



State of Maryland
Commission
on Civil Rights

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

RESTORING OUR SHARED HUMANITY

Cleveland L. Horton II, Executive Director
Stephanie Suerth, DBA, MPA, CCEP, Commission Chair

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

**“IT IS AN HONOR TO
WORK CLOSELY WITH
THE SKILLED AND
DEDICATED TEAM AT
MCCR TO ENSURE THAT
THE PROMISE OF EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY IS A
REALITY IN MARYLAND.”**

**JONATHAN SMITH, CHIEF, CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION,
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

With Federal civil rights laws currently under assault, the protections provided by Maryland laws are more important than ever. This year, MCCR and the Office of the Attorney General together created a comprehensive, plain-language, user-friendly guide that serves as a powerful tool to ensure that Marylanders know their rights and how to protect them.



“EVERY MARYLANDER DESERVES TO WORK IN AN ENVIRONMENT FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION. MCCR IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT EQUITY IS NOT JUST A PROMISE, BUT A PRACTICE, AND THAT EMPLOYERS ARE HELD TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF FAIRNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY.”

**ALESHA BELL, INVESTIGATIONS UNIT I SUPERVISOR,
EMPLOYMENT/PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS/HEALTH SERVICES**

In 2024, MCCR reached a landmark conciliation agreement in a case of racial and sexual harassment and retaliation in the workplace that included a \$450,000 payment directly to the complainant and \$50,000 submitted to MCCR's Civil Rights Enforcement Fund to aid ongoing efforts to promote and safeguard civil rights across the state.





STATE OF MARYLAND COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

"Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination."

The Honorable
Wes Moore
Governor,
State of Maryland
State House,
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable
Bill Ferguson
President,
Maryland State Senate
State House H-107,
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable
Joseline Peña-Melnyk
*Speaker, Maryland House
of Delegates*
State House H-101,
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 1, 2026

Governor Moore, Senate President Ferguson, and Speaker Peña-Melnyk,

On behalf of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR), we are honored to present our 2025 Annual Report—an accounting not only of our work, but of our unwavering commitment to the people of Maryland in a time of profound national challenge. Across the country, we continue to witness threats to equality, equity, and civil rights. Long-standing protections are tested, fundamental liberties are debated, and communities who have historically faced discrimination are once again confronted with rhetoric and actions that undermine dignity and belonging.

Yet in Maryland, we remain steadfast. As our gala theme—**Looking Ahead, No Turning Back: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities**—affirmed, we meet this moment with courage, resilience, and a clear-eyed belief that progress is both possible and necessary. We acknowledge openly that our state is not immune to the currents that sweep our nation. The challenges we have faced, and continue to confront, demand not retreat, but renewed commitment.

MCCR's work is systemic in scope, but its purpose is personal. Every case we investigate, every mediation we conduct, every outreach event we hold is ultimately about people—Marylanders whose daily lives, opportunities, and well-being are shaped by whether they are treated fairly. Discrimination is not an abstract concept; it determines whether a family can secure safe and stable housing; whether a job applicant is evaluated on merit rather than bias; whether our neighbors can walk into schools, businesses, and public spaces fully embraced by their communities and their state.

This year, we strengthened enforcement of Maryland's anti-discrimination laws, advanced critical education and outreach initiatives, and expanded partnerships with public and private stakeholders to confront inequity at its roots. Through litigation, mediation, training, and policy engagement, MCCR continues to safeguard civil rights in employment, housing, and public accommodations, ensuring that every Marylander has both protection and recourse.

As we look forward we embrace a theme of **Reclaiming our Common Ground: Restoring Our Shared Humanity**. This is a call to action, for the Commission and for all Marylanders. It is a declaration that, even in the most difficult times, the soul of Maryland remains stronger than forces that may attempt to fracture or break it. Reclaiming our common ground means recommitting ourselves

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to the simple yet powerful idea that people matter. Not concepts, not talking points, not rhetoric—people. Moreover, it reflects our collective resolve to pursue something deeper and essential: a renewed sense of *shared humanity*.

Our progress is powered by the extraordinary dedication of the MCCR staff. Their commitment to fairness, justice, and the dignity of every person is the backbone of our agency. Their efforts have been to expand access to justice, increase transparency, strengthen enforcement, and empower communities with the information and support they need to stand up against discrimination. In challenging times, they exemplify what steadfast public service looks like—meeting difficult facts with professionalism, meeting human need with empathy, and meeting systemic barriers with persistence.

As we look forward, we draw strength from the words of civil rights icon **Coretta Scott King**, who reminded us: “*Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation.*” Her words continue to guide our work and affirm the courage and determination required of us all.

In that spirit, we do not view setbacks as endpoints. We transform them into opportunities to refine our strategies, strengthen our partnerships, and elevate the voices of those too often unheard. Maryland’s civil rights trajectory is one of resilience and forward motion. **No turning back: we will reclaim our common ground, we will restore our shared humanity.**

Thank you for your continued support of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and for your commitment to ensuring that Maryland remains a place where equity is championed, justice is safeguarded, and all people can thrive. We look forward to continuing this vital work together.

Respectfully submitted,



Cleveland L. Horton II
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Stephanie Suerth, DBA, MPA, CCEP
COMMISSION CHAIR

RECLAIMING OUR COMMON GROUND



At this moment, we live in a divided country, and our shared values of equality, equity, and civil rights are under threat. Through all of this, our state remains deeply committed to safeguarding the rights of the people of Maryland, and our work at the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights is more essential today than ever before as we seek to bridge the divide of rhetoric and bring people together to recognize and respect our shared humanity.

Our efforts over this past year were focused on the theme of our 2025 gala—*Looking Ahead, No Turning Back: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities*. To that purpose, we strengthened enforcement of Maryland's anti-discrimination laws, advanced critical education and outreach initiatives to inform Marylanders of their rights, and expanded partnerships with public and private stakeholders to confront inequity at its roots. Through litigation, mediation, training, and policy engagement, MCCR worked to safeguard civil rights in employment, housing, public accommodations, health services, commercial leasing, and state contracts, ensuring that every Marylander has both protection and recourse.

As we look forward, we recognize that while our work is often systemic in scope, its impact has a direct impact on the daily lives of Marylanders, whose well-being and opportunities are shaped by whether they are treated fairly. Our theme for the coming year—*Reclaiming Our Common Ground: Restoring Our Shared Humanity*—is an affirmation that even in the most difficult times the soul of Maryland remains stronger than the forces that seek to break us. At MCCR, all of our activities are framed by a core belief—that people matter. Our dedicated staff will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that Maryland's civil rights trajectory is one of resilience and forward motion.

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LEADING THE CHARGE FOR EQUITY IN MARYLAND FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS

MARYLAND COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS



Maryland laws amended to ban:

- housing discrimination based on marital status and sex;
- certain employment practices and housing discrimination against people with mental or physical disabilities;

1974

Permitted for the first time since being established in 1968 as the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to seek certain types of court relief in order to preserve the status of parties or prevent irreparable harm.

1975

• discriminatory practices in public accommodations, employment, and housing due to marital status or physical or mental handicap.

Chapter 333 of 1975 makes it lawful for employers to set standards for employee dress and grooming that relate directly to the nature of the employment.

Gains increased independence and autonomy in operations and is empowered to award monetary relief to the victims of employment discrimination.

1977

Chapter 907 of 1977 requires employers to treat disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth in the same manner as other disabilities.

Vested with the authority to enforce Maryland's anti-discrimination laws in employment, housing and public accommodation on the basis of gender identity.



Launches the **Western Maryland Advisory Council (WMAC)** to serve Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington counties.

2014

Maryland passes the **Fairness to All Marylanders Act of 2014** (Chapter 474 of 2014), codifying more than a decade of actions that established gender identity as a protected class.

2015

Interns are protected from discrimination and harassment at their place of internship (Chapter 43 of 2015).



2018

MCCR'S ACTIVITIES

- Investigate complaints of unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, state contracts, health services, and commercial leasing because of race, color, religion or creed, sex, age, ancestry or national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information (employment only), familial status (housing only), source of income (housing only), and/or military status (employment and housing only).
- Promote awareness and understanding of Maryland's anti-discrimination laws.
- Help to promote and improve civil rights within the state by working with employers to develop bias-free selection, hiring, retention, promotion, and contracting procedures; advocating equal housing opportunities for all groups; and working to advance equal access to public accommodations and services.



Name changed to the **Maryland Commission on Civil Rights** to reflect the anti-discrimination work through enforcement of the state's anti-discrimination laws, as well as through public outreach and education (Chapter 580 of 2011).

1999

Governor Parris N. Glendenning is the first sitting governor to advocate for **banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation**.

2001

Protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation codified with Chapter 340 of 2001.

2011



2013

Pregnant employees gain the legal right to request a reasonable accommodation at work (Chapters 547 and 548 of 2013).

The Crown Act passes (Chapters 473 and 474 of 2020) identifying discrimination based on an applicant's or employee's hair texture, style or protective hairstyle as a type of race discrimination under existing Maryland EEO law.



Juneteenth designated a **Federal holiday**, honoring the date when the last slaves to receive the news learned of the end to slavery in the U.S., June 19, 1865, in Galveston Bay, Texas.



2020

The Housing Opportunities Made Equal Act adds "source of income" as a protected class under Maryland's Fair Housing law (Chapters 116 and 117 of 2020).

2021

Kamala Harris sworn in as the first woman and first woman of color to serve as Vice President. President Joe Biden's diverse cabinet includes the Pete Buttigieg, the first openly gay U.S. cabinet secretary, and Deb Haaland, the first Native American U.S. cabinet secretary.

Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 puts Maryland in the lead in enacting comprehensive police reform in the state.

2023–2025 THE WORK CONTINUES

Wes Moore becomes Maryland's first African American Governor and Aruna Miller, who emigrated from India at age 7, becoming a U.S. citizen in 2000, is the first immigrant to be elected to the post of Lieutenant Governor in the U.S. and the first Asian American elected to statewide office in Maryland.



The Maryland General Assembly passes a bill establishing the **Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention** (Chapter 773 of 2023), and authorizes the Attorney General to investigate, prosecute, and remediate certain civil rights violations under certain circumstances (Governor - Chapter 629).

Military status added as a protected class to employment and housing anti-discrimination laws. (Chapters 322 & 323 of 2024)

**JANUARY
2023**

**APRIL
2023**

**MAY
2023**

**JUNE
2023**

**OCTOBER
2024**



The Maryland General Assembly approves a measure prohibiting a person from discriminating in the sale or rental of, or otherwise making unavailable or denying, a dwelling to an **individual with a disability** who has, obtains, or retains a certain service dog (Chapter 212 of 2023).

The U.S. Supreme Court rules that colleges and universities can **no longer take race into consideration** as a specific basis for granting admission, a landmark decision overturning longstanding precedent that has benefited Black and Latino students in higher education.

**"STUDYING HISTORY ISN'T JUST ABOUT KNOWING
WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST. IT'S ABOUT KNOWING
OUR POWER IN THE PRESENT."**

GOVERNOR WES MOORE



MCCR launches seven complaints against housing providers after receiving reliable information that they may have violated **Maryland's fair housing law** by discriminating against tenants based on their sources of income.

MCCR hosted "Protecting Civil Rights During Challenging Times" Symposium

MCCR and OAG settle a major **housing discrimination case** with two housing providers in Frederick County due to a violation in Maryland's fair housing protections against source of income discrimination.

MCCR & OAG publish "Know Your Rights: A Guide to Understanding and Protecting Your Rights," a 37-page resource published in both English and Spanish.



