

# **CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS**

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## **TWO-YEAR REPORT 2021-2022**



**[WWW.CITYOFCHICAGO.ORG/CCHR](http://WWW.CITYOFCHICAGO.ORG/CCHR)**



## COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS ENABLING ORDINANCE

*The City Council finds that prejudice and the practice of discrimination against any individual or group because of race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, military discharge status, lawful source of income, and credit history (as to employment only), or criminal history (as to employment only) menace peace and public welfare. (2-120-480)*

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) is charged with enforcing the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance and the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance. The CCHR investigates complaints to determine whether discrimination may have occurred and uses its enforcement powers to punish acts of discrimination. Under the City's Hate Crimes Law, the agency aids hate crime victims. CCHR also employs proactive programs of education, intervention, and constituency building to discourage bigotry and bring people from different groups together.

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Greetings,

Welcome to the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) 2021-2022 Report. I am honored to have been appointed by Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot February 24, 2021, to serve as Chair and Commissioner of this incredible agency staffed by a team of dedicated and talented civil rights professionals.

The past two years have been a time of reflection and retooling for the CCHR, as Chicago and the world adjusts and resumes its pace in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CCHR has been challenged to evaluate our work and consider how we can be more effective in impacting the issues of discrimination and hate.

The lessons learned during this time will help shape the development of CCHR's outreach strategies to improve and strengthen our relationships with the city's most vulnerable communities. For example, one of our first initiatives was to pivot from our traditional in-person programs to a virtual outreach platform including the introduction of a new webinar series. This allowed us to reach thousands of residents in different areas of the city who may not have otherwise been aware of our services.

On the legal enforcement side, the CCHR worked to help draft and implement important new civil and human rights protections including a strengthened Sexual Harassment Ordinance and the new Bodily Autonomy Ordinance.

The CCHR also instituted new programs to fight hate crimes and reduce incidents of bias. Hate incidents against members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community grew at an alarming rate nationwide in 2021 resulting in calls for action. Working with AAPI community leaders, the CCHR responded to this crisis by creating an Ad-Hoc Committee on AAPI Hate Crimes to develop strategies to prevent and respond to acts of hate. Outreach and strengthening relationships with diverse communities and its stakeholders to generate awareness about hate and hate crimes remains a priority.

Yet, even with these initiatives and programs, the CCHR is aware that there is much more work to be done to combat hate and discrimination. To address this, in November of 2022 we launched a citywide CTA anti-discrimination ad campaign. The ads were posted on CTA buses, trains, and in CTA stations throughout the city garnering more than 10 million views. Our 2023 report will reflect the impact of the ad campaign in the CCHR's overall mission.

Certainly, the past couple of years have been challenging for us all. Yet, the CCHR remains resolved to evolve and strengthen our programs and services to better serve the residents of every community in our city. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Respectfully,

Nancy C. Andrade  
Chair and Commissioner  
Greetings,

## INVESTIGATION OF DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

In the City of Chicago, the Human Rights Ordinance and Fair Housing Ordinance are the civil rights laws established by the city to protect all within its boundaries. As the civil rights agency for the city, the CCHR is responsible for enforcing these important laws. The ordinances provide the agency with broad enforcement powers to investigate and make legal determinations of liability in employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, and bonding based on seventeen areas, or protected classes: race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, disability, age (over 40), sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, parental status, military status, source of income, retaliation, credit history (employment only), and criminal history (employment only). The CCHR's Adjudication Division conducts the intake and investigation of complaints filed with the agency and oversees the mediation and hearing processes.

A person who believes that they have been discriminated against in violation of one of these two ordinances can file a complaint with the CCHR if the alleged discriminatory act took place in Chicago, and the complaint is filed within 300 days of the person being made aware of the discriminatory act. Complaints may be filed in person, by mail, email, or by fax.

### 2021-2022 COMPLAINT FILINGS

The number of complaints the CCHR receives annually may be dependent upon many factors, including the economy, social and political movements, the availability of housing and housing subsidies such as Housing Choice Vouchers. The CCHR makes every effort to make the complaint filing process available for all by providing multiple ways to file complaints, including in-person, fax, mail, email, and online. During the pandemic our complaint intake did not stop, CCHR's Human Relations Investigators continued taking complaints over the phone. In 2022, CCHR added e-signature software to streamline online complaint filing helping to make the process more equitable for all filers.

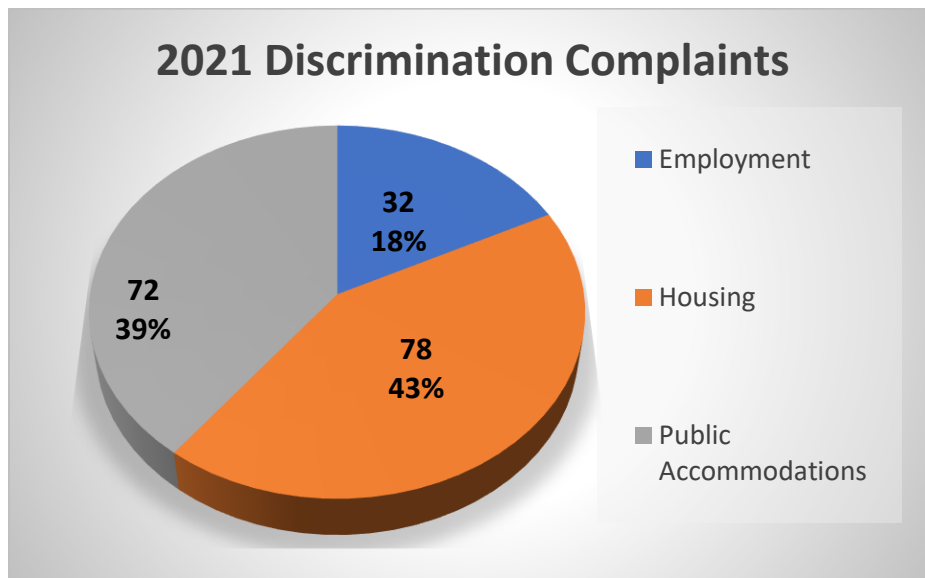
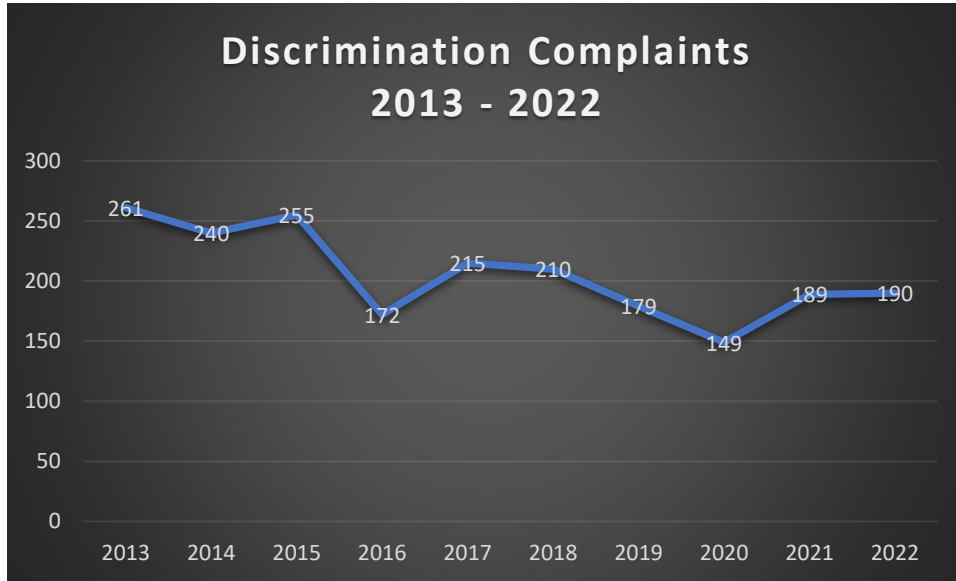
June 11, 2021, marked the end of city's "Shelter in Place" order reopening public places across Chicago including the CCHR. As a result, complaint filings began to rebound in 2021 from the drop in 2020 when only 149 discrimination complaints were filed. In 2021, 189 complaints were filed, and in 2022, there were 190 complaint filings.

