



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Assembly Information Memorandum

No. AIM 132-2024

Meeting Date: September 10, 2024

1 **FROM: MAYOR**

2
3 **SUBJECT: ANCHORAGE EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION 2023 ANNUAL**
4 **REPORT**

5
6 The Anchorage Equal Rights Commission members and staff respectfully submit
7 the Commission's 2023 Annual Report to the Anchorage Assembly.

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9
10 Prepared by: Anchorage Equal Rights Commission
11 Approved by: Keoki Kim, Executive Director, AERC
12 Concur: William D. Falsey, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
13 Concur: Rebecca A. Windt Pearson, Municipal Manager
14 Respectfully submitted: Suzanne LaFrance, Mayor

15
16 Attachment

ANCHORAGE EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION



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2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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2023 COMMISSION MEMBERS

Darrel Hess, Chair
Lea McKenna, Chair
Kathleen Obi Obasi, Vice Chair
Eric Talbert, Secretary
Timothy Kaderman, Member
Kathleen Obi Obasi, Member
Michael Maberry, Member
Erica Johnson, Member
Ryan Roley, Member
Heather Barbour, Member
Rosalina Mavaega, Member

2023 STAFF MEMBERS

Keoki Kim, Executive Director
Gita Franklin, Senior Investigator
Spenser Rose, Investigator
Darren Williams, Investigator
Stephanie Jedlicka, Investigator
Marie Husa, Investigator
Megan N. Moffitt, Investigator / Intake & Outreach Coordinator
Richard Busch III, Investigator
Natalie K. Day, Executive Assistant
Raleigh Alexander, Executive Assistant

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Dial 711 for Alaska Relay Services

Website: www.muni.org/aerc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AnchorageEqualRightsCommission

Twitter: www.twitter.com/AnchorageERC

MEETING DATES AND LOCATION INFORMATION

The Commission held regular meetings at 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of odd months in City Hall, the Fairview Rec Center, The Muldoon Library and the Main Library and via Microsoft Teams. Meeting information is posted on the MOA Public Notices website, the agency website, and under Upcoming Events on the MOA Boards and Commissions website.



II. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To Mayor Suzanne LaFrance, the Anchorage Assembly, and the Community of Anchorage:

On behalf of the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission, we are pleased to present the 2023 Annual Report. The report reflects the work of the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission throughout the year in furtherance of our mission to eliminate discrimination within the Municipality of Anchorage by enforcing Title 5 and working with the community to understand municipal, state and federal anti-discrimination laws.

This year continued to be one of hard work bringing the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission up to better standards. Executive Director, Keoki Kim, continued implementing a tracking system for investigative cases. This allows for all cases to be tracked from the day they are opened until their closing deadline. It provides for regular meetings and deadlines at each step of the investigation to ensure the case does not get delayed. It helps keep the Investigator, the Case Manager and the Director communicating and understanding what progress is being made in the case. Executive Director Kim also continued to

implement guidelines that all investigators are expected to actively work 50 cases simultaneously which conforms to national equal rights agency standards rather than the previous practice of only working 1 or 2 cases at a time, which resulted in substantial years long backlog. The major focus of the office has been to address the backlog. Slowly but steadily and with great attention to detail and thorough, impartial investigation, the agency has made substantial progress on the backlog.



This accomplishment was particularly difficult because at the beginning of the year three investigators left. However,



1st Annual ANB Alaska Civil Rights Conference



II. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CONTINUED)

new investigators were hired and received training in the office and at the EEOC. All investigators continue to receive supplemental training with the EEOC.

In order to address staff retention, Executive Director Kim successfully petitioned Human Resources to change the Investigator 1 position to an Investigator 2 position. This allows investigators to grow within the department rather than seek jobs elsewhere.

The Executive Director made the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission more accessible by conducting commission meetings in the community at library branches and neighborhood rec centers where parking and access to the building is easier than City Hall.

Twice a week the Executive Director conducted an informal survey by going to a random business or resident and simply asking if they had heard of the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission and knew what it did. Not a single person did. This is a serious deficiency. We cannot help Anchorage residents if they do not know we exist.

Accordingly, the Executive Director continued to overhaul all outreach materials to help spread knowledge of the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission. The Executive Director started:

- ▶ ***A children’s campaign featuring a child’s artwork with the slogan “We’re All in This Together.”***



- ▶ ***An anti-sexual harassment campaign featuring a female silhouette with the slogan “Justice for All.”***



- ▶ ***A unity campaign featuring the Anchorage skyline with the slogan “Anchorage Stronger Together.”***



- ▶ ***A civil rights history campaign featuring a picture of Elizabeth Peratrovich with the slogan “Elizabeth Spoke her Truth.”***





II. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CONTINUED)

- ▶ ***A criminal justice campaign featuring a Tlingit Owl with the slogan "Purpose, Hope Community."***



The Executive Director also used artwork from local high school students to develop outreach posters, postcards, calendars, stickers, magnets, mousepads, etc.

