



Seattle Human Rights Commission

1963 – 2022 *59 years of championing human rights and fostering a just future*

WORK PLAN 2022

About Us

The Seattle Human Rights Commission, established in 1963, advocates for justice and equal opportunity, advises the City of Seattle on human rights issues and to collaborate with public and private sectors on methods to prevent and eliminate discrimination city-wide.

Our goals are to elevate community voices to our elected leaders, ensure there is greater public awareness for human rights concerns, and create actionable objectives for local officials.

Mission

(A) Provide leadership and assistance that protects the human and civil rights of people who live, work, attend school, play, worship, or travel in Seattle;

(B) Study, advise, and make recommendations for legislation on policies, procedures, and practices which would further the purposes of SMC Chapter 14, "Human Rights";

(C) Act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, Office for Civil Rights and other City departments in respect to matters immediately affecting human and civil rights. These rights are stated in (including but not limited to the 14th Amendment, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Americans with Disabilities Act, Washington State laws, and the City of Seattle Municipal Code.

(D) Encourage understanding between all protected classes and the larger Seattle community, through long range projects; and

(E) Hear appeals and hearings, and as set forth in Chapters 14.04, 14.06, 14.08, and 14.09 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

2022 VISION

The Commission shall consolidate, document, share, and advocate for **community-generated solutions** to human rights related issues in Seattle, a human rights city. To accomplish this we:

- Invite community organizations and individuals related to homelessness, criminal justice reform, and human trafficking to monthly meetings;
- Attend community-hosted events related to our areas of focus;
- Host events to educate the public about human rights concerns;
- Continue to grow cross-Commission coalitions; and
- Collaborate with other cities that share our city's human rights vision.

The Commission shall **institutionalize an equitable, shared leadership model**. To do this we shall:

- Study other Commissions' organizational structures both within and outside of Seattle;
- Examine governing Seattle Municipal Code (S.M.C.) as it relates to the function of the Commission;
- Revise our Bylaws and make any recommendations to amend the S.M.C.; and
- Administer year two of the Fellows program.

SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION VALUES

Communities: We center the communities most impacted by human rights concerns in all the work we do.

Race & Social Justice: The commission supports the city's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) — an effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. The commission incorporates RSJI's long-term approach in its plans, by working to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our communities to achieve racial equity.

Shared Leadership: The Commission reflects the above values by practicing shared leadership within the Commission, the City Commissions, and in community.

Collaboration: The Commission dedicates 2022 specifically to expanding and deepening institutionalized collaboration with other Commissions; namely The Seattle Women's Commission, Disability Commission, LGBTQ Commission, and the Immigrant and Refugee Commission.

And, we strengthen relationships with community-based organizations dedicated to the Commission's areas of focus.

WORK PLAN *(fka “Guiding Principles”)*

2022

The main priority in 2022 is the **recruitment process to achieve 100% capacity at all times. The following Work Plan relies solely on our capacity and thus our ability to fill Commissioner positions in a timely and consistent manner.** We not only welcome new Commissioners, but the Commission also intends to examine and recommend changes to the City’s confirmation process using an equitable framework. Alongside recruitment, the Commission shall focus our work as follows:

1. To fulfill our mission and values of community and race/social justice, the Commission continues to support the following **Task Forces in 2022:**
 - a. The Unhoused (given full capacity)
 - b. Human Trafficking (given full capacity)
 - c. Criminal Reform Task Force
2. To fulfill our mission and value of Community, The Commission shall **continue to host (and attend) events** such as Human Rights Day in December. To further opportunities to exchange learning, we shall invite community organizations and individuals to our monthly meetings as well as attend community events on behalf of the Commission.
3. To fulfill our value of shared leadership, The Commission **named specific roles for the three Co-Chairs:**
 - Administrative Co-Chair
 - Communications Co-Chair
 - Five Commissions Co-Chair

One vision of the Executive Committee as a whole (Co-Chairs, Appeals Chair, Secretary) is to share **clearly defined tasks and responsibilities in an equitable way throughout the Commission.**
4. To fulfill our value of shared leadership, the Commission seeks to invite another officer to the Executive Committee that represents the Task Forces directly (**Task Force Chair**) as well as developing year two of the **Fellows Program.**
5. To fulfill our value of collaboration, In 2022 the Commission created the **Five Commissions Committee:** a group of Commissioners to serve as liaisons to each of the other City Commissions. The vision of this new Committee is to further institutionalize meaningful, ongoing relationships with the other Commissions and is chaired by the Five Commissions Co-Chair.
6. To fulfill our value of race/social justice, the Commission intends to continue to train all Commissioners in both the **appeals process and biases in recruitment** while examining underlying systems that create identity-based disparities in our communities.