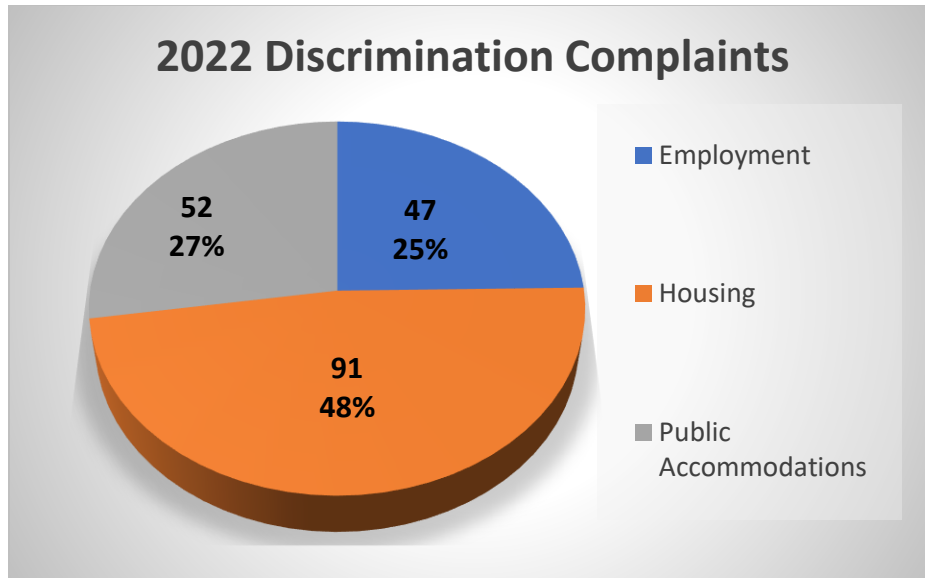
Interestingly, housing complaints remained consistent throughout the pandemic with 78 filed in 2021 as compared to 79 in 2020. However, there was an increase in 2022 when 91 complaints were filed.

Employment complaints experienced a decline in 2021 with 32 new filings, as compared to 41 in 2020. These numbers began to pick up again in 2022 with 47 complaints filed.

Even with the challenges of the pandemic, the CCHR received 52 percent more complaints in 2021 than in 2020. We also completed 10 percent more investigation than in 2020 and closed 28 percent more cases.

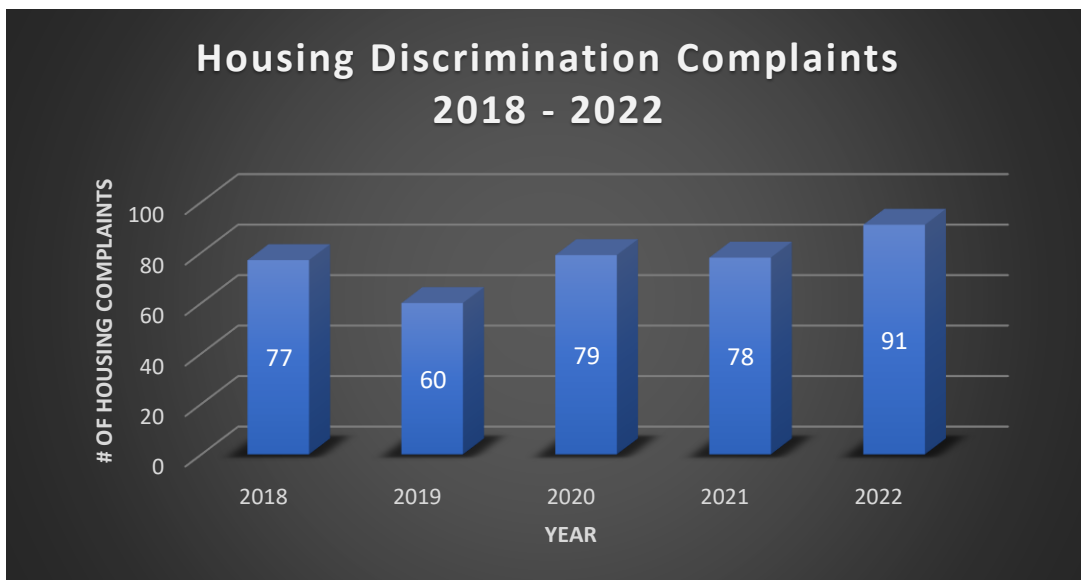
Overall, in 2022, CCHR completed nearly 50% more investigations of discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations in 2022 than in 2021.





## HOUSING

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, housing discrimination complaints filed with the CCHR remained relatively consistent over the past five-year period of 2018 – 2022, averaging 77 complaints annually. For 2021 and 2022, source of income claims, the vast majority of which involved Housing Choice Vouchers, accounted for 39% of housing claims received. Race and disability claims were filed in 16% of complaints during this period.



*Fair Housing Education Initiatives*

In addition to the agency’s fair housing enforcement work, the CCHR also worked to educate the public about housing discrimination through webinars, videos, presentations, and research studies. On April 7, 2021, the CCHR hosted a webinar for Fair Housing Month called, *“Know Your Rights. Protect Yourself Against Housing Discrimination.”* The program provided information about what constitutes discrimination, how to file a complaint with the CCHR, and what kind of documentation would be helpful in pursuing a complaint. The webinar was repeated in Spanish on April 14, 2021.

