

Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

Celebrating 60 Years of Civil Rights

2023 Annual Report
Volume 1



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Lonzo Henderson



Jessie Ruffridge



Shiela Cernich

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Front and rear cover photos courtesy of
Elliet L.M. Revis



The Honorable Michael J. Dunleavy, Governor of Alaska
 The Honorable Gary Stevens, President of the Senate
 The Honorable Kathy Tilton, Speaker of the House

First off, I want to wish a warm welcome to Commissioner Shiela Cernich, who joined the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights last March. Shiela retired in 2020 from owning Arctic Electric Inc., and actively engages in political, community, and social issues. Born blind, doctors were able to give Shiela sight after several surgeries as a small child, but this only allowed her to witness the discrimination her disabled mother faced when applying to jobs with one arm. Rampant racism against American Indians during her childhood also caused her to accept teachers changing the pronunciation of her name, which was original spoken “shy-eela,” to sound like the more common name “she-la” to match her racial identity. She brings a strong commitment to public service with a healthy dose of common sense to the Commission, and I appreciate her open mind and willingness to listen and engage on issues before the agency.

I also want to bid a sad farewell to Commissioner Lonzo Henderson, who after serving for two years during his own retirement felt called back to the workforce. Lonzo brought a tremendous amount of experience in chairing the Parole Board, and I personally appreciated his sage advice and how insightful his wisdom was as I took reins as chair.

The Commission celebrated an important milestone in 2023: its 60th anniversary! The Commission commemorated this event with a public celebration on the Delany Park Strip in Anchorage on July 26th, which culminated in the opening of a time capsule sealed in 1993 after the Commission celebrated its 30th anniversary. This event was followed by the Alaska Native Brotherhood / Alaska Native Sisterhood Camp 87 First Annual Statewide Civil Rights Conference, cosponsored by the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights and the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission, with guests including Lt. Governor Nancy Dahlstrom and Anchorage Mayor David Bronson. The Commission believes that the best way to solve our problems is to talk about them in an open, non-judgmental, and non-political atmosphere. We sincerely appreciated the community leaders in attendance, both in the audience and those who served as panelists.

A review of the Commission’s annual reports from the mid-late ‘seventies document a growing backlog of cases and the potential loss of federal funding due to the Commission’s increasing number of older cases. In 1979, the Commission’s average case processing time was 352 days, and it only went up from there. Even with increased productivity, the Commission’s goal in 1987 was “prompt resolution of complaints through elimination of backlogged inventory,” which were those cases where investigation had not even begun. Even as the Commission made progress, the inventory and backlog were perpetual—so much so that by 2019, the Commission’s practice was to review its inventory to see how many cases were waiting to be closed the next year, which was the number it would bid on its federal contract. Intentionally maintaining a year-old inventory is the antithesis of promptly investigating cases. Legislative audits in 2000 and 2010 both found that investigations were not timely; a review of cases from 2008-2010 showed that it took investigators an overall average of 448 days between complaint filing and determination. The 2022 legislative audit continued its criticism of the Commission’s investigation times but noted that operational changes in 2021 and 2022 were expected to improve complaint processing timelines.

As I predicted last year, those operational changes bore fruit in 2023. The average length for any case that was open at any time during 2023 was 231 days, while the median was only 139 days. The average for the cases opened and closed during 2023 was 198 days. While the Commission still has a handful of cases older than one-year (10 to be exact), individual investigators are now evaluated in part on how old their cases are, and their goal is to have no cases older than one-year and ratchet down the average investigation length to 180 days. For those cases resolved in 2023 through pre-determination settlement, mediation, conciliation, or otherwise, the process resulted in complainants receiving nearly \$150,000 in “make-whole” relief. The Commission is extremely proud of the staff, and the investigative staff in particular, in implementing the new resolution conference procedures and bringing these averages down to a 40-year low in such a short time.

I want to thank the Office of Governor Dunleavy and the Alaska Legislature by highlighting the work the Commissioners did in meeting with our state leadership during 2023. In last year’s annual report, the Commission identified four non-controversial priorities that require statutory changes. We took the opportunity to meet in Juneau last February to engage directly with legislators and the Governor’s staff on these priorities. Our requests received bi-partisan support in both houses. These meetings resulted in refinements to the proposed legislation and bills were introduced to address these fixes, including by Rep. Prax and Rep. Josephson. In particular, the House Judiciary Committee, led by Rep. Vance, introduced HB 181 as an omnibus bill incorporating everything the Commission asked for, as well as changes introduced from our legislative conversations and recommendations from associated bills. The Commission still supports these efforts and hopes the contents of HB 181 eventually make it across the legislative finish line one day.

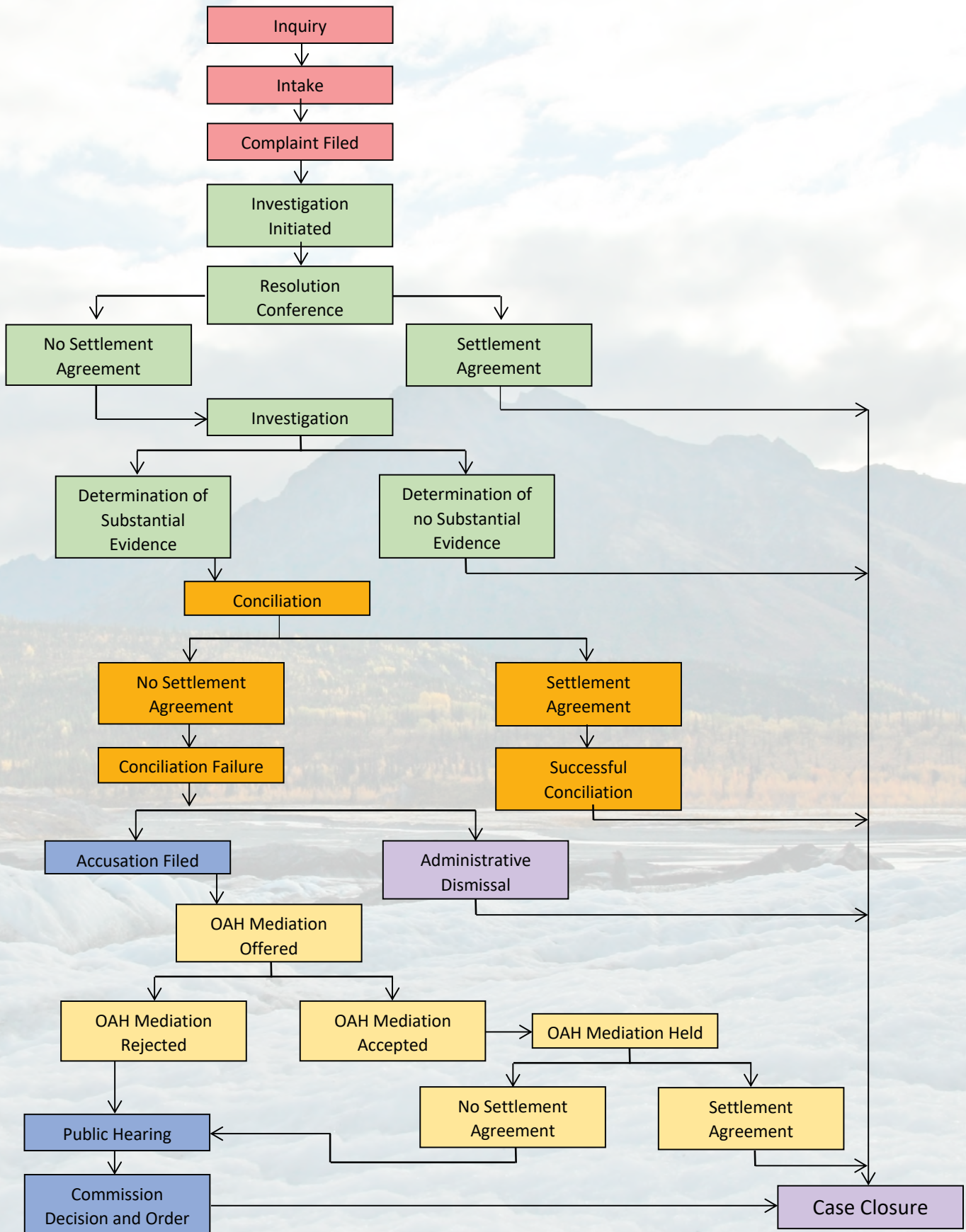
As for outreach, the Commission undertook two dozen individual outreach activities, and again brought in professionals for a formal marketing campaign. This campaign is extending through the rest of the current fiscal year, but through January 15 it resulted in 2,666,005 digital impressions for 6,082 clicks; 9,949 search ads for 1,124 clicks; and 550,447 YouTube impressions for 330 clicks. The campaign also bought advertising space in the Anchorage Daily News, and the Commission independently undertook radio ads. All of this more than likely contributed to the Commission’s increase in inquiries and complaints as documented later in this report.

Thank you for taking the time to review the 2023 Annual Report, and for once again supporting Alaska’s constitutional civil rights mandate through our work.

Sincerely,

Zackary Gottshall
 Chairperson

ALASKA STATE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS Complaint Resolution Process



ALASKA STATE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STAFF REPORT OF AGENCY ACTIVITIES January 1 through December 31, 2023

Public Hearing Cases

In **David Koen v. State of Alaska, Department of Corrections, Goose Creek Correctional Center**, (OAH No. 22-0898-HRC), Complainant David Koen alleged the correctional center where he is incarcerated refused his religious accommodation request for a Kosher diet. Following a thorough investigation, the substantial evidence determination was issued August 5, 2022. After months of efforts to find a resolution to this issue, an Accusation was filed with the Commission October 27, 2022. A Case Planning Conference was held December 1, 2022, followed by an order for any motion and response regarding jurisdictional objections due January 2023. Respondent filed a Motion to Dismiss January 18, 2023, based on their jurisdictional objection. The Commission filed an Opposition to Respondent's Motion to Dismiss on February 10, 2023, and Respondent filed their reply February 23, 2023. On April 7, 2023, an order denying Respondent's motion to dismiss was issued by OAH. Discovery is ongoing and a hearing date is currently scheduled for April 1, 2024.

In **Robert W. Corbisier v. Denali Foods, Inc. dba Taco Bell**, (OAH No. 22-0221-HRC), a female employee of a fast-food restaurant claimed she was discriminated against based on her sex when she was subjected to unwanted and offensive comments of a sexual nature, including explicit images on her manager's cell phone. Investigation found substantial evidence of discrimination when Respondent confirmed the actions but took no action to prevent the inappropriate conduct. Complainant withdrew her complaint to pursue a civil lawsuit. The Executive Director substituted as the complainant on November 5, 2021, to pursue public policy goals. Attempts to conciliate failed and an Accusation was filed with the Commission on February 22, 2022. The Case Planning Conference was held March 29, 2022, and an agreement was reached to attempt judicial mediation. Following mediation, a Mediation Settlement Agreement was approved November 2, 2022. An Unopposed Motion to Stay Hearing was filed with OAH on November 29, 2022. On March 1, 2023, Respondent notified the Commission that all training was completed, fulfilling Respondent's final obligation, and the case was closed.

