

FY 2020

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
**ANNUAL
REPORT**



PRINCE WILLIAM
Human Rights



Human Rights Commission **Annual Report** Fiscal Year 2020

Board of County Supervisors

Chair-At-Large: Ann B. Wheeler
Victor S. Angry, Vice Chair
Andrea O. Bailey
Kenny A. Boddye
Pete K. Candland
Margaret Angela Franklin
Jeanine M. Lawson
Yesli Vega

Human Rights Commission

Curtis Porter, Chairman
Ramunda Young, Vice Chair
Dr. Susan Holly, Parliamentarian
Mohammad Usman
William A. Johnston, III
Tonya James
Dr. Erika Laos
Evelyn BruMar
LaTonsha "LT" Pridgen

Human Rights Staff

Raul Torres, Executive Director
Shelia Venning, Human Rights Manager
Stacey Allen, EEO Manager
Denise McPhail, Outreach and Education Coordinator
Oliver Demery, Investigator
Dennis Sumlin, Investigator
Crystal Athan, Administrative Support

Mission Statement

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Merges with the Human Rights Office



Stacey Allen
Manager
Equality, Affirmative Employment and Diversity

After the retirement of the former EEO director, Patra Wright, the Office of Equality, Affirmative Employment and Diversity merged with the Human Rights Office. Stacey Allen, the EEO Manager, supervises this program for the Human Rights Office. The mission of the Office of Equality, Affirmative Employment and Diversity is to eradicate employment discrimination, improve diversity in the workplace, and create an environment where all employees are valued, respected, and free to develop and perform to their fullest potential.

New Human Rights Commissioners



LaTonsha "LT" Pridgen



Evelyn BruMar



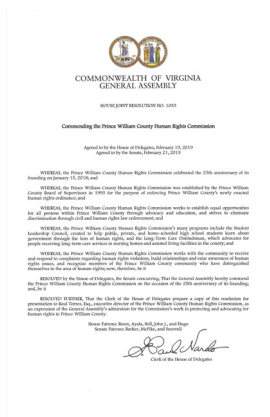
Tonya James



Dr. Erika Laos

The Board of County Supervisors appointed LaTonsha "LT" Pridgen, Evelyn BruMar, Tonya James, and Dr. Erika Laos as Human Rights Commissioners. Ms. Pridgen's term runs from February 2020 to December 2021; Ms. BruMar's term runs from January 2020 to December 2020; Ms. James' term runs from January 2020 to January 2023; Dr. Laos' term runs from January 2020 to January 2023. The new commissioners add cultural diversity and a wealth of experience to the commission.

Commending Resolution



The Human Rights Commission was recognized at the General Assembly by Delegate Danica Roem with a Commending Resolution. The resolution highlighted the commission's work in promoting equal opportunities for all persons within Prince William County through advocacy and education.

The Year In Review



Fair Housing Testing

The Human Rights Office (HRO) conducted Fair Housing testing on race and national origin in the western part of the county*. Testing was done through a regional testing contract sponsored by one of our partners, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. The baseline testing consisted of sixty tests. The test revealed only two (2) incidents (3%) of the total tests. No significant systemic issues were discovered. The HRO addressed the two (2) potential violations.

**In 2019 the Human Rights Office conducted testing in the eastern part of the county.*



Administration

The Human Rights Office continues to navigate uncharted waters due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our day to day operations. Since March 2020, we have been working 100% virtually and providing our services from remote locations. We have been able to fulfill the mission of our office during this unprecedented pandemic without major disruptions or unreasonable delays. The mission of the Human Rights Office is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights laws enforcement and to establish equal opportunity for all persons within the county through education.



Workforce Training

The Human Rights Office offers the following trainings to managers, supervisors and employees.

