated Cost column lists budgeted net cash costs to the City. It does not include contributions made to an activity by a collaborating partner nor an assumed value for donated time or resources by Human Rights commissioners, city administrative staff, or others.

Summary Description of Goals and Activities

Improve Human Rights Awareness

City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Section 2-301 states that the Commission will take positive measures to disseminate the nondiscriminatory policies of the city with respect to all unfair discriminatory practices by conducting public information meetings. During 2022, the Commission will appoint a work group to develop a plan and conduct one or more activities to improve human rights awareness in the city. Consideration of ways to promote human rights awareness may include improvements to the Human Rights Commission page on the city's website, updating or developing and distributing new brochures, literature, or pamphlets that create awareness and promote better understanding of human rights with city staff and the broader community, sponsoring speakers or informational and educational events or contests, and promoting Human Rights Day on December 10, 2022. The Commission will also identify other areas in which there is need for making citizens, businesses, organizations, city staff, and institutions aware of human rights concerns and requirements.

New Commissioner On-boarding:

Human Rights commissioner terms are for three years. Commissioner terms may be renewed with city council appointment, and normal turnover typically results in one to three new commissioners being appointed each year. To effectively fulfill their roles, commissioners should be knowledgeable about federal and state human rights laws, city ordinances regarding the human rights commission, and human rights commission bylaws. Newly appointed commissioners should also be aware of past actions and activities of the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission as well as city council positions and needs related to human rights. The Commission intends to develop a plan and program that would inform newly appointed commissioners, as well as continuing commissioners, of their responsibilities, duties, city policies and relevant administrative procedures, and other aspects. This on-boarding process is to be discussed with a plan and materials developed during 2021 for implementation with newly-appointment commissioners.

Commissioner Training and Education

Actions or decisions by the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission to provide freedom from discrimination requires knowledge about the types of prohibited discrimination and ways in which these types of discrimination may occur in employment, housing, real property, public accommodations, public services, education, and unfounded charges (City of Grand Rapids Rules, Division 6 Sec 2-301). The Commission plans to identify and act to identify and support commissioner training opportunities and activities in calendar year 2022. This may include approaches such as outside speakers, presentation or event sponsorship, community meetings, interviews, identifying and sharing of pertinent new articles or reports, and/or in other ways. Commissioner training and education would be an ongoing objective and activity.

Support Juneteenth Day Event

The Commission intends to recognize *Freedom Day*, June 19th, which includes recognizing freedoms in our nation and community including human rights, civil rights, and freedom of discrimination and creating public awareness of these rights through assisting street-side setting of street banners recognizing these freedoms, posting of United States flags, and co-issuing news media information.

Gather and Evaluate Demographic Data

The Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission strives to identify human rights issues of greatest concern in the city, and to develop and implement activities to make improvements in the areas of greatest concern. Achieving this goal requires demographic data about the city population. To gather such data the Commission desires to identify data needs and data sources, analyze the data, and from the data analysis develop plans for Commission activities in the community or recommend city policies to address, mitigate or alleviate those human rights concerns or issues. The Commission intends to review 2020 census data to inform changes in priorities, activities, and recommendations in the city.

Review human rights educational opportunities with schools

Schools in Grand Rapids contain their own sets of human rights concerns and opportunities. The Commission intends to explore and begin discussions with the schools in Grand Rapids to look into such possibilities as improving student experiences and understanding of diverse cultures possibly through programs such as pen pal programs with students in other countries, sponsoring an education Summit focused on human rights, or conducting a Human Rights Day event with local school. When an appropriate event is identified, the Commission expects to support such event.

Indigenous People's Day

The Commission was an important factor in establishment of Indigenous People's Day in Grand Rapids and has continued as a key factor in conducting and sponsoring the annual event as part of creating cultural awareness in the local community. This role is planned to continue in 2022, including establishing a Human Rights Commission Indigenous People's Day committee to collaborate with other community groups to plan, identify a theme, organize, and conduct an Indigenous People's Day program and activities.