The goal is to have outreach products that people will actually want and use. So far this has been very successful because now residents are coming to our office requesting them. They have seen their friends using them and want to help spread our message.



The Executive Director collaborated with the Alaska Native Brotherhood, the Alaska Native Sisterhood and the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights to raise awareness of equal rights issues in Anchorage by hosting the 1st Annual ANB Alaska Civil Rights Conference. The conference was well attended and opened by the Mayor and the Lt. Governor as

well as an assembly member. The Executive Director is currently planning the 2nd Annual ANB Alaska Civil Rights Conference with the same organizations in 2024.



The Executive Director is collaborating with the Small Business Association and the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights to provide free, in person and online anti-discrimination training events for local businesses and residents.

The Executive Director is collaborating with the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights to undertake a statewide comprehensive survey including Anchorage to determine what types of discrimination are occurring. This is an effort to better understand discrimination in our community so that we can develop a baseline to measure progress and also more effectively target our resources.





The Executive Director established a youth ambassador program to assist in spreading awareness of our agency and its services to local high schools and colleges.

The Anchorage Equal Rights Commission processed 333 inquiries during 2023.

Of those inquires, 60 discrimination complaints were filed. 33 were co-filed with the EEOC. 85 cases were closed by settlement, investigation, or conciliation in 2023.

Sincerely,

Sharon Gibbons

Sharon Gibbons, Chair

Keoki Kim

Keoki Kim, Executive Director



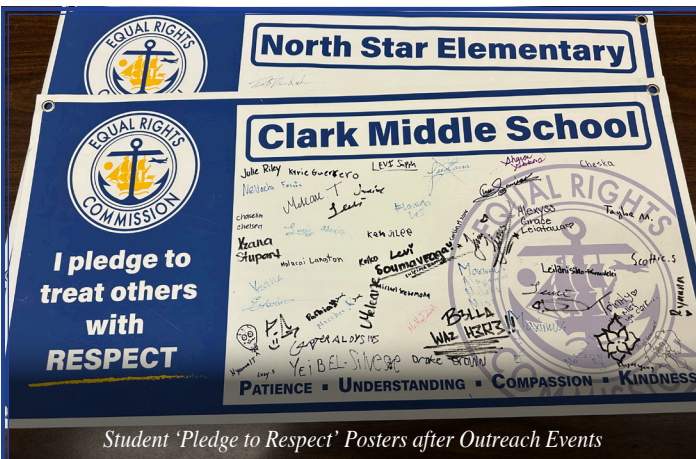
1st Annual ANB Alaska Civil Rights Conference Honor Guard



Lurie Daniels Favors, IAOHRA Keynote Speaker & Author of Afro State of Mind: Memories of a Nappy Headed Black Girl



Cameron Kroll, Youth Ambassador for the Autistic Community. Darrel Hess, Commission Chair



Student 'Pledge to Respect' Posters after Outreach Events



Clark Middle School Presentation with Commission Chair Sharon Gibbons



III. FUNCTIONS OF THE ANCHORAGE EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION

What is the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission?

The Anchorage Equal Rights Commission enforces Title 5 of the Anchorage Municipal Code. It was established in the Anchorage Charter in 1975 to prevent unlawful discrimination. It also enforces the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 through a work-share agreement with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

How does the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission enforce the law?

It impartially investigates complaints alleging illegal discrimination or harassment based on:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National Origin
- Age
- Sex (Pregnancy and Parenthood)
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- Physical Disability
- Mental Disability
- Retaliation

In the areas of:

- Employment
- Housing
- Public Accommodations
- Educational Institutions
- Financial Institutions
- Practices of the Municipality of Anchorage

What constitutes discrimination?

Discrimination means any direct or indirect act or practice of exclusion, distinction, restriction, segregation, limitation, refusal or denial or any other act or practice of differentiation or preference in the treatment of a person because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or physical or mental disability, or the aiding, abetting, inciting, coercing, or compelling thereof.

AMC 5.20.010

Discrimination also includes retaliating against someone for engaging in a protected activity, such as complaining of discrimination or requesting a reasonable accommodation.

What is the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission complaint process?