In **Jamiann Hasselquist v. Fred Meyer Stores, Inc.** (OAH No. 23-0053-HRC), Complainant Jamiann Hasselquist observed a sign in Respondent's window stating Native identification was not accepted when purchasing tobacco. A complaint was filed with the Commission March 30, 2020, and investigation found that the store employee refused to accept tribal identification cards issued by two Alaska Indian tribes. On March 22, 2022, a substantial evidence determination of discrimination was issued. When efforts to conciliate failed, a Certification of Conciliation Failure was filed with the Commission August 1, 2022. As the accusation was being drafted opposing counsel requested a settlement. The Notice of Rescission was filed September 6, 2022. However, no settlement was submitted to the Commission. A Certification of Conciliation Failure was again filed with the Commission December 27, 2022, and an accusation was filed January 3, 2023. Counsel for Respondent was initially open to mediation, and the case was scheduled for court facilitated mediation. However, the parties

subsequently decided to place the matter back on the hearing calendar. On or around September 12, 2023, the parties reached a mediated settlement agreement. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of the agreement for compliance.

In **Nicole Lee v. B.V., Inc. dba Great Alaskan Bush Company** (OAH 22-0695-HRC), the Complainant alleged that the Great Alaskan Bush Company discriminated against her on the basis of sex and her disability. While employed as a dancer, the Complainant alleged when she reported she was subjected to unwanted sexual contact, Respondent declined to follow its no-touching policy. Complainant also alleged she was not permitted to wear a mask to mitigate her exposure to the COVID-19 virus, and Respondent failed to engage in the interactive process to provide her an accommodation to her disability. Investigation by Commission staff found substantial evidence of both allegations. Attempts to reach a conciliation failed and an Accusation was filed with the Commission on July 8, 2022. A Case Planning Conference was held August 29, 2022. Mediation was held at OAH on February 16, 2023. On August 23, 2023, the parties reached a mediated settlement agreement addressing both public policy concerns and compensatory damages. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of the agreement for compliance.

In **David Rockwell v. Thomas Schwarz dba GI Joes Army/Air Force Surplus Outlet** (OAH 22-0781-HRC), the Complainant alleged that GI Joes Army/Air Force Surplus Outlet discriminated against him by not allowing his service animal to enter the premises and failed to make an accommodation for his disability. The wife claimed she was afraid of big dogs and the owner, who was not present at the time, later claimed the dog was not allowed in because of his extreme allergies. The Complainant further alleged that Respondent would not make an accommodation for his disability. Investigation by Commission staff found substantial evidence to support the Complainant's allegations. All conciliation efforts failed, and an Accusation was filed on August 19, 2022. Following the Case Planning Conference, the hearing was scheduled for February 1, 2023. However, due to scheduling conflicts, the Commission filed an Unopposed Motion to Continue Trial on November 29, 2022. As of December 20, 2022, the Commission had not received an answer to the accusation, and a Motion for Entry of Default was filed with OAH on December 13, 2022. Ultimately, Respondent's counsel filed a response to the accusation with OAH, along with an opposition to the Motion for Entry of Default. On January 6, 2023, the Commission received an order denying the Motion for Entry of Default. The Commission filed a Motion for Summary Judgment on February 1, 2023. During investigation, Respondent failed to provide proof of their competing disability, and the Commission filed a Motion to Preclude Respondent's Disability Evidence on April 21, 2023. Respondent's counsel filed an opposition to the Motion for Summary Judgment on April 24, 2023, and subsequently requested both an evidentiary hearing and oral arguments. Oral arguments took place on May 30, 2023.

Public Hearing Cases

from page 5

The Commission's Motion to Preclude Respondent's Disability Evidence was denied on June 26, 2023. On August 15, 2023, an Evidentiary Hearing was held, and a Notice of Recommended Decision was issued by the Administrative Law Judge. No objection to the decision was filed. The Commission entered its final order on October 26, 2023, finding that Respondent violated state law by discriminating against David Rockwell and similarly situated disabled individuals by refusing to allow service or alert animals into the business. Because Respondent wound up his business during litigation, relief is limited to requiring Respondent to post signage, adopt non-discrimination policies and procedures, and undertake non-discrimination training only if he opens a retail establishment of any kind within two years of the order. As of December 31, 2023, the case remains pending closure due to a delay in serving the final order. If there is no appeal, the Commission expects to close the case on February 19, 2024.



2023 Appeal Updates

In **Demetrie Alexander v. Alaska State Commission for Human Rights** (4FA-17-02348CI), Appellant alleged that the Alaska Court System discriminated against him based on his race (Alaska Native), when it terminated his employment as a magistrate judge. The Commission found no substantial evidence of discrimination and closed the case. On August 9, 2017, Appellant appealed to the Alaska Superior Court. The court stayed the administrative appeal on February 28, 2018, after Appellant filed a civil action (4FA-18-01372CI) based on the same facts as those alleged to the Commission. Proposed trial dates were submitted in the second case on October 21, 2022. A Notice of Hearing was filed in 4FA-18-01372 CI on October 26, 2022. As of December 31, 2023, the appellate case remains stayed.

In **YoungJu Kim v. Commission for Human Rights** (3AN-23-07545CI), Appellant alleged that AROM, Inc., d/b/a Anchorage Radiation Therapy Center, discriminated against her when it terminated her employment based on her race (Asian), age, and national origin (Korean). The Commission did not find substantial evidence of discrimination and the case was closed. On or around August 2, 2023, Appellant appealed to the Alaska Superior Court. On or about October 12, the superior court issued an Order Granting Request and Order for Extension of time to File Agency Record. The agency record was filed on December 1, 2023. This case is currently pending as of December 31, 2023.

In **Benjamin Balivet v. Alaska State Commission for Human Rights** (3AN-23-04884CI), Appellant alleged that his employer, the State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water, discriminated against him based on his close association with a disabled family member by denying him remote work, and he was given a lower rating than his actual performance. The Commission did not find substantial evidence of discrimination, and the case was closed. Appellant filed another complaint with the Commission, alleging he was being retaliated against for his previously filed complaint. The Commission failed to find substantial evidence for Appellant's retaliation allegations, and the case was closed. On

February 23, 2023, Appellant appealed to superior court. As of December 31, 2023, the parties were engaged in preliminary motion practice.

In **Voncica Bell v. Alaska Commission for Human Rights** (3AN-23-08724CI), Appellant alleged Subway of Alaska, LLC, discriminated against her because of her race (African American), when she was passed up for a promotion in favor of another employee of a different race. Appellant further alleged that her employer failed to take corrective action when other employees subjected her to inappropriate racial comments. The Commission did not find substantial evidence of discrimination, and the case was closed. Appellant appealed to superior court on October 10, 2023. On December 27, 2023, the agency record was filed with the court. This case is currently pending as of December 31, 2023.

In **William Baxter v. Alaska State Commission for Human Rights** (3AN-22-08483CI, 3:22-cv-00236-SLG), is not a traditional appeal of a final Commission order. Plaintiff is suing the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, the Municipality of Anchorage, the United States Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Superior court at Anchorage. Plaintiff alleged in his civil case that amongst other things he was discriminated against based on age, disability, religion, marital status, personality type, and veteran status. Plaintiff contacted the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights on or about April 5, 2022, claiming he was terminated from the Municipality of Anchorage based on unknown safety violations, as well as age, physical and mental disability, marital status, and was retaliated against. The complaint was determined to be non-jurisdictional. Plaintiff subsequently filed a complaint in superior court on May 24, 2022. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission requested superior court to move the case to federal court, and the case was closed in Alaska superior court November 1, 2022. A stipulation to dismiss with prejudice was filed by Plaintiff on December 29, 2022, and Plaintiff's case was closed in federal court January 3, 2023.

Substantial Evidence Cases

Note Regarding Substantial Evidence Findings:

Findings of Substantial Evidence remain unproven allegations against a Respondent. A Substantial Evidence finding is not proof of discrimination but is sufficient evidence to lead to an Accusation filing and a trial if conciliation efforts fail. Cases where the Executive Director finds Substantial Evidence of discrimination move into Conciliation, where staff attempt to confidentially resolve the case before filing a public Accusation.

Conciliated Case Monitoring

Homeowner denied emotional support animal

Complainant alleged their Homeowner's Association (HOA) discriminated against him by having a policy that excludes all animals, including Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) and service/alert animals. The Commission's investigation found substantial evidence of discrimination, and a determination was issued June 29, 2023. On or around July 31, 2023, Complainant entered into a separate agreement with the HOA, and withdrew his complaint with the Commission shortly after. The Executive Director substituted himself as the Complainant to pursue the Commission's policy goals on August 18, 2023. Respondent entered into an agreement with the Commission on October 20, 2023, agreeing to update the HOA policy regarding service animals, post signage that service animals are welcome, and provide a relief area for service animals. Additionally, Respondent agreed to anti-discrimination training for all HOA board members. The Commission is monitoring the terms of this agreement.

Service animal not allowed at a clinic

Complainant alleged she was prohibited from accompanying their minor child into an exam room with Complainant's service dog. When Complainant offered to show proof their service animal is legitimate, Respondent refused stating that "the dog will introduce bacteria" into the exam room and refused to offer a reasonable accommodation. A Resolution Conference was held on March 30, 2023, with neither side coming to an agreement. An investigation determined there was substantial evidence, and a determination was issued June 30, 2023. Both parties entered into an agreement on December 1, 2023, agreeing to issue an apology letter to Complainant. Respondent had previously performed training and refreshed their public accommodations training outside of an agreement and agreed that they would continue annual training. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of the agreement.

"No person is to be denied the enjoyment of any civil or political right because of race, color, creed, sex, or national origin. The legislature shall implement this section."

–Article I, Section 3, of the Alaska Constitution

Pending Conciliations

Sexual harassment in a restaurant

Complainant alleged she was subjected to unwanted physical sexual harassment by the owner of the restaurant where she was employed. Complainant further alleged the unwelcome comments and conduct escalated after Respondent learned about Complainant's sexual orientation. Additionally, Complainant alleged her work schedule was significantly reduced after filing a complaint with the Commission, which initiated a separate investigation for retaliation. A Resolution Conference was held on February 14, 2023, with both parties entering into an agreement. A third investigation was opened when Complainant informed the Commission that she was only scheduled for one shift, a violation of the previous Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement that was entered into after the February 14, 2023, Resolution Conference. Complainant further alleged that she was scheduled for shifts she was not available for after informing Respondent of her daytime employment outside of her employment with Respondent. Commission investigation determined there was substantial evidence of discrimination, and a determination was issued on December 13, 2023. Conciliation efforts are ongoing.

Age discrimination and harassment in the workplace

Complainant alleged he was subjected to unwanted and offensive sexual comments, physical touching, and derogatory comments regarding his age. Complainant further alleged he was subjected to derogatory comments regarding his spouse's race (Asian) and his employer retaliated against him by placing him on suspension after he complained about the harassment. The employer subsequently terminated him. Commission investigation found substantial evidence of discrimination, and a determination was issued on December 16, 2023. Conciliation efforts are ongoing.

Successful Conciliations

Sexual harassment in the workplace

Complainant alleged Respondent subjected her to unwelcome comments and conduct of a sexual nature. Complainant further alleged that, after telling Respondent to stop, the behavior continued thereby forcing Complainant to quit her job. Investigation by Commission staff found substantial evidence to support Complainant's allegations, and a Substantial Evidence Determination was issued July 26, 2022. A Conciliation Agreement was signed by both parties September 12, 2022. Respondent fulfilled all terms of the Conciliation Agreement, and a closing order was issued May 12, 2023.

