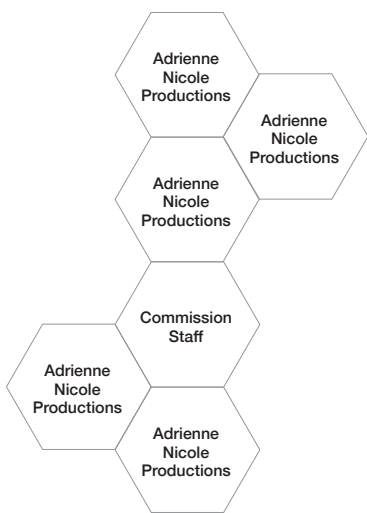


# 2017 YEAR END REVIEW



**BILL DE BLASIO**, Mayor  
**CARMELYN P. MALALIS**, Commissioner/Chair



Cover photo credit:

Commission staff and various media campaigns illustrate our cover.



**Commission on  
Human Rights**

# 2017

## **YEAR END REVIEW**





# Message from the Mayor



New Yorkers have a responsibility to ensure that our city remains a beacon of hope, tolerance, and equality for the nation and for the world. My administration is working hard to fulfill this mission and make New York the fairest big city in America, where no one faces discrimination or injustice because of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or immigration status.

In a time when Federal policies are targeting some our city's most vulnerable communities, we must stand together to protect the progressive values that have always defined the five boroughs. For this reason, the work of the City Commission on Human Rights has never been more vital. By opposing discriminatory, biased, and hateful policies that target New Yorkers for who they are, what they believe, or who they love, CCHR works to protect our residents and sends a clear message to the world: we will not abandon our principles or be swayed by fear.

Every New Yorker should know that their city is a place where respect for diversity and for each other remains paramount in word and in deed. CCHR is an essential part of our city's defense against attempts to erode our character. When immigrants are targeted, when LGBTQ people are excluded from serving their nation, or when women fight for safety and equality, the dedicated CCHR staff are there beside them, supporting their struggle for justice and championing their efforts.

In this report, you will learn more about the Commission's unparalleled work to protect New Yorkers from discrimination, as well as ways that you can help New York City lead the way to a future of fairness and equality. I urge you to join us in this mission and help us ensure that the five boroughs always stand as an open and welcoming place for all people.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill de Blasio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor

# Message from the Commissioner



This report captures the Commission's work at a time when many in the City and across the nation were orienting themselves to a new reality. Changes in federal leadership brought about dramatic shifts in policy for many of the communities and populations with which the Commission works. Hateful and divisive rhetoric that had grown increasingly common leading up to the presidential election in 2016 began to establish itself as a consistent feature of our public discourse.

With these changes, the Commission's charter mandate—to foster stronger ties among New Yorkers and to enforce their rights under the New York City Human Rights Law (“City Human Rights Law”)—has been more important than ever. In 2017, through its outreach efforts, enforcement actions and policy initiatives, the Commission has strived to counter policy and rhetoric that is increasingly hostile toward people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ individuals, Jewish and Muslim Americans and others. Over the course of the year, the Commission's Community

Relations Bureau and Office of the Chairperson partnered with the Office of the Mayor, sister agencies and community-based organizations on multiple efforts to inform New Yorkers of their rights, Commission resources and other City services designed to assist them and their families. These included regular workshops, trainings and “Know Your Rights” sessions coordinated with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs; “Protecting Our Muslim Communities,” a citywide Day of Action in February; and a similar citywide effort in September emphasizing that protections available under the City Human Rights Law extend to Dreamers and others regardless of their immigration status. Other actions responded to specific local developments, such as Queens-based outreach in June following reports of landlords threatening to contact federal immigration officials about immigrant tenants, and outreach and education efforts in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood following allegations of race-based service refusals at an area cafe.