Work Plan Timeline

1st Quarter (January - March)

Recruitment

- Promote the application via email lists and social media
- Consolidate all mailing lists and contacts into a “Community Directory”

Criminal Justice Task Force

- Recruit Commission members and invite community organizations
 - Conduct outreach to grassroots community organizations across the City of Seattle who are doing impactful work to support and uplift families who have been impacted by incarceration and SPD. (Excessive use of force, re-entry services, etc)
- Relationship building and understanding of current landscape
- Assess Commission capacity for proposed avenues of advocacy
- Propose possible avenues of advocacy to Commission
 - Invite community organizations to present about how the commission can help them move their work forward in the advocacy space

Commission Development

- Complete Biases in Recruitment training for current Commissioners
- Finalize Work Plan and present to City Council and Mayor
- Job descriptions for Co-Chairs (Administrative, Communications, Five Commission)

Work Plan Timeline

2nd Quarter (April - June)

Recruitment and Onboarding

- Interview questions and needs assessment w/ equitable practices (March)
- Review applications (April) and conduct interviews (May)
- Training new Commissioners: Handbook, mandatory City trainings (June)
- Update Onboarding process documents
- Partner new Commissioners with current Commissioner/mentor
- All new Commissioners confirmed with expediency

Criminal Justice Task Force

- Review all existing related documents created by the community and City and via their collaborations (historical and current)
- Conduct outreach to community based organizations across the City and invite them to join CJ Task force meetings.

Commission Development

- Familiarize Commissioners with new online platform (emails, doc storage, etc)
- Finalize revisions to the Bylaws
- Recommended changes to the SMC as they relate to the Commission

Events

- Create Human Rights Day event planning team

3rd Quarter (July - September)

Recruitment

- Fill outgoing Commissioners' positions (three outgoing in July)
- Explore second year of Fellows (or potential internship/volunteers) Program

Criminal Justice Task Force

- Invite community based organizations to present at task force meetings around advocacy efforts in the Criminal Legal System space

Commission Development

- Present Appeals training for new Commissioners (August)
- Present Bias in Recruitment training for new Commissioners
- Activate other existing Task Forces (Homelessness, Human Trafficking)

Events

- Plan for Human Rights Day
- Collaborate with the Seattle Disability Commission to hold a panel for Prisoner Justice Day (August)
- Form Retreat planning team for January

Work Plan Timeline

4th Quarter (October - December)

Commission Development

- Retrospective - how is 2022 going?

Events

- Plan the January 2023 retreat
- Host the annual Human Rights Day (December)

PROGRESS FROM 2021, Highlights

2021 Work Plan Goals	Accomplishments
In order to function at the full capacity of community engagement it is crucial to recruit more commissioners	The Commission successfully recruited 9 new Commissioners
It takes a while to hear about progress on filling commission seats	The confirmation process is still not in alignment with the realistic needs of the Commission. 2022 is dedicated to addressing this matter with a lens of equity.
We need to manage agendas and meetings	All meeting minutes and agendas are now streamlined and sent to SOCR on time
Attend City training classes sent by Marta	100% of all current Commissioners have completed all mandatory SOCR trainings
Define and streamline the interview process	The entire recruitment process is now in line with other Commissions, and follows best known equitable practices
Project management...All focus on one project at a time.	While maintaining focus on a project, we also expanded this thinking under a shared leadership model which emphasizes project based work specifically within task forces and task-specific Co-Chair roles.
Connections to: Indigenous community, Youth and elders, People with lived experience	Worked with the other Commissions to educate Community about their rights as the eviction moratorium deadline was looming. Became a founding member of the Human Collaborative and lead train-ins on Human Trafficking from the perspective of survivors.

	2021 was a year of recruitment. We have not met our goals specifically with the indigenous community, youth and elders, but our new Commissioners are all folks with lived experience.
Fellowship reporting	Fellows successfully created reports on: Criminal Legal Reform (charging youth), Human Rights Scorecard, Human Trafficking, and a Human Rights Report. Reports were presented to the Mayor and City Council.
Research: We haven't exercised our full power (look to all the things commissions have achieved in the past)	Collected past reports and studies into a central, accessible location and is incorporated into the onboarding process.
Report: Potentially issuing a report that could turn into legislation (Women's commission study on eviction)	The recommendations from the Fellows report on Charging Youth were advocated for by Council Member Herbold in the 2022 legislative agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider youthfulness when sentencing youth by codifying Houston-Sconiers (SB 5120) • Raise the age of Juvenile Court Jurisdiction from 8-17 to 13-19 (SB 5122). • Ending the failed and harmful policy of youth sex offender registration (SB 5123) • Expand the number of people eligible to have their sentences reviewed if they were under 18 and tried as an adult when the crime was committed (House Bill No. 1344) • Remove the ability of the court to use juvenile felonies to factor in adult sentences, and allow adults to be re-sentenced if that occurred to them. (House Bill No. 1413)
Funding: Asking City Council for money for a study or potentially pushing some form of study on our own?	Goal not yet met.
Mayoral Debate	Held a Candidates Forum in collaboration with the other Commissions
Human Rights Day Event	We successfully hosted Human Rights Day in December, inviting a panel with Bob Hasagawa, Jaelynn Scott, Rais Bhuiyan, Aneelah Afzali, and Tracy Lai.
Liaising with other 5-commissions	Created the Five Commission Committee and named a Co-Chair position responsible.