**OCTOBER
2024**

**FEBRUARY
2025**

**MAY
2025**

**JULY
2025**

**AUGUST
2025**

Public accommodation anti-discrimination law updated to make victims of unlawful discrimination eligible to receive monetary relief. Previously, monies paid were classified as civil penalties, paid to the state's General Fund with no monetary relief/damages available to a victim (Chapter 344 of 2024).

MCCR reaches a landmark **conciliation agreement** with **Prince George's County Public Schools** (securing the largest relief award to a complainant) in that discrimination and harassment case.

MCCR publishes guidance on **Source of Income protections** in Maryland's fair housing law, a resource for both landlords and tenants.

OUR FOCUS



The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) is an independent state agency serving individuals, businesses and communities throughout Maryland. MCCR is governed by a nine-member Commission appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Maryland State Senate to serve six-year terms. The Commission meets once a month to set policy and review programmatic initiatives.

MCCR's mandate is to ensure equal opportunity through enforcement of Title 20 of the State Government Article, Title 19 of the State Finance & Procurement Article, and Title 19 of the Health-General Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

Since 1968, the Commission has had authority to administer and enforce the Maryland Public Accommodations Law, the Discrimination in Housing Law and the Fair Employment Practices Law. To achieve this, MCCR has a deferral relationship and funding provided by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U. S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

OUR MISSION

is to ensure opportunity for all through the enforcement of Maryland's laws against discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, state contracts, health services, and commercial leasing; to provide educational outreach services related to provisions of this law; and to promote and improve civil rights in Maryland.

OUR VISION

is to have a state that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.

OUR CORE VALUES

These core values are the ideals and principles that are the heartbeat of this organization and drive the delivery of all of our services and initiatives.

- **Respect** - We value one another's differences and varied roles with humility and sensitivity, where all people, perspectives, and positions are heard and valued.
- **Integrity** - We are committed to the public and each other's ethical behavior that reflects and works for the betterment of the laws we enforce.
- **Effective Communication** - We promote an inclusive culture of open communication, promoting meaningful and successful interactions.

CASE PROCESSING



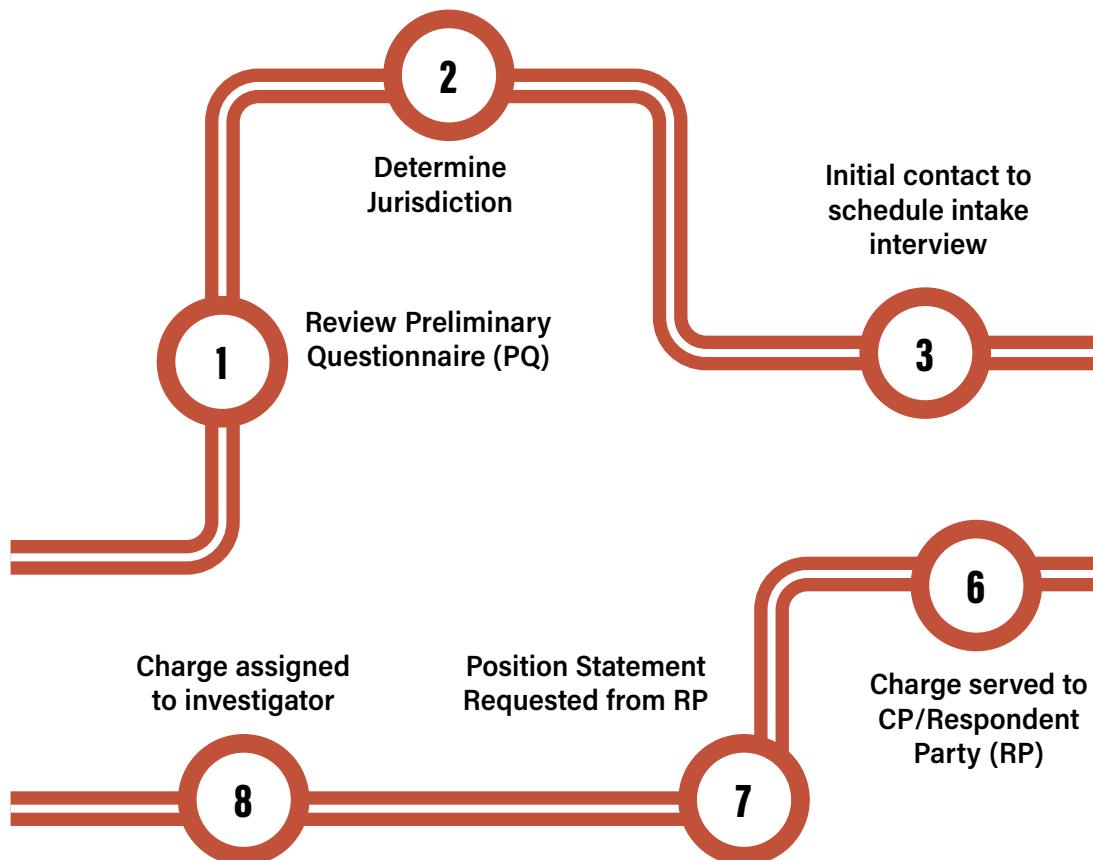
DEPARTMENT

MCCR's Case Processing Department investigates complaints in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations state contracts, health services, and commercial leasing. Our mandate is to protect against discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, state contracts, health services, and commercial leasing because of race, color, religion or creed, sex, age, ancestry or national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information (employment only), familial status (housing only), source of income (housing only), and/or military status (employment and housing only).

MCCR receives complaints directly from individuals who believe they have been victims of unlawful discrimination and collaborates

with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).

INTAKE PROCESS

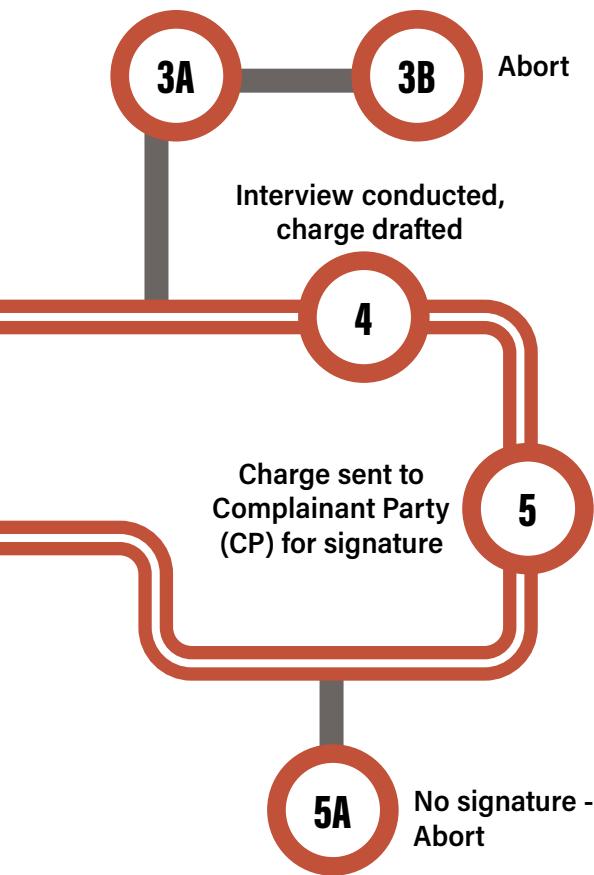


HOW TO FILE A CASE

Anyone who wishes to file a complaint with MCCR alleging unlawful discrimination in violation of Title 20 of the State Government Article, Title 19 of the State Finance & Procurement Article, or Title 19 of the Health-General Article should:

Complete an online inquiry form on the MCCR website. Those needing assistance can contact MCCR by telephone, e-mail, fax or mail to begin the process of filing a complaint.

If no contact, send
10-day letter



TOTAL INQUIRIES

1,962

FY2025

1,761

FY2024

TOTAL CHARGES TAKEN

825

FY2025

676

FY2024

TOTAL INTAKE ABORTS

455

FY2025

700

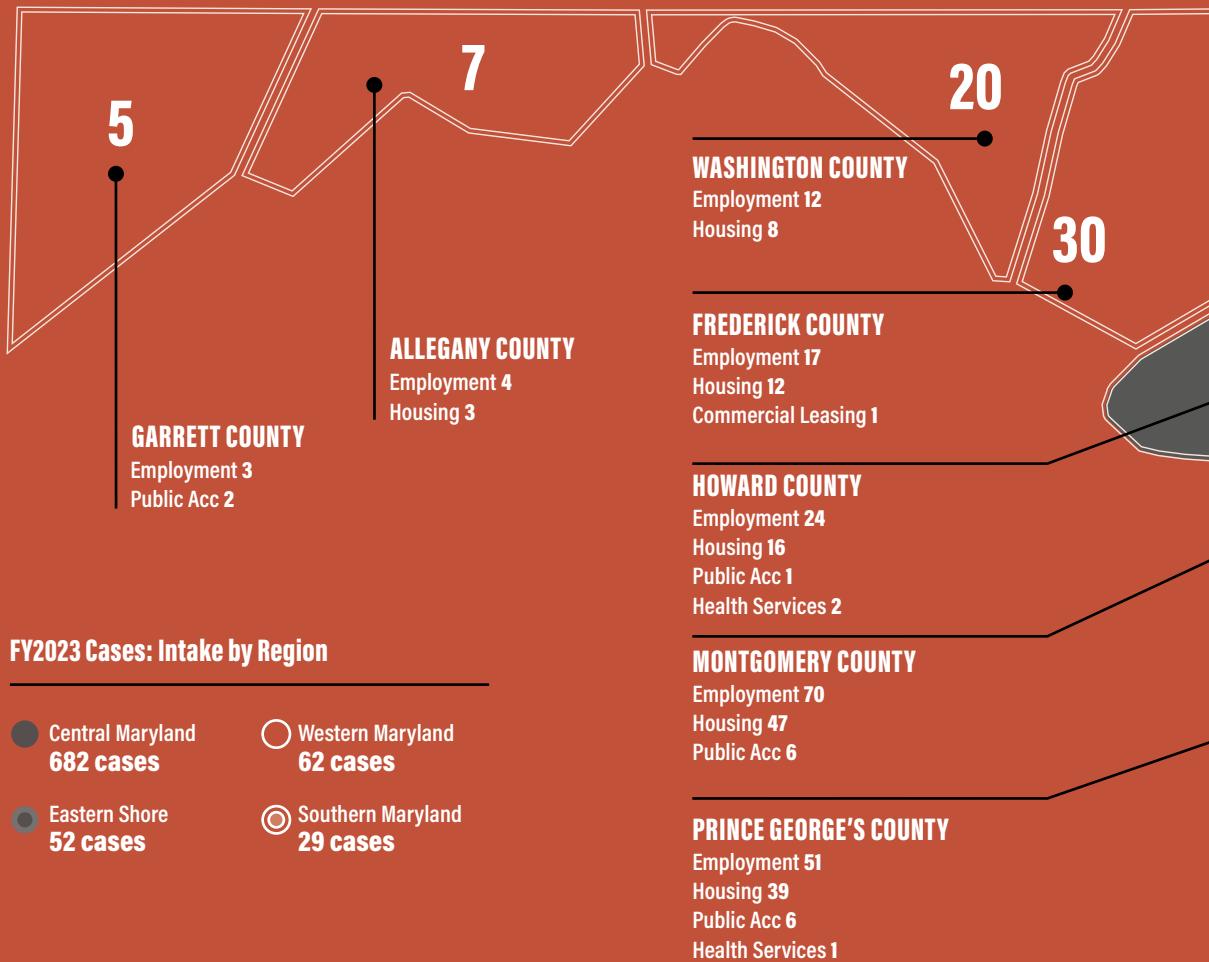
FY2024

Follow this timetable from the date of an alleged incident of unlawful discrimination for filing a complaint with MCCR:

- Employment - within 300 days
- Housing - within 1 year
- Public accommodation, health services, and commercial leasing - within 6 months
- State contracts - within 4 years

Learn more or file a complaint online on our website at mccr.maryland.gov.

