



## Spring 2010 Business e-Update

### Saving Florida Businesses Money

Did you know that because of FCHR's programs and services, Florida **businesses were able to avoid litigation costs of more than \$56 million in employment discrimination lawsuits over the past three fiscal years?** This is a major contribution to the economic stability of our state since lawsuits can lead to bankruptcies, budget cuts, job lay-offs and even higher rates of unemployment. Contrary to the beliefs of some, civil rights agencies like FCHR save states and businesses millions of dollars; all while protecting the civil rights of all people.

Sadly, civil rights issues have often pitted one side against the other, which has greatly limited human and economic growth. The reality is that justice being served and economic prosperity for businesses are not mutually exclusive! At the end of the day, many policy makers, CEOs and civil rights advocates alike want the same things—for the state Florida to be a desirable place to live and work with high quality schools, safe communities, discrimination-free workplaces and a prosperous economy. In these times, we all need to work together to make it happen.

So, we want to know...are you proactive in developing and enforcing policies and procedures that protects each of your employees? Taking preventative measures now can positively affect your bottom line later; and could mean the difference between your business being in the black, or in the red. Sound policies and prevention can also ensure a highly productive and content workforce. It is time to bury old perceptions and misunderstandings about civil rights. Our state's economic viability and success of Florida's businesses depend on it!

### The Dollars Make Sense

#### Mediation Savings:

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, the median value of court-awarded damages for successful discrimination complaints is estimated at \$134,125 (excluding attorney fees and court costs). From FY 2006-07 through FY 2008-09, FCHR mediated 319 cases, averaging \$13,727 per settlement, for a total avoided cost savings to Florida businesses of \$120,398 (\$134,125-\$13,727) per case. That is approximately \$38.4 million saved from 2006 to 2009, or over \$10 million per year.

#### Investigation Savings:

During FY 2008-09, FCHR issued 599 of its *no cause* determinations within the required 180-day timeframe. Had only one fourth (or 150) of the cases made it to court, it could have cost Florida businesses and taxpayers over \$20 million (150 x \$134,125).

#### **Top 5 Bases for Employment Discrimination Complaints filed during FY 08-09**

1. Retaliation—22%
2. Race—21%
3. Disability—19%
4. Sex—16%
5. Age—11%



#### **Top 5 Industries filed against during FY 08-09**

1. Service
2. Hospitality
3. Retail
4. Industry
5. State Government

Health Care is a close sixth with only **two** cases fewer than State Government.

For more statistics, click here for our [FY08-09 Annual Report](#).