The Commission also brought its enforcement authority to bear. Recognizing the devastating impact of source of income discrimination on the City's most vulnerable residents—many of them Black and Latinx—the Law Enforcement Bureau began the year by announcing it had filed complaints against five large landlords and brokerage firms alleged to have refused prospective tenants' housing vouchers. It continued by filing enforcement actions against landlords believed to have retaliated against immigrant tenants and investigating allegations of tenant harassment at a Queens building whose lobby was covered with Nazi and Confederate imagery. In November, LEB announced charges against 12 national and local employers alleged to have discriminated against job applicants with criminal histories, a practice that has a particularly negative impact on Black and Latinx job applicants.

The Commission's Office of the Chairperson (“OC”), which focuses on policy reform, marked several major accomplishments in 2017. The agency issued final rules to strengthen protections related to criminal history and credit history in the employment context. The OC provided crucial insight and advice throughout the legislative and implementation phases of new protections for veterans and active members of military services. The Commission also implemented a new provision in the City Human Rights Law, signed into law by Mayor de Blasio in May 2017, that prohibits employers from asking about an applicant's salary history during the hiring process to mitigate the effects of any prior discriminatory pay practices, while allowing employers and job applicants to engage in salary negotiations focused on the applicant's qualifications and requirements for the job. This new provision expanded upon Executive Order 21, signed by the Mayor in November 2016 to prohibit City agencies from inquiring about the salary history of job applicants.

The OC also spearheaded two exciting efforts designed to inform future policy. In late fall, the Commission conducted a survey of Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish and Sikh New Yorkers to assess their experiences with discrimination since late 2016. And in December, the Commission convened its first public Citywide hearing on sexual harassment in over 40 years with special guest and former Commissioner

and Chairperson, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Importantly, the Commission's Communications and Marketing team has also undertaken communications efforts that not only educate New Yorkers about protections available under the City Human Rights Law, but also emphasize the values of equity and inclusion. In the spring of 2017, for example, the Commission launched a multi-platform communications campaign, #YouHaveRightsNYC, affirming New Yorkers' rights to live, work, and pray free from discrimination and harassment. Additionally, in the fall of 2017, the Commission conducted a digital marketing campaign on the new salary history ban in employment by targeting job seekers, recruiters and human resources professionals across Facebook, Twitter, Google, and popular online job sites. These efforts generated nearly 150,000 clicks to the salary history landing page on the Commission's website, making it the most successful advertising campaign to generate web clicks in the agency's history.

This is just a snapshot of the Commission's work in 2017. The report that follows details these and other Commission initiatives. What unifies them is the agency's commitment to anticipating and responding to the needs of New Yorkers by drawing upon existing relationships with communities and forging new connections, enhancing its capacity to investigate and prosecute reports of discrimination, and leveraging its own regulatory power while working with sister offices and agencies to deepen shared impact on behalf of all New Yorkers.

It has been my honor to spend time with you in your communities and to partner with many of you on advancing human rights here in New York City and providing hope in human rights nationally. We look forward to continuing those efforts with you in the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.P. Malalis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carmelyn P. Malalis  
Chair and Commissioner



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# LAW ENFORCEMENT BUREAU

The Law Enforcement Bureau (“LEB”) enforces the City Human Rights Law through its civil law enforcement efforts. Allegations of discrimination come to LEB for investigation in several ways. Members of the public may file a complaint with LEB about their own experience. A lawyer may file a complaint with LEB on a person’s behalf. Service providers, community organizations, members of faith communities, elected officials, or any other individual may bring specific incidents or potential patterns of discrimination to LEB’s attention, and LEB can initiate its own investigation.

## Inquiries



Left photo credit: Carmen Boon. Middle and right photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

LEB's front-line staff of Human Rights Specialists fielded 9,772 inquiries from members of the public in 2017. These inquiries came in the form of phone calls, emails, letters and visits to the office. Human Rights Specialists assess each person's situation and route them for pre-complaint intervention, further assessment by an attorney, complaint filing, and/or a referral to another City agency or community resource.

The chart below provides further information about these inquiries. Since many individuals alleged more than one jurisdiction and/or protected class, the total below (10,096) exceeds the number of inquiries serviced (9,772). Since 2015, the number of inquiries the agency receives annually has increased by nearly 85% (from 5,296 in 2015 to 9,772 in 2017). This increase is due in part to the Commission's expanded outreach efforts targeting hard-to-reach communities in the five boroughs and informing them about the Commission as a venue to combat discrimination and harassment.