SERVING ALL OF MARYLAND | FY2025 CASES: BY REGION & COUNTY



825 TOTAL CASES

RECEIVED FOR INVESTIGATION

513
EMPLOYMENT

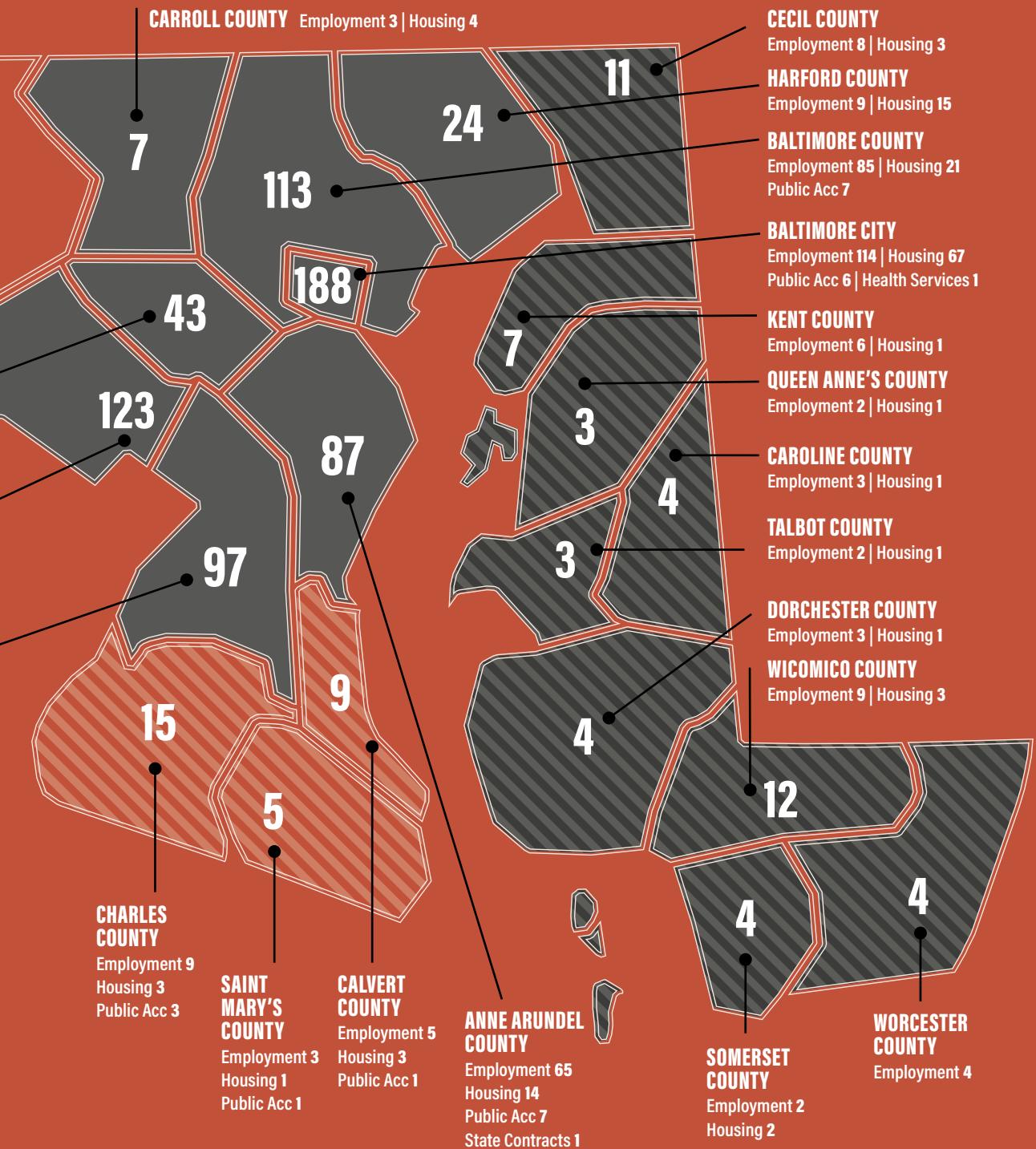
266
HOUSING

40
PUBLIC
ACCOMMODATION

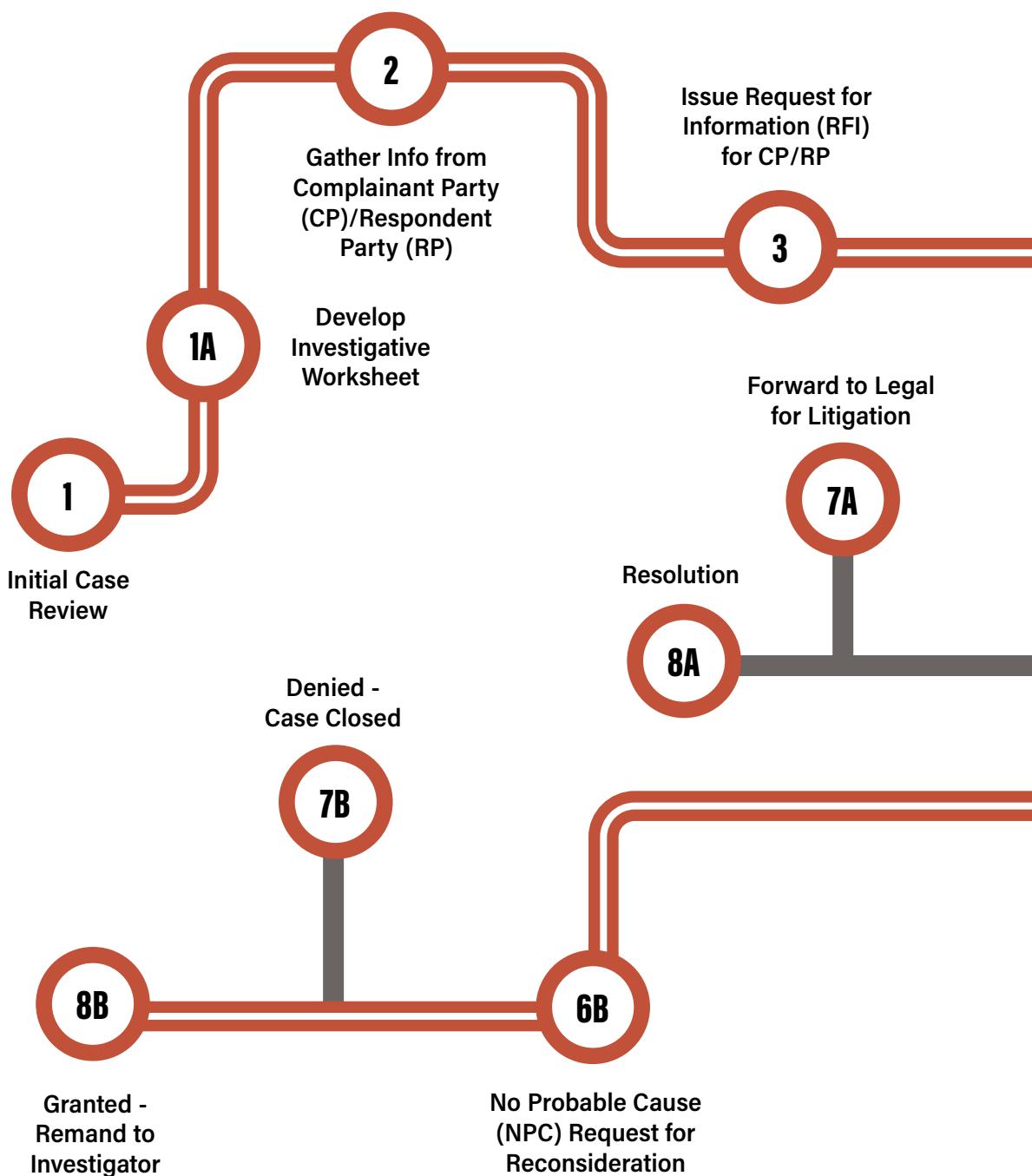
1
STATE
CONTRACTS

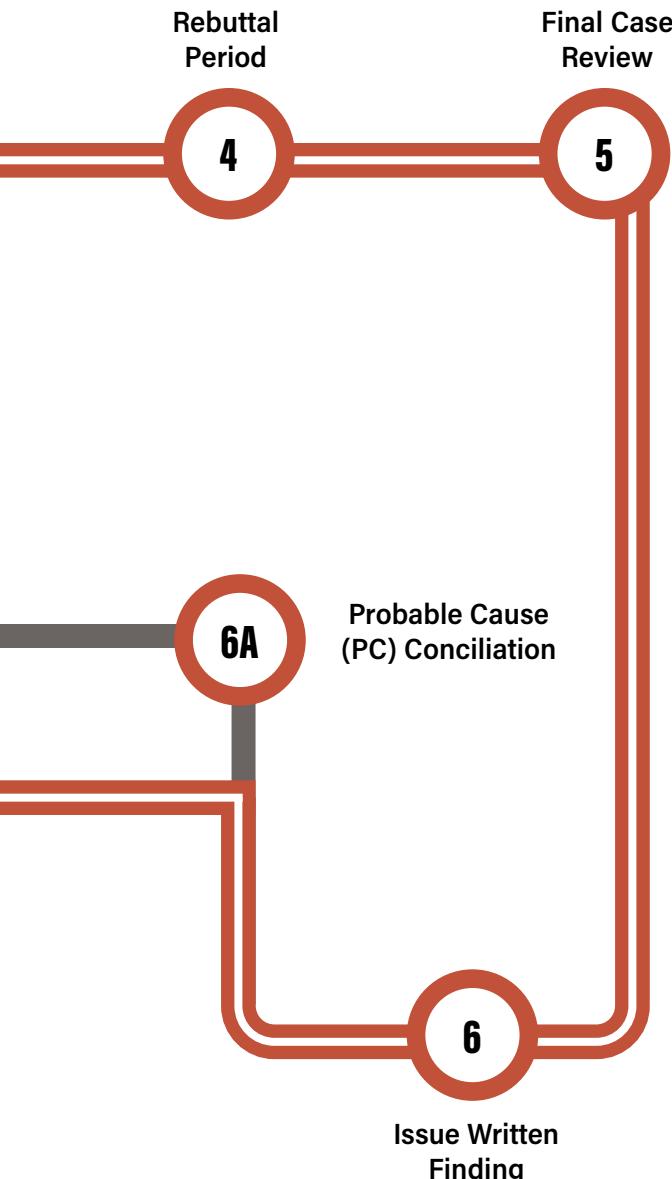
1
COMMERCIAL
LEASING

4
HEALTH
SERVICES



INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS FROM INTAKE TO CLOSURE





Total Case Closures

745

FY2025

815

FY2024

478	Employment	546
218	Housing	210
45	Public Accommodation	53
0	State Contracts	6
1	Commercial Leasing	0
3	Health Services	0

Type of Closure

417	No Probable Cause
169	Administrative Closure
101	Withdrawn with Benefits
52	Settlements
3	Probable Cause
3	Successful Conciliation
0	Unsuccessful Conciliation

Monetary Relief

\$2,456,165.51

FY2025

\$2,135,046.38	Employment
\$301,311.13	Housing
\$15,808	Public Accommodation
\$4,000	Health Services

\$1,432,315.51

FY2024

\$1,265,249	Employment
\$144,342.51	Housing
\$22,724	Public Accommodation

CASE PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

EMPLOYMENT



Employment discrimination cases accounted for 62% of MCCR's total cases in 2025. The number of retaliation inquiries fell for the second year in a row this year, after a sharp rise 2021-2023, with the agency receiving a total of 86 different retaliation inquiries in 2025 as compared to 850 in 2024. Fear of retaliation continues to have a chilling effect on efforts to encourage reporting of employment discrimination. Since 2017, retaliation has been the #1 employment-related inquiry received by MCCR. In 2025, race and disability remained the #2 and #3 employment-related complaints.