Human Rights Awareness Events - Human Rights Day (December 10)

To improve awareness of human rights in the city, the Commission plans to discuss and review ways to improve awareness of human rights in the city. Committee work is expected to include approaches such as conducting community conversations, identifying ways to tie human rights awareness with the local schools, arranging and sponsoring topical speakers, and/or other means of fostering human rights awareness preferably in collaboration with other groups or entities.

Notes:

During the year, adjustments may be made to reflect changes in costs, changes in priorities, changes in format or delivery methods, or identification of human rights concerns that were not identified in compiling the preceding list but which the Commission feels need to be addressed. Examples include:

- a. Possible adjustments could occur due to identifying new or incidental human rights concerns related to protected groups and areas from the [Minnesota Human Rights](#) and other state statutes and regulations:

Protected Classes	Protected Area
RACE	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
COLOR	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
CREED	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit
RELIGION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, and credit

NATIONAL ORIGIN	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
SEX	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
MARITAL STATUS	Employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and credit
DISABILITY	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	Employment, housing, public services, education, credit
AGE	Employment and education
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Employment, housing, public accommodations, public services, education, credit, and business
FAMILIAL STATUS	Employment, Housing
LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ACTIVITY	Employment

b. Adjustments could occur as a result of use of alternative education/training delivery methods such as print, seminars, webinars, speeches, and others



5-Year Plan of the Human Rights Commission 2023 to 2028

Submitted to the Red Wing City Council
January 12, 2023

Purpose:

Acknowledging the universal concept of human rights, the mission of the Human Rights Commission is to ensure that all Red Wing residents may participate equally and fully in the human experience. The City will work to extend these rights to economic opportunity, safe and affordable housing, and quality education at all levels to create a safe and supportive community environment. This involves actively working to assure all City policies and practices do not discriminate on any basis, including immigrant or refugee status.

History of the Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission was started in 1969. At a community gathering held on September 18, 1966, Frank Kent, Commissioner of Human Rights of the State of Minnesota, spoke to a group of Red Wing citizens. After the meeting, multiple groups raised interest in founding a Human Rights Commission. At the City Council meeting on October 3, 1968, Mayor Demetrius Jelatis expressed that there was interest in the community in starting a Human Rights Commission. The idea was forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for further study on the issues the Human Rights Commission would be dealing with.

In 1969, at both the February 6th and March 6th City Council meetings, letters were submitted, and citizens attended. In letters and in spoken comments, citizens urged the Council to create a Human Rights Commission in Red Wing. At the Council meeting on June 5, 1969, Ordinance No. 571 was accepted, creating the Human Rights Commission of Red Wing.

Currently, the Human Rights Commission has 11 members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Council. One notable HRC program is the Amos Owen Award. Since 2001, the annual Amos Owen Award has recognized one or more individuals in the Red Wing community for their work in uplifting and striving for others' human rights. The award's namesake is a Prairie Island Mdewakanton elder and spiritual leader, Amos Owen, who worked tirelessly to preserve Dakota language and culture. A committee of the Human Rights Commission chooses the award winner.

Definitions for the 5-Year Plan

- Strategy:** An overarching role or responsibility the board/commission does as part of its work.
- Action:** A specific action, activity, or priority the board/commission will accomplish.
- Year:** Designate the year(s) of an initiative. *Ongoing* means the action is continuous and not limited to a particular year. Highlighted areas identify top priorities in the coming year.
- Budget:** The range of dollars an action is expected to cost.

0 = No dollars
\$ = \$1 to \$999
\$\$ = \$1,000 to \$3,000
\$\$\$ = \$3,001 to \$5,000
\$\$\$\$ = \$5,001 or more (a dollar amount will be noted if higher than \$7,000)

Staff Time: The estimated staff liaison time an action is estimated to take.

None = No additional time
Small = 5 hours or less
Medium = 6 to 15 hours
Large = More than 15 hours

Equity: How the board/commission will consider the input and experiences of all in Red Wing.

