



Title VI



Fair Contracting Practices



Civil Rights Commission



Fair Housing



Public Accommodations

2002 Report to the Community



Disability Access



Fair Employment



King County

**Department of Executive Services
Office of Civil Rights**

Annual Report 2002

*O, let my land be a land where Liberty
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
But opportunity is real, and life is free,
Equality is in the air we breathe.*

**- Langston Hughes
"Let America Be America Again" 1938**

Message from the Office of Civil Rights

Given the situation in Iraq, 2002 seems very far away. Yet our work here at OCR is more relevant than ever. We know from our discussions with Muslim immigrants that they face frequent harassment and discrimination. Mistreatment of Muslims and those who appear to be of Middle Eastern descent will likely continue as instability in and around Iraq continues. Each and every one of us must stand together to oppose hate, however it is manifested.

We call on all to take action to ensure that everyone is treated with equality and

respect. Let's make King County a place where we can all live and work together, honoring the diversity that makes this county unique. We will continue to provide information and to answer questions for individuals and groups. Call us or check our Web site for information and other resources.

Thank you!

The Staff of the King County
Office of Civil Rights

Our Mission: To eliminate discrimination through education, mediation and enforcement that is responsive to the needs of a diverse King County.

Overview

The King County Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has two broad areas of focus: enforcement and compliance. In its enforcement program, staff implement the county's ordinances prohibiting discrimination in unincorporated King County in housing, employment, public accommodations (services like stores and restaurants) and contracting. In the compliance program, staff work with county departments to ensure non-discriminatory access to government for people with disabilities and others. OCR also staffs the King County Civil Rights Commission and the Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee, and coordinates the annual celebration in honor of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Services to the Community

Education, Investigation, Mediation, Resolution

Education to prevent discrimination is one of our priorities. We offer free general workshops open to the public. We also provide group training sessions upon request and work with individuals. Our extensive Web site has many resources: www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre. We also have information available in print and in other languages.

We talk with people who feel they have been the victims of discrimination and explain the laws and options for action. If they decide to file a complaint with us, we investigate the issues, using mediation when appropriate to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. If we do find evidence of discrimination, we can order monetary compensation and other means to stop future discrimination.



We also explain the laws to those who must comply to help them avoid problems.

We assist county departments in making their facilities, services and programs accessible to people with disabilities. We also support the departments to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by not discriminating in providing services and other opportunities. We accept grievances from individuals who think county government has not been accessible or has discriminated against them, and we work to resolve the issues.

OCR's Role

Education: We provide information to all members of the public, including those who must comply with the ordinances, and to county personnel and contractors. Our goal is both to prevent discrimination and to inform people about how discrimination can be addressed and remedied.

Ordinance Enforcement — Impartial Third Party:

When we investigate and resolve complaints filed under the housing, employment, public accommodations and contracting ordinances, we are neutral and do not advocate for either side.

Disability Access and Title VI — Support to County Departments and Grievance Resolution:

We assist county departments in complying with federal, state and local laws requiring access to people with disabilities and non-discrimination in county facilities, services and programs. We also receive and resolve grievances in these areas.

All Are Protected by Anti-discrimination Laws!

All of us are covered, no matter what our race, national origin, gender, ancestry, marital status, color, sexual orientation, religion, disability or age. While I-200 ended many “affirmative action” programs, the laws still prohibit discrimination.

Chart 1**Complaint Filings**

Types of Complaints	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Employment	19	25	21	20	16	17
Housing	14	20	7	9	12	5
Public Accommodations	0	1	1	1	0	0
Contracting Practices					0	1
Total Complaints Filed	33	46	29	30	28	23

Note: The Contracting Practices Ordinance became effective in 2001.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT:

Employment, Housing, Public Accommodations, Contracting Practices Ordinances

Complaints Received — Bases of Complaints


In 2002, OCR opened 17 fair employment cases, 5 fair housing cases, 1 fair contracting case and no public accommodations cases. Yearly filings are presented in Chart 1. Chart 2 shows the types of discrimination prohibited under each ordinance and the number

of complaints filed on each basis.

The top issues in employment cases were 1) termination and 2) terms and conditions (such as discipline, assignments and harassment). This year, failure to accommodate people with disabilities was the most frequent housing complaint.