Protected Class	Bias-Based Profiling	Discriminatory Harassment	Employment	Housing	Public Accommodation	Jurisdiction Not Stated	Total
Age	1	5	119	48	20	●	193
Aiding/Abetting	●	●	2	●	●	●	2
Alienage Status (Immigration Status)	1	3	14	25	2	●	45
Arrest Record (Employment only)	●	●	38	●	●	●	38
Caregiver Status (Employment only)	●	●	15	●	●	●	15
Citizenship Status	●	7	11	21	4	●	43
Color	3	5	50	40	59	●	157
Conviction Record (Employment only)	●	●	89	●	●	●	89
Credit History (Employment only)	●	●	11	●	●	●	11
Creed/Religion	●	14	47	33	30	●	124
Disability	2	2	230	508	260	●	1002
Domestic Partnership Status	●	●	1	3	●	●	4
Gender*	●	15	198	48	62	●	323
Interference with Protected Rights	●	●	1	●	1	●	2
Lawful Occupation (Housing only)	●	●	●	9	●	●	9
Lawful Source of Income (Housing only)	●	●	●	356	1	●	357
Marital Status	●	●	6	19	1	●	26
National Origin	3	17	128	104	64	●	316
Pregnancy Accommodation (Employment only)	●	●	45	3	1	●	49
Presence of Children (Housing only)**	●	1	●	34	1	●	35
Race	7	25	277	156	143	●	609
Relationship/Association	●	●	4	1	3	●	8
Retaliation	●	1	100	20	9	●	130
Salary History (Employment only)	●	●	5	●	●	●	5
Sexual Orientation	1	10	56	51	26	●	144
Unemployment Status (Employment only)	●	●	1	●	●	●	1
Uniformed Services Member	●	●	1	●	●	●	1
Victim of domestic violence (Employment & Housing only)	●	●	9	9	●	●	18
Protected Class Not Stated	●	●	●	●	●	6341	6341
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>1488</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>6341</b>	

**Total Inquiries 10,096**

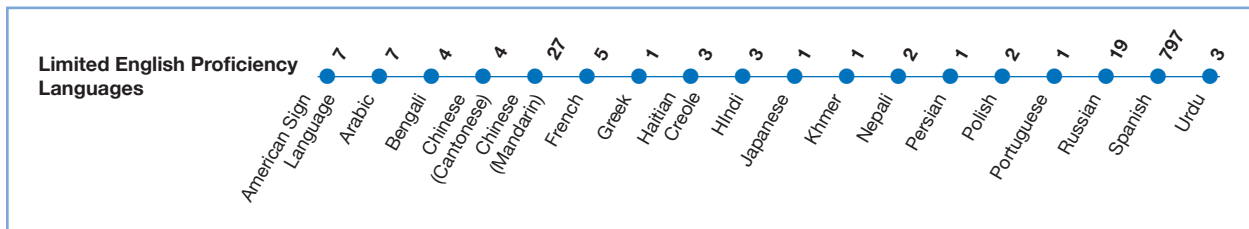
\* Includes Gender Identity and Gender Expression.

\*\* Includes children that are, may be, or would be residing there.

\*\*\* The names of protected categories are shown here as they appear in the text of the law.