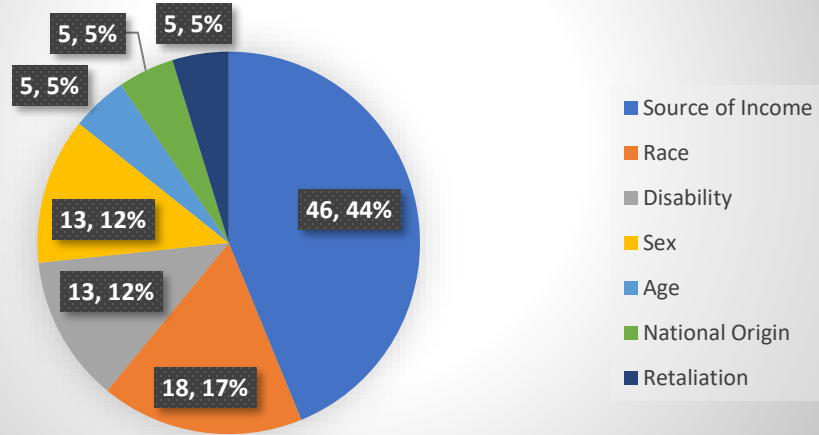


The CCHR also produced two video vignettes on fair housing topics, *“Housing Choice Voucher Discrimination”* and *“Housing Discrimination Based on Disability”*. These videos provide the viewer with examples of discriminatory acts the CCHR regularly investigates through our complaint process. Sharing information in this manner will hopefully encourage more victims of discrimination to protect their rights and file complaints.

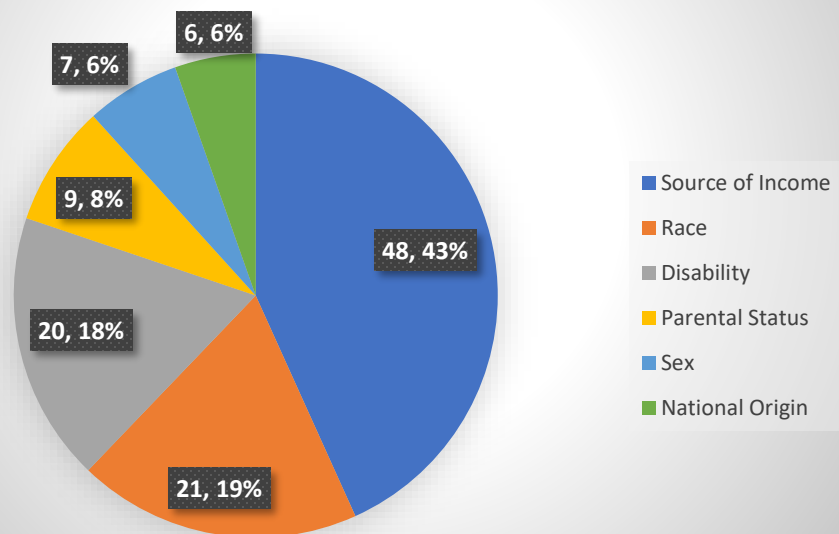




### Housing Most Frequent Claims by Protected Class 2021

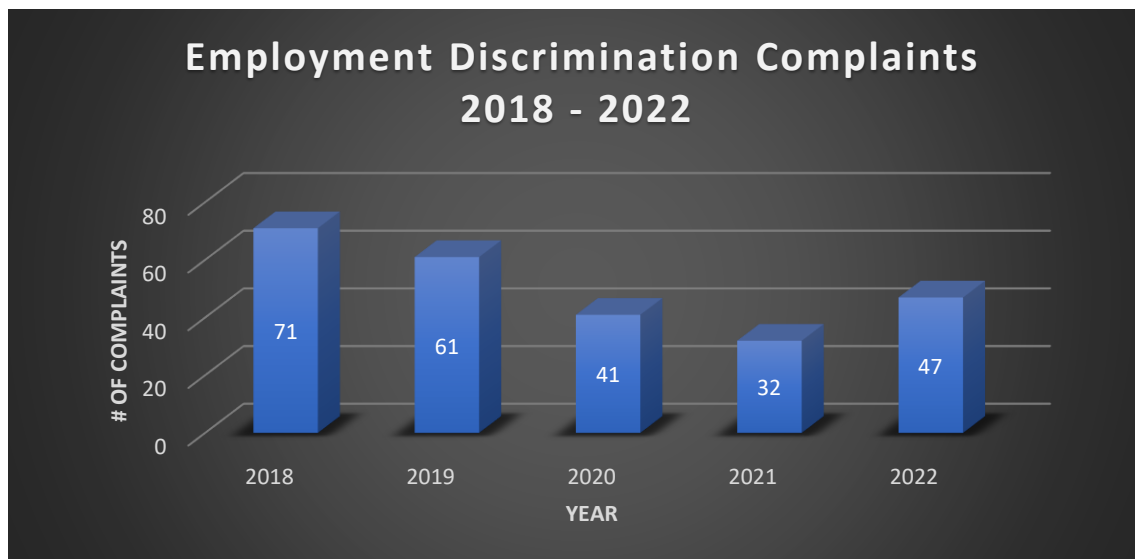


### Housing Most Frequent Claims by Protected Class 2022



## EMPLOYMENT

Employment discrimination complaints appear to have been the most impacted by the pandemic. In 2020, 41 employment complaints were received by the CCHR and only 32 in 2021. The shelter in place order from March 21, 2020 – June 11, 2021 temporarily closed many businesses and significantly increased the number of people working from home which seems to have been a factor in the decrease in filings. Simply put, if fewer businesses are open or have employees at their facilities, the opportunities for discrimination diminish significantly. Thus it is not surprising with the return to the workplace, 2022 saw an increase of nearly 50% (47) in employment complaints. Overall, for the five-year period of 2018-2022, the CCHR received an average of 50 employment discrimination complaints.