Race-based discrimination in a lobby

Complainant, who is Black, and his companion, finished visiting a patient in a medical facility and were waiting in the lobby for a ride. Security personnel approached Complainant and ordered him to leave the

premises. Security staff refused to answer Complainant when he asked what time the lobby closed. Instead, security handcuffed Complainant advising him he was under arrest and trespassed from the premises for one year. When Complainant's friend kept inquiring what Complainant had done, instead of answering, security handcuffed and arrested her as well. Security personnel did not approach or question any other patrons in the lobby, none of whom were Black. The parties signed a Conciliation Agreement on November 11, 2021. Respondent's security staff participated in non-discrimination training. The Commission received notice from Respondent on June 6, 2023, confirming there have been no further complaints of discrimination and the case was closed.



Service animals must be allowed in restaurants

A guest was denied service at a restaurant when the owner advised her no pets were allowed. After reassuring the owner her dog was a service animal, the owner advised it was his right to refuse service and told her to leave. Investigation found substantial evidence supporting her claim of disability discrimination. The parties reached a Conciliation Agreement, but the Complainant subsequently declined to sign the document so she could preserve her right to seek punitive damages in civil court. The Executive Director substituted as the Complainant to pursue the Commission's public policy goals and a two-party Conciliation Agreement was approved on December 29, 2021. Due to the seasonal status of its employees, a Third Amendment to Conciliation Agreement was approved September 7, 2022, to allow training to be completed when Respondent's business was open. On or around July 24, 2023, the Commission was notified that training of all employees was completed, and the Commission issued a Closing Order shortly thereafter.

Sex-based discrimination at a restaurant

Complainant, who is deaf, alleged that he attempted to place an order

through a restaurant drive-thru window using a mobile device as an accommodation for his disability. Complainant further alleged that the drive-thru employee became frustrated, refused service, and subjected him to harassment and profanity. The Commission determined there was substantial evidence to support Complainant's allegations and a determination was issued May 31, 2023. Efforts to contact the Complainant were unsuccessful, and on July 12, 2023, the Executive Director substituted for the Complainant to continue pursuing policy goals. Both parties entered into an agreement on October 13, 2023, with Respondent agreeing to refreshing their anti-discrimination and public accommodation policy, and to continue their existing anti-discrimination training. Additionally, Respondent agreed to maintain signage at their drive-thru window instructing individuals who require assistance to pull forward. On November 11, 2023, the Commission received confirmation that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Employee discharged due to pregnancy

Complainant alleged she was terminated from her placement through a staffing agency due to excessive absences related to her pregnancy. Complainant further alleged that she received no complaints regarding her work performance from Respondent before she became pregnant. Shortly after starting her contract, Complainant discovered she was pregnant and put on bed rest for a few days. Respondent requested a doctor's release to return to work, which Complainant furnished. Respondent informed her that she could not return to work until they could discuss their liability with the staffing agency, and Complainant was terminated. Two complaints were filed, one against the company she was placed with and one with the staffing agency who placed her. Investigation did not find substantial evidence of discrimination with the staffing agency and the case was closed. However, a finding of substantial evidence was made with the temporary employer. On July 17, 2023, the Commission entered into an agreement with Respondent, with Complainant receiving \$4136.75 in back pay. On or around November 2, 2023, the Commission received confirmation that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Resolution Conference Pre-Determination Settlement Agreements

Note Regarding Pre-Determination Settlement Agreements:

Resolution conferences are held as the first step in the investigation process to obtain preliminary facts from the parties and then to attempt settlement negotiation. A case settled at this stage did not undergo a complete investigation, nor was any finding made. The following cases all resulted in Pre-Determination Settlement Agreements as a direct result of participating in a resolution conference.

Race-based discrimination creating hostile work environment

Complainant alleged racial discrimination when Respondent's new store manager made it difficult for Complainant to fulfill her own managerial duties. Complainant further alleged she had no choice but to step down and work as a part-time cashier, as well as asserting Respondent never put her on the cashier schedule. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and claimed the cashier schedule was generated by an automated program that assesses store labor needs, employee availability, and seniority; Respondent further claimed Complainant's limited availability caused the system to not schedule her. A Resolution Conference was held, and the parties agreed to a settlement that included Respondent agreeing to transfer Complainant to a different store and Complainant agreeing to increase her availability. On or around January 24, 2023, all terms of the agreement were completed, and the case was closed.

Unfair treatment due to religious beliefs

Complainant, who worked as a part-time sales advisor inside a warehouse store, alleged religious discrimination when she was subjected to a negative attitude, wrongfully accused of infractions that coworkers not of her religion were not subjected to, and subsequently terminated. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and claimed it is a drug free employer and that Complainant consumed controlled substances during her shifts in violation of its policy. A Resolution Conference was held during which the parties agreed to a settlement that included Respondent agreeing to pay Complainant \$168, as well as not share information regarding disciplinary actions or reasons for separation to any party unless legally required to do so. On or around February 24, 2023, all terms of the agreement had been met, and the case was closed.

Constructive discharge after observing religious practice at work

Complainant alleged he was discriminated against based on his religion when, after he was observed participating in various religious activities, Respondent removed him from his position as head cook. Complainant further alleged that Respondent did not schedule him for other work, thereby constructively discharging him. A Resolution Conference was held wherein the parties agreed to non-monetary remedies, including a neutral reference letter and reinstatement. On or around March 31, 2023, all remaining terms of the agreement were completed, and the case was closed.

Failure to engage in the interactive process

Complainant worked as an office manager. She alleged Respondent failed to engage in the interactive process by demoting her after she requested a disability accommodation. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and asserted Complainant's job was eliminated as part of a pre-planned corporate restructure—that she was offered a different position in the new company structure. Respondent further claimed it explained its ADA process to her by giving her written instructions along with a form for her doctor to fill out, but Complainant failed to engage in the interactive process, declined the new position, and resigned. The parties agreed to a pre-determination settlement that included Respondent agreeing not to disclose the facts giving rise to this case, including Complainant's disability, and filing a complaint with the Commission, to any current, future, or potential employer. All terms of the agreement were met on or around April 4, 2023, and a Closing Order was issued.



Employee treated as disabled and terminated

Complainant alleged Respondent treated her as disabled when it terminated her employment after she suffered a temporary impairment from an injury. Respondent asserted Complainant's employment was terminated for failing to perform her duties. A Resolution Conference was held, and the parties agreed to monetary compensation of \$24,800 and a letter of recommendation. Both parties agreed not to disclose the settlement agreement or the facts giving rise to it unless legally required to do so. All terms of this agreement have been met, and the case was closed on or around April 26, 2023.

Disability as a factor in termination

Complainant alleged they were discriminated against based in their disability when Respondent terminated their employment. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and asserted the termination was unrelated to any disability. A Resolution Conference was held, and the parties agreed to non-monetary remedies, which included an apology and a neutral reference letter. The Commission was notified on or around May 8, 2023, that all terms of the agreement had been met, and the case was closed.

Sex-based discrimination creates different terms and conditions of employment

Complainant alleged she was discriminated against based on her sex and that due to her different employment terms and conditions, she felt she had no choice but to resign. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and asserted all employees were subjected to similar

circumstances including discipline. A Resolution Conference was held on April 28, 2023, and the parties agreed to a non-monetary remedy that included a neutral reference letter signed by a high-level supervisor. All terms of the agreement were met on or around May 19, 2023, and the case was closed.

Disabled patron denied access due to unavailability of wheelchair ramp

Complainant alleged Respondent did not have a wheelchair access ramp readily available and therefore, was unable to enter the premises. Before a Resolution Conference could take place, Complainant withdrew her complaint and the Executive Director substituted for the Complainant to further public policy goals. A two-party Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement was executed on November 30, 2022, with Respondent agreeing to adopt a non-discrimination policy, post signage at relevant locations regarding the existing wheelchair ramp and train all employees. Due to Respondent's mostly volunteer staff and Respondent's challenges finding a qualified trainer, two extensions were granted. On or around June 23, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms and conditions of the agreement had been completed, and the case was closed.

Pregnancy discrimination claim in the workplace

Complainant alleged Respondent, who hired Complainant knowing she was pregnant, terminated her after second guessing whether a pregnant person should work in a marine environment. A Resolution Conference was held November 7, 2022, and both parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement wherein Respondent agreed to adopt a non-discrimination policy and train all employees. All terms of the agreement were met, and a closing order was issued May 18, 2023.

Employee claims discrimination based on disability

Complainant alleged Respondent terminated her because of her physical disability. Complainant asserted she was on approved leave due to surgery related to her disability, obtained a work release from her physician, and inquired with her employer about her upcoming work so she could reschedule a dental appointment. Respondent terminated her citing excessive absences and to avoid what Respondent believed was an emerging pattern. A Resolution Conference was held November 7, 2022, in which Respondent agreed to pay Complainant \$6,898.00 in back pay. Anti-discrimination training for Respondent's managers, supervisors, and employees was completed, and a closing order was issued February 27, 2023.

Service Animal not allowed in restaurant

A disabled Complainant alleged he was denied entry by restaurant staff because they refused to admit his service animal. A Resolution Conference was held October 17, 2022, and both parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement whereby the restaurant agreed to undertake training, adopt a non-discrimination policy, post a sign indicating that service animals are welcome, and allow service animals for disabled patrons. All terms of the agreement were met, and the file was closed on February 15, 2023.

Harassment in the workplace based on sex

Complainant alleged they were subjected to harassment and verbal abuse based on their sex. Complainant further alleged they

were marginalized in their position, and Respondent told staff to not follow directions, or to be involved with their work because of Complainant's sex. When Complainant brought these issues to management, Respondent took no action. Complainant was offered a demotion, although with an increase in hourly rate. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations. On February 14, 2023, both parties participated in a Resolution Conference and entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement, wherein Respondent agreed to provide an apology letter, compensate Complainant \$4000.00, and provide Complainant a letter of recommendation. Respondent further agreed to anti-discrimination training, along with updating corporate policies and procedures. The Commission received confirmation that all terms of the agreement had been met, and a Closing Order was issued on or around October 17, 2023.

Age based discrimination and Retaliation

Complainant alleged that her employer subjected her to age discrimination by giving her different employment terms and conditions than that of her younger coworkers. Respondent terminated Complainant when she complained about this discriminatory conduct. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations, asserted that all employees are subject to the same policies, and that it investigated the policy violations each time the Complainant notified her employer. Respondent also asserted that it terminated her for cause. A Resolution Conference was held on February 1, 2023. The parties agreed to a Pre-Determination Settlement in which Respondent agreed to pay Complainant \$1,155.00 for wages she would have earned during the month of December 2022, provide its employees training regarding the laws prohibiting discrimination, as well as other compliance training. Respondent fulfilled all terms of the agreement, and the case was closed March 31, 2023.

Different terms and conditions based on age

Complainant alleged they were subjected to different terms and conditions of employment when younger employees were allowed to make grievances or respond to complaints from clientele, but Complaint was not, and this led to Respondent terminating Complainant. Respondent denied the allegation, asserting that the termination was due to performance issues rather than Complainant's age. A Resolution Conference was held June 21, 2023, and Respondent agreed to change the classification of Complainant's termination from involuntary to voluntary, provide a copy of Complainant's performance review to Complainant, and pay the remainder of Complainant's employee leave balance, totaling \$1228.63. The Commission received notification that all terms of the agreement were completed, and a closing order was issued July 19, 2023.