1 = The group will **collect input or feedback from more people** so a wider variety of ideas and thoughts are considered. This may involve using surveys, gathering input at public meetings, hosting events, attending community groups to learn, etc. This may include partnering with organizations, community members, and/or boards and commissions.

2 = The group will **increase promotion, publicity, or education to the public through a wider variety of methods and/or places** to reach more people in the community. This may include translating materials.

3 = The group will **utilize data that identifies different population groups and how people are experiencing aspects of life** so that information can be considered during decision-making.

4 = The group will **lead or collaborate on an event or project that acknowledges history and/or provides representation or voice** to one or more identified groups*.

5 = The group will **recommend to Council a policy, plan, or practice that will improve the lives of more people.**

** "More people" or "identified groups" refers to those who are often under-represented or not focused on due to their age, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, and/or limited English proficiency. (These groups are identified by state and federal governments and are also included in the City of Red Wing's required Title VI Plan, approved by City Council on September 12, 2022.)*

Strategic Plan: This designates where the board/commission's actions fit with the goals of the City's 10-Year Strategic Plan.

2040 Plan: This designates where the board/commission's actions fit with the goals of the Red Wing 2040 Community Plan.

Human Rights Commission 5-Year Plan: 2023-2028

Strategies	Actions	Year	Budget	Staff Time	Equity	Strategic Plan	2040 Plan
#1. Advise Council and other boards and commissions on improving plans and policies to be more equitable.	(A) Review and monitor the City's Equity Plan at least two times annually and provide feedback and/or recommendations if needed.	2023 & Ongoing	0	Small	5	#59	12.D.1.
	(B) Provide recommendations to City Council on policies and practices, either as requested by Council or brought forth by the HRC.	2023 & Ongoing	0	Med	1, 5	#59	12.D.1.
	(C) Use the HEEAP Sheet regularly in planning, implementing, and evaluating plans, programs, and policies.	Ongoing	0	None	1,2,3,4,5	#59	12.D.1.
	(D) Be a resource to other city boards and commissions to assist in their equity planning, if requested.	Ongoing	0	Small	2	#59	12.D.1.
	(E) Consider ways to address and monitor local systemic issues and improvements related to Red Wing's racism as a public health emergency declaration.	Ongoing	Not sure yet	Not sure yet	1, 2, 3, 4, and/or 5	#60	12.D.1. 12.A.4.
#2. Host events that educate, uplift, and celebrate human rights and bridge divisions in our community.	(F) Lead community conversations. Provide a safe space for people to engage in often uncomfortable discussions to better understand each other as fellow human beings. Goal is to build trust and encourage an environment of knowledge, empathy, & inclusivity.	2023	\$	Med	4	#60	12.D.2. 12.A.4.
	(G) Host the Juneteenth Celebration in 2023. Work with community members to plan, promote, and implement this public event that honors and celebrates Black history and culture.	2023	\$\$\$\$	Large	4	#58 #60	12.D.2. 12.A.4.

	(H) Organize annual Amos Owen Award. Promote program, choose winner, and host reception.	2023 & Ongoing	\$	Med	4	#60	12.A.4.
	(I) Host or co-host Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event in Red Wing.	2024 & Possibly ongoing	\$\$	Med to Large	4	#60 #62	12.D.2. 12.A.4.
	(J) Host public events such as movie/documentary nights, workshops by organizations, community meals, and other gatherings. Many can be collaborations with other groups.	2024 & Ongoing	\$\$	Med to Large	4	#60 #62	12.D.2. 12.A.4.
#3. Collaborate with groups to educate and spread awareness.	(K) Partner with Red Wing youth organizations when opportunities arise. Groups include the BSU, NASA, the LGBTQ+ student group, the City's Youth Committee, and others.	Ongoing	0	0	1, 2, 4	#60 #67	12.A.4.
	(L) Bring in speakers for every regular meeting. For 2023, these include representatives from the Black Student Union, the Native American Student Association, Hispanic Outreach, the LGBTQ+ school group, and others so they can promote and share with the HRC & community what they're doing.	2023 & Ongoing	0	Small	4	#60 #67	12.A.4.
	(M) Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to provide material that would give ideas on how business owners can be more welcoming to all people in their shops, restaurants, organizations, etc.	2024 2025	\$	Med	4	#60	12.A.4.
	(N) Host a table at Hispanic Heritage Festival	2023 & Ongoing	\$	Med	2	#60	12.A.4.
	(O) Bring in speakers from the city and county's housing organizations to learn more about how people are experiencing housing in Red Wing.	2023	0	Small	2	#59	12.A.1.
	(P) Continue to meet periodically with Mayo Clinic Health System to discuss progress on inclusive policies and practices.	2023	0	Med	2	#60	12.D.1.