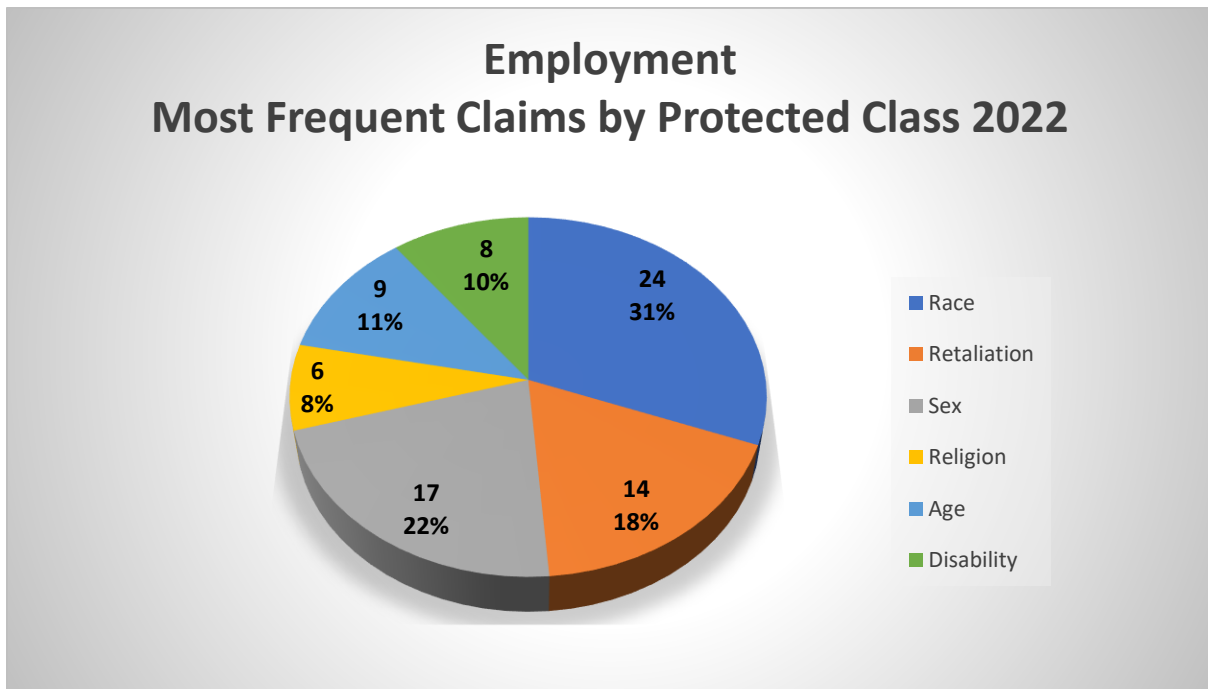
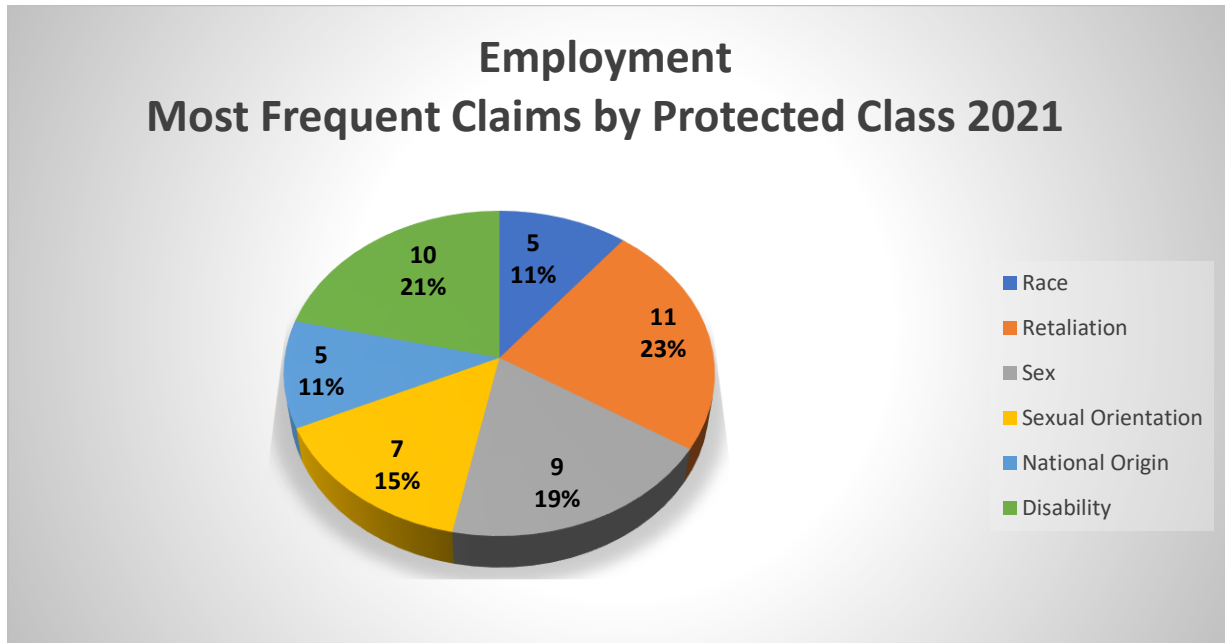
### *Expanded Protections Against Sexual Harassment*

In 2022, the CCHR worked with the City to draft and implement a new Sexual Harassment Ordinance. The ordinance requires all businesses in Chicago to:

- Develop sexual harassment policies.
- Post anti-sexual harassment notices in their workplaces.
- Provide sexual harassment training for all employees.
- Provide additional sexual harassment training for managers.
- Provide bystander intervention training for all employees.

The ordinance also sharply increases penalties to deter sexual harassment from \$100 - \$1,000 per act, to \$5,000 - \$10,000. The CCHR developed a model policy, posting, and trainings for

businesses, and makes these resources available on its web page in English, Spanish, Polish, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, and Hindi.



## PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The number of public accommodation complaints increased significantly in 2021 to 79 complaints following a low of just 29 complaints in 2020, which can be attributable to the onset of the pandemic and the resultant “Shelter in Place” order. Filings began to level off in 2022, with 52 complaints which is comparable to the five-year average of 56 complaints from 2018 - 2022.

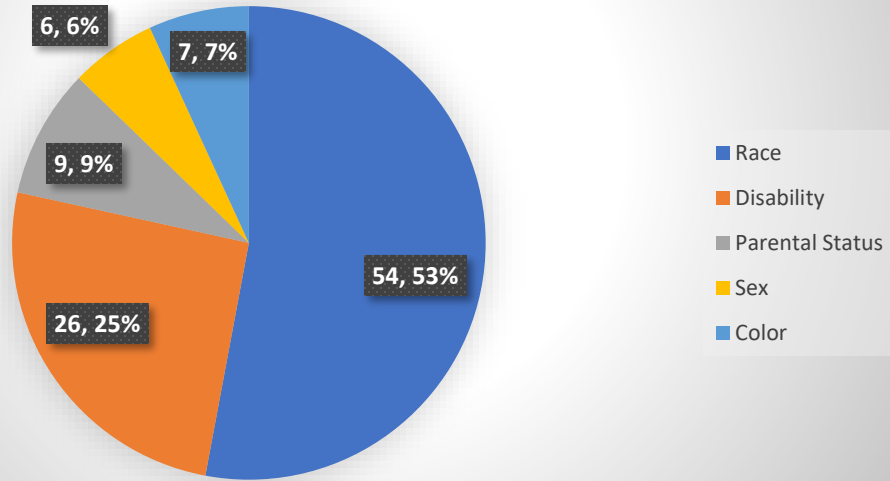
For 2021 – 2022, race (49%) and disability (25%) accounted for 74% of all public accommodation claims.