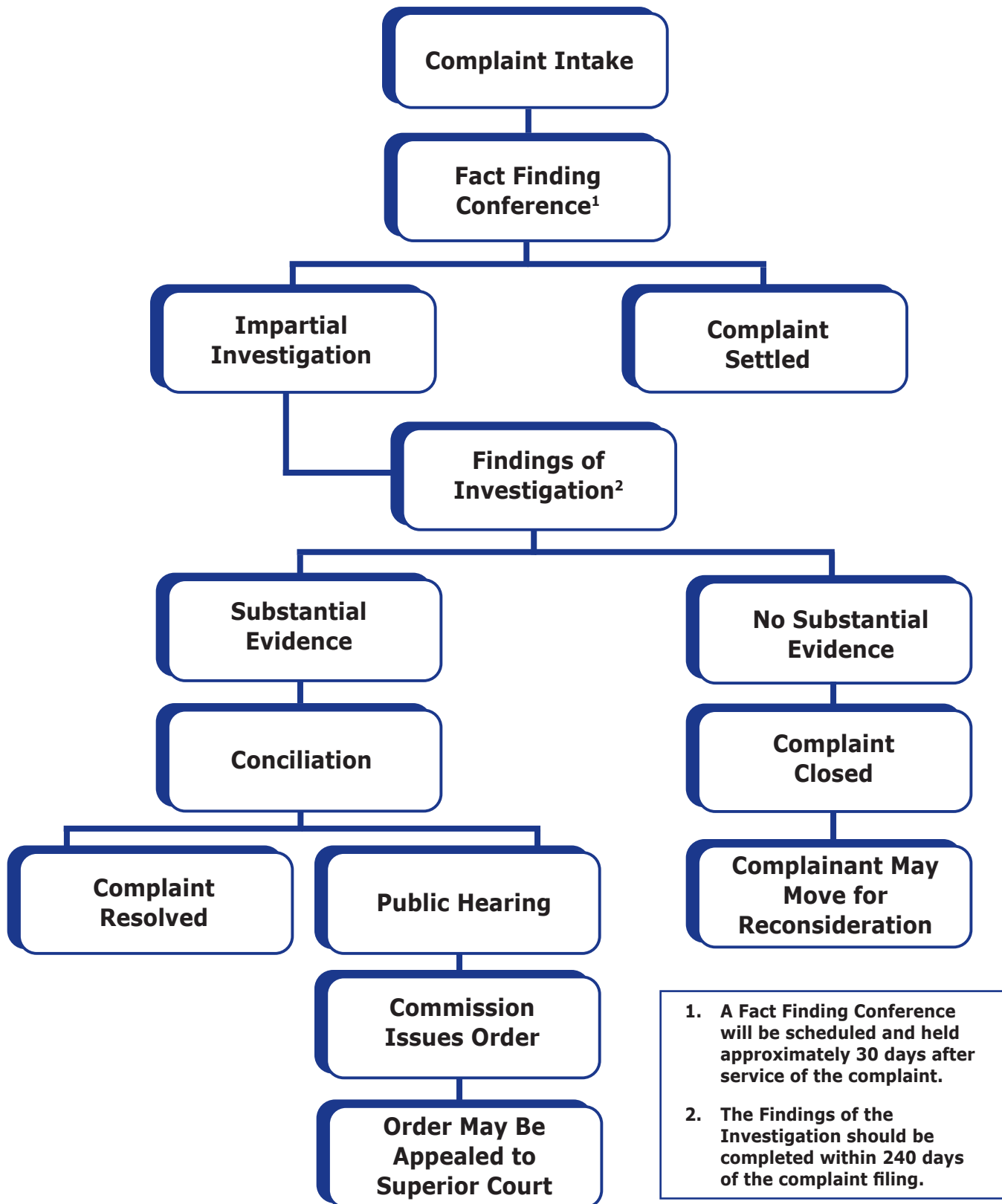
Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against, contacts the staff and fills out an intake questionnaire. The staff will review the questionnaire within 24 hours. Staff will draft a complaint if there is jurisdiction.

If there is not jurisdiction, staff will refer the person to the appropriate agency.



III. FUNCTIONS OF THE ANCHORAGE EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION (CONTINUED)

COMPLAINT PROCESS FLOW CHART





IV. STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2025

Document Control

Prepared by

Commission Members

Kimberly J. H. Pace, Chair
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Distribution Control

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Document Location

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Mission

The Anchorage Equal Rights Commission enforces municipal and other anti-discrimination laws on behalf of all residents and visitors to Anchorage. The Commission also educates the public about anti-discrimination laws and seeks to increase voluntary compliance with such laws and to uphold the vision of equal opportunity for all.

Vision

To support and maintain a community in which each person values the rights of others to live, work and play in peace and dignity, and all persons have equal opportunity to realize their full potential both as individuals and as members of society.



IV. STRATEGIC PLAN (CONTINUED)

Commission Goals

Goal One

Continue to develop our outreach and marketing plan to improve ways to inform the community about the Commission's services via collaboration and technology.

Goal Two

Review Title 5 annually and recommend revisions, if necessary, to ensure code is accurate, facilitates staff work, and is responsive to the community.