	(Q) Partner with other city boards and commissions on public art and/or educational projects when it aligns with the mission of the HRC and helps to further the HRC's goals.	Ongoing	Not sure yet	Small to Med	4	#60	12.A.4. 10.B.2. 10.B.3.
	(R) Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to create an annual award honoring a local business that highlights human rights.	2024	\$	Small	2	#60	12.A.4.
	(S) Produce video with the message that all boards and commissions need members who think about human rights. Goal is to nudge people in RW from all backgrounds with an interest in human rights to volunteer for these positions.	2024	0	Med	2	#66	12.B.1.
#4. Increase people's knowledge about the MN Human Rights Act. Share resources that assist people with their human rights concerns.	(T) Promote the city's Human Rights Resource Connection in multiple ways.	2023 & Ongoing	\$	Med	1, 2, 3	#60 #64	12.A.4. 12.A.1.
	(U) Advise and monitor how the City documents human rights concerns that come through the Human Rights Resource Connection. When possible, use that information to learn & inform future HRC planning.	2023	0 right now	Med to High	1,2,3	#60 #64	12.A.4. 12.A.1.
	(V) Increase knowledge of HRC members and the public on human rights issues. ---Bring in the MN Department of Human Rights (MDHR) early in the year to update HRC. ---Invite other HRCs to share their work and insights. ---Include educational materials with each regular meeting from organizations like the MDHR and HUD to keep HRC members up to date on human rights issues.	2023 & Ongoing	0	Med	2	#59	12.D.1.

Organization

Presiding officers: The Commission shall elect from its members a Chairperson in [month] at a regular meeting, by majority of votes cast, to serve a one-year term as the Chairperson with their term beginning in [month].

Nothing in these Rules of Procedure shall prohibit members of the Commission from electing two Co-Chairs to share the responsibilities of being Chair. In any year when Co-Chairs are elected, a Vice Chair need not be elected for that year.

Nothing in these Rules of Procedure prohibits a Chairperson or Co-Chairs to be re-elected for an additional term.

Duties of Chairperson: The Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, if present, shall preside at the meetings. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside, and in the absence of both, a temporary chairperson as chosen by the Commission shall serve.

The Chairperson shall conduct the meeting so as to keep it moving as efficiently as possible; preserve decorum and order; may speak to points of order in preference to other members; and shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the full Commission. In keeping decorum, the Chairperson shall stop any member of the public who is becoming abusive or is exceeding the three-minute time limit on public comment.

The Chairperson will be responsible for coordinating preparation of the meeting agenda with the City staff liaison. The Chairperson shall appoint committee membership and committee Chairpersons and perform other duties that arise in the course of business of the Commission.

Additional duties of the Chairperson:

- The Chairperson shall not move for action but may second motions.
- The Chairperson shall be responsible for the communications of the Commission.
- The Chairperson shall be responsible for submitting an Annual Work Plan and Annual Report to the Commission for review and approval prior to presenting it to the City Council.