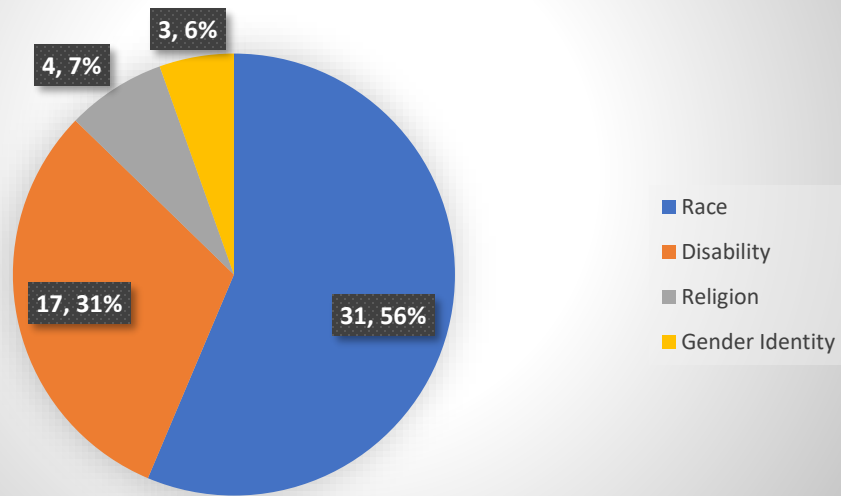
### *City Enacts New Bodily Autonomy Ordinance*

Following the 2022 Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* overturning the landmark decision of *Roe v. Wade* which guaranteed a constitutional right to abortion, many states across the country immediately began implementing laws restricting abortion and gender-affirming care. As a result, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago City Council passed the Bodily Autonomy Ordinance. The CCHR worked closely with the Mayor’s Office and the City’s Law Department to craft the ordinance which prohibits the City from participating in any investigation or proceeding initiated by another state that seeks to impose civil or criminal liability or professional sanctions upon a person who has allegedly received reproductive health care or gender affirming care that is legal in Illinois. Thus, if a person travels to Chicago to have an abortion or receive gender-affirming care, City departments and their employees may not share information about these visits with other jurisdictions.

### Public Accommodations Most Frequent Claims by Protected Class 2021

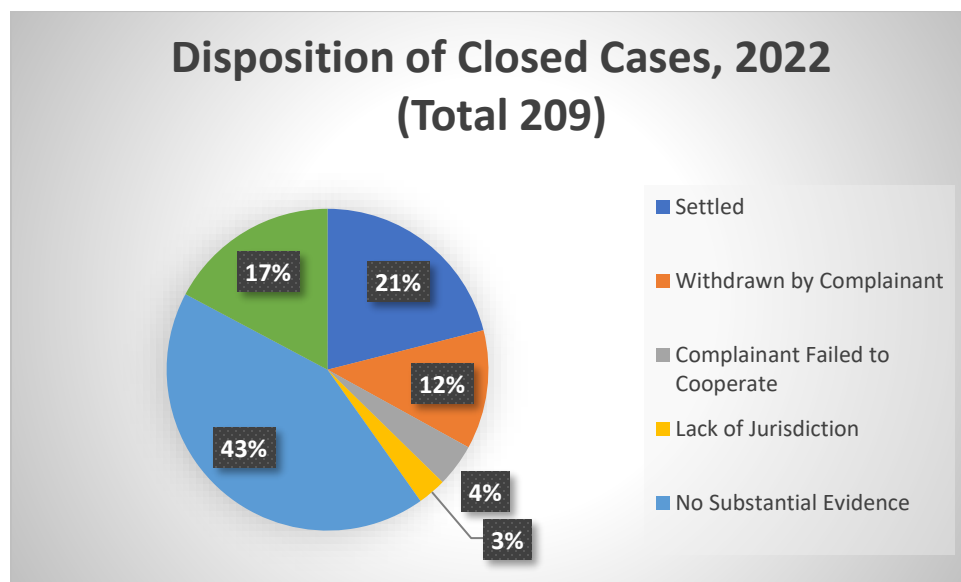
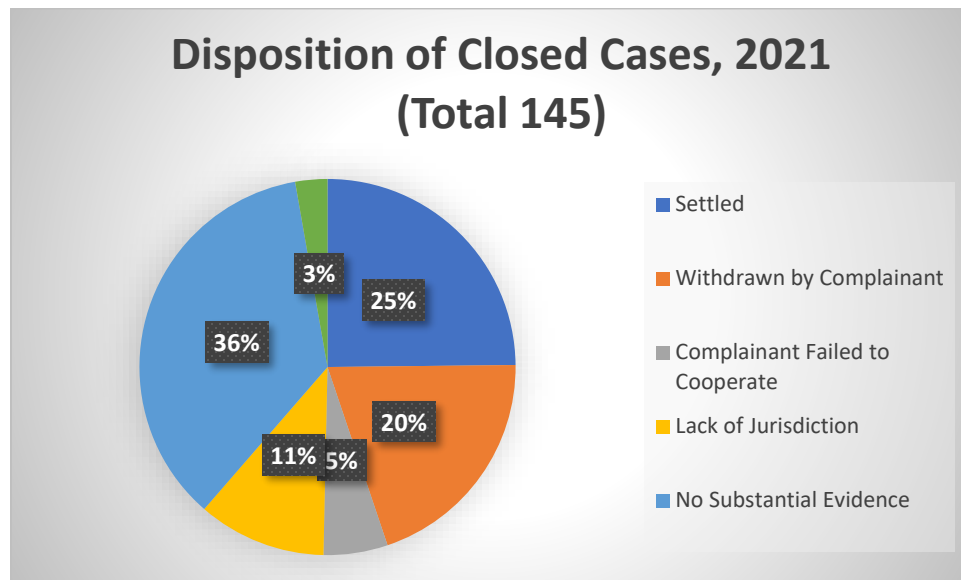
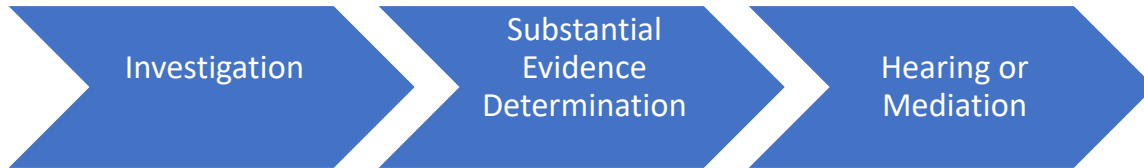


### Public Accommodations Most Frequent Claims by Protected Class 2022



RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS

**How Complaints Move Through CCHR**



## FIGHTING HATE THROUGH EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, AND MEDIATION

The CCHR works to fight hate and promote mutual understanding and unity through its Inter-Group Relations (IGR) Unit. IGR works throughout the city to mediate community tensions, advocate for victims of hate crimes, and conduct peace circles and human relations workshops. IGR partners with community-based organizations, elected officials, and community leaders to engage residents in the discussion of problems and the development of solutions.