Sex/Gender based employment discrimination

Complainant, on behalf of their non-binary minor, alleged Respondent discriminated against their child on the basis of sex when Respondent's manager refused to refer to the minor by their chosen name and pronouns and made the minor feel unwelcome in the workplace, resulting in the child resigning. The parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement in which Respondent agreed to compensate the minor \$500, provide a written apology, adopt a non-discrimination policy, and appropriately train its employees. The Commission was informed on May 19, 2023, that only management staff had been trained. As of October 31, 2023, Respondent failed to comply with the terms of the agreement, claims the business was sold, and ceased further communication. The Commission is evaluating a course of

action in consultation with the Attorney General's Office, counsel for the Commission.

Sex based discrimination

Complainant's mother filed a complaint for her minor daughter alleging she was sexually harassed by a co-worker during her first week of employment. After reporting the incidents, management spoke to the co-worker and placed him on leave. The harassment continued when he returned. The second time Complainant reported the harassment, management informed her they didn't know what to do. A Resolution Conference was held on November 14, 2022, with both parties agreeing in principle to enter into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement. However, after the Resolution Conference Complainant refused to finalize the agreement, believing they were entitled to further financial compensation. On August 31, 2023, the Commission entered into a two-party agreement with Respondent. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of the agreement.

Denied access due to disability

Complainant alleged Respondent discriminated against him because of his physical disability by not providing an accessible website or computer check-in system, thereby denying him equal access to its services. Respondent asserted it was developing minimum accessibility guidelines and acknowledged its check-in kiosks did not provide a universal solution for all customers with physical disabilities. A Resolution Conference was held, and the Respondent agreed to purchase and install ADA compliant check-in systems. On July 5, 2023, the Commission was notified that ADA compliant check-in systems were installed at all of Respondent's locations, and a closing order was issued July 11, 2023.

Allegation of sex discrimination in the workplace

Complainant alleged she was subjected to unwanted comments of a sexual nature, which caused a hostile work environment. A Resolution Conference was held May 26, 2022, wherein both parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement with Respondent compensating Complainant \$1,000, adopting a non-discrimination policy, and training all employees. Efforts to enforce the Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement failed April 13, 2023. This matter has been referred to the Attorney General's Office, counsel for the Commission, to enforce the agreement.

Race based harassment in the workplace

Complainant alleged discrimination when Respondent failed to take effective corrective action after Complainant reported race-based harassment to the employer. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and asserted that its investigation into Complainant's allegations found them to be without merit. A Resolution Conference was held, and the parties agreed that Complainant would voluntarily resign, and Respondent would provide Complainant with a neutral employment reference, and monetary compensation of \$18,076.80, which represented a \$15,000.00 payment to cover the Complainant's relocation expenses, and \$3,076.80 which represented two weeks of pay in lieu of work. Additionally, Respondent agreed to forgive an unamortized sign on bonus valued at \$10,625.00. Complainant and Respondent completed all obligations in the agreement and the case was closed on July 26, 2023.

Retaliation and sex based discrimination

Complainant alleged his employer terminated his employment after

he attempted to make a sexual harassment complaint against his supervisor. Complainant further alleged he was trespassed from all store locations after his termination. A Resolution Conference was held on August 18, 2023, where Respondent agreed to reinstate a previously used company policy handbook, perform anti-discrimination training, and allow Complainant to return to all store locations. All terms of the agreement were met, and the Commission file was closed September 1, 2023.

Employee treated as disabled

Complainant alleged he was discriminated against based on his disability; that Respondent set him up to fail by increasing his job duties and adding an additional work location, as well as modifying a computer system that increased his mistakes. Complainant was subsequently terminated. Respondent denied all the allegations, citing a new director who conducted an audit and discovered Complainant's performance deficiencies. Respondent stated it was not even aware of Complainant's disability. A Resolution Conference was facilitated on August 29, 2023, and the parties signed a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement in which Respondent agreed to compensate Complainant \$3,180.00. On September 7, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed on September 11, 2023.

Inappropriate sexual comments in the workplace

Complainant alleged she was discriminated against based on her sex when Respondent's supervisor made inappropriate sexual comments and touched her. Complainant further alleged she reported the harassment to management who failed to take corrective action. A Resolution Conference was held on August 15, 2023, and the parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement with Respondent compensating Complainant \$4,800.00. All terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed on September 11, 2023.

Terminated for complaining about sexual harassment

Complainant alleged she was discriminated against when one of Respondent's staff members subjected her to uncomfortable and inappropriate sexual comments. Complainant further alleged she complained to Respondent, but no action was taken, so she confronted the harasser who in retaliation terminated her employment. A Resolution Conference was held on August 10, 2023. The parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement in which Respondent agreed to compensate Complainant \$2,252.33. Respondent also agreed to adopt a non-discrimination policy and train all management employees. The Commission continues to monitor the agreement for completion.

Failure to engage in the interactive process

Complainant alleged she was discriminated against based on her disabilities. Complainant requested that Respondent provide reasonable accommodations including providing a daily task list and not approaching Complainant in an aggressive manner. Respondent failed to engage in the interactive process and refused to provide an effective accommodation, so Complainant resigned. A Resolution Conference was held on May 3, 2023, and the parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement in which Respondent agreed to compensate Complainant \$10,000. Respondent also agreed to review its existing ADA and anti-discrimination policies. Additionally, Respondent agreed to provide training to all of its management staff on the laws prohibiting discrimination with an emphasis on disability discrimination. The Commission continues to monitor the agreement for full compliance.

Sexual harassment in a restaurant

Complainant alleged she was subjected to unwanted physical sexual harassment by the owner of the restaurant where she worked. Complainant further alleged the unwelcome comments and conduct escalated after Respondent learned about Complainant's sexual orientation. Additionally, Complainant alleged her work schedule was significantly reduced after filing a complaint with the Commission, which initiated a separate investigation for retaliation. A Resolution Conference was held on February 14, 2023, with both parties entering into an agreement. Respondent agreed to adopt an anti-discrimination and anti-retaliation policy, in addition to providing training to all employees regarding discrimination and retaliation in the workplace. Respondent also agreed to provide back pay in the amount of \$15,000.00. On or around August 18, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms of the agreement had been met, and the cases were closed.

Resigned due to harassment

Complainant alleged he was subjected to offensive comments regarding his race and religious beliefs. Complainant further alleged his complaints to management were ignored, and no corrective action was taken, leaving Complainant with no other choice but to resign. On July 12, 2023, a Resolution Conference was held with Respondent agreeing to pay Complainant a sum of \$2000.00. All terms of the agreement were met on August 30, 2023, and the case was closed.

Sexual harassment and retaliation in the workplace

Complainant worked for a family run business. Complainant alleged that the son of Respondent's owners requested sexual favors for money, spread false information that they were in a relationship, and made unwelcome comments to Complainant. Complainant also alleged that after complaining about the harassment to one of Respondent's owners, the owners harassed her, divulged personal medical information to Respondent's customers, and terminated Complainant's employment shortly thereafter. A Resolution Conference was held July 21, 2023, during which Respondent agreed to provide anti-discrimination training to its owners and related employees, as well as agreed to provide a letter of reference to Complainant. On or around August 25, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms of the agreement had been met, and the case was closed.

Employee treated as disabled

Complainant alleged Respondent treated her as disabled when it terminated her employment because it believed Complainant had an "undiagnosed medical issue" akin to a physical disability. Respondent asserted it had a safety concern based on observed physical characteristics of Complainant. A Resolution Conference was held, and Respondent agreed to pay Complainant \$850.46, eliminate all information giving rise to the discrimination including the filing of the Commission case from Complainant's personnel records, as well as to provide a neutral employment reference. On or around September 15, 2023, all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Injured on the job and not rehired

Complainant, a seasonal worker, alleged that Respondent was treating him as disabled. Respondent denied the allegations and asserted that it believed it was making a sound business decision due to issues it had with Complainant. A Resolution Conference was held, and an agreement was

Resolution Conference

from page 11

reached; Complainant received a settlement of \$6500, and Commission staff agreed to facilitate training for Respondent. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of this agreement.

Sexual harassment

Complainant alleged that throughout her employment, another employee subjected her to unwelcome sexual comments, that her female coworkers were also subjected to unwelcome sexual comments that were creating a hostile work environment, that her reported concerns were ignored, and that the conduct continued. After, Complainant alleged she was terminated for insubordination after a heated discussion with a co-worker regarding unwelcome sexual comments. Respondent denied the allegations. A Resolution Conference was held on November 8, 2023, Respondent agreed to a settlement in the amount of \$3500. All terms of this agreement have been met, and the case was closed on or around December 15, 2023.

Terminated after reporting discrimination

Complainant alleged she was retaliated against for complaining of discrimination after being subjected to unwelcome racial comments. The comments stopped, but the coworker who made the comments along with another coworker continued to create a hostile work environment which included one of them showing her a sexually harassing video at work. Complainant further alleged she informed Respondent of the behaviors, and Respondent suspended her without pay in retaliation. A Resolution Conference was facilitated on September 11, 2023, and the parties entered a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement on October 11, 2023, with Respondent compensating Complainant \$1,028. On or around October 30, 2023, the Commission was informed that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Race-based discrimination and hostile work environment

Complainant alleged he was discriminated against because he is Hispanic by Respondent subjecting him to a hostile work environment through berating language, physical pushing, and shoving. Complainant further alleged that on April 30, 2023, after Respondent pushed and shoved him again, Respondent terminated his employment without explanation. A Resolution Conference was facilitated, and the parties entered a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement on November 15, 2023, with Respondent agreeing to compensate Complainant \$5,000. On or around November 20, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Sexual Harassment in the workplace

Complainant alleged she was retaliated against for complaining of sexual harassment. Complainant complained that a male contractor at a worksite subjected her to both inappropriate sexual comments and inappropriate touching. She reported the harassment and was told it would be addressed, but the harassment continued anyway. Complainant again complained about the behavior to Respondent's human resources person who then moved her to an office position. A Resolution Conference was facilitated, and the parties entered a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement on December 26, 2023, with Respondent compensating Complainant \$4,000. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of

the agreement.

Service Animals must be allowed

Complainant alleged a restaurant discriminated against him because of disability when it denied him due to his service dog. Respondent asserted it allows service animals and Complainant had dined at its establishment multiple times, but based on previous actions of the animal, it believed the dog was not trained. When Complainant was asked about the services the dog performed, Complainant raised his voice, caused a scene, and was asked to leave. On August 29, 2023, a Resolution Conference was held, and Respondent agreed to adopt and disseminate to all employees a corporate policy reflecting Respondent's nondiscriminatory position regarding service animals. Respondent also agreed to training, posting a service animal welcome sign in its entry way, and to distribute the Commission's service animal pocket-cards to staff. On or around October 17, 2023, the Commission was notified that all terms of the agreement have been met, and the case was closed.

Service Animal required to leave

Complainant alleged Respondent discriminated against her by refusing her admission with her service animal. Respondent did not deny that one of its owners informed Complainant that she had to leave her service animal in the car. A Resolution Conference was held on December 8, 2023, at which time the parties agreed to training and signage. On or around December 20, 2023, the Commission received confirmation that all terms of the agreement had been met, and the case was closed.

Terminated due to disability

Complainant alleged that he was terminated because of his disability and the fact that his supervisor did not believe someone with a disability could function in his role.