## Inquiries by Members of the Public Who Speak a Language Other Than English

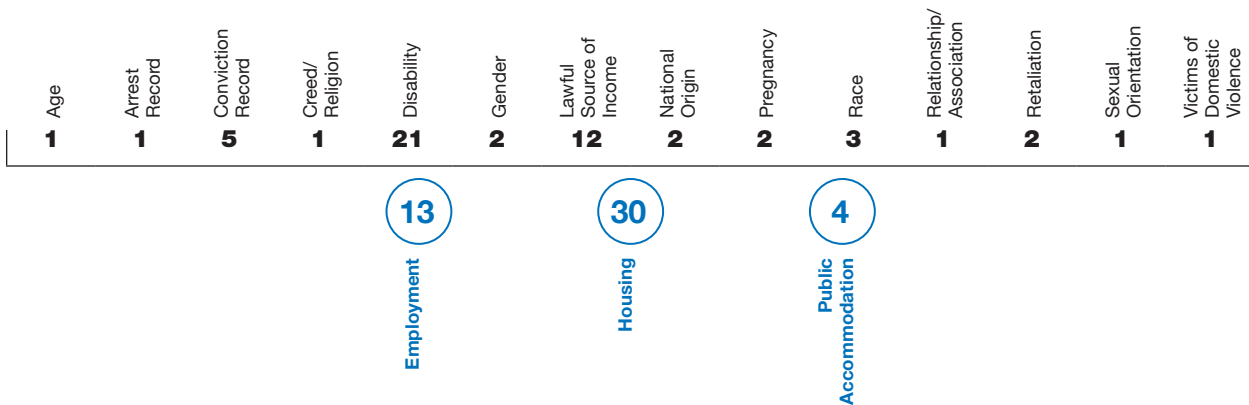
The Human Rights Specialists in LEB who are fielding inquiries from the public speak Spanish, French Creole, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, and Nepali. In addition, staff members use Voiance to connect with an interpreter for other language needs. The chart below provides information about the languages, other than English, spoken by members of the public who made inquiries to LEB.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, the staff fielded 888 such inquiries in 18 languages, an increase over 2016 (639 inquiries - 13 languages) and 2015 (473 inquiries - 11 languages).



## Successful Pre-Complaint Interventions

The Commission can intervene in appropriate situations before filing a complaint. In 2017, LEB resolved 47 cases without filing a complaint, an increase from 2016 (30 cases) and from 2015 (13 cases).

The chart below lists the jurisdictions and the protected classes involved in these successful interventions. Many interventions involved more than one protected class.

