
Florida Commission on Human Relations



We're All In It Together

2006 - 2007
At a Glance

Vision

To become the chief resource on human relations for the State of Florida.

Mission

To prevent unlawful discrimination by ensuring people in Florida are treated fairly and are given access to opportunities in employment, housing and certain public accommodations, and to promote mutual respect among groups through education and partnerships.

Our Core Values

Every individual is to be treated with dignity and respect.

Service provided is impartial and high-quality.

Innovation and creativity are encouraged and rewarded.

Communication is open and honest.

Teamwork determines our success.

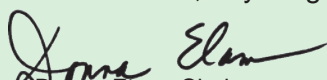
A Message from the Leadership

Since 1969, the Florida Commission on Human Relations has worked to protect individuals and communities from the harsh and long-lasting effects of discrimination. These issues are alive and well and affect each and every one of us. Discrimination not only diminishes the quality of our lives, it also weakens our economy. Due to the budget crisis facing our state, the need to prevent costly discrimination is even greater. We believe strongly that the greatest contribution we can make is to vigorously investigate allegations of discrimination, encourage business owners to implement sound anti-discrimination policies, help communities to deal with intergroup tensions and teach children how to be responsible and accepting adults.

This *At a Glance* is a brief introduction of our 06-07 fiscal year achievements. We are pleased to report that during the past fiscal year, Commissioners and our staff have made great strides in working to prevent and resolve discrimination in Florida. We provided training to business owners, managers and housing providers on best practices and Florida laws. Our Mediation Unit settled 95 cases totaling \$1,356,239, which is one of the Commission's highest settlement amounts! We continued to recruit and train talented professionals who conducted thorough investigations in a timely manner.

Our inaugural Florida Employment Law Conference in Orlando was a great success with over 200 attendees. The Commission partnered with various Pensacola organizations to host the Fair Housing Summit and students around the state participated in interactive diversity activities through our 3L (Learning, Literacy and Leadership) program. In Tallahassee, an "Interactive Look at Diversity" was offered to the Supreme Court, First District Court of Appeals, Second Judicial Circuit and the Office of the State Courts Administrator. We look forward to sharing more detailed information about these accomplishments.

We take our commitment to the people of Florida very seriously. As a vital state resource, we are always striving for excellence. In the coming year, we will increase our partnerships in an effort to have a greater impact on the lives of Floridians. We believe that when people come together, with a positive mindset, anything is possible.


Donna Elam, Chairperson




Derick Daniel, Executive Director



Mutual Respect... Fair Treatment... Equal Access

Florida's Resource on Human and Civil Rights

2006-2007 Accomplishments: A Snapshot

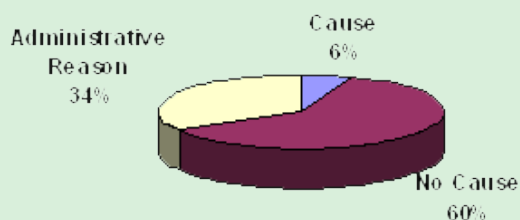
- Discrimination cases resolved within statutorily required 180 days of filing: 77% (legislative performance standard: 75%)
- Inquiries and investigations received: 12,530 (legislative performance standard: 10,000)
- Average age of cases: 117 days (down from 646 days in FY 99-00)
- Cases closed: 2,642 (includes cases from prior fiscal years)
- New cases filed: 1,332
- Top 5 Bases: Retaliation – 26%; Race – 19%; Sex – 17%; Disability – 17%; Age – 10%
- Top 5 Counties (cases filed): Leon (94); Brevard (27); Bay (25); Escambia (24); Marion (22)

Statutory Authority and Budget

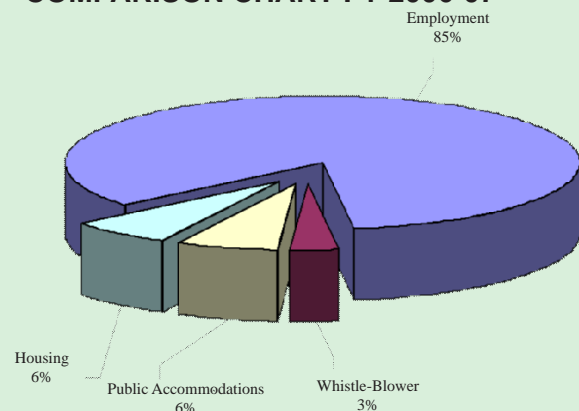
The Florida Commission on Human Relations was statutorily created in 1969 to enforce the Florida Civil Rights Act and address instances of discrimination. The Commission has the responsibility to investigate and resolve discrimination complaints in areas of employment, housing, certain public accommodations and state employee whistle-blower retaliation. It is against Florida law to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status or familial status. The Commission strives to ensure mutual understanding and respect among persons of all economic, social, racial, religious and ethnic groups.