CASES TRANSFERRED

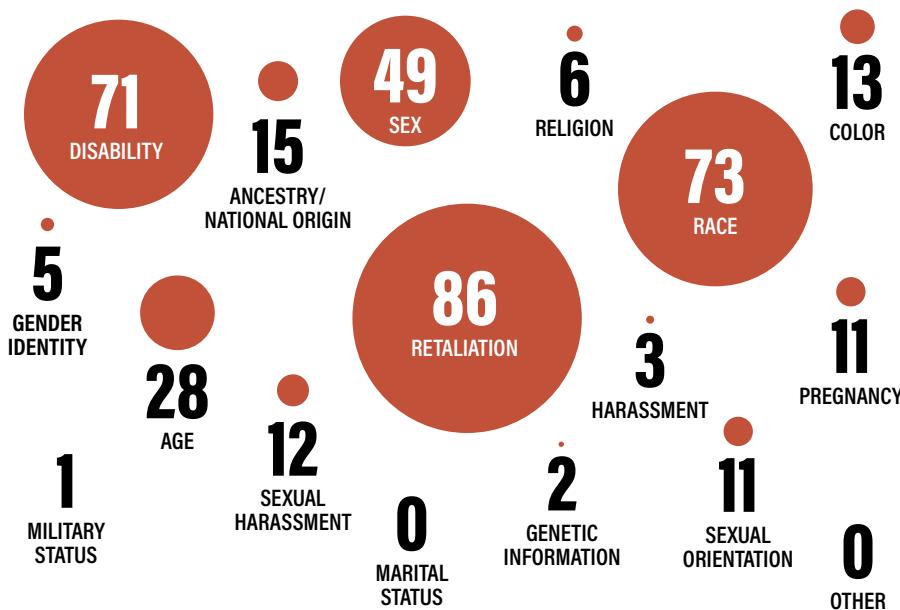
4

to EEOC

208

from EEOC

Breakdown of Employment Inquiries, FY2025



INQUIRIES BY RACE
Black 60
White 6
Asian 4
Bi-Racial/
Multi-Racial 3

BY SEX
Female 43
Male 6

BY RELIGION
Catholic 2
Muslim 3
Other 1

BY ANCESTRY/ NATIONAL ORIGIN
Arab, Afghani 1
Hispanic 3
Other 11

Case Studies: Employment Discrimination

Based on Race and Sex

Prince George's County

When the complainant reported her former supervisor for subjecting her and other female African American employees to sexually explicit comments and advances, the respondent created a hostile work environment including increased workload, out-of-scope assignments, excessive hours, personal attacks, workplace bullying, a fabricated performance review, and efforts to undermine her professional credibility. Following a thorough investigation, the parties reached a comprehensive resolution including a monetary settlement of \$450,000 to the Complainant, \$50,000 to the Civil Rights Enforcement Fund, as well as mandatory training for all employees on ADA compliance, Title VII regulations, and harassment prevention.

Based on Race and Disability

Cecil County

A new hire at a national bank alerted both her supervisor and human resources (HR) that her onboarding training was inadequate. Due to a disability the respondent was aware of, she also took time off. At this point, she was advised her job performance required improvement and was assigned to a less desirable job. She filed a formal complaint with HR, and the bank found her allegations to be unsubstantiated. Shortly thereafter, she was terminated due to "workplace reduction." However, because the respondent was still actively hiring, the complainant asserted her termination was retaliatory against her as an African American female. After months of facilitated settlement discussions, the parties reached a private agreement that included an award of \$500,000 to the complainant.

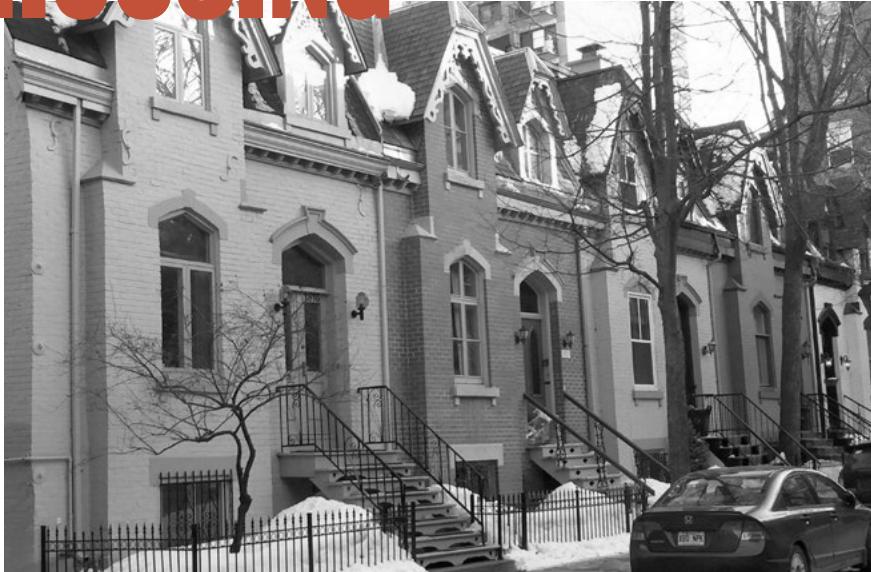
Based on Race, Disability, Retaliation

Montgomery County

The complainant alleged that she was subjected to harassment by her immediate supervisor. She alleged that her work was overly scrutinized, her disability status was not respected in the workplace, and she was denied bonuses and awards that were previously honored before her protected activity. MCCR investigators utilized multiple investigative tools including a fact-finding conference and requests for information. The parties agreed to settle the matter in a private agreement, with a significant settlement to the complainant.

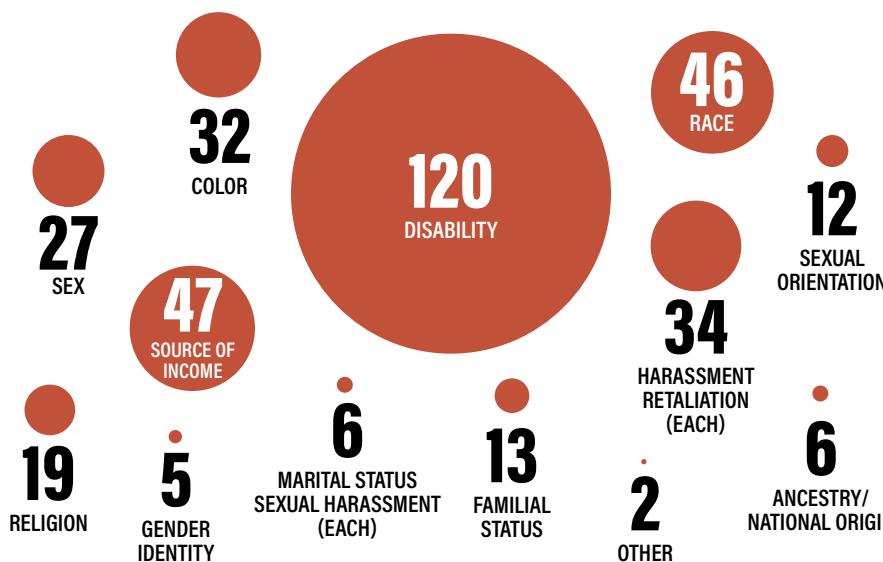
CASE PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

HOUSING



For 2025, the housing closure number continued to rise, reaching the highest level the Commission has achieved in the past four years, and MCCR continues to lead HUD Region III in case closures. Although there was an increase in the number of housing discrimination inquiries made in FY2025, MCCR remains concerned that its typical annual caseload of housing discrimination cases is an inappropriately low level of reporting based on the state's population of 6 million residents. Through targeted outreach, we have actively worked to educate the public about their rights and about MCCR's role in investigating housing discrimination complaints. Disability complaints related to accessibility remained the #1 type of complaint, followed for the first time by source of income, which has become a top protected class since the passage of the Housing Opportunities Made Equal Act in 2020.

Breakdown of Housing Inquiries, FY2025



INQUIRIES BY RACE
Black 42
White 4
Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial 3

BY SEX
Female 40
Male 7

BY RELIGION
Catholic 3
Jewish 1
Muslim 5
Other 10

BY ANCESTRY/ NATIONAL ORIGIN
Hispanic 4
Other 2

Case Studies: Housing Discrimination

Based on Source of Income

Montgomery County

MCCR initiated cases against seven property management companies after the Equal Rights Center provided testing information which indicated that these housing providers were refusing applicants who used Rapid Rehousing and Sustainable Housing Assistance Rental Program assistance. These assistance programs help vulnerable individuals find secure housing. MCCR successfully settled all seven cases, with four out of the seven closed during this fiscal year. The settlements required that the respondents provide training for the involved parties and pay \$13,250 to Civil Rights Enforcement Fund.

Based on Disability

Baltimore County

A resident with physical disabilities that limited her mobility found that the neighbor whose assigned parking spot was next to hers frequently encroached on the complainant's space, leading to a parking dispute between the neighbors. In a predetermination settlement agreement, the complainant agreed to withdraw her case if the respondent would repaint the parking lot by a specific date in a way that would accommodate her disability and quickly resolve the dispute between the neighbors. Repainting included moving the neighbor's assigned parking spot further from hers and creating a loading zone next to the complainant's space. The complainant was allowed to review and approve diagrams of the proposed design to ensure it would allow her to enter and exit her vehicle more easily.

Based on Source of Income

Frederick County

Following a joint investigation between MCCR and the Office of the Attorney General's Civil Rights Division (CRD), a significant settlement was reached with Habitat America, LLC, and The Commons of Avalon TH, LLLP, stemming from allegations that tenants using housing vouchers were subjected to higher rent increases than other tenants at a Frederick, Maryland, apartment complex. Under the terms of the settlement, the respondents agreed to reimburse affected households for excess rent paid, pay up to \$2,500 per household in additional damages, pay \$105,000 in civil penalties, update their internal policies and conduct fair housing training for staff, and submit regular reports on rental practices to MCCR and CRD.

CASE PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

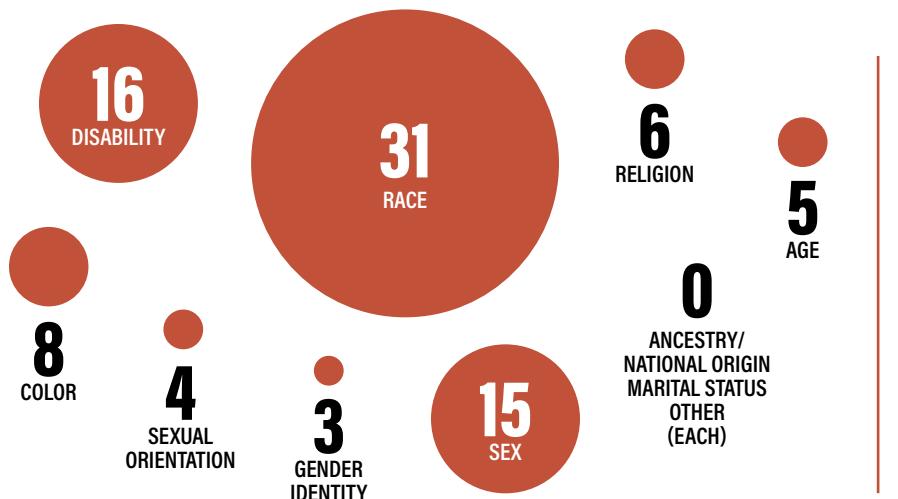
PUBLIC



ACCOMMODATION

Inquiries of discrimination against an owner or operator of a place of public accommodation continued to rise in 2025 as a percentage of MCCR's total caseload. Race and disability remained the #1 and #2 reported protected classes for public accommodation complaints in 2025.