### HATE CRIMES

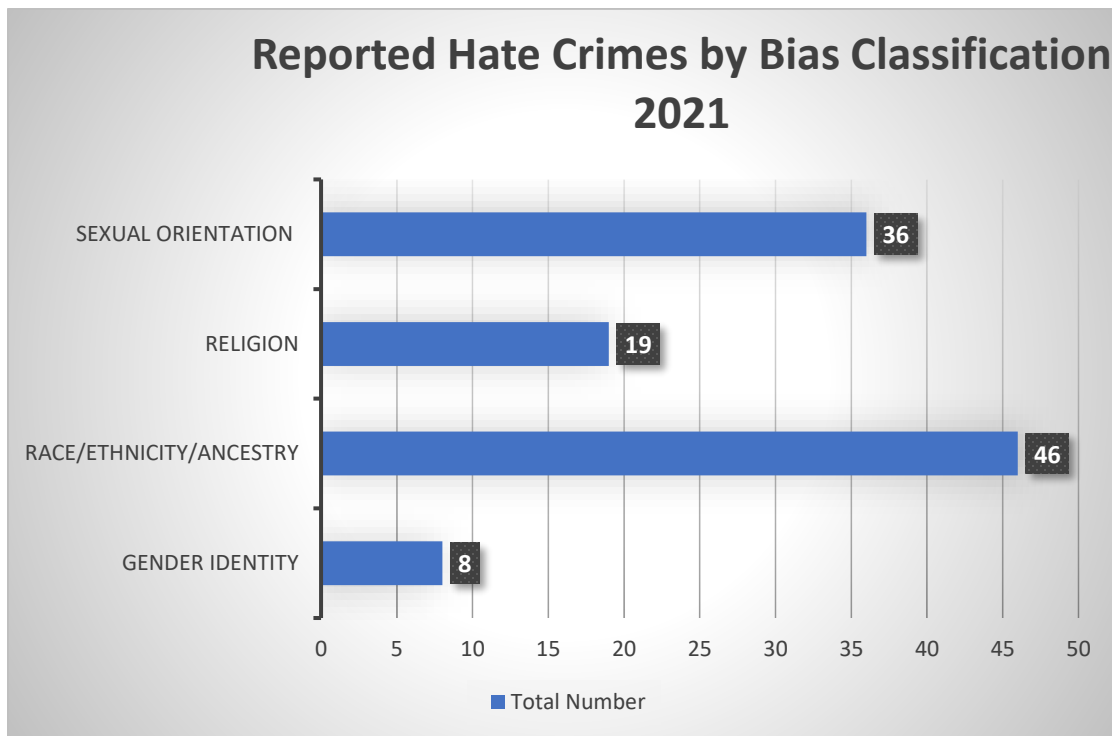
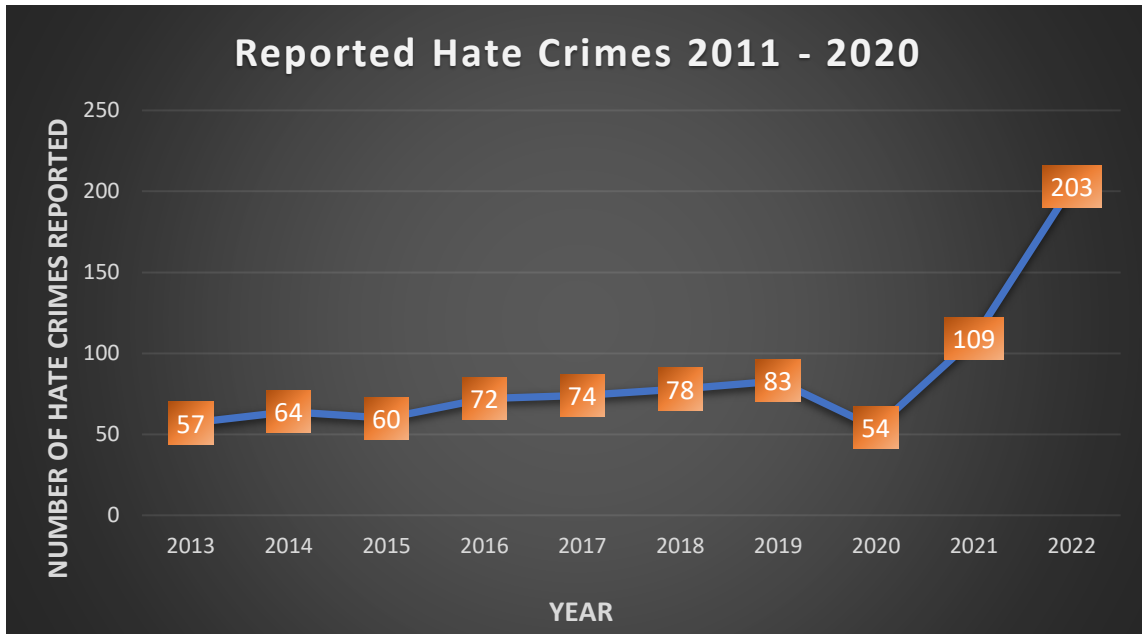
Hate crime prevention and victim assistance are priorities for the CCHR. Our IGR Unit advocates for and assists victims of hate crimes. Services provided include accompanying victims to criminal court when a hate crime is being prosecuted, identifying social service resources, and mobilizing community support for victims. The CCHR works closely with the Chicago Police Department, Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, government agencies, and community-based organizations to provide these services.

2021 and 2022 both saw an exponential growth in reported hate crimes over what had been reported during the ten-year period beginning 2013. From 2013 – 2020, there was an average of 68 reported hate crimes in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> In 2019, reported hate crimes rose to a total of 83 which was the highest number of reported hate crimes in the city in more than 10 years. In 2020, the “shelter in place order” during the COVID-19 pandemic may have had an impact on hate crime activity as reported hate crimes dropped to 54.

