



Executive Director's Report for March 2025

Summary

Our investigators became certified Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Investigators at the end of February. This has been fruitful as they continue to work extremely hard and make progress on their investigations. The main priority of the agency is keeping up with investigations and current cases while a new executive director is approved and hired. We have made progress in the administrative steps required to get the job posted and should be able to start taking applications soon. The internal audit report is nearing completion and will likely be released in May.

Case Status

Inquiries and New Complaints

The agency received 25 inquiries and perfected 6 new complaints in March 2025.

<i>Inquiries and New Complaints</i>								
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Inquiries	498	516	408	385	363	333	324	88
New Complaints	119	130	82	72	73	55	48	13

Pending Cases

The agency has 29 open cases.

Case Closures

One case was closed during March by settlement between the parties and one case was closed when the complainant requested a right to sue letter from the EEOC.

<i>Case Closures</i>								
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Closures	126	108	83	97	71	85	79	4

Cases over 240 days

AMC 5.50.010 requires the AERC to “promptly and impartially” investigate complaints and conduct fact finding procedures. The AERC shall, unless good cause is shown, issue its determination of whether the allegations are supported by substantial evidence within 240 days after the filing of the complaint. The agency currently has **two** cases that exceed 240 days for good cause, down from **four** last month.

- In one case, both sides are represented by counsel. The attorneys requested numerous continuances while they attempted to negotiate a settlement.
- In one case the investigator was unable to reach the complainant for several months but has re-established communication and is investigating the case.

Budget Status

2025 Budget vs Actuals

	Current Budget	Encumbrance	Actuals	Difference	Utilization
Labor	\$ 720,580.00	\$	\$ 77,932.01	\$ 642,647.99	10.82%
Non-labor	\$ 13,175.00	\$	\$ 381.57	\$ 12,793.43	2.90%
Travel	\$ 8,500.00	\$	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,700.00	56.47%
IG Charges	\$ 225,172.00	\$	\$ 211.55	\$ 224,960.45	0.09%
Revenue	\$ (49,800.00)	\$	\$ (0.00)	\$ (49,800.00)	0.00%
Total	\$ 917,627.00	\$	\$ 83,325.13	\$ 834,301.87	9.08%

Administration

Our contract with the EEOC may be at risk of being reduced or eliminated. As background, the EEOC has a district office in San Francisco and a field office in Seattle that covers a broad region, including Alaska. But the EEOC does not have investigators or staff in Alaska. Therefore, the EEOC has a contract with the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission to investigate and process cases in Anchorage involving alleged violations of various federal anti-discrimination laws. The contract for 2025 requires the AERC to close 49 cases during fiscal year 2025 (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025). In return, the EEOC is obligated to pay the municipality \$49,095.

Recently, the EEOC let us know that it is seeking to identify government efficiencies and evaluate contracts for possible reduction or elimination, and that this contract may be one of the ones affected. We are working to answer various requests for information from the EEOC to ensure this does not happen. If it does, we will seek guidance and assistance from the municipal attorney to ensure the municipality’s contractual rights are protected.

Internal Audit is currently auditing the AERC and finalizing a report, which will be a public

record. The initial exit conference is scheduled for April 16, 2025. The report will likely be publicly available in May and will be provided to all the commissioners once it is available.

The process to hire a new executive director has involved updates to the job classification to make sure the posted job description is accurate. We recently completed this step and are hoping to start receiving applications soon. Hiring a new executive director is subject to both appointment by the commission and approval by the mayor. Once we have a pool of applicants, the hiring process will involve a hiring panel that will interview applicants and make a recommendation to the commission. We will need two commissioners to serve on the hiring panel. If other commissioners have specific questions that they would like applicants to be asked or considerations for the hiring panel, please bring them up during commissioner comments at one of the meetings.

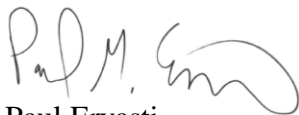
Case Management System: The agency uses Time Matters as its case management system. Several years ago, the agency decided to not renew active licenses for this system while deciding on the best solution for a case management system. Licenses would cost around \$25,000 per year. Each year the agency continues to use this program without paying for an active license, the number of bugs and technical challenges increases. Currently, investigators spend a lot of time with IT, and this sometimes does not resolve their issues. Time Matters has its own service desk and IT support that could easily fix the issues, but these services are only available for subscribers with an active license. Therefore, a long-term decision will need to be made about the future case management system.

Recently, Harley evaluated City View, which is the case management system the Ombudsman's office uses. This system may be a good solution that would fulfill our needs. Licenses are around \$2,000 per year. As interim director, I do not feel it is appropriate to commit to any long-term solutions and bind the agency to future expenditures of funds. But if we believe that City View is a viable solution, we may ask the commission to approve this switch in the future.

Outreach

Harley attended a community event at the Central Lutheran Church, which was sponsored by Action Alaska, Stand Up Alaska, And Alaskans Take A Stand. She presented information about our agency. Cade went to UAA and met with the UPD Chief of Police and spoke with UPD staff about our agency.

Very Respectfully,



Paul Ervasti
Acting Executive Director
Anchorage Equal Rights Commission