Goal Three

Develop and maintain Commission Development and Orientation Committee to ensure qualified Commission members are timely appointed and trained.

Staff Goals

Goal One

Respond to inquiries in a timely manner.

Goal Two

Timely investigate allegations of discrimination.

Goal Three

Eliminate and prevent discriminatory practices by providing outreach and education to our community.

Goal Four

Advance staff professionalism by creating and implementing individualized professional development plans.

The Principles & Values that Guide Our Work

Honesty and Integrity

Respect for Everyone

Commitment to Fairness and Impartiality

Teamwork is How We Do Business



V. REPORT ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In 2023, Executive Director, Keoki Kim, overhauled the outreach merchandise used by the agency to focus on making items that Anchorage residents would actually want and use to help spread awareness of our agency. The Senior Investigator and the newly hired investigators focused on training and bringing the case backlog up to date.

The Executive Director worked with the Alaska Native Brotherhood, The Alaska Native Sisterhood and the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights to host the 1st Annual ANB Alaska Civil Rights Conference which held panels on issues discussing discrimination in Housing, Criminal Justice, and Education. The conference also had a panel discussing the intersection of Religion and Civil Rights. Some of the outreach that Staff and Commission members participated in are listed below. Executive Director Kim continued outreach by building relationships with other agencies, businesses, community organizations and individuals.

Staff Training Highlights:

- EEOC's Annual Investigator Conference.
- IAOHRA annual conference
- EEOC Monthly FEPA Director Meetings
- IAOHRA Monthly Board Meetings

Community Trainings:

- Community Council Meeting: staff attended numerous Community Council meetings and gave presentations about our services.
- Zender Group: staff partnered with ASCHR to lead a virtual presentation about hostile work environment, disability, and retaliation.

Municipal Engagement:

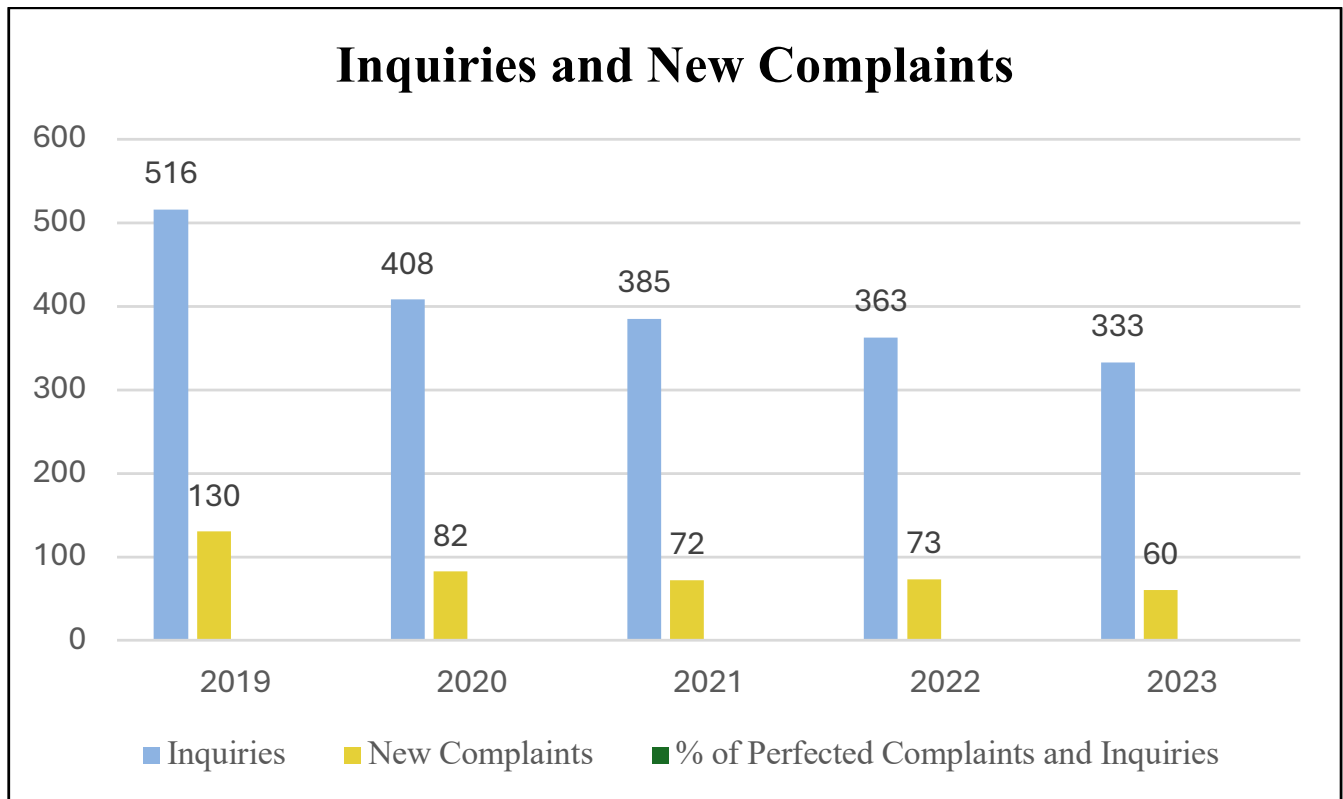
- Coaching, Counseling, and the Disciplinary process, hosted by the Municipality's Supervisor Training Academy.



VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Inquiries and New Complaints

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Inquiries	516	408	385	363	333
New Complaints	130	82	72	73	60
% of Perfected Complaints and Inquiries	25.2%	20.09%	18.70%	20.11%	18.02%

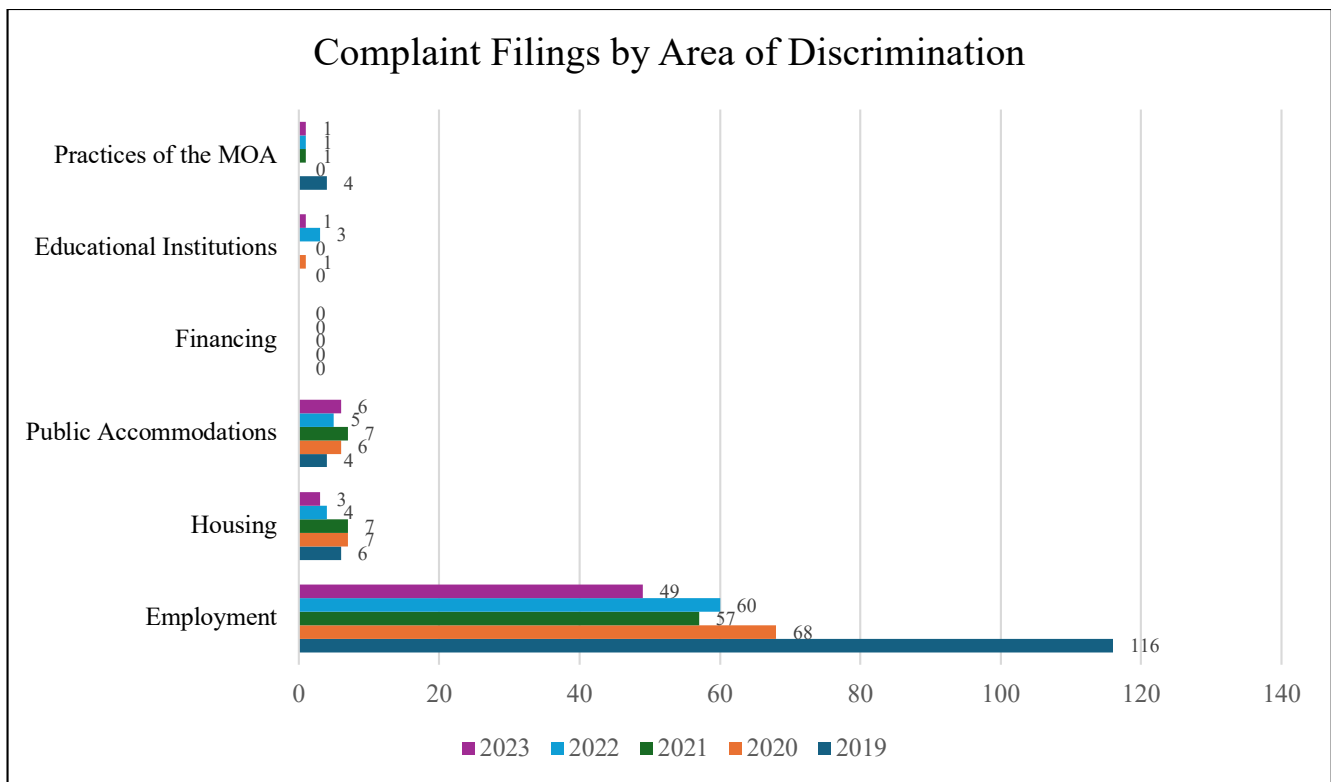




VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Complaint Filings by Area of Discrimination

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Employment	116	68	57	60	49
Housing	6	7	7	4	3
Public Accommodations	4	6	7	5	6
Financing	0	0	0	0	0
Educational Institutions	0	1	0	3	1
Practices of the MOA	4	0	1	1	1
TOTALS:	130	82	72	73	60