Breakdown of Public Accommodation Inquiries, FY2025



Case Studies: Public Accommodation Discrimination

Based on Disability

Baltimore County

In 2019, a mall visitor seeking access to the food court at White Marsh Mall discovered that parking spaces designated for people with disabilities had been replaced by electric vehicle charging stations, forcing her to navigate more than 100 feet from the nearest reserved handicap space. MCCR's investigation led to a finding of probable cause, and the respondent agreed to reinstate accessible parking close to the food court and to address additional barriers, ensuring a welcoming environment for all visitors.

Based on Disability

Charles County

A Deaf complainant requested that a motorcycle course provide an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter so he could participate in the program's classes and activities. The respondent initially claimed that they were not required to provide the accommodation. Guidance from the Motor Vehicle Administration Rider Education Division confirmed that the accommodation was required. Further inquiry confirmed that all motorcycle courses are required to accommodate Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing individuals. A probable cause finding that the respondent was in violation of Title 20, Subtitle 3 of the State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland led the respondent and complainant to conciliate the matter for a payment of \$10,000 to the complainant.

Based on Disability

Allegany County

An individual with a physical disability who uses a power wheelchair for mobility was denied a reservation for a historic Polar Express train trip after requesting to board the train utilizing their power wheelchair as a reasonable accommodation for disability-related health issues. The respondent denied both the accommodation request and service, citing the "historic nature of the train cars." The complainant asserted this was a pretext for discrimination, as other institutions with historic train cars, such as the B&O Railroad Museum, are ADA-accessible. The respondent denied discriminating based on disability, but a pre-determination settlement agreement led to updates to the railroad's website wording about ADA compliance and renovations to the train to create space for mobility devices.

CASE PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

HEALTH CARE, COMMERCIAL LEASING, AND STATE CONTRACTS

In FY2025, sex and race remained the leading protected class complaints in commercial leasing discrimination. Disability, followed by race and sex were the leading protected class complaints in health care. Sex was the leading protected class in state contracts.

Health-General Article, §19-355 (c) and (d), Annotated Code of Maryland, prohibits a hospital or related institution from discriminating in the provision of medical care because of an individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

State Government Article, §20-501, Annotated Code of Maryland, prohibits an owner or operator of commercial property, an agent or employee of the owner or operator of commercial property, or a person that is licensed or regulated by the state from discriminating against an individual in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the leasing of property for commercial use, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection with the leasing of property for commercial use, because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

State Finance & Procurement Article, §19-101, Annotated Code of Maryland, prohibits the State of Maryland from entering into a contract with any business entity that has discriminated in the solicitation, selection, hiring, or commercial treatment of vendors, suppliers, subcontractors, or commercial customers on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any otherwise unlawful use of characteristics.

TOTAL INQUIRIES**34 40**

FY2025

FY2024

TOTAL CHARGES TAKEN**6 9**

FY2025

FY2024

MONETARY RELIEF**\$4,000 \$0**

FY2025

FY2024

BREAKDOWN OF COMMERCIAL LEASING INQUIRIES IN FY2025**1**
RACE
BLACK**1**
SEX
FEMALE**1**
ANCESTRY/
NATIONAL
ORIGIN**BREAKDOWN OF HEALTH SERVICES INQUIRIES IN FY2025****3**
DISABILITY**2**
RACE
BLACK**2**
SEX
1 MALE
1 FEMALE**1**
RELIGION
OTHER**1**
ANCESTRY/
NATIONAL
ORIGIN**STATE CONTRACTS INQUIRY IN FY2025****1**
SEX
FEMALE

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL



The MCCR's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) is an independent legal department serving as the Commission's chief legal counsel. The OGC represents MCCR in litigation and negotiations and provides legal advice to the agency's commissioners, management and staff. In addition, the OGC manages MCCR's legislation and regulation activities—drafting bills and regulations, testifying, and providing technical assistance to legislators.

Because the OGC operates independently from the Office of the Attorney General, which represents most state agencies, OGC is able to pursue legal action in discrimination charges the Commission might bring against the State of Maryland under the state's anti-discrimination statute, Title 20 of the State Government Article.

The OGC is a member of the Maryland Equal Pay Commission and represents MCCR on the Office of the Attorney General's Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention. The Assistant General Counsel participates in the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and the Pro Bono Resource Center.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

The Office of the General Counsel (the Office or OGC) is an independent legal counsel for the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR). State Government Article, §20-206, created the Office as an independent state legal department, separate from the Office of the Attorney General, to represent MCCR in all legal matters including negotiations and litigation. OGC also provides legal advice to the agency's commissioners, executive team, supervisors, and staff. In addition, the Office provides technical assistance to federal, state, and local governments, numerous private businesses, non-profits, and other organizations such as bar associations. The Office also cooperates with the Office of the Attorney General on litigation matters and with its Civil Rights Division.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 OGC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- The General Counsel provided technical assistance through Investigative Techniques and Legal Theories Training for statewide Equal Employment Opportunities Officers employed by state agencies. This annual training is sponsored by the statewide EEO Office.
- The General Counsel moderated a panel for MCCR's Cannabis Symposium held for Calvert County. In addition, the General Counsel participated on the Enforcement Panel for MCCR's Fair Housing Webinar Series.
- The Assistant General Counsels presented a training entitled Damages & Remedies in Employment Discrimination Cases for a MCCR Staff Lunch & Learn. In addition, the General Counsel provided MCCR staff with a legal update and with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Training. OGC staff provided an overview of the General Counsel's Office duties, functions, processes, and litigation requirements at another monthly MCCR Staff Lunch & Learn.
- At the Civil Rights and Human Rights Conference, the General Counsel presented on Conducting Administrative Hearings for state and local commissioners. In addition, the General Counsel participated as a panelist for MCCR's Protecting Civil Rights During Challenging Times Symposium.

SIGNIFICANT CASE LITIGATED BY THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL IN FY2025

State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, et.al. v. Cheryl Sawyers, et.al.

Tonya Wood ("Ms. Wood") was a Section 8 housing choice voucher holder and a gainfully employed mother of a college student and two-year-old daughter. During the summer of 2022, she was residing in New Jersey and planning a transition. Ms. Wood was searching the real-estate website Trulia for rental housing in Silver Spring, Maryland. A single-family home captured her attention. The spacious home was owned by Cheryl Sawyers, and the property manager was Rachel Wilson. The advertisement attached to the online property listing read "the landlord is currently not authorized to accept the Section 8 housing voucher because the property did not go through registration and inspection." Ms. Wood clicked the apply button which generated a pop-up message, which stated, "the landlord is not currently set up for Section 8." Ms. Wood contacted Rachel Wilson through Trulia and by cell phone. Ms. Wood informed Rachel Wilson that she was a Section 8 participant and was interested in renting the property. Ms. Wood told Rachel Wilson that she believed the advertisements were discriminatory towards Section 8 voucher holders.

Rachel Wilson admitted that she created the online listing with the message about Section 8 vouchers. She said that neither she nor the owner wanted to accept Section 8 voucher holders. Based on their conversation, the advertisement, and email, Ms. Wood felt that applying to rent the home would be futile. Ms. Wood filed a fair housing complaint with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights against Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson. The Commission investigated the claim. The agency found probable cause of discrimination because the online listing was produced to exclude Section 8 voucher holders. Despite efforts by the Commission, the case did not settle prior to litigation. Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson elected to have the case tried before a jury. This resulted in the Commission filing a lawsuit in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County against Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson based on source of income discrimination.

The Commission and Tonya Wood's attorney believed the evidence of discrimination was solid. They filed a motion for summary judgment in the case. Their motion was granted by the Court. Following a two-day bench trial only on damages, the Court ordered Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson to pay Tonya Wood \$6,000 in compensatory damages for the emotional distress. The Court also ordered Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson to pay a \$4,000 civil penalty to the State of Maryland. In addition: They are permanently prohibited from publishing any discriminatory material based on source of income or other protected class; there must be a fair housing statement included in any future advertisement produced by them; for three years they must maintain a record of all rental applications, inquiries, and rejections; and Cheryl Sawyers and Rachel Wilson are required to undergo fair housing compliance training.

This judgment imposed was consistent with the state policy to end discriminatory housing practices by any person in order to protect and ensure the peace, health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of all.

2025 CIVIL RIGHTS GALA

LOOKING AHEAD, NO TURNING BACK: TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

The theme of the 2025 gala emphasized forward momentum and the ability to find positive outcomes in difficult situations, as well as the commitment to progress through determination, resilience, and a refusal to be deterred by obstacles. The evening featured a Fireside Chat with notable activists and leaders, a discussion on current civil rights challenges, and live entertainment.

"This gala is not just a celebration of achievements but a call to action," said Cleveland Horton II, the Executive Director at MCCR. **"It reminds us of the work ahead and inspires all of us to be part of the solution."**

OUTREACH

400+

INDIVIDUALS

Special guests included: Tamika D. Mallory, Jeff Johnson, Delegate Malcolm P. Ruff, April D. Ryan, Senator Shaneka Henson, District 30, Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, and the Morgan State University Choir.





Congratulations & thank you to our honorees for the Community Impact Award: Carl Snowden, Krystal Gonzalez, MSU President David K. Wilson, and LGBTQ activist Carlton Smith, who was honored posthumously with his family accepting in his memory.



Dr. Michael L. Zollicoffer, M.D., was honored with the Glendora C. Hughes Award in recognition of his tireless and selfless work in medically caring for the Baltimore community.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH



MCCR's Education & Outreach Unit (E&O) develops and offers educational materials, resources, and support to businesses, state and local government agencies, nonprofit and community organizations, faith groups, academic institutions, and the citizens of Maryland. Each training workshop is an opportunity to reach out to audiences and educate them about the agency and their rights.

The E&O Unit's outreach services focus on educating the public on their civil rights and responsibilities under the law. Outreach activities include attending public events statewide; publicizing our educational information online, on local TV and radio stations and in print; and collaborating with partner organizations to ensure that everyone who lives, works, and visits the State of Maryland has equal access to employment, housing, public accommodations, state contracts,

health services, and commercial leasing. The E&O Unit also takes the lead in planning and hosting MCCR's special events; fostering relationships with other civil/human rights and diversity organizations; identifying the needs of underserved populations; facilitating public dialogue and reducing conflict related to equity and human rights issues; and connecting people across their differences to promote and improve civil rights in Maryland.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH UNIT

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

The MCCR Education & Outreach Unit continues to lead statewide efforts to promote awareness, understanding, and compliance with Maryland's civil rights laws. Through a comprehensive suite of programs and partnerships, the Education and Outreach Unit empowers individuals, organizations, and communities to create environments rooted in equity, inclusion, and respect.

Workshops and Training

- **Anti-Discrimination Training:** MCCR provides dynamic training sessions covering workplace harassment prevention, fair housing rights, and equal employment practices.
- **Cultural Competency & Diversity Training:** These programs build inclusive workplaces and communities by fostering cultural awareness, respect, and understanding across Maryland's diverse populations.

Educational Resources

- **Printed Materials:** The Unit produces accessible brochures, guides, and fact sheets detailing civil rights protections in employment, housing, and public accommodations.
- **Online Resources:** The MCCR website features downloadable toolkits, videos, and other digital resources designed to educate and engage the public.

Outreach Programs

- **Community Listening Sessions:** MCCR hosts public events and dialogues that address current civil rights issues, encourage community engagement, and highlight legal protections.
- **School Initiatives:** Partnering with educators and students statewide, the Unit integrates civil rights education into classrooms, helping the next generation understand the history, impact, and importance of equal rights.