The Commission receives approximately 73 percent of its budget from general revenue dollars appropriated by the Florida Legislature. The remainder is derived from trust funds through contracts with the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The trust funds are derived from registration fees for 55+ communities (housing for older persons) and payments for public records requests.

CASE CLOSURE BY TYPE OF RESOLUTION FOR
FY 2006-07



END OF YEAR INVENTORY
COMPARISON CHART FY 2006-07



Services to Florida's Communities

- **Outreach** – Providing the public, organizations and schools with information on cultural diversity and pressing human and civil rights issues. Building community partnerships.
- **Training and Education** – Informing business owners, housing providers and the public on best practices and legal rights and responsibilities.
- **Conflict Resolution and Technical Assistance**– Providing assistance to local leaders, law enforcement and individuals in addressing inner-group tensions. Serving as a facilitator in bringing people together to seek solutions. Providing the public with information on civil rights laws and the Commission complaint process.
- **Investigation** - Thoroughly investigating discrimination complaints from the people of Florida, both residents and visitors, and issuing a determination.
- **Mediation** – Finding an acceptable and mutual compromise while avoiding costly investigation and litigation procedures.

Community Relations Service (CRS) Unit

The CRS Unit is the outreach and educational arm of the Commission that works to prevent discrimination and promote cultural understanding by raising awareness.

- During the last three years, with a staff of only five individuals, CRS has reached over **15,000** individuals through its training, education and outreach initiatives. We reached **5,317** people in the past year.
- CRS conducted seven human trafficking trainings in the past year, reaching over **300** persons.
- Several courts within the state's court system requested CRS to provide sensitivity training to court staff, administrators and judges within the past year.
- In 2006 and 2007, the Commission's CRS Unit delivered **46** education and training sessions to community and stakeholder groups around the state.

Hate Crimes

Did You Know...

Tarpon Springs - April 6, 2007

A young man was charged with battery, shooting into an occupied dwelling and attempted murder. He allegedly shot a black man in the shoulder while using racial epithets and then directed similar slurs to a police officer after his arrest.

Tampa - April 12, 2007

A building next to a mosque and educational center was set afire.

Sarasota - July 14, 2007

Anti-Islamic epithets were spray-painted on a Bosnian family's residence that was then set on fire.

Florida is home to at least 49 hate groups, making it third in the nation.

Since 2000, there has been an 40% increase in the number of hate groups in the United States.

The Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project counted 844 active hate groups in the United States in 2006.

Source: Southern Poverty Law Center

Nationally, of the 4,737 racially motivated hate crime offenses in 2006:

... 66.2 percent were motivated by anti-black bias.

... 21.3 percent were motivated by anti-white bias.

... 6.1 percent were driven by bias against groups of individuals consisting of more than one race (anti-multiple races, group).

Source: FBI Hate Crime Statistics, 2006

District One Highlights

- Florida Press Association - General Training
- Supreme Court Training - Diversity Training
- Woodham High School - Dessert and Dialogue Event

District Two Highlights

- Duval County Schools - Hate Crimes Training
- Jacksonville Hate Crime Working Group Partnership
- St. Francis House Homeless Shelter - Human Trafficking Training



District Three Highlights

- Birchwood County Housing - Fair Housing Training
- Volusia County Government - Sexual Harassment Training
- Latino Leadership Forum - Exhibit

District Four Highlights

- El Sol - General Training
- Council on American Islamic Relations - Community Partner
- Workforce Alliance of West Palm Beach - Employment Law Training



Dessert and Dialogue participants in Tallahassee

Highlights

Housing

The Housing Unit investigates and resolves housing complaints and provides Fair Housing education and outreach to the public.

Florida Fair Housing Month

In recognition of Fair Housing Month in April, the Housing and CRS Units provided various educational and outreach activities in Pensacola. The Commission reached out to students at several schools by providing educational activities about housing issues and offering a poster contest. Commission staff appeared on local television and radio programs to discuss fair housing laws and issues and a Fair Housing Summit was conducted as well.