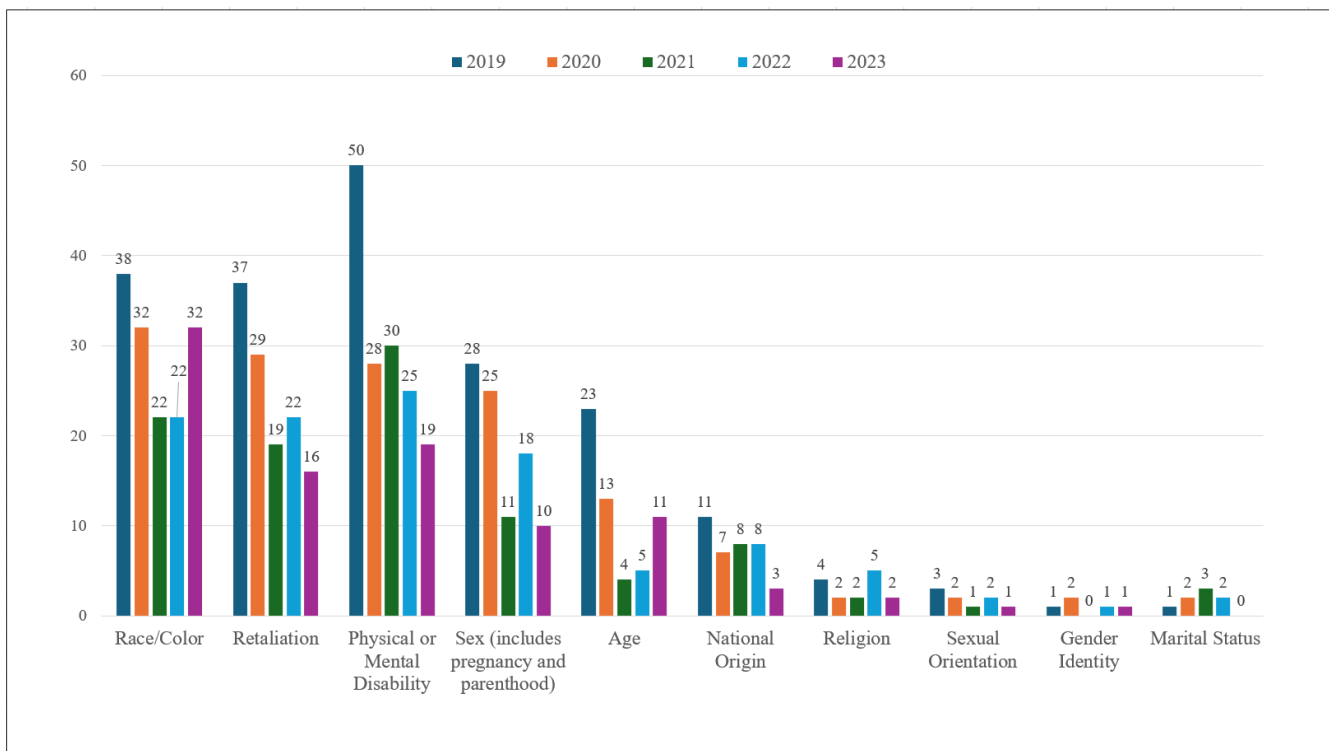


VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Complaint Filings by Basis*

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Race/Color	38	32	22	22	32
Retaliation	37	29	19	22	16
Physical or Mental Disability	50	28	30	25	19
Sex (includes pregnancy and parenthood)	28	25	11	18	10
Age	23	13	4	5	11
National Origin	11	7	8	8	3
Religion	4	2	2	5	2
Sexual Orientation	3	2	1	2	1
Gender Identity	1	2	0	1	1
Marital Status	1	2	3	2	0

*Complaints can be filed with more than one basis.