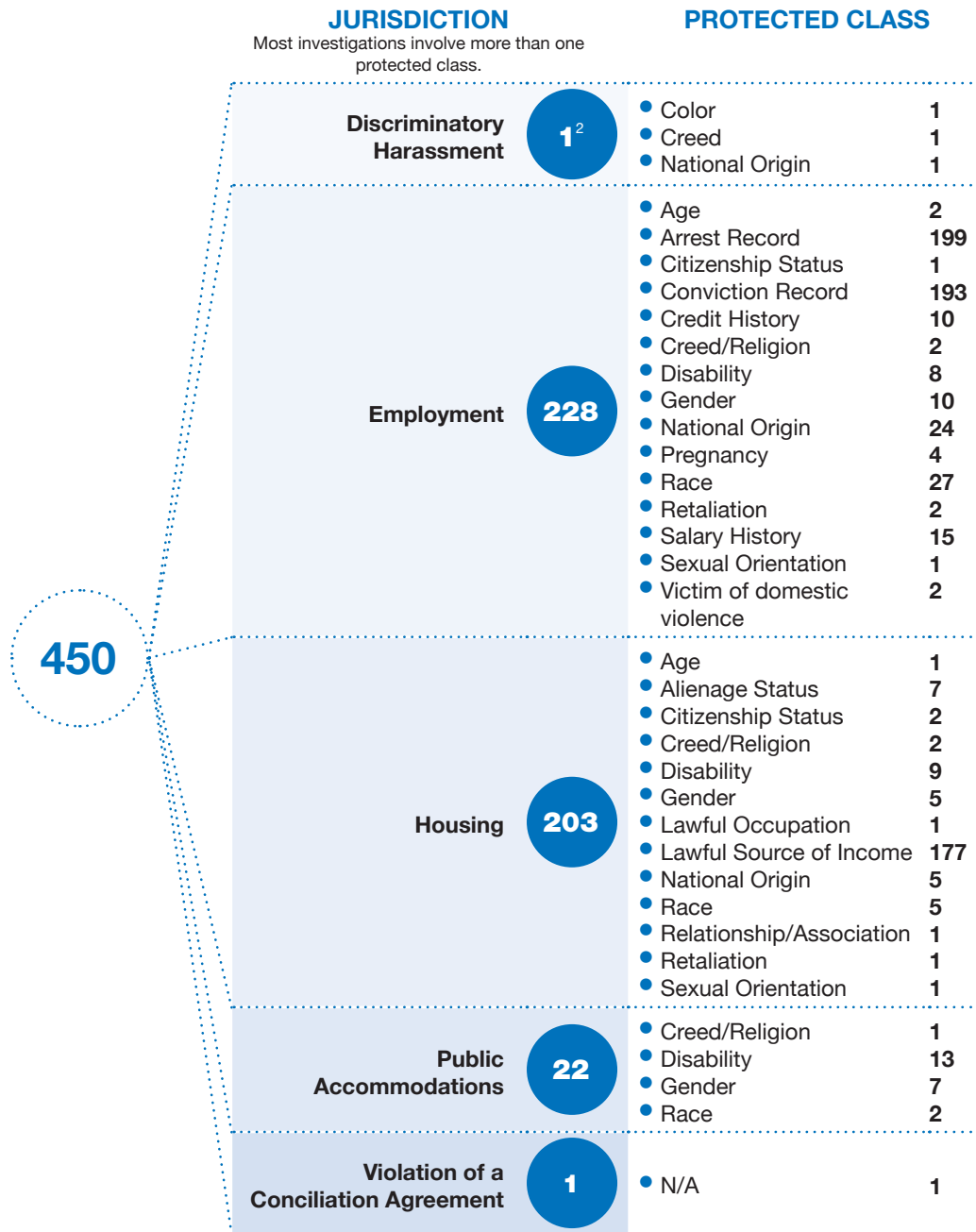


## Commission-Initiated Investigations

The Commission has the power to initiate its own investigations into entities suspected of maintaining or engaging in discriminatory policies or practices. In addition to testing, which is further described below, LEB uses a range of investigative methods in such cases, such as demands for documents and interviews of key witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> Members of the public who speak languages other than English also contact the agency through our Community Relations Bureau. Across the agency, Commission staff speak more than 35 languages and use Voiance (City's preferred translation service) when necessary.

LEB launched 450 Commission-initiated investigations in 2017, an increase from 2016 in which LEB initiated 426 such investigations. The chart below provides a breakdown of the Commission-initiated investigations according to the jurisdiction and protected class of the alleged violations. Most investigations involve more than one protected class. Five additional cases involve investigations into violations in both housing and public accommodations:



<sup>2</sup> Most reports of discriminatory harassment are routed to the bias response team of the agency's Community Relations Bureau for a community level response, particularly if the perpetrator cannot be identified.

Some Commission-initiated investigations lead to the filing of a Commission-initiated complaint alleging a pattern or practice violation. LEB filed 37 Commission-initiated complaints in 2017. While this number is lower than in 2016, in which 54 Commission-initiated complaints were filed, this year LEB resolved far more Commission-initiated cases at early stages without the need for filing a complaint. Of the 47 cases resolved through pre-complaint intervention in 2017 mentioned earlier, 27 were the result of Commission-initiated investigations, up from six such cases in 2016.

The chart below lists the number of Commission-initiated complaints according to the jurisdiction and protected class of the alleged violation. Most complaints allege more than one protected class. One case alleges violations in both housing and public accommodations:

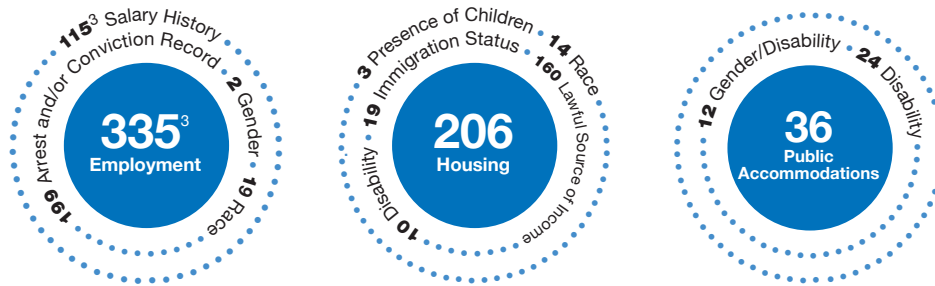
Most complaints allege more than one protected class.