1. New Employee Orientation - Equal Opportunity and Compliance Training
2. Creating an Inclusive & Harassment-Free Workplace Participant Guide – Supervisors
3. Cultural Diversity
4. Fire and Rescue Recruits - Behaviors, Boundaries, and Best Practices
5. Police Recruits - Behaviors, Boundaries, and Best Practices
6. Generation Translation
7. Leadership Application Program (LAP) III Fire and Rescue Creating an Inclusive & Harassment Free and Respectful Workplace
8. New Leader Academy Police - Harassment-Free Workplace
9. Humanize Diversity and Inclusion

United States®
Census
2020

Due to the importance of our democracy and local government funding, the Prince William Human Rights Commission is committed to helping reduce census undercounting within communities of color including the African American and the Hispanic populations. Prince William County stands to lose \$2,000 of federal funding for every person that is not counted in the 2020 census. We collaborated with the Prince William County Complete Count Committee to provide training and materials for the 2020 Census. This collaboration included a distribution of 10,000 bilingual census cards in Dumfries and Woodbridge.

The Human Rights Office led the 2020 census efforts, and as of September 29, 2020 **76.4%** of all residents have self responded.

In The Community



Universal Human Rights Day

On January 18, 2020, the Prince William Human Rights Commission (PWHRC) celebrated Universal Human Rights Day and the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. Also, the commission recognized community leaders and organizations that contributed to the advancement of human rights in Prince William County. The PWHRC presented awards to the following persons/organizations: Dr. Renee Chinn; Emmitt & Vera Fletcher; Yukiko Dove; Evelyn BruMar; Taalibah Hassan; and Old Dominion (VA) Chapter, The Links, Incorporated.



Human Rights Student Leadership Council

The award winning Prince William County Human Rights Student Leadership Council's (HRSLC) mission is to promote human rights awareness and diversity to inspiring High School leaders. Some of the council's activities included assisting the Human Rights Commission with its annual Universal Human Rights Day program and participating in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Youth at Work program. Students were asked to participate in a county-wide video entitled One Community United that highlighted Unity, Equality, and Equity within Prince William County. The HRSLC engaged in implementing human and civil rights projects in the community. Such projects consisted of collaborating with other organizations to raise community awareness about human and civil rights issues. As well as sharing unique experiences and promoting diversity through conferences, public events, small group discussions, online interactions, oral presentations of issues of concern to the Human Rights Commission.



Community Engagement

There has been one (1) or more commissioners at all of the Human Rights Commission's major outreach activities, including the Student Leadership Council sessions; the trip to the General Assembly in Richmond; the Unity in the Community meetings, Black History Month celebrations to include the MLK Oratorical Contest, Townhalls and Latino Roundtables with Board of County Supervisors, and other outreach activities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the agency's outreach and community engagement was moved to a virtual environment.

The Human Rights Commission Chair, Curtis Porter continues as the President of the Virginia Association for Human Rights (VAHR) for the 2020 term.



Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Award Winner

The Human Rights Commission's Student Leadership Council program was selected as the winner of the 2020 Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Best Achievement award which recognizes excellence in local government programs. Our winning entry focused on addressing issues of inclusion, belonging, and reconciliation that challenges counties today.

The Office of Human Rights



Alternative Dispute Resolutions: Mediation and Conciliation

The Office of Human Rights uses two (2) types of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), mediation, and conciliation. The HRO offers mediation to both parties at the filing of any discrimination complaint. Mediation is conducted by In-house certified mediators. Investigators perform conciliation at any stage during the processing of a complaint. Both alternative resolution methods are accessible to all parties throughout the investigation process. Also, Human Rights certified mediators have been available to other county agencies, if requested, to mediate employment-related issues.



Engagement, Collaborations and Partnerships

The office of Human Rights is working with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) outreach division in providing training for small businesses on compliance with civil rights laws.

The Human Rights Office partnered with several Hispanic grassroots organizations to promote Census participation and to do joint outreach to the Hispanic community. Presently, we have established a partnership with the consulate of El Salvador in Woodbridge to outreach the broader Hispanic community. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Human Rights Office (HRO) conducted outreach activities in the community to include meetings with: the Northern Virginia Baptist Association, Inc., the National Pan-Hellenic Council, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Disability Services Board, PWC Chamber of Commerce, Salvadorian Chamber of Commerce, Dar al Noor, Muslim Congregation, Ner Shalom, Jewish Congregation, and the Alliance to Save Carver Road.

The HRO renewed its partnership with both the EEOC for the investigation of dually filed cases and with the Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development for Fair Housing testing and training.