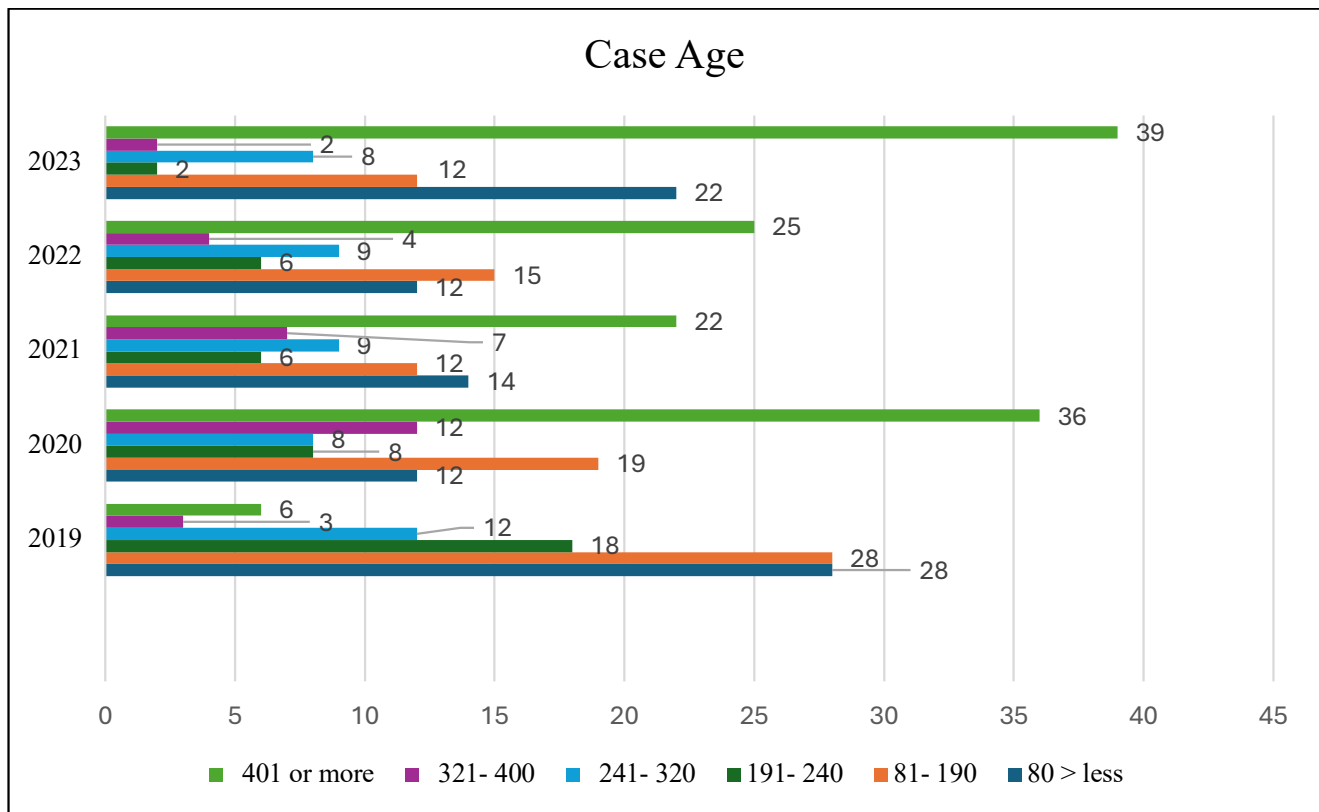




VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Case Age

		80 or less	81-190	191-240	241-320	321-400	401 or more	Total Cases	Total # and % Over 240
2019	# of Cases	28	28	18	12	3	6	95	21
	% of Cases	29.47%	29.47%	18.95%	12.63%	3.16%	6.32%	100%	22.18%
2020	# of Cases	12	19	8	8	12	36	95	56
	% of Cases	12.63%	20.0%	8.42%	8.42%	12.63%	37.89%	100%	58.94%
2021	# of Cases	14	12	6	9	7	22	70	38
	% of Cases	20.00%	17.14%	8.57%	12.86%	10.00%	31.43%	100%	54.28%
2022	# of Cases	12	15	6	9	4	25	71	38
	% of Cases	16.90%	21.13%	8.45%	12.68%	5.63%	35.21%	100%	53.52%
2023	# of Cases	22	12	2	8	2	39	85	49
	% of Cases	25.88%	14.12%	2.35%	9.41%	2.35%	45.89%	100%	57.65%



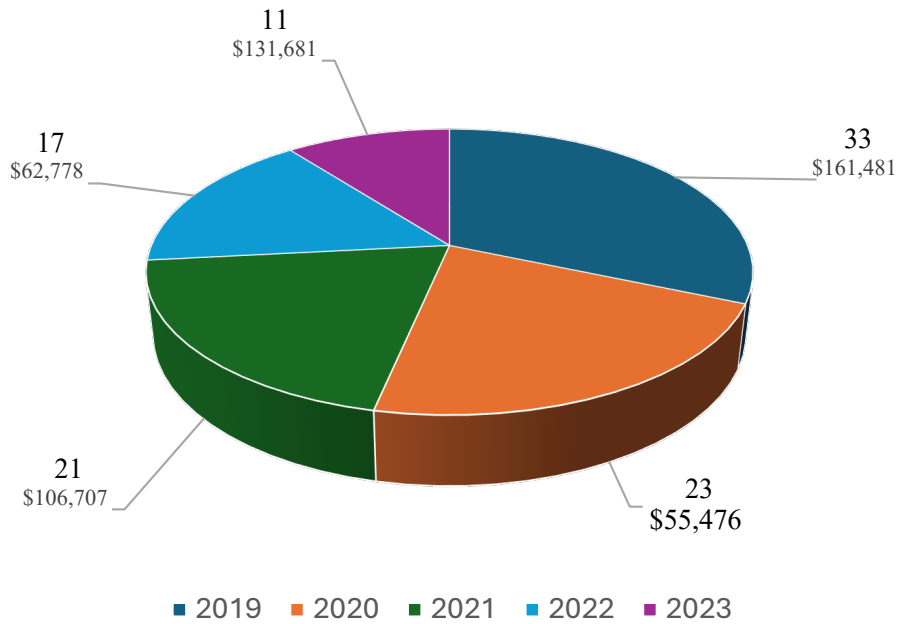


VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Resolutions Providing for Elimination of Discriminatory Practices