JURISDICTION	PROTECTED CLASSES
Employment <b>25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>23</b> Arrest Record</li> <li><b>23</b> Conviction Record</li> <li><b>2</b> Credit History</li> <li><b>1</b> Creed/Religion</li> <li><b>1</b> Gender</li> <li><b>21</b> National Origin</li> <li><b>21</b> Race</li> </ul>
Housing <b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2</b> Alienage Status</li> <li><b>1</b> Citizenship Status</li> <li><b>1</b> Disability</li> <li><b>5</b> Gender</li> <li><b>2</b> Lawful Source of Income</li> <li><b>1</b> National Origin</li> <li><b>1</b> Race</li> </ul>
Public Accommodations <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1</b> Disability</li> <li><b>2</b> Gender</li> </ul>
Violation of a Conciliation Agreement <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1</b> N/A</li> </ul>

## Testing

LEB uses testing as an investigative tool to confirm whether there is discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations. As part of an investigation, LEB conducts tests of potential employers, landlords/real estate brokers, restaurants, hospitals, stores, or other public accommodations to see if our testers are treated differently or are given different information because they belong to a protected class.

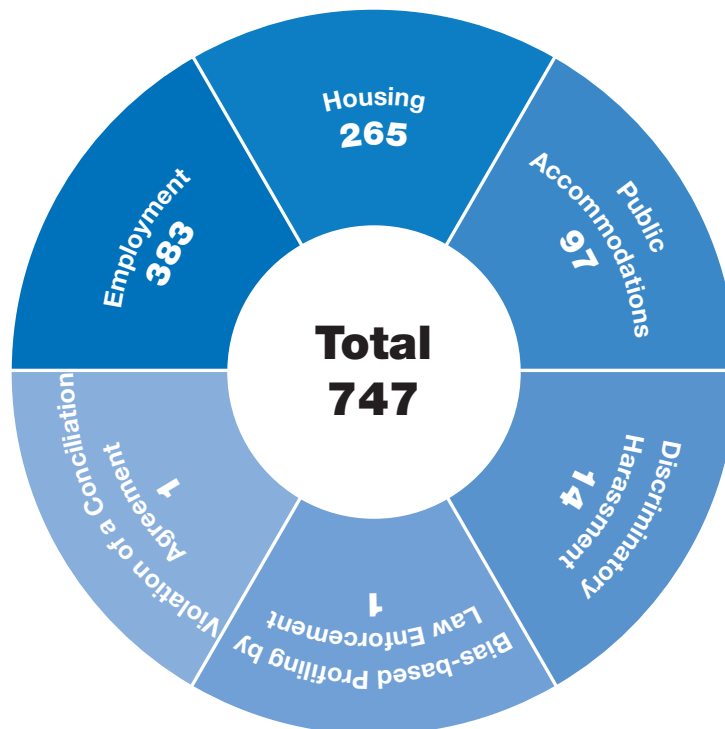
In 2017, LEB testers performed 577 tests across the following protected categories, an increase over 2016, in which 557 tests were performed:



## Complaints Filed in 2017

LEB filed complaints in 747 cases in 2017 alleging a range of discriminatory practices. Fifty percent (50%) of those cases were in employment and thirty-five percent (35%) were in housing. Disability-related claims were the most common at twenty percent (20%) of claims. Race discrimination was the next most common claim at sixteen percent (16%) of claims with gender following at thirteen percent (13%) and national origin at ten percent (10%).