Vacancies: If the Chairperson retires during their term of office, the Vice-Chairperson shall become Chairperson. A new Vice-Chairperson will be elected at the next Commission meeting. If both retire, new officers shall be elected at a meeting called as soon as possible, but not to exceed 60 days from the date of retirement.

Meetings

Regular meetings: Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on XX. A schedule of the regular meetings shall be publicized on the Commission's webpage. Regular meetings shall

Commented [CB1]: One thing that is missing from this document and what we have so far is Rules around liaisons. In particular, I noticed the inclusion of engaging student liaisons (page 2 of the ordinance). We should come up with something around that as well.

Commented [CB2]: Should we specify here that we mean meetings of the full Commission?

Commented [CB3]: I haven't included anything in the rest of this document on standards around public comment. I wonder if that's another point we should include?

ordinarily be held at Watertown City Hall. Meetings may be held in other accessible facilities as the Commission deems necessary. If the Commission decides to hold a regular meeting at a time or place different from the time or place stated in its schedule of regular meetings, it shall give the same notice of the meeting that is required for a special meeting.

Commented [CB4]: Add provision around virtual attendance?

Special meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by three members of the Commission. Special meetings may be called only when such meetings comply with the advance notice requirements of Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A.

Emergency meetings: In an emergency, the Chairperson may call an emergency meeting with forty-eight (48) hours' notice. Notice of the emergency meeting must be given via the public website per Open Meeting laws. A quorum for an emergency meeting shall be the same as for a regular meeting. A majority of the commissioners participating in this meeting may take action on any matter presented. If action is taken, a report shall be presented to the full Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The report shall include the nature of the emergency, the issue(s) presented for consideration, and the action taken.

Committees

The Commission may establish such committees as are deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Commission. The Chairperson shall seek Commissioners' requests for Committee appointments and then appoint members as s/he deems necessary. The Committees shall meet at such times and places as each Committee deems suitable and subject to the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A. The proceedings and/or output of every Committee meeting shall be reported at the full Commission meeting for inclusion in the meeting's minutes.

Attendance

Commissioners shall attend meetings of the Commission regularly and participate actively. Commissioners who have three (3) unexcused absences during a one-year period shall be recommended for removal. An unexcused absence is defined as an absence without notifying the City staff liaison prior to the beginning of the Commission's regular monthly meeting.

A Commissioner's absence shall constitute a "notified absence" where the Commissioner, in advance of the meeting, informs the staff liaison of the absence. An absence due to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness or emergency, shall also qualify as notified absence where the Commissioner reports such absence to the staff liaison as soon as reasonably possible.

Quorum and Action

A quorum shall consist of five (5) Commissioners. Decision-making shall be subject to a majority vote of the Commissioners present, provided that a quorum has been established. When a quorum fails to attend a scheduled meeting or the Commission loses a quorum because of the departure of some members, the only official actions the Commission may take are: 1) fix the

time to which to adjourn; 2) adjourn the meeting; 3) recess the meeting; or 4) take measures to secure quorum. Any other action taken by the Commission while it does not have a quorum is void.

Cancellation of meetings

The Chairperson may cancel a regular meeting in the event that a quorum will not be present or if the meeting date conflicts with other responsibilities of the Commissioners. Notices of continued, rescheduled, or canceled meetings shall be posted.

Incidents

The Commission is empowered to respond to incidents brought to its attention. For purposes of these Rules and Regulations, an incident is defined as an occurrence within the City of Watertown which the reporter alleges is motivated, in whole or in part, by prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and/or with the intent to threaten, harm, coerce or intimidate. Incidents may include, but are not limited to: the removal, stealing or defacing of items promoting diversity, equity and inclusion; the placement of signs or graffiti promoting prejudice, intolerance or bigotry; biased statements or slurs; actions with animus related to a protected class; and others.

Responding to incidents: The Commission shall adopt protocols and/or procedures for responding to incidents which are brought to the Commission's attention and shall amend them from time to time as needed in the discretion of the Commission.

Commented [CB5]: I have followed up with the Arlington HRC to see if they can share their version of this with us.