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Predetermination Settlements, Conciliations or Settlements that include remedial measures provided by Title 5	33/33	23/23	21/21	17/17	11/11
Total Dollars in Settlements	\$161,481	\$55,476	\$106,707	\$62,778	\$131,681

Total Predetermination Settlements, Conciliations or Settlements that include remedial measures provided by Title 5



2023 Post-Determination Cases as of 12/31/2023

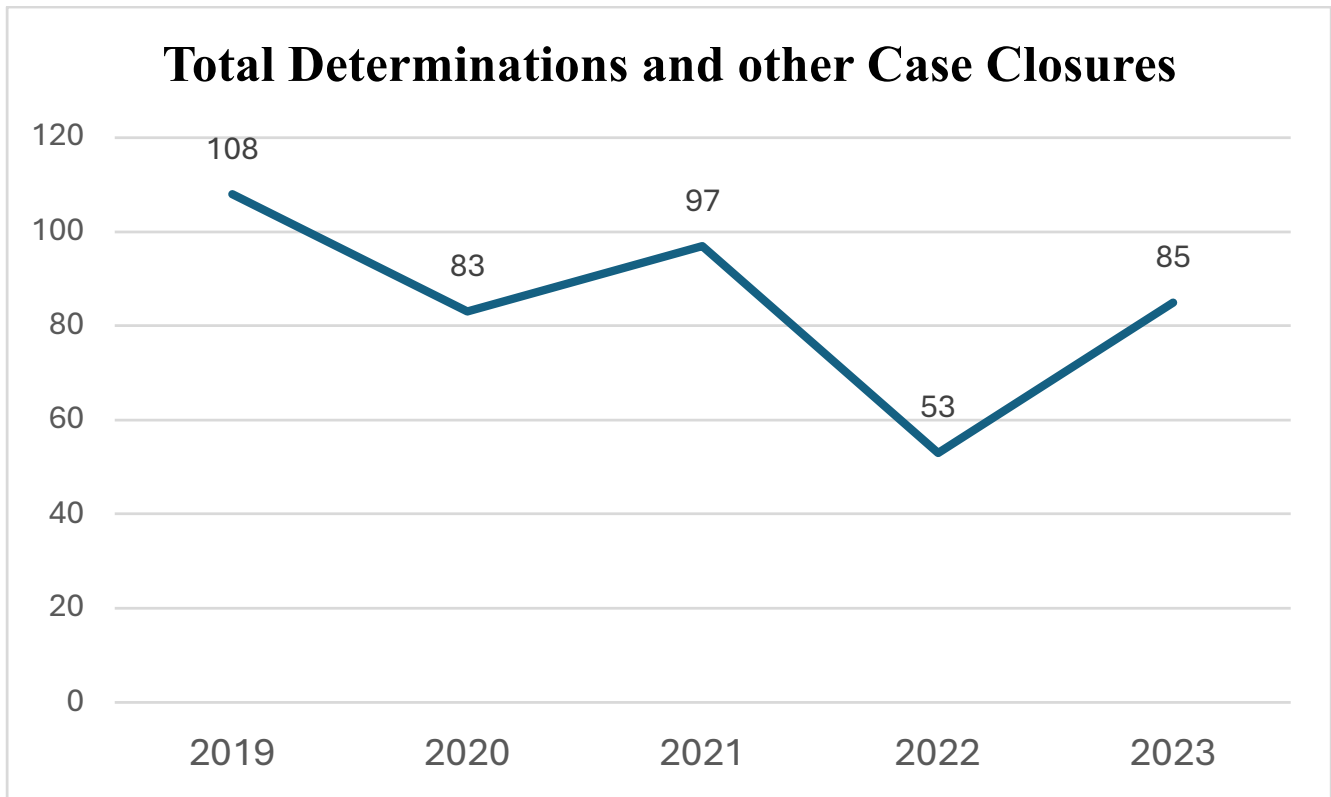
Number of cases in Conciliation status: 0 Number of cases Appealed to State Court: 0



VI. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND STATISTICS

Determinations and Case Closures

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Determinations and other Case Closures	108	83	97	53	85



Community
Inclusion
Access
Opportunity

Anchorage Equal Rights Commission

Anchorage Equal Rights Commission

Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination



Artwork created by Ana P, ASD Service High School

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