The Chairman of the Human Rights Commission issued a statement regarding the events surrounding the death of George Floyd on June 4, 2020, expressing the pain and sorrow we feel as a community about the death of George Floyd while in police custody.

After the Board of County Supervisors elections the Executive Director, Raul Torres, and Human Rights Commission Chair Curtis Porter, met with the majority of the Supervisors to introduce and discuss the role of the Human Rights Commission. In addition, the Chair and Executive Director met with several organizations within the community to introduce and discuss the role of the Human Rights Commission. These organizations include: The Divine Nine, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Women in Community Action, and the Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE).

Resolutions:

The Human Rights Commission affirmed June as the LGBTQ+ Pride Month.

Requested the County Board of Supervisors to amend the Prince William County Human Rights Ordinance, Chapter 10 of the Prince William County Code, to include status as a veteran, sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes.

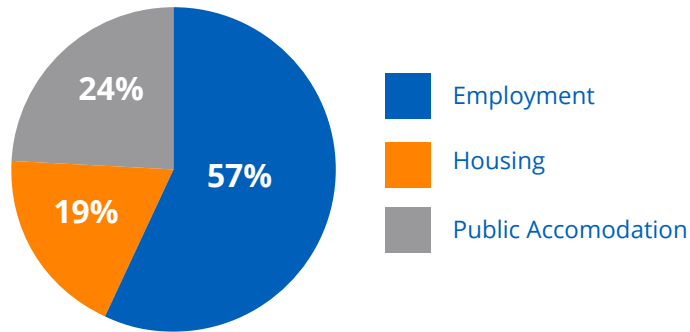
Adopted a policy for remote participation when a quorum is physically assembled in one location.

Declare, Affirm and Recognize the month of September 15 to October 15 of 2020 as Hispanic Heritage Month.

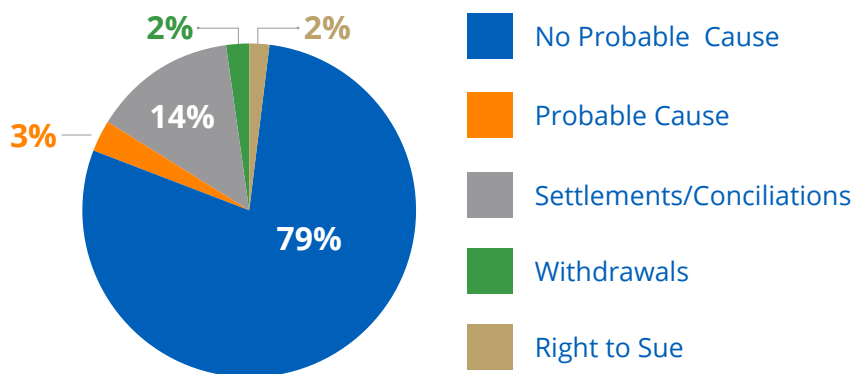
Requested the Board of County Supervisors to review and adopt a new county seal.

Statistics

Case Closures



Reasons For Closures



County FY20	
# of Cases Filed	51
Cases Closed	42
% closed w/in 1yr of filing (2)	84%
Resolved through mediation (1)	2%
Resolved through conciliation (5)	12%
No Cause	79%
Cause	3%
Appealed (3)	9%
Withdrawals/Dismissals (1)	2%
Appeals upheld	100%
Settlement amount	\$167,884

Our statistics for the County's FY 2020 reveal that 57% of the complaints closed were employment-related, 24% claimed public accommodation issues, and 19% complained about housing-related matters.

During the County's FY 2020, fourteen percent of the cases were settled. These settlements represented \$167,884 in monetary benefits to complainants.

In FY 2020, 84% of the cases closed were closed within one year of filing.

Only 9% of the cases closed during FY2020 were appealed, and 100% of the initial decisions made by the Executive Director were upheld by the Human Rights Commission after hearing the appeals.

EQUALITY

DIVERSITY

CULTURE

"Our ability to reach unity in
diversity will be the beauty and
the test of our civilization."

- Mahatma Gandhi

ADVOCACY

COMMUNITY

EDUCATION

Prince William County
Human Rights Commission
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Woodbridge, VA 22191
703-792-4680

www.pwcgov.org/HumanRights

PEOPLE