Complaint Process Education

- **Empowering Individuals:** The Unit educates the public about how to file discrimination complaints and outlines the MCCR's process for investigation, resolution, and enforcement.

Partnerships and Advocacy Support

- **Collaborative Impact:** MCCR strengthens its reach and effectiveness through partnerships with local governments, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, and community leaders. Together, these collaborations advance equity, expand outreach, and reinforce Maryland's commitment to civil rights for all.

Social Media and Digital Engagement

- **Expanded Digital Presence:** In 2025, MCCR enhanced its visibility and accessibility through robust social media outreach on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Targeted campaigns promoted key observances—such as Fair Housing Month, Pride Month, and Civil Rights Awareness Week—reaching thousands of Marylanders with educational content and calls to action.
- **Interactive Engagement:** Through live Q&A sessions, short-form videos, and timely updates, MCCR fostered greater community dialogue and responsiveness to emerging civil rights issues.

These resources aim to empower individuals, businesses, and communities to uphold and advocate for civil rights and equality in Maryland.

200

EDUCATION
& OUTREACH
EVENTS &
TRAININGS

104

VIRTUAL
EVENTS &
TRAININGS

96

IN PERSON
EVENTS &
TRAININGS

Hate Bias Reporting Forums

OUTREACH

55

INDIVIDUALS

Hate Bias Reporting Forums hosted by MCCR and the Maryland Attorney General's Office have played a significant role in fostering education and awareness about hate crimes and bias incidents in the state. These forums contribute to the state's efforts in promoting inclusivity, safety, and mutual understanding by addressing critical issues related to discrimination and hate. Here's how they have impacted education and awareness:

MCCR & OAG collaborated to provide Hate Bias Reporting Forums with the following counties and agencies...

- ...in Southern Maryland: Wor-Wic Community College, Wicomico NAACP, University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), Shore Pride Alliance, Commissioner of the State Commission for Disability, Kindness Commissioner for Kind SBY
- ...in Anne Arundel County: Anne Arundel County Community College, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Caucus of African American Leaders, Annapolis Pride, Immigrant Affairs Commission, Anne Arundel County Shepard Byrd Hate Crime Prevention Program

Know Your Rights Booklet



A joint publication of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and the Maryland Office of the Attorney General's Civil Rights Division, the bilingual "Know Your Rights" Guide offers a vital resource to help Marylanders navigate their civil rights during times of uncertainty and change. For housing issues, discrimination, or challenges accessing public services, this guide empowers individuals and communities with the knowledge to stand up and speak out. The guide reflects the shared commitment of both departments to serve everyone in Maryland, regardless of background or identity and underscores the administration's deep concern about defending the rights of all people across the state. The guide is available in English and Spanish.

Protecting Civil Rights During Challenging Times Symposium

OUTREACH

111

INDIVIDUALS

As the federal government transitioned to a new administration, MCCR had an imperative to host this symposium to focus on addressing the civil rights challenges in today's uncertain environment and the collaborative efforts needed to safeguard equity and justice for all Marylanders.

Special Guests & Panelists:

Cleveland L. Horton II, Executive Director, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
 Wes Moore, Governor, State of Maryland
 Dr. Calvin Ball, III, Howard County Executive
 Dr. Daria Willis, President, Howard Community College

Also featured:

- Jim Stowe, Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
- Lisa Kelly, Baltimore City Office of Equity & Civil Rights
- Jose Villegas, Prince George's County Office of Human Rights
- Todd Givens, Howard County Office of Human Rights & Equity
- Asha Smith, Anne Arundel County Office of Equity & Human Rights
- Rashida Ogletree-George, Office of Attorney General
- Natasha Dartigue, Maryland Public Defender
- Richard H. Gibson Jr., Howard County State's Attorney
- Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel, MCCR
- Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, Chair Legislative Black Caucus
- Chrissy Thornton, Associated Black Charities
- Veronica Dunlap, ACLU Maryland
- Tifani Fisher, NAACP Maryland
- Susie McClannahan, Equal Rights Center
- Lauren Pruitt, FreeState Justice

Quarterly Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Workplaces Train the Trainer Two-Day Course

OUTREACH

52

INDIVIDUALS

MCCR holds quarterly sexual harassment train-the-trainer two-day courses for state government agencies in partnership with the Office of the Statewide Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator. The trainings provide information on legal frameworks and policies, develop training skills, and help to identify and address harassment in the workplace.

The audience for these trainings include:

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion officers
- Equal employment opportunity coordinators
- Human resource professionals
- Organizational trainers and educators
- Supervisors and managers responsible for staff training

Fair Housing Month Events

OUTREACH

276
INDIVIDUALS

- **Redlining in Real Estate** focused on persistent challenges due to the lasting effects of redlining practices on historically marginalized communities.
- **Addressing Appraisal Bias: The Roles of Law Makers, Industry and Homeowners** addressed the unique challenges faced by marginalized communities in the appraisal process.
- **Enforcement** covered the unique challenges faced when individuals experience housing discrimination.
- **Source of Income** focused on the unique challenges faced by individuals and families whose income sources are often overlooked or undervalued in housing and lending practices.

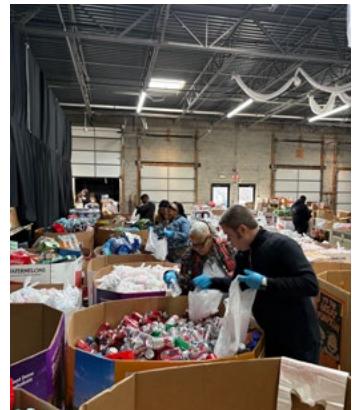
Fair Housing event speakers, panelists, and guests:

- Jeffrey Paul May, Subject Matter Expert (SME)/Planner/Instructor
- Michael D. Mitchell, SME/Attorney/Instructor
- Colette Massengale, Senior Policy Representative, National Association of REALTORS®
- Todd Blackistone, Executive Director, Maryland Commission of Real Estate Appraisers
- Melanie Gamble, President of the Prince George's County Realtist and REALTORS® Political Action Committee Trustee
- Jacqulyn Priestly, Principal of Oak Hill Strategies
- Dr. Samuel Henderson, Certified General Realty Appraiser, Fair Housing Instructor
- Cecelia M. Assam, Housing Investigations Unit Supervisor, MCCR
- Charles R. Floyd, Senior Investigator, Prince George's County Human Relations Commission
- Todd E. Givens, Investigations, Howard County Office of Human Rights and Equity
- Ronald Clarkson, Housing Counseling Services Inc.
- Susie McClannahan, Senior Manager, Equal Rights Center
- Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel, MCCR

22 New Partnerships

▪ Bond Distributing LLC	▪ The League for People with Disabilities	▪ Montgomery County Office of Human Resources
▪ Charles County Department of Health	▪ Maryland Association of Counties	▪ Mount Carmel High School
▪ Charles County Department of Social Services	▪ Maryland Military Department	▪ Prince George's County Aging & Disabilities Services Division
▪ Citizens Care Center	▪ Maryland Office of People's Counsel	▪ Ulysses Hotel
▪ City of Hyattsville	▪ Maryland State Police Forensic Science Division	▪ University of Maryland Baltimore County
▪ Housing Counseling Services Inc.	▪ Maryland Office of Public Defender	▪ University of Maryland Women's Forum
▪ Howard County Department of Public Works	▪ Maryland State Retirement & Pension System	
▪ Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs	▪ Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service	

MCCR – RESPECT, INTEGRITY, AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN ACTION





HATE CRIMES



REPORT

Per Public Safety Article 2-307(b)(4), Annotated Code of Maryland, MCCR receives a copy of every Maryland Supplementary Hate Bias Incident Report Form filed by law enforcement officials around the state and compiled by the Maryland State Police (MSP). These forms are completed when there is evidence to initially suggest that a hate-motivated crime may have occurred against a victim. However, even if an investigation results in no evidence of a hate crime, the report is still retained by MSP and copied to MCCR. MCCR thanks MSP for their continued partnership in sharing hate crimes data. A summary of MSP's findings is provided here; please refer to the full report for further details. <https://mcac.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2024-Hate-Bias-Report.pdf>

HATE CRIMES REPORT

There were a total of 921 hate bias incidents reported by Maryland law enforcement agencies during the 2024 reporting period, with 316 being verified, up from 269 in 2023. For comparison, in the last 10 years, 2023 had the highest number of incidents reported with 952, and 2024 had the second highest number of total incidents with 921. The largest increase in hate bias reporting took place between 2022 and 2023 (up 103.6%). In the last 10 years, Anti-Black or African American was the most reported hate bias motivation each year. Anti-Jewish was the second most reported hate bias motivation each year.

In 2024, Race, Ethnicity or Ancestry (R/E/A) as a category was the most common hate bias motivation, accounting for 52.1 % of all incidents, consistent with 52.6% in 2023. On average, R/E/A accounted for 67.3% of all incidents reported from 2020 to 2022. Meanwhile, Religion as a category saw a rise in reported incidents from 20.7% in 2022 to 31.5% in 2023.

As noted on page 12 of the 2024 Hate Bias Report, 19 counties and Baltimore City reported at least one hate bias incident in 2023. This is the highest number of jurisdictions reporting during the last 10 years. Between 2014 and 2022, an average of 15 jurisdictions reported incidents annually. In 2023, three counties—Garrett, Kent, and Somerset—reported no hate bias incidents. In 2024, Garrett, Somerset, Talbot, and Washington Counties all reported no incidents, while Kent County reported 8 incidents. All of these rural, low-population jurisdictions historically report low/no incidents. Note that reporting zero hate bias incidents does not mean that no hate bias incidents have occurred within a jurisdiction.

The number of both total and verified reports in 2024 is a continuation of a ten-year trend. While there is still a long way to go, we are seeing better reporting leading to better enforcement and policymaking. A number of factors have affected the numbers, including:

- The increase in reporting by jurisdictions, as described above, encouraged by a statewide focus on hate-bias reporting and response.
- An increase in actual incidents, which is evidenced both in the data and through anecdotal reporting in the news and social media.
- An increase in reporting by victims, communities, and groups.

One data point highlights a troubling trend—a sharp increase in the number of incidents occurring in elementary and secondary schools. In 2022, there were 90 reported incidents in schools, 10 of which were verified. In 2023, that number skyrocketed to 326 reported incidents, 24 of which were verified. This continued for a second year in a row in 2024, with 326 incidents, 39 verified. Incidents at private residences and on roads/streets rounded out the top three reporting locations in both 2023 and 2024.

MCCR continues taking a leadership role in addressing the persistence in acts of hate and bias with a wide range of activities and engagement with communities as outlined in the Education and Outreach section of this report. Activities include:

- MCCR's membership in the Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention.
- A wide range of listening sessions, community forums, and open houses throughout Maryland.
- Hate Bias Forums in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General with a goal of sharing legal definitions to encourage law enforcement to properly report acts of hate and bias in their jurisdictions, as well as to inform the community of our efforts and learn about community needs so that MCCR can provide support. Forums were held in 2024 in Anne Arundel County and Southern Maryland.