Conduct of Commissioners/Code of Ethics

The Chairperson or Co-Chairs shall be the official spokesperson(s) for the Commission. Individual commissioners shall not express personal opinions on any matter that has come, or is likely to come, before the Commission without clarifying that the opinion is his or her own personal opinion and does not reflect or represent the opinion or position of the Commission on the matter.

Commented [CB6]: To choose between these headings.

Commissioners agree to maintain the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. Each Commissioner shall adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct and support the Commission's mission, goals and objectives and instill in the public a sense of confidence in the Commission's operations. The standard of conduct for the Commission includes, but is not limited to:

- Being accountable for its Rules of Procedure and decisions, and promoting accountability of all members of the Commission;
- Treating all members of the Commission, members of the public and colleagues with courtesy, respect, objective, and fairness;
- Conducting all Commission business in a timely manner and in public meetings with full disclosure of policies and procedures;

- Reviewing its actions, recommendations, and procedures periodically to determine whether the Commission has adhered to its Code of Ethics and mission in all respects.

Action Plan

The Commission shall develop an Action Plan annually that outlines specific goals and associated activities for the upcoming year, aligned with the Commission's purposes as stated in the ordinance. The goals and activities outlined in the Action Plan shall directly relate to one or more of the Commission's core purposes as outlined in the ordinance.

Action Plan content: The Action Plan shall include:

- XX primary goals for the year
- Specific, measurable activities associated with each goal
- Timelines for completion of each activity
- Responsible parties or subcommittees for each activity
- Resources required for implementation

Development process: The Commission shall dedicate at least one full meeting to Action Plan development and/or deliberation annually. Prior to this meeting, Commissioners shall review the previous year's Action Plan and progress and consider current human rights issues affecting the community. The Commission shall gather community input through surveys, public forums or other means. The Commission may form a temporary Action Plan subcommittee to draft the plan for full Commission review and approval.

Approval and implementation: The Action Plan must be approved by a majority vote of the Commission. Once approved, the Action Plan shall be:

- Published on the Commission's website
- Submitted to the City Council
- Distributed to relevant city departments and community partners

Progress monitoring: The Commission shall review Action Plan progress as a standing agenda item at each regular meeting. Commissioners or subcommittees responsible for specific activities shall provide brief updates on their progress.

Mid-year review and updates: The Commission shall conduct a comprehensive mid-year review of the Action Plan. Based on the review, the Commission may vote to:

- Adjust timelines for existing activities
- Modify or remove activities that are no longer feasible or relevant
- Add new activities in response to emerging issues or opportunities

Any substantive changes to the Action Plan must be approved by a majority vote of the Commission.

Annual Reporting: The Commission shall prepare an annual report summarizing Action Plan achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. This report shall be submitted to the City Council and made publicly available.

Continuous improvement: As part of the annual Action Plan development process, the Commission shall reflect on the effectiveness of the previous year's plan and process. Based on this reflection, the Commission may vote to modify these Rules of Procedure to improve the Action Plan's impact and the efficiency of the development process.

Training/onboarding

Each new member of the Commission shall be furnished with orientation materials upon their appointment, to include the Ordinance, Annual Plan, Annual Report, the last two months of minutes, a meeting calendar, and any other pertinent information. An orientation session will be held for newly appointed Commissioners to familiarize them with the Ordinance Establishing the Watertown Human Rights Commission; Open Meeting Law; the Commission's purpose, attendance requirements, and meeting dates; and these Rules of Procedure.

Commented [CB7]: Do we need to specify who will be responsible for this?

Amendment of Rules of Procedure

These Rules of Procedure may be amended or repealed, and new Rules of Procedure adopted, by the Human Rights Commission by majority vote, if a quorum is present. Prior to the adoption of the amendment, each Commissioner shall be given at least 10 days' notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be considered, and the notice shall state that one of the purposes of the meeting is to consider a proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure and shall contain a copy of the proposed amendment.