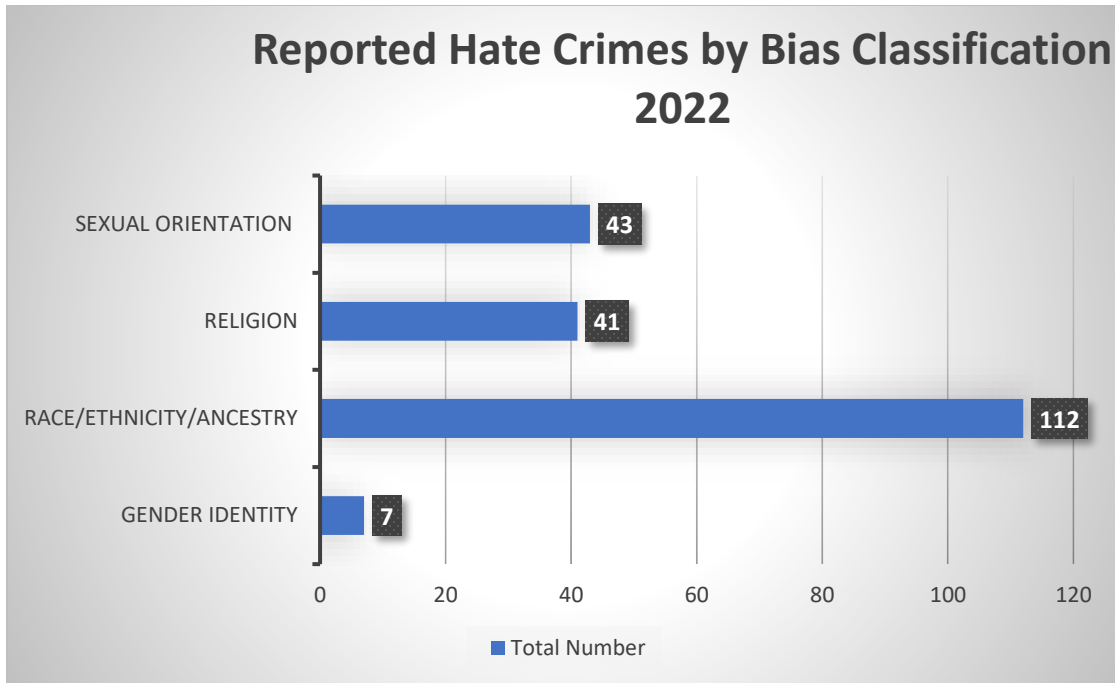
In 2021, the number of reported hate crimes were up again, and more than doubled to 109. Yet, in 2022 reported hate crimes again increased dramatically to 203. This total included significant increases in reported hate crimes against Jews from 8 in 2021 to 38 in 2022. Similarly, reported hate crimes against Blacks rose from 22 in 2021 to 45 in 2022, and Latinos 5 in 2021 to 17 in 2022, and Asians 9 in 2021 to 14 in 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> Hate crime statistics provided in this report are those reported to the CCHR by the Chicago Police Department.







## COMMUNITY TENSION INTERVENTION

### *Mediation*

The CCHR responds to a variety of community tensions including neighbor-to-neighbor disputes, conflicts between residents and businesses, and many more. Our staff of trained mediators work to facilitate conversations in a safe and confidential manner, while maintaining their neutrality, where both parties feel heard and can express their concerns openly.

The CCHR works closely with aldermanic offices, schools, community organizations, and other groups to reduce community tensions and promote healing. In 2021, CCHR staff mediated 108 community tensions, and 75 in 2022.

### *Peace Circles*

In addition to using mediation as a tool to resolve community tensions, the CCHR facilitates Peace Circles based on the restorative justice model. Peace Circles have been used successfully by the CCHR to address conflicts and as an education tool for schools, community organizations, and governmental agencies.

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Education and outreach are essential components of CCHR’s work. Presentations are provided for organizations, community groups, businesses, and faith communities about CCHR programs and services. In addition to presentations, CCHR staff attend community meetings, host information tables at community events, conduct neighborhood canvassing, and more.

Under the leadership of Commissioner Andrade, the CCHR has made important strides to raise our public profile to ensure residents are informed about our services. The Commission worked with the Asian community to provide hate crime awareness education through webinars and trainings when the community became targeted for bias incidents and hate crimes with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the hateful rhetoric that soon followed. In addition, the CCHR worked the Mayor’s Office to create the Asian Ad-Hoc Committee on Hate Crimes which brought together community leaders, city officials, and members of law enforcement to look at ways to reduce hate crimes and discrimination.

Engagement and building strong relationships with Aldermanic offices in addition to community based organizations and diverse faith leaders is a key tool when responding to hate crimes that range from a swastika spray painted on a synagogue, a vandalized a home deemed an LGBTQ+ ally with a rainbow flag flying on its porch, to a Chinese man who was brutally assaulted while riding public transportation. Our work not only involves reaching out to the victim to ask if they need any additional assistance, but we also accompany them to court and let them know that we care. It is the latter that really resonates with the victims. Our genuine care for the well being of the individual is what matters.



CCHR provides presentations to the Chicago Police Department about the work we do with victim of hate crimes, referring victims to resources within the City or with partnering community based organizations that can provide additional assistance.



Yet, even with these initiatives and programs, the CCHR is aware that there is much more work to be done to combat hate and discrimination. To address this, November of 2022 marked the launch of a citywide CTA anti-discrimination ad campaign. The ads were posted on CTA buses, trains, and in CTA stations throughout the city garnering more than 10 million views. Our 2023 report will reflect the impact of the ad campaign in the CCHR's overall mission.



Similarly, the CCHR ramped up its education and outreach efforts with the LGBTQ+ and immigrant community. The CCHR collaborates with the Chicago Police Department LGBTQ+ Liaison on matters pertaining to hate crimes and community engagement. The partnership has been very productive and continues to grow.



The Commission works closely with LGBTQ+ Advisory Council and the LGBTQ+ community. It hosted a Pride month webinar *Care And Respect: Supporting and Affirming Chicago's Trans and Nonbinary Communities* in collaboration with Howard Brown Health and community stakeholders.

The poster features a rainbow-colored header and footer. At the top center is the CCHR logo, which includes a red star and the text "CCHR Chicago Commission on Human Relations". Below the logo, the title "CARE AND RESPECT: Supporting and Affirming Chicago's Trans and Nonbinary Communities" is displayed in large, bold, blue letters. A dark blue banner below the title contains the date and time: "Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at 2:00 PM".

The main text of the poster reads: "Join Chicago's LGBTQ+ Advisory Council and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations for a conversation on what it means to affirm identities with respect and care. Featuring **Channyn Parker**, **Chris Thoren**, and **Victor Marquez**, in conversation with **Megan Carney**, this webinar covers pronouns and their importance, explores the connections between our personal and professional experiences, and highlights the joy of finding one's community."