Complainant discussed his disability with HR and agreed that he needed no accommodations, but he was terminated shortly thereafter anyway. Respondent denied the allegation, saying he was terminated due to poor working relationships with his subordinates, insufficient organization, and complaints about his management from his coworkers and subordinates; one subordinate quit due to Complainant's behavior, and two additional employees threatened to quit. A Resolution Conference

was held on October 5, 2023, where a resolution was reached in which Respondent agreed to pay \$3,773.69 and Complainant agreed to sign an indemnification release. On or around October 19, 2023, the Commission received confirmation that all terms of the agreement had been met, and the case was closed.

Race based discrimination in the workplace

Complainant alleged that Respondent discriminated against her based on her race by subjecting her to a hostile work environment, giving her different terms and conditions, and subjecting her to offensive racial comments. Complainant also asserted her concerns were dismissed and Respondent took no effective corrective action. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations, asserted it investigated Complainant's allegations and found that the evidence did not support Complainant's belief. However, her complaint did bring to light other employment issues that Respondent timely addressed. A Resolution Conference was held on August 11, 2023, during which the parties entered into a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement wherein Respondent agreed to provide training to its employees in the laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace.



On or around December 12, 2023, the Commission received notice that all terms of the agreement were met, and the case was closed.

Denied a reasonable accommodation

Complainant alleged that Respondent discriminated against her based on both her disabilities and race when her manager denied her a reasonable accommodation for her disability, and then terminated her employment immediately when she gave notice of her resignation. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations saying it allowed her preferred accommodation, and it paid her for the two weeks associated with her resignation notice. A Resolution Conference was held on November 17, 2023, during which the parties agreed to a Pre-Determination Settlement Agreement; Respondent agreed to provide training to its employees on the laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, as well as pay Complainant \$8000.00. The Commission continues to monitor the terms of this agreement.

Race-based discrimination in the classroom

Complainant alleged that Respondent discriminated against her based on her race when Respondent's professor muted her during webinars, falsely accused her of bullying, and failed her. Respondent denied Complainant's allegations and asserted Complainant was graded consistently with the professor's rubric and was on an academic improvement plan based on

similar performance issues in previous classes. A Resolution Conference was held on October 17, 2023, during which the parties agreed Respondent would reimburse Complainant's costs for the tuition, books and fees for the class totaling \$1,960.00. All terms of the agreement were met, and a Closing Order was issued on November 7, 2023.

Noteworthy non-Commission settlements

Religious discrimination and sex-based pay disparity

Complainant, a Christian, made multiple internal complaints regarding religious discrimination from her supervisor, an atheist, and sex discrimination for a pay disparity when compared to her male coworker. Then she was fired. She had worked there for years without any issues and believed her termination was directly due to her discrimination complaints. Barely a month after filing her signed complaint, attorneys representing the parties in their individual capacities contacted the Commission's assigned investigator to inform the agency that the parties settled the matter for \$47,437.09 and the Complainant would be withdrawing her complaint.

"It is determined and declared as a matter of legislative finding that discrimination against an inhabitant of the state because of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, physical or mental disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood is a matter of public concern and that this discrimination not only threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of the state but also menaces the institutions of the state and threatens peace, order, health, safety, and general welfare of the state and its inhabitants." –AS 18.80.200(a)



Filings by Basis		
	Single	Multiple
Race	41	23
Physical Disability	36	10
Sex	39	13
Mental Disability	20	8
Age	16	9
Retaliation	6	0
Pregnancy	4	0
Religion	1	0
Retaliation for Filing	1	0
Color	1	0
National Origin	1	0
Total Filings	166	

*Some complaints alleged more than one basis and/or issue

Filings by Issue		
	Single	Multiple
Fired	93	38
Terms and Conditions	30	18
Failure to Hire	11	0
Denied Service	9	0
Failure to Accommodate	8	3
Sexual Harassment	5	4
Failure to Promote	3	0
Harassment	2	0
Eviction	2	1
Other	2	0
Failure to Rent	1	0
Total Filings	166	

*Some complaints alleged more than one basis and/or issue

Filings by Type	
Employment	144
Public Accommodation	15
Government Practices	5
Housing	2

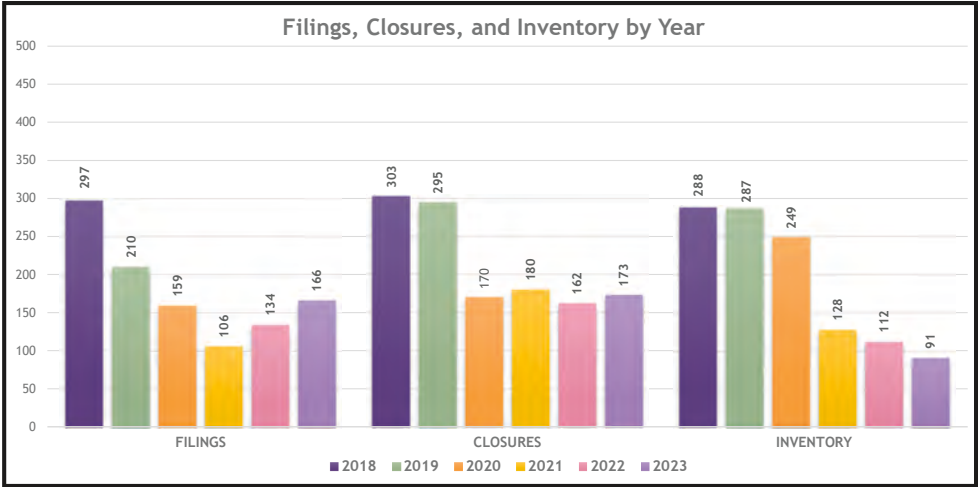
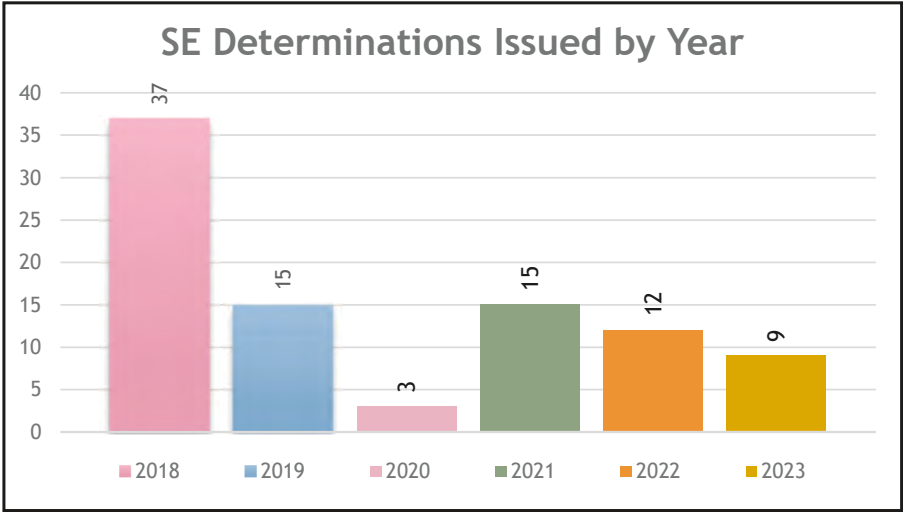
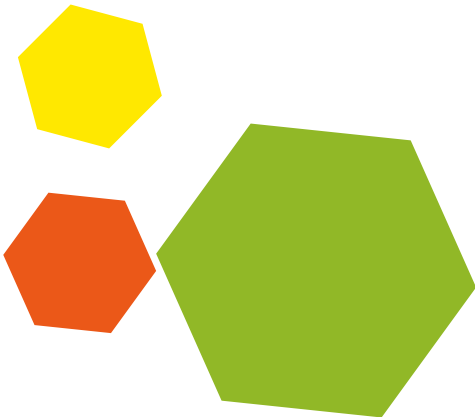
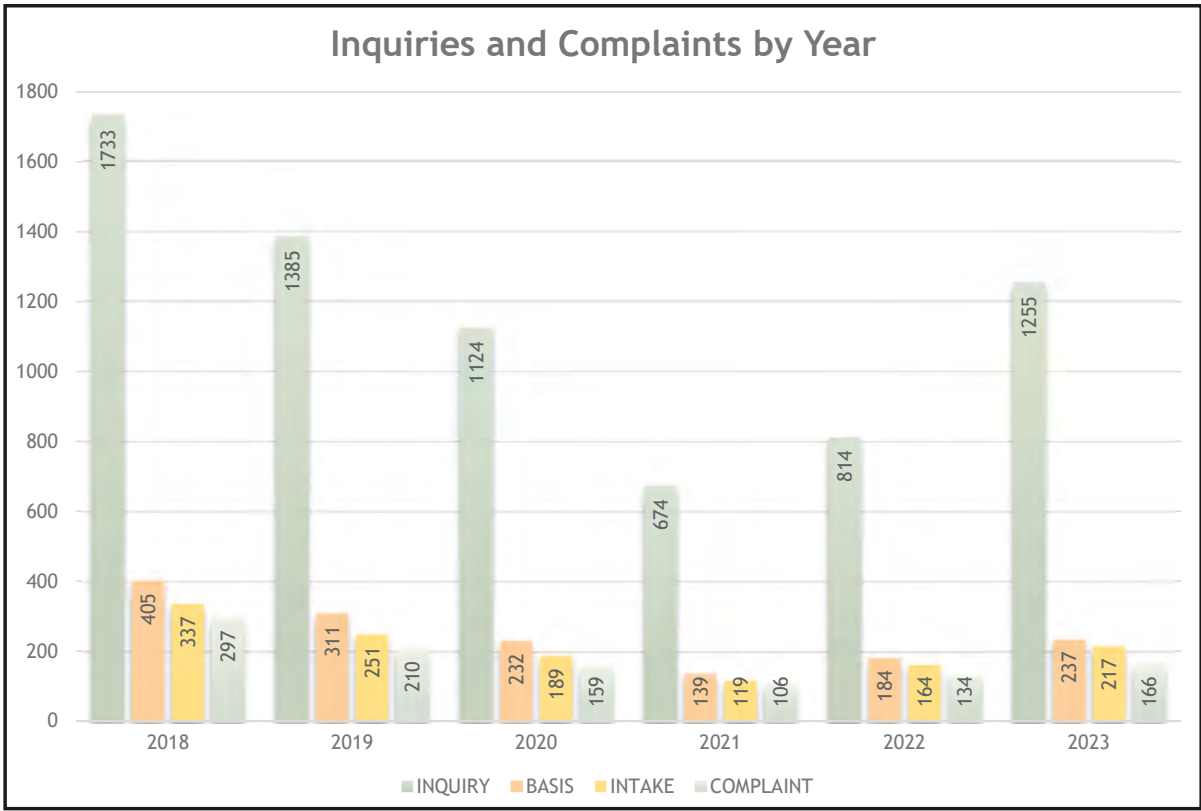
Filings by Complainants Age	
20 year and under	3
21 - 40 years	67
41 - 60 years	68
61 years and older	26
unknown	2