Chart 2**Bases for Complaints Filed 2002**

 Fair Employment KCC 12.18

 Fair Housing KCC 12.20

 Public Accommodations KCC 12.22

 Fair Contracting Practices KCC 12.17

				
Race	15	0	0	0
Color	0	0	0	0
National Origin	6	0	0	1
Religion	2	0	0	0
Sex (gender)	2	3	0	0
Disability	6	3	0	0
Parental Status	N/C	0	0	N/C
Retaliation	7	0	N/C	0
Marital Status	0	0	0	0
Age	4	0	0	0
Ancestry	0	0	0	0
Sexual Orientation	0	0	0	0
Section 8	N/C	0	N/C	N/C

Total Complaints* **17** **5** **0** **0**

N/C: Basis not covered in this ordinance.
*Each case may allege more than one reason for discrimination.

Chart 3

Type of Closure	Employment	Housing
Withdrawal or Closure with Settlement	0	0
Withdrawal or Other Administrative Closure	7	0
Pre-finding Settlement	2	1
No Reasonable Cause Finding	6	3
Reasonable Cause Finding	0	2
Total Closures	15	6

Case Resolution

Our goal is to resolve cases as quickly as possible.

Pre-finding Settlements: If a case can be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties without investigation and OCR believes the result benefits the public, the agreement will be written down, signed by all parties and monitored by OCR. One housing case and two employment cases were resolved with pre-finding settlements. The agreements included such terms as monetary

compensation and anti-discrimination training.

Administrative Closures: One employment case was administratively closed when the charging party could not be located. Another was closed for lack of jurisdiction. Five employment cases were withdrawn by the charging parties, some after nearly completed investigations. The contracting case was closed for lack of jurisdiction.

Investigations: OCR closed six employment and six housing cases after full investigations that found insufficient or no evidence of discrimination. Charging parties can request OCR to reconsider such findings.

Superior Court: One housing case was filed in Superior Court at the request of the respondent after OCR found that “reasonable cause” existed to believe the respondent violated the Fair Housing Ordinance. After the filing, the respondent agreed to terms proposed by the Charging Party

which included making donations to two non-profit agencies. OCR approved this resolution.

Education on the Ordinances

OCR is committed to informing the public and county employees about the county's non-discrimination laws. In 2002, we answered over 1796 calls from the public seeking our assistance in understanding their rights and responsibilities. Our OCR investigators presented a number of training workshops to orient the public to our ordinances.

During 2002, the Fair Housing Agency Partnership presented quarterly training for housing providers, published quarterly newsletters, staffed a booth at the TRENDS housing trade show, and co-sponsored the Tacoma Fair Housing Conference in April. The partnership continued to develop sample policies for housing providers and began a revision of the popular "Fair

Employment



A receptionist's employment was terminated after she was frequently late and absent. She believed that she was treated unfairly because she was taking care of her children. She based her complaint on sexual orientation because she thought a gay co-worker who cared for his sick partner was treated more favorably. The evidence confirmed her attendance problems. Co-workers testified that they needed to cover for the receptionist when she was absent. OCR found the employer had a legitimate need for her to be present and on time. The co-worker's position was different, as was his attendance record. OCR found no evidence of discrimination.



Housing

Charging Party and her two children dreamed of buying a condominium in their favorite Eastside complex. When one became available, the owner told them children weren't allowed there. The owner's real estate agent confirmed the restriction. Fair housing laws prohibit barring children unless housing meets specific requirements for exemption. The housing did not meet the requirements. The Respondents agreed to pay \$18,500 to the family and to participate in fair housing training.

Housing Guidelines for Property Owners and Managers." The partnership grant for outreach to new immigrants continued, including several workshops for people with limited English proficiency and the community agencies who serve them. A major project involved OCR, the King County Bar Association, the Northwest Justice Project, City of Seattle agencies and other county staff on a series of training sessions for social service providers, and three fair housing basics workshops for advocates for people with developmental disabilities. In addition, OCR conducted several workshops on domestic violence issues in fair housing and gave a presentation at a vocational school.

The OCR Web site is user-friendly and easy to navigate, with frequently updated information about our office, our ordinances, and tips for complying with civil rights laws. Visit the site at www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre.