Below the text is a row of four headshots of the speakers, each with a name and affiliation below it:
 

- Channyn Parker**, Howard Brown Health
- Chris Thoren**, 2nd Story
- Megan Carney**, About Face Theatre
- Victor Marquez**, Source Patton Boggs LLP

 The headshots are set against a purple background with white stars on either side.

At the bottom of the poster, a white box with a thin border contains the following information:
 

Please register in advance at:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_AafaFRuMSPWHX-xNEQYh5w](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_AafaFRuMSPWHX-xNEQYh5w)

ASL Interpretation and closed captioning will be available.  
 Please request additional accommodations in advance of the webinar date by emailing us at:  
[CCHRwebinars@cityofchicago.org](mailto:CCHRwebinars@cityofchicago.org)

The CCHR also engaged with the legal profession through a collaboration with the Chicago Bar Association which hosted a continuing legal education program for attorneys "*How to Represent Clients Before the CCHR*". The program was designed as a nuts and bolts for representing clients in proceedings before the Commission.

Not to leave out the younger audience, the CCHR also hosted a webinar for children, "*Storytime with ABC 7's Judy Hsu*," featuring Judy reading the children's book, "*Dumpling Soup*." The story highlights a multi-racial family which brings together all their great cultural differences to make a wonderful dumpling soup that everyone loves, illustrating to the young audience the importance of appreciating difference.

Education and outreach focusing on the immigrant community has always been a fabric of the Commission’s work. 2021 marked a time when immigrant workers were facing discrimination and labor abuses. Partnering with the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and community partners, the CCHR hosted “Know Your Rights” forums at the National Museum of Mexican Arts and Benito Juarez High School. Commissioner Andrade spoke to Spanish media outlets about CCHR resources available to the immigrant community regardless of one’s immigration status.



Each year the Mexican Consulate hosts a weeklong Know Your Labor Rights campaign, the CCHR participates with a resource table and provides daily presentations on the Human Rights Ordinance and the Fair Housing Ordinance.



August of 2022 marked the arrival asylum seekers to Chicago. The CCHR stepped up and aided the asylum seekers with *Know Your Rights* presentations in Spanish at various shelters. Staff of the Commission also answered the call to help our new Chicagoans by organizing a clothing and hygiene products drive.



## EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE COHORT

The CCHR was proud to participate in the Mayor’s Office of Equity and Racial Justice’s first-ever Equity and Racial Justice Cohort in 2021. The Cohort took a team of CCHR staff through a deep dive into the history of racism in America and the lingering, ongoing effects of systemic and structural racism in present day Chicago. Through the Cohort the CCHR team learned about the principles of equity and how we will apply them to all phases of our work and operations to better serve the public and promote healing from our past.





## COMMUNITY VOICES

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The CCHR Board of Commissioners serves as the public leadership and community voice of the department. The board receives reports on the work of the department from staff and provides valuable input on how to better serve the public. The board also reviews and recommends policies to address issues of discrimination and prejudice. Finally, the board makes the final rulings in all fully litigated discrimination cases after reviewing the recommended ruling of the hearing officer who conducted the administrative hearing. The Board may adopt the hearing officer's recommendation in full, reject or modify it consistent with applicable law, or remand the case for further hearing.

#### **Board of Commissioners**

Nancy C. Andrade, *Chair and Commissioner*

Darlene Attiah

Karina Ayala-Bermejo

Jamie Brown

Marta Cerda

Jennifer Eleazar

Daniel Goldwin

Rey Gonzalez

Daniel Hernandez

Mirna Holton

Ahmad Jitan

Ray Koenig III

Margaret Kujulian

Ester Nieves

Dr. Terrell Odom

Michael Takada

Butch Trusty

Kimberly Waller

## ADVISORY COUNCILS

### ADVISORY COUNCILS

There are five Advisory Councils to the CCHR which work directly with the Office of the Mayor to serve as liaisons between city government and the community to promote cooperation and enhance services and to foster improved human relations and fight discrimination against all Chicago residents: Advisory Council on Women, Advisory Council on New Americans, LGBTQ+ Advisory Council, Advisory Council on Equity, and Advisory Council on Veterans.

The CCHR successfully worked with the councils to advance several important initiatives in 2021 and 2022 including:

- New Sexual Harassment Ordinance
- Bodily Autonomy Ordinance
- Advocacy for the creation of the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs
- Migrant Assistance Outreach
- Racial Equity Initiatives
- LGBTQ + training webinar

### Advisory Council Chairs

Advisory Council on Equity, Esther Nieves and Victor Dickson Co-Chairs

Advisory Council on LGBTQ+, Butch Trusty

Advisory Council on New Americans, Karina Ayala-Bermejo

Advisory Council on Veterans, Dr. Terrell Odom

Advisory Council on Women, Jackie Kaplan-Perkins

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CCHR would like to thank our fabulous group of superstar interns for 2021 and 2022; Cynthia Garcia (University of Chicago), Elizabeth Flores (University of Chicago), Adam Faber (University of Illinois-Chicago), and Jacqueline Palacios (Adams State University, Colorado).

We would also like to thank our resident creative genius, Sarah Fernandez Da Silva Nascimento (pictured) who came to us as an International Fellow from Brazil through the U.S. Department of State Professional Fellows Program, 2022 Young Leaders of Americas Initiative.

Thank you all for the enthusiasm, creativity, and energy you brought to CCHR everyday! It was great working with you. We wish you much success in your future endeavors.

Finally, the CCHR would like to thank the Department of Assets Information and Technology (AIS) Photography Unit for several of the wonderful photos interspersed throughout this report, and its Graphics and Reproduction Unit for the print and digital production of the report.



## CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS STAFF

Nancy C. Andrade, Chair and Commissioner  
Aracelis Baez, Human Relations Specialist II  
Maria Balderas, Executive Administrative Assistant  
Marisol Gallegos, Director of Human Rights Compliance, Employment  
Kenneth Gunn, First Deputy Commissioner  
Wessie Johnson, Administrative Assistant III  
Kristen Lee, Director of Compliance/Fair Housing  
JoAnn Newsome, Deputy Commissioner  
Peter Oakley, Human Relations Investigator II  
Cheryl Reid, Human Relations Investigator II  
Albert Robinson, Human Relations Investigator II  
Jennifer Scott, Human Relations Specialist II  
Connie Simonelli, Human Relations Investigator II  
Daniel Serrano, Director of Intergroup Relations and Outreach  
Gloria Vu, Human Resources Business Partner  
Norman White, Hate Crimes Specialist

## INTERNS AND FELLOWS

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