Filings by Complainants Gender	
Male	66
Female	98
Other	2

ANALYSIS OF 2023 CLOSURES

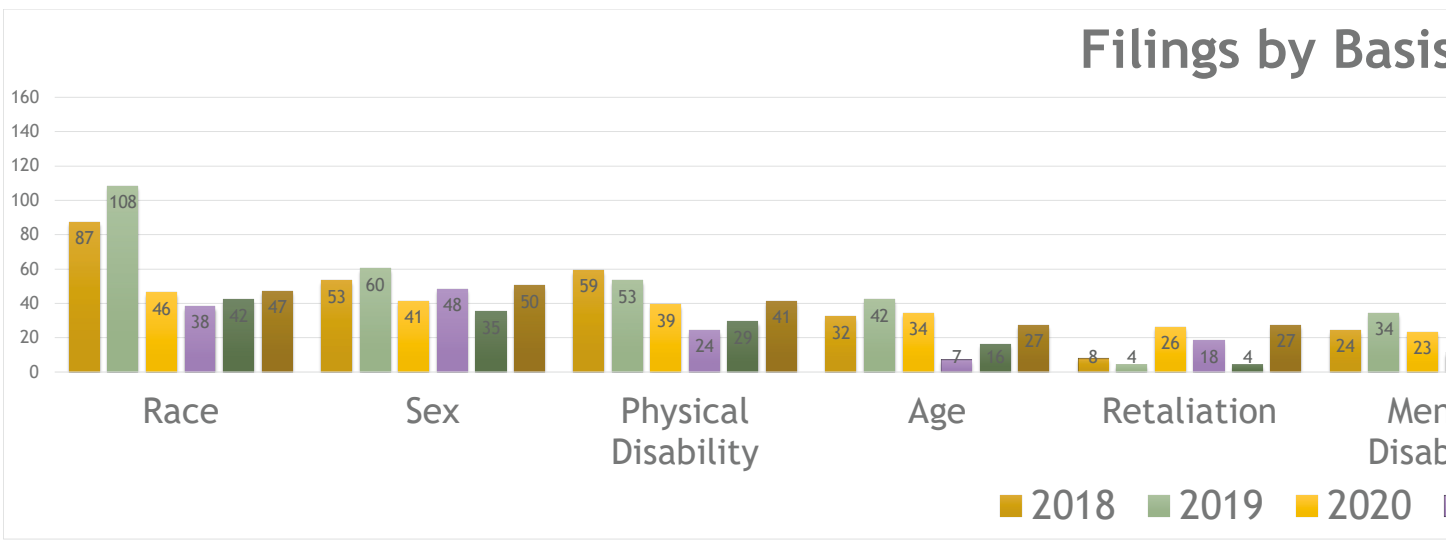
REASON FOR CLOSURE	
NOT SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE	111
ADMINISTRATIVE	11
Complaint Withdrawn	8
Failure of Complainant to proceed	2
Administrative Dismissal	1
CONCILIATION AND SETTLEMENT	43
Pre-determination Settlement	29
Resolution Conference Closures	14
HEARING	8
Administrative Dismissal by Hearing Unit	0
Prehearing Settlement	8
Total Closures	173

Filings by Complainants Race	
Caucasian	109
Black	25
Native	15
Bi Racial/ Multi Racial	6
Hispanic	4
Asian	4
Other	3

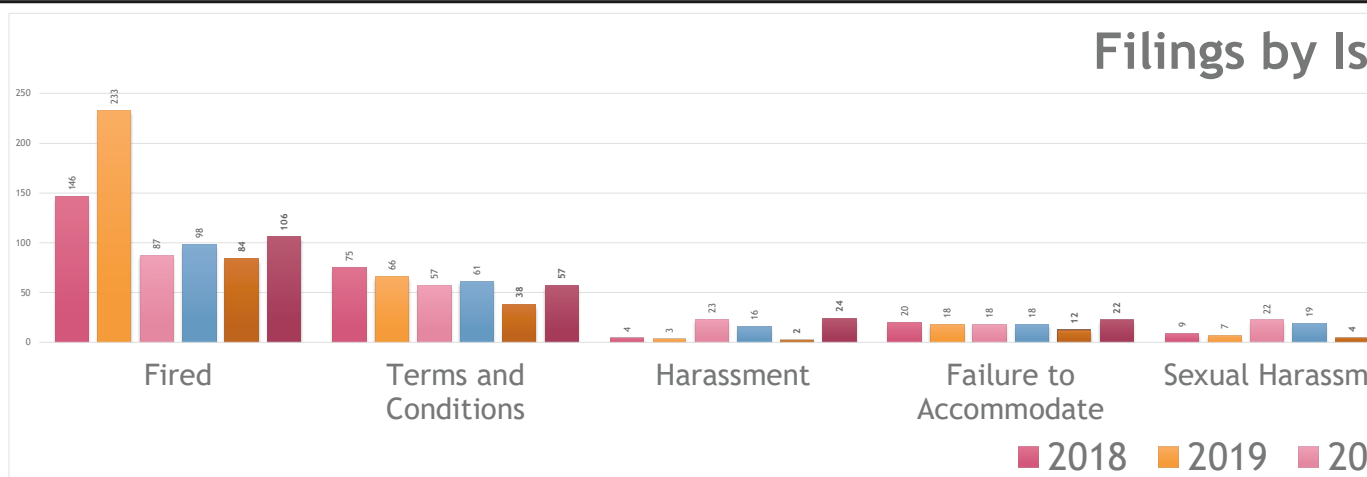


Category of Closure	2018		2019		ASCHR
	ASCHR	EEOC	ASCHR	EEOC	
Predetermination/Resolution Conference Settlements	22	1	20	0	0
Administrative	30	1	36	0	18
Not Substantial Evidence	165	48	197	6	144
Conciliation and Settlement	14	1	24	0	5
Hearing	21	0	12	0	3
Subtotal	252	51	289	6	170
TOTAL	405		452		

Filings by Basis



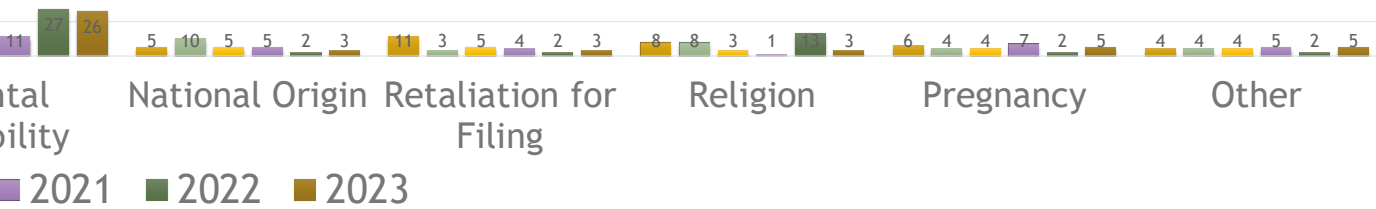
Filings by Issue



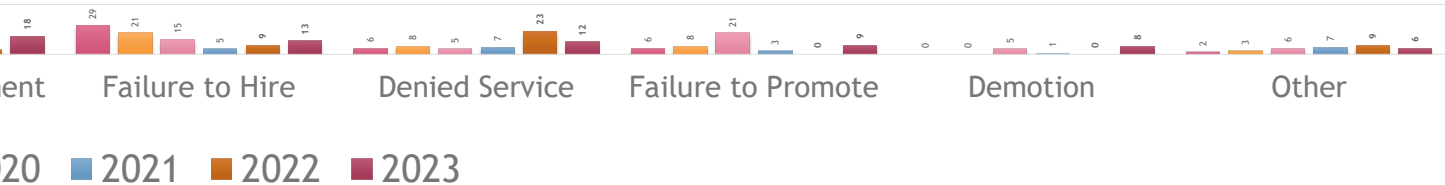
asures (2018-2023)

2020		2021		2022		2023	
ASCHR	EEOC	ASCHR	EEOC	ASCHR	EEOC	ASCHR	EEOC
	1	0	3	1	2	38	5
	1	24	3	30	2	11	0
	15	151	28	92	12	97	14
	0	2	1	39	1	8	0
	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
	20	180	35	162	17	154	19
342		215		179		173	

s Comparison



ssue Comparison





THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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RESOLUTION 2023-1

Encouraging the Alaska Division of Elections to Expand the Available Languages on the Touch Screen Voting Units

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska's civil rights enforcement agency charged with enforcing the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*, as mandated by Article I, Section 3, of the Alaska Constitution; and,

WHEREAS, Congress declared in Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, codified at 52 U.S.C. § 10503, that it is necessary to eliminate discrimination against citizens of language minorities by prohibiting voting practices that exclude these citizens; and,

WHEREAS, AS 18.80.255 makes it unlawful for the state "to refuse, withhold from, or deny to a person any local, state, or federal funds, services, goods, facilities, advantages, or privileges because of race, religion, sex, color, or national origin;" and,

WHEREAS, requiring a particular language or prohibiting a particular language can be a form of racial discrimination and/or national origin discrimination; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska, Division of Elections, settled a lawsuit in 2010 that resulted in bilingual election poll and outreach workers, followed by a subsequent lawsuit and settlement in 2015 that required a comprehensive language assistance program including the use of touch screen voting machines, which was extended following the 2020 election; and,

WHEREAS, federal observers found what appeared to be continued violations of the Voting Rights Act during the August 2022 election, including a polling place without bilingual language workers and election officials who lacked training in assisting voters with languages other than English; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Division of Elections produces elections materials in Spanish, Tagalog, six dialects of Yup'ik, Gwich'in, Northern Inupiaq, Nunivak Cup'ig, and Aleut; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Division of Elections acquired touch screen voting units circa 2005 oriented for use by the blind and visually impaired for use in precincts throughout the state that

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can accommodate up to nine languages and are programmed in Yup'ik, Inupiaq, Koyukon, Gwich'in, Spanish, and Tagalog, depending on location, in addition to English; and,

WHEREAS, according to the statement of Julie Kitka, President of the Alaska Federation of Natives, to the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on October 27, 2021, during the 2018 election 60% of village precincts lacked voting machines with audio translations; and,

WHEREAS, according to the Director of Get Out the Native Vote, Alaskans are likely unaware that the touch screen voting units have any languages other than English and the Division of Elections could do more to promote the value and utilization of the language features incorporated into the touch screen voting units at remote precincts, especially ones that are understaffed or manned by a substitute poll worker,

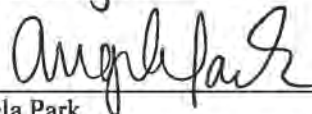
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights encourages the Alaska Division of Elections to expand the number of languages offered at polling locations throughout Alaska by fully utilizing the features of the touch screen voting units, and promote the use of the touch screen voting units not only as an accommodation for the blind and visually impaired, but also for Alaskans with limited English proficiency, as a way for all Alaskans to participate equally in exercising their fundamental right to vote.

ADOPTED in Juneau, Alaska, this 22nd day of February, 2023.



Zackary Gottshall
Chairperson
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution 2023-01 is a true and accurate copy of the language adopted by the Commission on February 22, 2023.



Angela Park
Secretary
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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RESOLUTION 2023-3

Revising the request for the annual report due date specified in Resolution 2022-8

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights ("ASCHR" or the "Commission") passed Resolution 2022-8, asking the Alaska Legislature to change the due date for the Commission's annual report; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission reaffirms the rationale provided in Resolution 2022-8; and,

WHEREAS, during legislative discussions in February, 2023, the idea arose to align the Commission's report period with the fiscal year; and,

WHEREAS, aligning the data analysis with the fiscal year potentially gives the Commission more than six months to produce the report and deliver it to the Alaska Legislature before session, even during cycles when the three-year equal employment opportunity assessment is required per AS 18.80.060(a)(6); and,

WHEREAS, many legislators expressed a preference to receiving agency reports during the interim when they had time to review the report rather than during the legislative session; and,

WHEREAS, Representative Prax introduced HB 48, which had legislative hearings, to adjust the annual report deadline; and,

WHEREAS, after its introduction, additional meritorious ideas were presented such as removing the Legislative Affairs Agency from the distribution chain per AS 18.80.150 and electronically notifying the Alaska Legislature that the annual report was available; and,

WHEREAS, Rep. Prax offered to hold HB 48 for the Commission to further consider the annual report's due date.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights calls on the Alaska Legislature to amend AS 18.80.150 to change the due date for the annual report to November 15 and require the data analysis to review data on the fiscal year. This grants over four months to produce the report, which is particularly needed during the executive branch assessment years, and delivers the report to the legislators when they are not in session.