921 HATE/BIAS REPORTS IN 2024

-31 OR 3.3% DECREASE FROM 2023

412 AVERAGE HATE BIAS INCIDENTS PER YEAR 2020-2022

77 AVERAGE REPORTS PER MONTH

FOR 2ND YEAR IN A ROW, OCTOBER SAW HIGHEST # OF REPORTS

TOP 3 BIAS MOTIVATION CATEGORIES

52%

RACE/ETHNICITY/ANCESTRY
37.67% BLACK | 4.02% HISPANIC
OR LATINX | 2.99% ASIAN

33%

RELIGION
28.5% ANTI-JEWISH
2.3% ANTI-ISLAMIC
(MUSLIM)

12%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION
ANTI-GAY (MALE) 5.8%
ANTI-LGBT (MIXED GROUP) 4.9%
ANTI-LESBIAN 1.1%

TOP BIAS MOTIVATION SUB-CATEGORIES

37.7%

ANTI-BLACK
OR AFRICAN
AMERICAN

28.5%

ANTI-JEWISH

5.8%

ANTI-GAY
(MALE)

4.9%

ANTI-LGBT
(MIXED GROUP)

4%

ANTI HISPANIC
OR LATINX

>3%

ANTI-ASIAN,
ISLAMIC
(MUSLIM),
LESBIAN

REPORTED VICTIMS

41.9% BLACK

35% WHITE

6.5% ASIAN

4.8% HISPANIC

11.7% UNKNOWN R/E/A

51% MALE

41% FEMALE

8% UNKNOWN GENDER

OFFENDERS

17.6% BLACK

35.4% WHITE

2.8% HISPANIC

2.7% ASIAN

41.5% UNKNOWN R/E/A

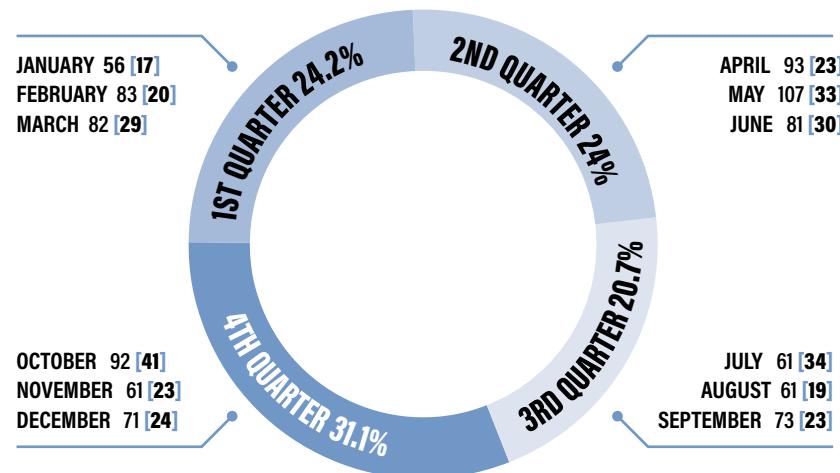
51% MALE

13% FEMALE

36% UNKNOWN GENDER

HATE CRIME REPORTS IN 2024 - BY MONTH

All Reports [\[Verified Reports\]](#)



BIAS MOTIVATION REPORTS IN 2024

All Reports [\[Verified Reports\]](#)

505 **[182]**

Race/Ethnicity/
Ancestry

316 **[78]**

Religion

116 **[59]**

Sexual Orientation

19 **[10]**

Gender Identity

5 **[2]**

Gender

8 **[1]**

Disability

0 **[0]**

Homelessness

969 **[332]**

TOTAL*

* Incidents can have more than one bias motivation. This accounts for differences between bias motivation numbers and the total number of incidents reported.

SOURCE: [STATE OF MARYLAND 2024 HATE BIAS REPORT](#)

INCIDENT LOCATIONS IN 2024

Including locations with greater than 1% of incidents reported

	School Elementary or Secondary	326 [39]
	Residence/Home	188 [99]
	Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk	118 [59]
	Church/Synagogue/Temple/Mosque	52 [11]
	Parking Lot/Garage	28 [14]
	Other/Unknown	27 [10]
	Park/Playground	27 [11]
	Restaurant	25 [11]
	Commercial/Office Building	18 [11]
	School College or University	17 [8]
	Department or Discount Store	12 [6]
	Government/Public Building	12 [7]
	Convenience Store	11 [6]
	Hotel/Motel/etc.	8 [3]
	Air/Bus/Train Terminal	7 [2]
	Grocery/Supermarket	7 [0]
	Field/Woods	6 [2]
	Specialty Store (TV, Fur, etc.)	6 [4]
	Drug Store/Drs. Office/Hospital	5 [0]
	Community Center	4 [2]
	Service or Gas Station	4 [3]
	Bar/Night Club	2 [1]
	Construction Site	2 [0]
	Liquor Store	2 [1]
	Shelter-Mission/Homeless	2 [2]
	Shopping Mall	2 [1]
	Arena/Stadium/Fairgrounds/Coliseum	1 [1]
	Daycare Facility	1 [1]
	Jail/Prison/Penitentiary/Corrections Facility	1 [1]
	TOTAL	921 [316]

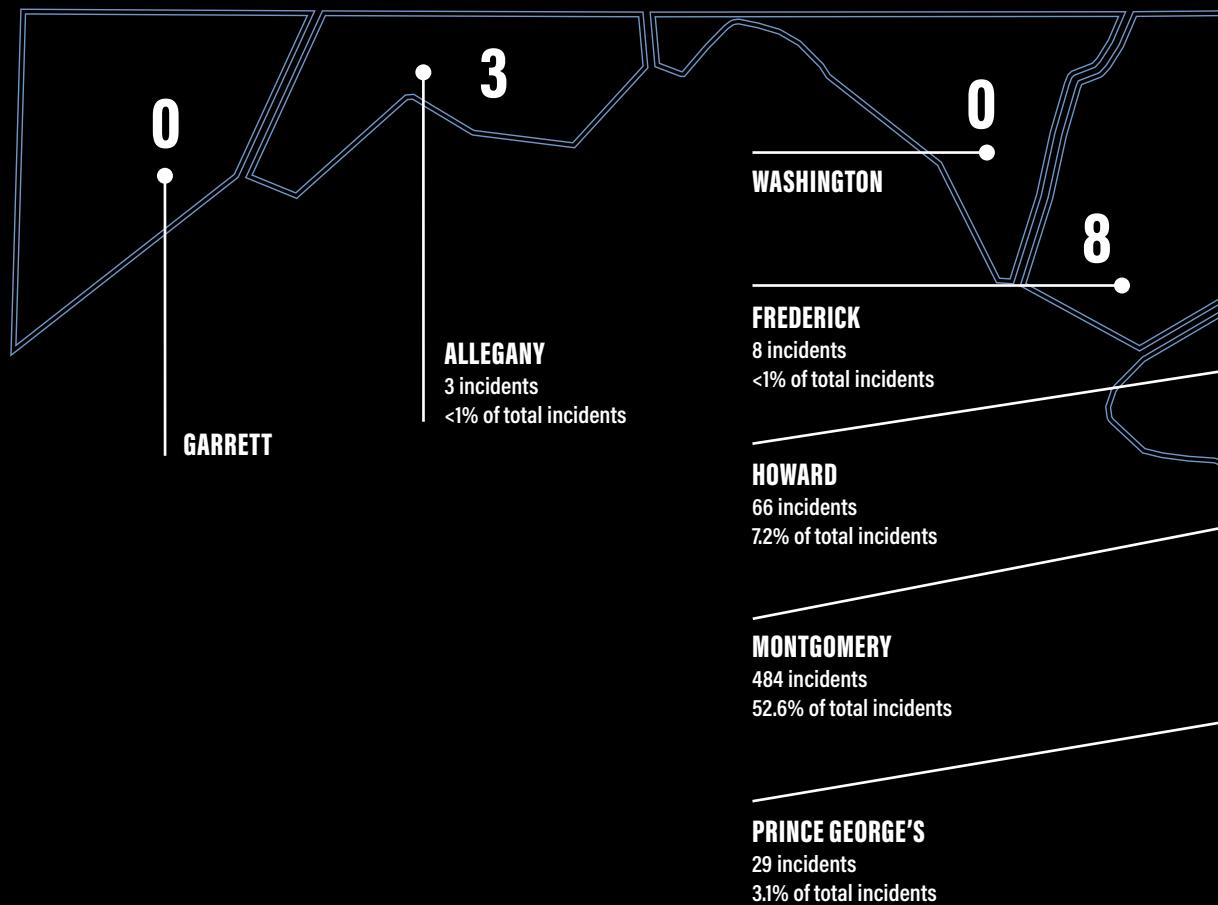
The majority (86%) of all 2024 hate bias reporting in Maryland was received from five counties: Baltimore (145), Baltimore City (58), Harford, Howard (66), and Montgomery (484).

No hate bias reports were submitted by the following counties: Garrett, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, and Washington. Garrett and Somerset counties have reported zero incidents since 2020.

The highest number of verified incidents in the state in 2024 were from Baltimore County: 130 of the 145 incidents reported.

More than half of all 2024 hate incidents reported in Maryland (52.6%) were from Montgomery County, with 20.6% occurring in one of five ZIP Codes: 20852 (57), 20817 (37), 20901 (33), 20902 (32), and 20850 (31).

REPORTING BY COUNTY



921 TOTAL INCIDENTS

316

VERIFIED
INCIDENTS

592

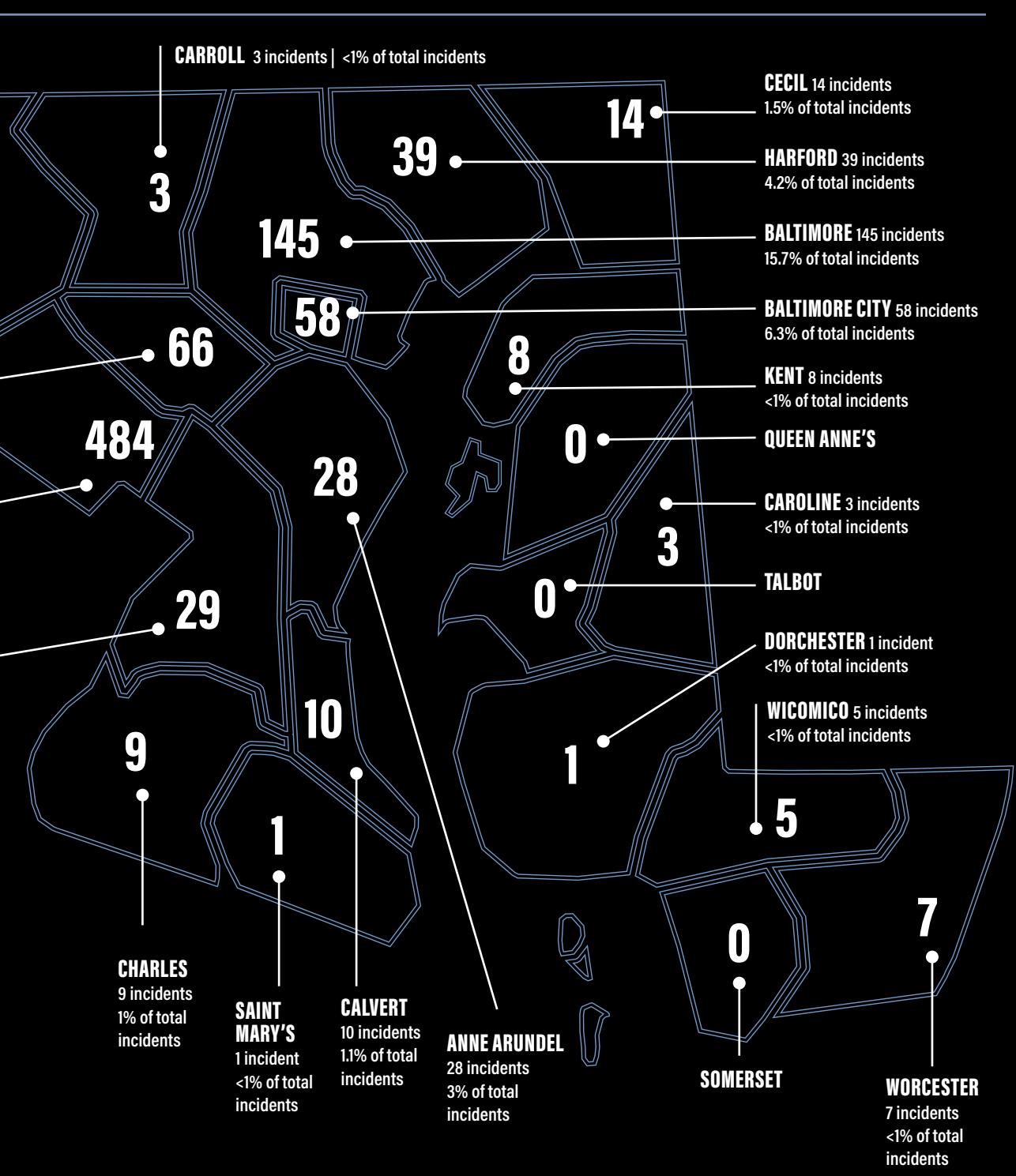
INCONCLUSIVE

13

UNFOUNDED

5

COUNTIES WITHOUT
REPORTED INCIDENTS



MCCR BUDGET REPORT FOR THE LAST FOUR FISCAL YEARS

FUNDING SOURCE	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Appropriation
HUD	\$672,108	\$666,004	\$702,572	\$933,653
EEOC	\$558,103	\$720,638	\$758,771	\$934,848
Reimbursable Funds	\$14,250	\$5,000	-	-
Special Funds	\$45,000	\$7,395	\$44,769	\$118,800
State General Funds	\$3,214,567	\$3,745,732	\$4,618,993	\$4,760,046
GRAND TOTAL	\$4,504,028	\$5,144,769	\$6,125,105	\$6,747,347