COMPLIANCE: DISABILITY ACCESS AND TITLE VI

Disability Access to Programs and Services

OCR staff help county departments comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability access laws by providing technical assistance, training, publications and on-site assessments. The Disability Compliance Specialists (DCSs) are designated as the county's ADA Title II Coordinators. By mid-year 2002, due to re-organization, we made the transition from two to one DCS.

Training and Outreach: The DCSs continued to provide training to meet the particular needs of county departments, divisions and work groups. They completed extensive training which began during 2001 on print materials accessibility guidelines. The DCSs designed and presented a new module on accessibility of services to Deaf and hard of

Employment



During a civil rights workshop for immigrant women from Somalia, a young woman clad in a hijab, thought of in the U.S. as traditional Muslim female attire, described being called “al Qaeda” and “Osama bin Laden” by her co-workers. The manager told her she was fired because people were uncomfortable with her. All the women in the group described being treated badly after September 11, 2001. None wanted to file complaints, afraid of the consequences of complaining. Some felt they shouldn’t have to do anything — that the problems should be taken care of. The women told the OCR presenter that taking action like filing complaints is discouraged in their culture, especially for women. We are continuing to meet with the group to provide information.

hearing individuals. OCR continued to provide training on diverse topics, including service animals, TTY and relay service communication, and general disability access and sensitivity training. The DCSs also presented disability access training to two regional parks and recreation organizations.

Section 504/ADA Advisory Committee: Members provided input on the 2002-2004 EEO/Affirmative Action Plan and reviewed the work of both the Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services and the Civil Rights Commission. The committee also looked at public access issues in small business locations, voting accessibility, mental health concerns, alcoholism issues, and the intersection of poverty and disability. The committee continued its collaborative relationship with the Civil Rights Commission and other related county boards and commissions. For details, see the committee's Web site at www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/advisory.htm.

Disability Employment Awareness Month: For the first time, OCR presented awards in recognition of notable efforts on the part of individuals or a group to ensure the accessibility of King County programs and services:

Bob Carroll, Metro Accessible Services
Polly Young, Natural Resources and Parks
Tom Braman, Web Team Lead with
Information and Telecommunication
Services
Superior Court

Grievances: OCR works with the grievant and the county department to resolve grievances, to eliminate barriers and to enhance accessibility. We received and resolved five formal grievances alleging discrimination by King County related to the accessibility of facilities, services and programs. Three of five grievances were resolved with no corrective action required of King County. Two grievances were resolved by identifying a problem in execution of established procedures; re-training was done.

Title VI Program

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

OCR staff help county departments comply with the Title VI and related legislation by providing technical assistance and training. Each department has designated Title VI Liaisons to assist in program implementation. OCR was instrumental in forming a statewide group of Title VI program representatives who meet twice a year to share resources and knowledge.

Training: In 2002, OCR provided general Title VI information to all departments and specialized training to the Road Services Division of the Department of

Transportation due to the nature of its work. More in-depth training is planned for 2003 and will be ongoing.

Complaints: OCR works with the complainant and the county department to resolve complaints and eliminate discrimination. OCR received and resolved two formal complaints alleging discrimination by King County in the provision of services and benefits.

Plan and Report: OCR coordinated the revision of the county Title VI Plan and Annual Update prepared on Road Services Division activities for the Washington State Department of Transportation. These documents are available on request from OCR.



King County Civil Rights Commission

The Civil Rights Commission is a volunteer body established to advise the King County Executive and County Council on civil rights in King County. It reviews the implementation of county civil rights ordinances and policies to determine compliance and effectiveness.

Additionally, it leads by raising community awareness of and involvement in civil rights issues. The mission of the commission is to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all within the county's jurisdiction.

The commission has 16 members: 13 are

nominated by the county council and 3 are nominated by the Executive. Terms are three years.

Commission Accomplishments in 2002

In 2002, the King County Civil Rights Commission continued to create collaborative relationships with county agencies in the arenas of criminal justice and women and minority business. It also continued to educate the community about their civil rights and responsibilities. The commission:

- co-sponsored an evening presentation by noted anti-racism activist Tim Wise;
- reviewed and provided comments on the 2002-2004 EEO/Affirmative Action Plan;
- reviewed a proposed pilot program to enhance contracting opportunities for disadvantaged small businesses with the county;



- provided comments on the revised county anti-harassment policy and procedures;
- reviewed a proposed county omnibus anti-discrimination ordinance;
- co-sponsored a forum on discrimination in health care with Seattle and King County Public Health; and
- sponsored an essay contest with the theme of "Stride Toward Freedom" to encourage eighth grade students to think critically about Dr. King's legacy of peace and justice.