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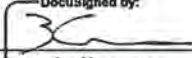
Further, by having the date due on November 15, it avoids complications associated with election years. Newly elected legislators can review the report alongside re-elected incumbents. Further, the Commission supports removing the Legislative Affairs Agency from the distribution chain.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission suggests the following language for legislative discussion in amending AS 18.80.150:

The commission shall report annually to the governor on civil rights problems it has encountered in the preceding year and may recommend legislative action. The commission shall review data included in the report on the fiscal year from July 1 of the preceding year through June 30, and produce the report by November 15. The commission shall make electronic copies of the report available to the public and notify the governor and the legislature that the report is available. [PROVIDE THE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY WITH 40 COPIES OF THE REPORT DURING THE WEEK PRECEDING THE CONVENING OF THE ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION FOR LIBRARY DISTRIBUTION. THE COMMISSION SHALL MAKE COPIES OF THE REPORT AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AND NOTIFY THE LEGISLATURE THAT THE REPORT IS AVAILABLE.]

Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Alaska Legislature and the Governor.

ADOPTED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 17 day of April, 2023

DocuSigned by:

 Zackary Gottshall F08314A2...
 Chairperson
 Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution 2023-3 is a true and accurate copy of the language adopted by the Commission on April 18, 2023.


 Gina Aumavae
 Secretary
 Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

800 A Street, Suite 204
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3669
Main: 907.274.4692 / 907.276.7474
TTY/TDD: 711 for Alaska Relay
Fax: 907.278-8588

RESOLUTION 2023-04

Drawing Attention to the Parental Rights of Disabled People

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska’s civil rights enforcement agency; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights enforces the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*; and,

WHEREAS, over the past decade, news entities in other states reported stories about parents with physical or mental disabilities having their parental rights terminated or threatened to be terminated due in total or part to their disabled status; and,

WHEREAS, scholarly articles such as *Clients with Mental Illness and Their Children: Implications for Clinical Practice* in “Issues in Mental Health Nursing;” *When a Parent Has a Mental Illness: Child Custody Issues*, in “Mental Health America;” and *Mothers with Mental Illness* in “Family Relationships & the Context of Parenting” have all found that upwards of seventy percent of parents with mental disabilities will lose custody of their children at some point in their life, despite these parents having the lowest rate of previous legal problems and relatively high rates of complying with reunification plans in comparison to other parents facing custodial termination; and,

WHEREAS, many advocates in the disabled community from both the National Federation of the Blind and the National Association of the Deaf have expressed concerns about the legal and regulatory barriers that are faced by those who are “Parenting While Blind” or raising the Children of Deaf Adults; and,

WHEREAS, AS 18.80.255 makes it unlawful for the state, “to refuse or deny to a person any local, state, or federal funds, services, goods, facilities, advantages, or privileges because of physical or mental disability”; and,



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RESOLUTION 2023-05

Encouraging the State of Alaska to Purchase Braille Printers for Shared Department Use

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska’s civil rights enforcement agency; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights enforces the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*; and,

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has recorded 14,000 Alaskans reporting total or near blindness; and,

WHEREAS, even with the increase in digital communications, numerous offices of the State of Alaska still distribute printed material to the public for a wide variety of purposes; and,

WHEREAS, braille printers or embossers can allow for written or printed materials to be made accessible to those visually impaired peoples who are fluent in braille; and,

WHEREAS, AS 18.80.255 makes it unlawful for the state, “to refuse or deny to a person any local, state, or federal funds, services, goods, facilities, advantages, or privileges because of physical or mental disability;” and,

WHEREAS, the state’s Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Program’s policy statement provides that “no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded, by reason of such disability, from participation in or be denied the benefits of the service, programs, or activities of a state agency; or be subjected to discrimination by any such agency.”

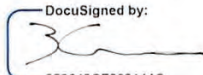
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights calls on the Governor to work with the department heads to procure a small number of braille printers or embossers that would allow for state agencies to create braille documents when necessary. The Commission recognizes the unreasonable cost-benefit balance of providing every state office, or even every department, with a braille printer or embosser, and instead encourages the Governor to

Page 2

work with the departments to procure a limited number of these devices to be made available for shared use between all executive branch agencies in a geographic locale when the agency needs to provide braille documents.

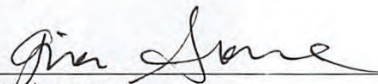
Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor of Alaska and the Governor's cabinet members.

ADOPTED in Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of August, 2023.

DocuSigned by:

953643CF08314A2

Zackary Gottshall
Chairperson
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution
2023-05 is a true and accurate copy of the
language adopted by the Commission on
August 22, 2023.



Gina Aumuvae
Secretary
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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RESOLUTION 2023-06

**Encouraging the Alaska Pioneer Homes to Voluntarily Retrofit Facilities
to Meet Current Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements**

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska’s civil rights enforcement agency; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights enforces the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Pioneer Homes have a storied history of providing a home and community to senior citizens of Alaska and currently serve almost 500 elders; and,

WHEREAS, section 12182 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that, “No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place or public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation;” and,

WHEREAS, in furtherance of these goals, the federal government has enacted many regulations on construction of buildings of public accommodation covering aspects including the height of light switches, the number of dedicated handicapped parking spaces, and the labelling of elevator buttons, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, these federally promulgated ADA regulations contain a variety of exemptions and “safe harbors” from their enforcement that can be acquired based on compliance on earlier lesser standards or the historic nature of the buildings; and,

WHEREAS, the various Pioneer Homes likely qualify for a number of these ADA regulation exemptions and therefore may legally have facilities that are not up to the highest accessibility standards.

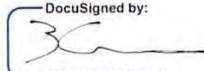
Page 2

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights calls upon the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes to voluntarily retrofit their facilities to meet the highest standards required under the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations.

Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to Central Office of the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes, and the Alaska Division of Senior and Disability Services.

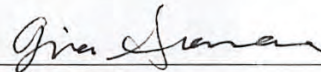
ADOPTED in Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of August, 2023.

DocuSigned by:


953643CF08314A2

Zackary Gottshall
Chairperson
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution
2023-06 is a true and accurate copy of the
language adopted by the Commission on
August 22, 2023.



Gina Aumuvae
Secretary
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



THE STATE
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Office of the Governor

COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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RESOLUTION 2023-07

Requesting the Alaska Legislature to codify *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* as it applies to the Alaska Human Rights Act

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska’s civil rights enforcement agency; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights enforces the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*, which includes AS 18.80.230, proscribing unlawful practices in places of public accommodation; and,

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court issued its opinion in *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*, 600 U.S. ____ (2023), on June 30, 2023, wherein Lorie Smith sought to prevent the State of Colorado from enforcing the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act against her in such a manner that may cause her to create expressions that contradict her own religious views—namely the creation of websites celebrating same-sex marriages that she does not endorse; and,

WHEREAS, the Colorado Commission on Civil Rights enforcing its public accommodation statute in the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act is the equivalent of the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights enforcing its public accommodation statute in the Alaska Human Rights Act; and,

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court stated that creating wedding websites qualifies as pure speech protected by the First Amendment, *id.* at 9 (citation omitted), and that the websites Lorie Smith sought to create involve *her* speech because they are to contain her words and her original artworks, *id.* at 10; and,

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court went on to compare the issue to an unwilling Muslim director being forced to make a Zionist film, an atheist artist being forced to paint an Evangelical mural, or a male website designer married to another man being forced to design websites for an organization opposed to same-sex marriage, *id.* at 12 (citations omitted); and,

WHEREAS, “no public accommodations law is immune from the demands of the Constitution. . . [P]ublic accommodations statutes can sweep too broadly when deployed to compel speech.” *id.* at 14; and,

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Page 2

WHEREAS, “religion” is a class protected throughout the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights desires the Alaska Legislature to amend the public accommodation statute, AS 18.80.230, to codify *303 Creative LLC* so as to avoid any public confusion about enforcing that law against a public accommodation respondent being compelled to create speech that violates the respondent’s sincerely held religious belief.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights calls on the Alaska Legislature to amend AS 18.80.230 to codify the United States Supreme Court’s opinion in *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* to clarify in state law the First Amendment protection granted to public accommodation entities who could otherwise be compelled to create speech against their sincerely held religious beliefs.

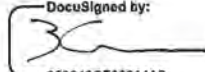
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission suggests the following language for legislative discussion in amending AS 18.80.230:

AS 18.80.230 is amended by adding a new section to read:

(c) It is an affirmative defense to a complaint filed under (a) of this section that the service sought by the complainant involves pure speech that violates the respondent’s sincerely held religious belief.

Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Alaska Legislature and the Governor.

ADOPTED in Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of August, 2023.

DocuSigned by:

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Zackary Gottshall
 Chairperson
 Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution
 2023-07 is a true and accurate copy of the
 language adopted by the Commission on
August 22, 2023.


 Gina Aumuvae
 Secretary
 Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL I. DUNLEAVY

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RESOLUTION 2023-08

Encouraging the Alaska Departments of Law, Public Safety, Education and Early Development, Family and Community Services, and Labor and Workforce Development to strengthen awareness and preventative efforts to stop human trafficking through publications and education on what constitutes human trafficking, and through exploration of how departments can use their skills and expertise to be a part of the solution

WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights is the State of Alaska’s civil rights enforcement agency charged with enforcing the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*, as mandated by Article I, Section 3 of the Alaska Constitution; and,

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a global as well as a state issue; and,

WHEREAS, according to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, “The trafficking of persons has frequently been described as a ‘modern’ or ‘Twenty-First Century’ form of slavery,” and there are more “modern slaves” in the world today than at any other time in history; and,

WHEREAS, human trafficking includes the recruitment, transport, receipt, and harboring of people for the purpose of exploiting their labor and in which individuals are deprived of their freedom for little or no pay; and,

WHEREAS, labor trafficking constitutes 75% of all trafficking where the victims are primarily men, but sex trafficking is a primary concern of American Indians and Alaska Native Communities as 40% of women involved in sex trafficking identify as American Indian/Alaska Native or Canadian First Nations; and,

WHEREAS, human trafficking can happen to anyone, according to the Alaska Native Justice Center, who reported that “homeless youth in Anchorage were being trafficked at a rate of nearly 30%—a higher rate than any other city studied, including New York and New Orleans,” and, “Nearly 45% of trafficked youth identified were Alaska Native;” and,

WHEREAS, human trafficking in the forms of labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and sexual exploitation can constitute a violation of both criminal statutes and civil rights laws; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Human Rights Act is generally regarded as one of the most comprehensive and progressive civil rights statutes in the United States, and therefore Alaska has the opportunity for leadership in the prevention of human trafficking; and,

Page 2

WHEREAS, per AS 18.80.060, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights has a duty to study the problems of discrimination in specific fields of human relationships; and,

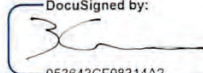
WHEREAS, the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights may call upon the departments and agencies of the state, with the approval of the governor, for cooperation and assistance in carrying out its duties, including the duty of educating the public on the law, what constitutes discrimination, and how to prevent discrimination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights calls on the Departments of Law, Public Safety, Education and Early Development, Family and Community Services, and Labor and Workforce Development to strengthen awareness and prevention efforts to stop human trafficking through publications and education on what constitutes human trafficking, and through exploration of how these departments can use their skills and expertise to be a part of the solution to human trafficking.

Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor of Alaska, the Attorney General, the Commission of Public Safety, the Commissioner of Education and Early Development, the Commissioner of Family and Community Services, and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

ADOPTED in Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of August, 2023.

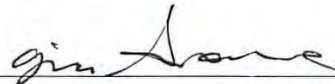
DocuSigned by:



953643CE08314A2

Zackary Gottshall
Chairperson
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution
2023-08 is a true and accurate copy of the
language adopted by the Commission on
August 22, 2023.



Gina Aumuvae
Secretary
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights



MISSION

To eliminate and prevent discrimination for all Alaskans

VISION

An Alaska free of discrimination

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Integrity in all we do
- An organization built on mutual respect
- Data-driven and accountable
- Promoters of equality for all Alaskans
- Meaningful application of resources
- Continuous improvement
- Respectful representation of the constituents we serve
- Enforcement as a tool, not a goal
- Integrate education into all aspects of our work

PURPOSE STATEMENT

“Discrimination not only threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of the state, but also menaces the institutions of the state and threatens peace, order, health, safety, and general welfare of the state and its inhabitants. Therefore, it is the policy of the state and the purpose of this chapter to eliminate and prevent discrimination. It is also the policy of the state to encourage and enable physically and mentally disabled persons to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state and to engage in remunerative employment.” AS 18.80

60th Anniversary Celebration

In spring of 2023, staff discovered a time capsule closed in 1993 with instructions for it to be opened in 2023. A quick survey revealed no institutional knowledge of this capsule or even an awareness of its existence in the back corner of a rarely used supply closet. Realizing that 2023 represented the agency’s 60th anniversary, plans were soon underway to hold a large public event celebrating this milestone that would simultaneously provide a forum to open the time capsule.



Time capsule from 1993.



ASCHR Executive Director Robert Corbisier and Chairperson Zackary Gottshall.

After advertising on southcentral radio stations, bulletin boards, and social media, the Commission held a meeting on July 27 under a tent on the Delany Park Strip in Anchorage, complete with a food truck, cookies, games, prizes, and a scavenger hunt. After a welcome from Chairperson Zack Gottshall, Executive Director Rob Corbisier provided an overview of the Commission’s history, and the Commissioners each said a few words commemorating the event. This was followed by a speech from Elizabeth Cannon, the U.S. EEOC’s Seattle Field Office Director. Chair Gottshall and Mr. Corbisier then opened the time capsule, which contained a newspaper from 1993 and speeches, comments, and the agenda from a similar event held in Fairbanks commemorating the Commission’s 30th anniversary. The Commission then invited public comment and asked for contributions for a new time capsule.

This new capsule has not yet been sealed as of the publication of this 2023 annual report, and anyone wishing to submit additional items should contact the executive director.



Above: From left to right, Evelyn Abello (former ASCHR Investigations Director), Commissioner Henderson, Commissioner Carrillo, Betsy Peratrovich (granddaughter of Alaska civil rights pioneers Elizabeth and Roy Peratrovich), Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Cernich, and Commissioner Craig.

OUTREACH



ASCHR Attorney Alex Roider at the 2023 Pride Festival



ASCHR information flyers for public education



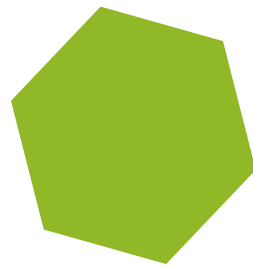
ASCHR Attorney Alex Roider at the 2023 Alaska State Fair



ASCHR Attorney Alex Roider at the 2023 Kenai Peninsula State Fair



AFN Booth - ASCHR booth at AFN



- Alaska Association of Paralegals presentation, January 12, 2023
- Anchorage Downtown Rotary presentation, January 17, 2023
- Project Homeless Connect outreach booth, Soldotna, January 31, 2023
- Press release for February meeting/outreach, February 14, 2023
- Press release for HB 13 addressing non-profit jurisdiction, February 16, 2023
- Commission meeting and outreach table during 2023 University of Alaska Southeast Spring Job Fair, February 22, 2023
- Legislative priority meetings with elected officials, Juneau, February 23-24, 2023
- State and national press coverage related to LGBTQ+ jurisdiction, February/March 2023
- Stone Soup Group 2023 Parent Conference outreach table, March 23-24, 2023
- Mat-Su Employer Expo, March 29, 2023
- Press release for April meeting, March 31, 2023
- Alaska Society for Human Resource Management Annual State Conference presentation and outreach table, April 13-14
- Anchorage South Rotary presentation, April 27, 2023
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council Job Fair outreach booth, May 31, 2023
- Celebrate Pride '23 outreach booth, June 24, 2023
- Press release for 60th Anniversary Celebration/meeting/outreach, July 12, 2023
- Anchorage East Rotary presentation, July 12, 2023
- Underground Pride outreach booth, Palmer, July 20, 2023
- ASCHR 60th Anniversary Celebration radio ads, July 19-26, 2023
- ASCHR 60th Anniversary Celebration flyers distributed in Anchorage and Matsu, July 2023
- ASCHR 60th Anniversary Celebration meeting, July 26, 2023
- Bartlett Club presentation, July 27, 2023
- Anchorage Community Police Task Force presentation, August 11, 2023
- U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service meeting in collaboration with minority community members, August 23, 2023
- Kenai Peninsula State Fair outreach booth, Ninilchik, August 11-13, 2023
- Alaska State Fair outreach booth, Palmer, August 18, 25, 2023
- Press release highlighting resolutions from August 22 meeting, September 1, 2023
- Anchorage Police Department Academy presentation, September 27, 2023
- Press release announcing statewide civil rights conference, September 29, 2023
- Brilliant Media Strategies campaign launched October 2023 (ongoing into 2024); as of January 15, 2024:
 - 2,666,005 digital impressions
 - 6,082 programmatic digital clicks
 - 55.19% view through completion
 - 9,949 Google ad impressions
 - 1,124 Google ad clicks
 - 550,447 YouTube ad impressions
 - 330 YouTube ad clicks
- United Youth Courts of Alaska State Conference outreach booth and lunch-and-learn presentation, October 6
- Press release announcing LGBTQ+ Workplace Guidance Document, October 11, 2023
- Media coverage associated with the updated guidance document
- ANB/ANS Camp 87, ASCHR, and AERC 1st Annual Statewide Civil Rights Conference, October 14, 2023
- First Alaskans Institute 40th Annual Statewide Elders & Youth Conference outreach booth and lunch-and-learn presentation, October 15-18, 2023
- Alaska Federation of Natives Annual Conference outreach booth, October 19-21, 2023
- Alaska Jobs Corps collaboration, Palmer, ongoing from October 2023
- National Federation of the Blind, Alaska Convention presentation, November 3, 2023
- Congregation Beth Sholom meeting, November 29, 2023
- Alaska Black Caucus meeting, December 5, 2023
- Alaska Municipal Attorneys Conference presentation, December 5, 2023

Statewide Civil Rights Conference

Toward the end of July, representatives from Alaska Native Brotherhood (“ANB”) Camp 87 approached the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission (“AERC”) about collaborating on a civil rights conference after the Camp 87 leadership believed that the nation and the state were entering a new era in the civil rights movement. AERC asked if the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights (“ASCHR”) was interested in attending this planning meeting, and by August 8th plans began coming together to put on a statewide event to be held in Anchorage the weekend before the Alaska Federation of Natives annual convention.

On October 14, 2023, ANB Camp 87 along with Alaska Native Sisterhood (“ANS”) Camp 87 headlined the First Annual Statewide Alaska Civil Rights Conference, cosponsored by ASCHR and AERC. The conference was free and open to the public. As a non-partisan event, special guests included both state and municipal leadership with Lt. Governor Nancy Dahlstrom and Mayor Dave Bronson. After some introductory remarks, attendees learned a little about how Alaska’s civil rights history began with the formation of ANB and ANS, followed by Roy and Elizabeth Peratrovich lobbying for passage of the Alaska Antidiscrimination Act of 1945—the first of its kind by any state or territory in the wake of federal and state laws passed immediately after the Civil War.

Morning panel discussions were held on challenges to providing civil rights education to students, and the intersection between religion and civil rights. The keynote speaker during lunch was Cal Williams, who recounted some of his experiences leading civil rights in Anchorage after growing up and becoming active in the civil rights movement as a young man in the deep south. After lunch, attendees heard about issues in housing discrimination. The conference wrapped up with a panel discussing discriminatory barriers prisoners face when re-entering society and closing remarks by the organizing committee.

That evening, participants had the opportunity to attend a banquet hosted by ANB/ANS Camp 87, where ANB/ANS presented a civil rights award to Emil Notti for his work to advance civil rights during the Alaska Native land claims era. Mr. Notti recounted how his own experiences facing discrimination as a young Native electrical engineer trying to get a job in Anchorage led him to work for a time at ASCHR as the first field representative, making him ASCHR’s third employee.



ASCHR Commissioners with the Lt. Governor of Alaska at the statewide civil rights conference. L-R: William Craig, Chairperson Zack Gottshall, Vice-Chair Mae Marsh, Becky Carrillo, Lt. Gov. Nancy Dahlstrom, Shiela Cernich.



Executive Director Rob Corbisier, at left, moderates the religion panel during the statewide civil rights conference featuring, from left to right, Niki Tshibaka, Michael Burke, Heather Barbour, Leonard John, and Matt Schultz.

Statewide Civil Rights Conference



Civil rights conference organizers wrapping up the conference. L-R: ASCHR Executive Director Rob Corbisier, AERC Executive Director Keoki Kim, and ANB Camp 87 President Marvin Adams.



Marvin Adams, ANB Camp 87 President, speaks to civil rights conference attendees with other members of ANB and ANS.



Commissioner Shiela Cernich with civil rights conference keynote speaker Cal Williams.



Commission Chairperson Zack Gottshall speaks to attendees at the civil rights conference.

Alaska Native Brotherhood
Alaska Native Sisterhood Camp 87

First Annual Statewide Civil Rights Conference

Free & Open to the Public | October 14, 2023
Embassy Suites, Anchorage, AK

Co-sponsored by the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights
and the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission

Executive Panel

Nancy Dahlstrom
LL, Governor

Dave Bronson
Mayor of Anchorage

Mark Yaffee
Commissioner

DOORS OPEN 8 am

8:30 am: Welcome

9:30 am: History of ANB/ANS

10:30 am: Education Panel

11:30 am: Religion Panel

1:30 pm: Housing Discrimination Panel

2:45 pm: Criminal Re-entry Panel

3:45 pm: Closing

BANQUET 5:30 PM

Presented in partnership with the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

William P. Craig, Sitka
Rebecca N. Carrillo, Juneau
Zackary Gottshall, Anchorage
Lonzo Henderson, Anchorage
Mae Marsh, Fairbanks
Jessie Ruffridge, Soldotna
Shiela Cernich, Anchorage

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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