STAFF POSITIONS	2023	2024	2025	2026 Appropriation
Authorized Permanent	33	38	38	50
Contractual Positions	1	4	1	3
TOTAL POSITIONS	34	42	39	53

“IT WAS IMMENSELY SATISFYING FOR MCCR TO SECURE A COMPREHENSIVE REMEDY FOR THE FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THIS INCIDENT. THIS CASE DEMONSTRATES OUR DEDICATION TO ENSURING JUSTICE FOR ALL IN MARYLAND.”

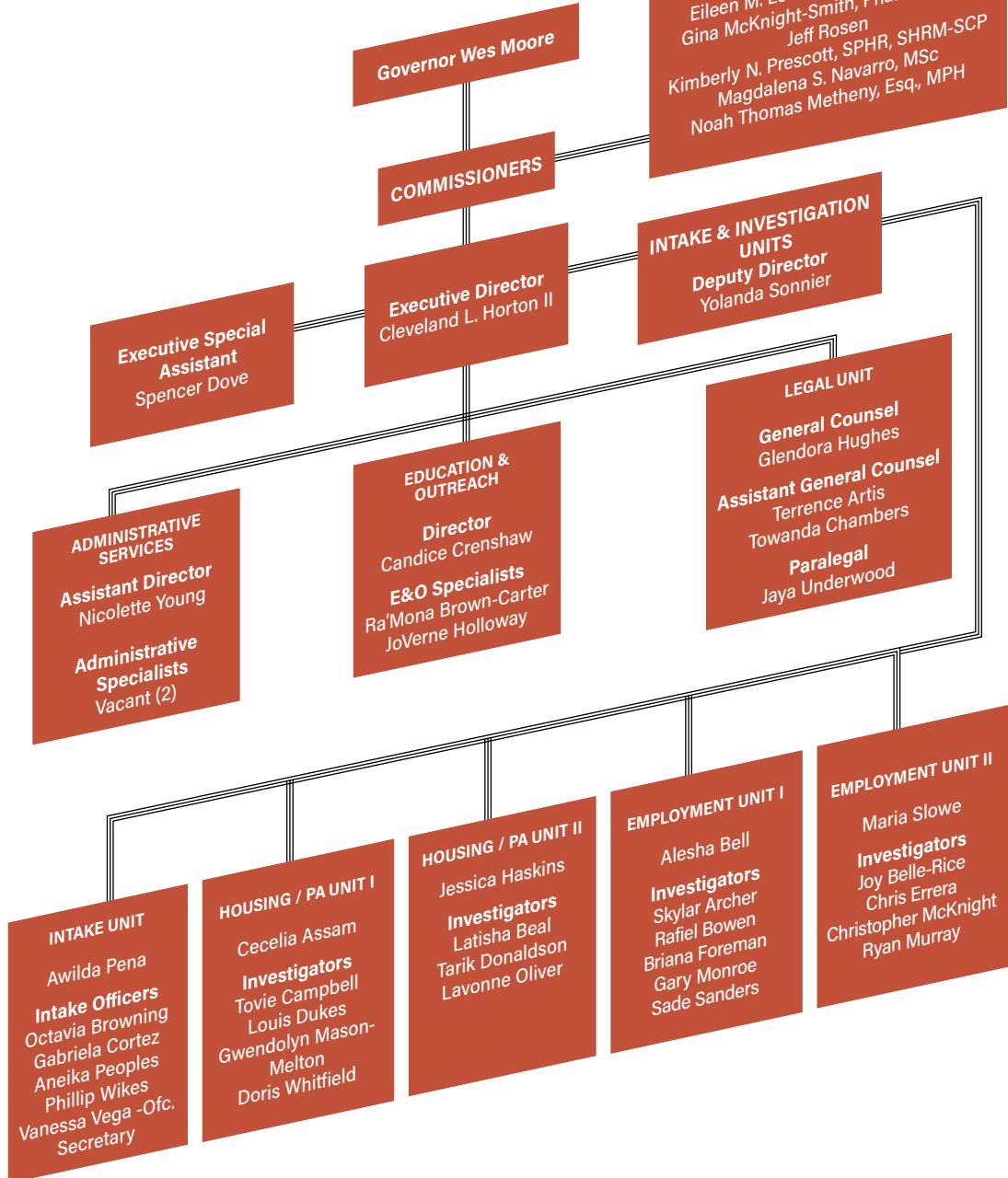
LEAD INVESTIGATOR RAFIEL BOWEN

In this 2024 incident, a Waldorf, Maryland, Cracker Barrel was accused of denying dine-in service to a group of special needs students on a field trip. In the negotiated settlement, the involved families, their elementary school, and the Civil Rights Enforcement Fund all received monetary relief. In addition, Cracker Barrel provided a written apology to each family, dismissed the staff involved, and agreed to evaluate and update its public accommodation policies and training procedures.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

AS OF JUNE 30, 2025
END OF FISCAL YEAR 2025

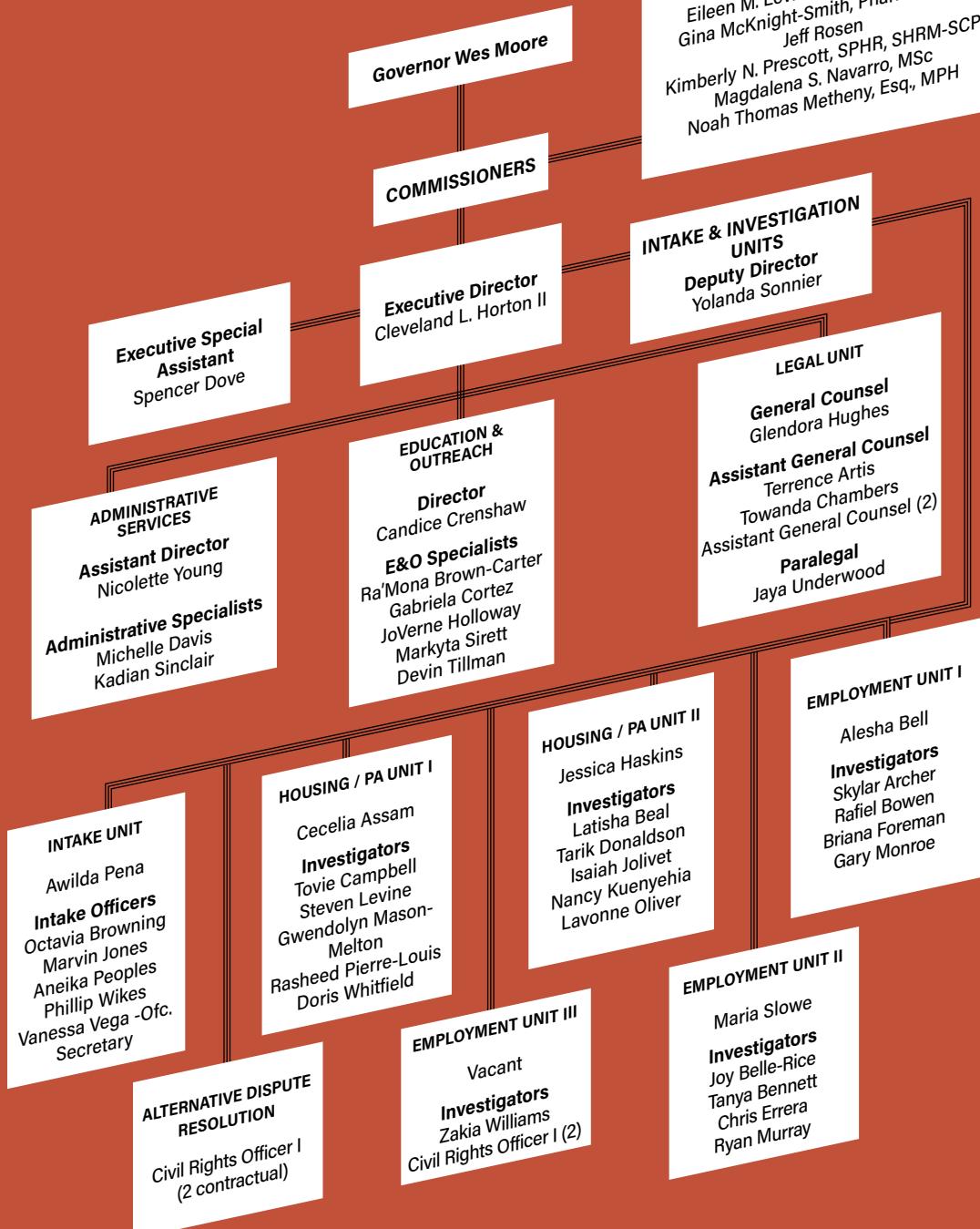


ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

CURRENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025
END OF CALENDAR YEAR 2025

**CURRENT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025
END OF CALENDAR YEAR 2025**

COMMISSIONERS
Stephanie Suerth, DBA, MPA, CCEP, Chair
Janssen E. Evelyn, Vice Chair
Angela Scott, Esq.
Eileen M. Levitt, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA
Jeff Rosen
Kimberly N. Prescott, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Magdalena S. Navarro, MSC
Noah Thomas Metheny, Esq., MPH



**“ALL MARYLANDERS HAVE
THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN
THE NEIGHBORHOOD
OF THEIR CHOICE, FREE
FROM DISCRIMINATION.
WE VALUE OUR
PARTNERSHIP WITH
MCCR TO ENSURE
STRONG ENFORCEMENT
OF MARYLAND’S
FAIR HOUSING
PROTECTIONS.”**

**SUSIE MCCLANNAHAN, SENIOR FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS
PROGRAM MANAGER, THE EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER**

The Equal Rights Center identifies and seeks to eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations in Greater Washington, D.C., and nationwide.



**“RESTORING OUR SHARED
HUMANITY MEANS
SEEING EACH PERSON’S
DIGNITY, WORTH, AND
STORY. CIVIL RIGHTS
ARE NOT JUST LAWS.
THEY ARE PROMISES
WE MUST KEEP TO ONE
ANOTHER.”**

**SPEAKER OF THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
JOSELINE PEÑA-MELNYK**

Speaker Peña-Melnyk has championed landmark legislation to advance equity, expand healthcare access, and protect vulnerable communities, driven by a belief that everyone deserves safety, dignity, and belonging. She has served as Delegate for District 21, Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties since 2007.



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