Special Project:

Are you reaching for the mountain top?

On January 17, 2002, the county's stirring celebration honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. moved to the Paramount Theater. Featured guests were Tim Wise, a noted anti-racism writer and lecturer, the Total Experience Gospel Choir, the SD Prism Dance Theater and the King County Ethnic Percussionists. Humanitarian awards were presented to deserving county employees. The Dr. King Essay

Awards were given to high school students. The annual calendar included art work by Sam Knight, a seven year old artist. OCR coordinates the celebration every year.

"I painted this picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. three times. On the first painting I wasn't very good at it. The final one I did was pretty good because I practiced. My mom says that since I kept trying, even when I wanted to give up and stop painting, I was reaching for the mountain top." — Sam Knight, Seattle, age 7

Are you reaching for the mountain top?

January	February	March	April
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May	June	July	August
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September	October	November	December
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King County employees can find information on diverse holidays on the calendar at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/diversityandcommunityaffairs>

King County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration • Noon, January 17, 2002 • Paramount Theater, Seattle



OCR Team

2002-2003 Team Members

Haberdean West, Customer Service Specialist
Roxanne Vierra, Civil Rights/Disability Compliance Specialist
Karen Peirolo, Civil Rights Specialist
Karen Ozmun, Disability Compliance Specialist
Karen Murray, Civil Rights Specialist
Lisa Marquette, Civil Rights Specialist
John "Sandy" Macdonald, Civil Rights Specialist
Jacque Lindstrand, Office Coordinator
Paula Harris-White, Civil Rights Commission Administrator
Bailey de longh, Manager
Maurice Alexander, Civil Rights Specialist

Department of Executive Services 2002-2003

Paul Tanaka, County Administrative Officer
Caroline Whalen, Deputy County Administrative Officer
Jim Buck, Administrative Services Manager
Ruben Rivera, Confidential Secretary
Anne Brusklund, Administrative Assistant

Contact Us

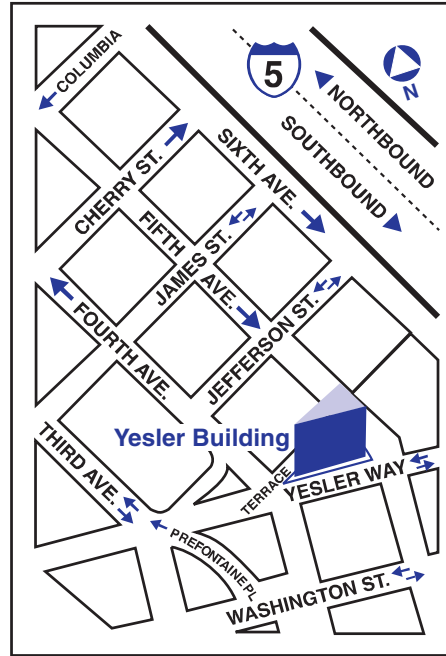
We want everyone to understand their rights and responsibilities under the laws. We are available to answer your questions whether you are a tenant or housing provider, employee or employer, if you use or provide public accommodations, or if you are a contractor. We can also answer questions related to disability access to county facilities, services and programs and to non-discrimination in county services.

If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact us to discuss the situation. If you decide to file a complaint or grievance, we will explain the steps to you.

We provide training sessions and written materials on selected topics upon request.

Please contact us for more information. We welcome your suggestions.

We want to hear from you!



The Yesler Building entrance is on Terrace Street. While the building is accessible, it is on a steep hillside. We can arrange to meet in alternate locations. People with disabilities can contact us for parking arrangements.

*America did not invent
human rights.*

*In a very real sense ...
human rights invented
America.*

- Jimmy Carter



King County

Department of Executive Services

Office of Civil Rights

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206-296-7596 TTY

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Civil-Rights.OCR@metrokc.gov

www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre

Our services are available to all.
Please inform us if you need
reasonable accommodations
due to disability, need this
report in alternate formats, or
need information translated
into other languages.