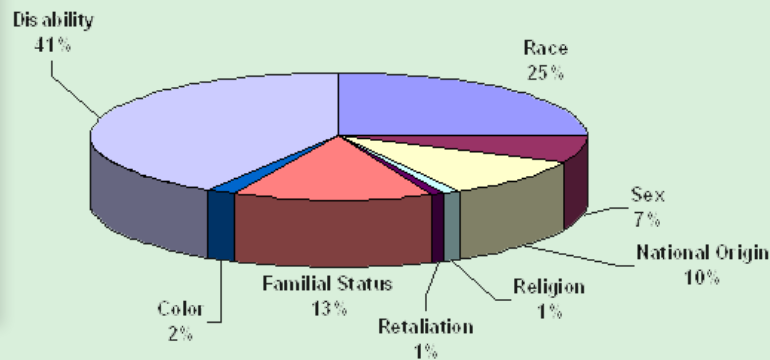
The Summit, entitled *Fair Housing-It's Not an Option, It's the Law*, was sponsored in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Presenters at the event included staff from the Florida Attorney General's office, the Mayor of Pensacola, a member of the National Fair Housing Alliance as well as speakers from the partner organizations. Partners included the City of Pensacola, Legal Services of North Florida and Escambia Human Relations Commission.

The event drew a standing room only crowd of over 100 participants, composed of community members, housing managers and real estate agents. The Summit received extensive press coverage by local television and radio stations.

Housing Cases Closed by Type of Basis FY 2006-07



Pensacola students participate in an activity during Fair Housing Month.



Students participate in an activity during Fair Housing Month.

Housing discrimination is illegal under the federal Fair Housing Act and Chapter 760, Part II Florida Statutes.

Intake and Customer Service

The Intake and Customer Service Unit is the first point of contact in receiving inquiries and formal complaints. This Unit works to ensure optimal customer service to the public.



Commission Investigator Cole Kekelis presents information to students during the Florida Fair Housing Month.

Customer Service Survey

In order to evaluate their level of service, the Intake Unit created a survey to gather feedback from its customers. The Intake Unit was rated excellent by 100 percent of survey respondents in the areas of: courteous and helpful, neutral and objective, professional and clear, and easy to understand. Across all seven categories, the Intake Unit was rated excellent 97.6 percent of the time. The remaining scores were all 4 which is the second-highest ranking.

Human Trafficking

Did You Know...

Florida is one of the top three locations in the United States for human trafficking victims.

Source: Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

In south Florida, federal prosecutions have indicated hundreds of farmworkers who were victims of human trafficking, and a forced prostitution ring identified as many as 40 young women and girls brought from Mexico.

Men are also trafficked into forced labor in agriculture, restaurants and other unregulated industries.

Source: Florida Freedom

Every 10 minutes, a woman or child is trafficked into the United States for forced labor.

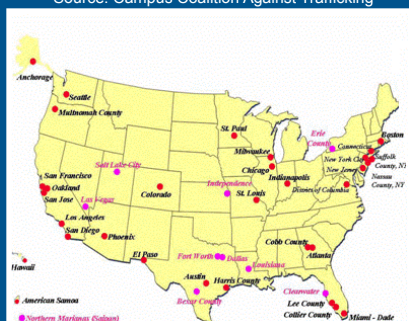
Human trafficking has become a \$9 billion a year global industry and is increasingly an activity of organized crime

Source: Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

Victims come from all ethnic and racial groups. Over the past 5 years, 90 U.S. cities have reported cases of human trafficking. Traditionally, immigrant communities in California, Florida, Texas, and New York hold the largest percentage of cases.

According to the International Labor Organization, the assumed forced labor profits for one year amount to \$32 billion.

Source: Campus Coalition Against Trafficking



2006-2007

Legal

The Legal Unit reviews all Commission cases, conducts internal and external trainings, and provides legal counsel to all staff.

Mediation

The Commission's pilot project of splitting full-time positions into part-time positions as well as locating mediators in strategic locations throughout the state has allowed almost all mediations to be conducted face-to-face, rather than by telephone. Travel costs have also decreased. The Commission is currently working to increase the numbers of complainants and respondents who opt for mediation. Mediation saves time and resources and, in many cases, both parties walk away with a higher level of satisfaction as they are directly involved with the outcome of the case.

The Commission's Mediation Unit had a successful 06-07 fiscal year! Staff conducted 186 mediations and resolved disputes in 95 of those. The Commission's mediation settlement total was \$1,356,239.

Employment

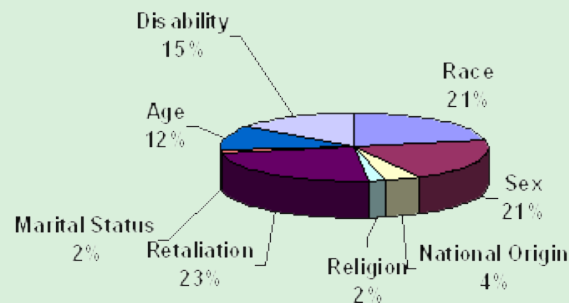
The Employment Investigations Unit is responsible for investigating all incoming complaints in the areas of employment, public accommodations and state employee whistle-blower retaliation.

The Employment Investigation Unit of the Commission revived its onsite program in which investigators travel to meet with customers face to face.

On Site Testimonial:

"Although I do not know the results of my complaint, I am certain the investigator gave it a thorough and thoughtful review. Mostly, I was very impressed when the investigator came to visit my worksite and continue the more in-depth investigation my complaint required."

Employment Cases Closed by Type of Basis FY 2006-07



State and Federal Laws Prohibiting Employment Discrimination

- Federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act
- Federal American with Disabilities Act
- Federal Employment Act (Title VIII)
- Florida Statutes Chapter 760, Part 1

Highlights

Employment Law Conference



Opening session of the first annual Employment Law Conference in Orlando.

The Commission's first annual Employment Law Conference was held December 11th and 12th in Orlando and was deemed a great success by many participants. The law conference was created to give human resource professionals, lawyers, managers and business owners knowledge about ways to improve productivity and implement best practices in a multi-cultural office setting. Participants were given a vast amount of information on state and federal civil rights laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Florida Civil Rights Act, as well as cultural competency and sexual harassment training.

All conference attendees received educational materials from the workshops which could be brought back to their offices and utilized as a resource by all employees. Attendees felt the conference "provided excellent instructions that amount to practical tips for going back and improving current policies."

The 2006 Employment Law Conference was sponsored by The Florida Commission on Human Relations, City of Orlando Office of Human Relations and the University of Florida Office of Human Resource Services.



Commission staff members during the first annual Employment Law Conference.

Commissioners Take Action

Commissioners Dr. Donna Elam and Gilbert Singer spoke on behalf of the Commission during the Orlando vigil for Ryan Keith Skipper, a victim of a brutal hate crime. The Florida Commission on Human Relations is a member of the Hate Crimes Working Group for the United States Middle District of Florida. The Commission continues to work with law enforcement and community groups to educate Florida about hate crimes.

Commissioner Shahrukh Dhanji has been active in Broward County in raising awareness on diversity issues, particularly within the court system. Commissioner Dhanji also worked with the interfaith community and Commission staff to respond to police shootings taking place in South Florida.

Sexual Harassment Video

"Sexual Harassment: Know What to Do" is the Commission's first educational video and contains important information for young people entering Florida's workforce about the realities of sexual harassment. Commission staff explained how to avoid the harmful and costly effects of sexual harassment by developing internal company policies and making sure employees are kept well informed of what to do if it happens to them.

Several actors from Tallahassee Little Theater volunteered to help with the production and a Tallahassee restaurant, La Fiesta, was generous enough to let the Commission shoot on location. To view the completed video, visit our website at fchr.state.fl.us.



Van Williams, Employment Investigations Manager, discusses the damaging effects of sexual harassment.

Florida Facts

16.1% of Floridians have disability status. **20%** of Florida's population will be over 65 years old or older in 2015. **15.4%** of Florida's population is African-American. **20.1%** of Florida population is Hispanic. Between 2005 and 2006, Florida had the **3rd** highest numerical increase in the country of Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey
U.S. Census Bureau, "Minority Population Tops 100 Million"
U.S. Census Bureau, Facts for Figures: American Indian and Alaska Native Month 2007



The Commissioners



Donna Elam
Chairperson
Former Vice-Chair
Orlando



Rita Barreto Craig
Former Chairperson
Palm Beach Gardens



Gayle Cannon
Lake City



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