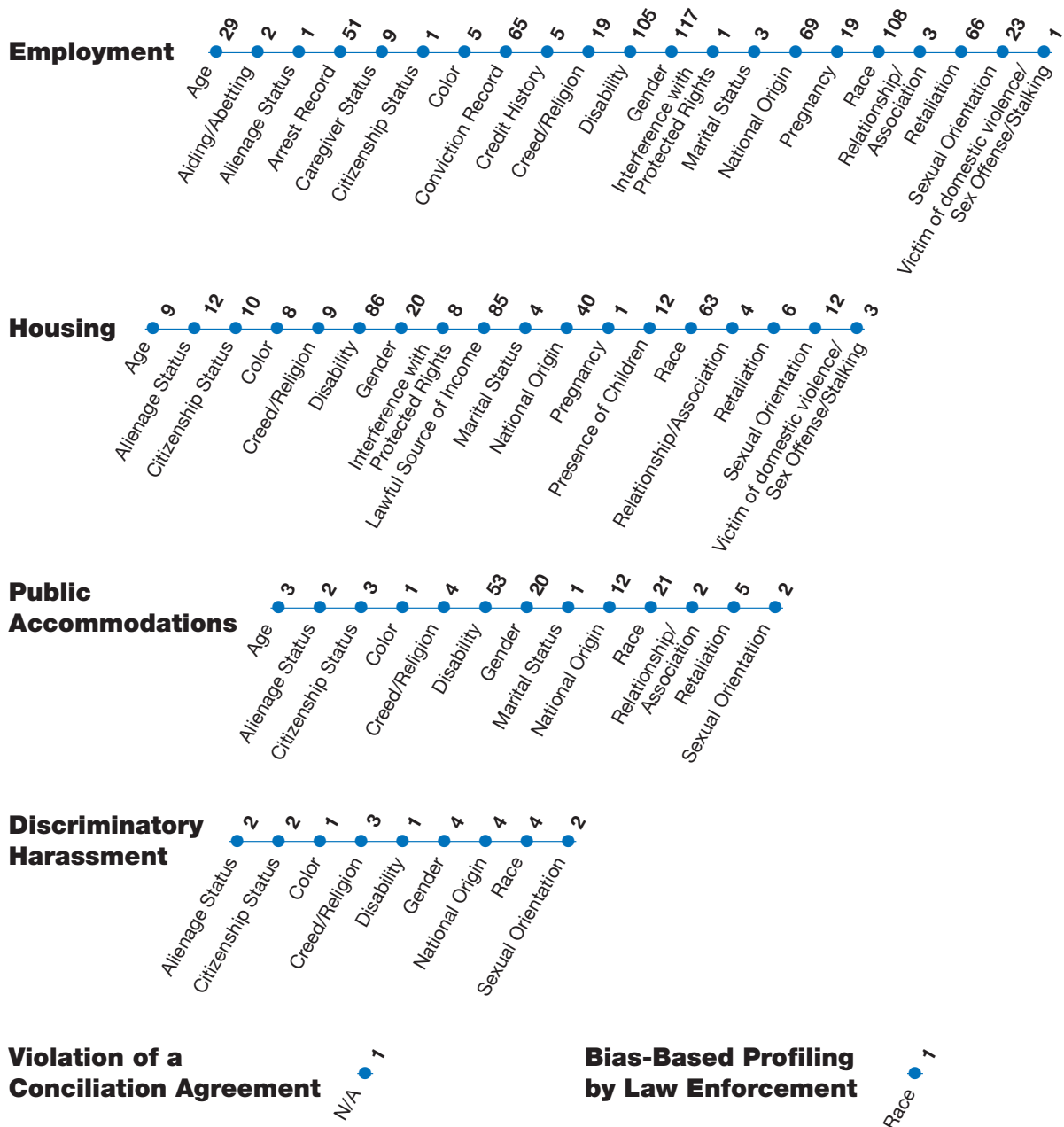
The types of discrimination claims filed with and by the Commission during 2017 can be found below – first, the number of complaints filed in each jurisdiction, and second, the number of claims in each protected class. Most complaints allege more than one violation, sometimes under more than one jurisdiction and, more commonly, under more than one protected class. Complaints filed by members of the public and Commission-initiated complaints are included; therefore, the charts below overlap with the Commission-initiated investigations and complaints charts above.



<sup>3</sup> LEB began testing for questions related to salary history (after the law became effective October 31, 2017), along with ongoing conviction and arrest record tests, since both tests involve reviewing job applications for illegal inquiries.

## Claims by Protected Class

The graphic shows only categories with 1 or more cases.



## Determinations and Resolutions in Cases with Filed Complaints

LEB issued determinations and/or obtained settlements in 609 filed cases in 2017, up significantly from previous years (436 in 2016 and 354 in 2015). The outcomes fall into the following categories:

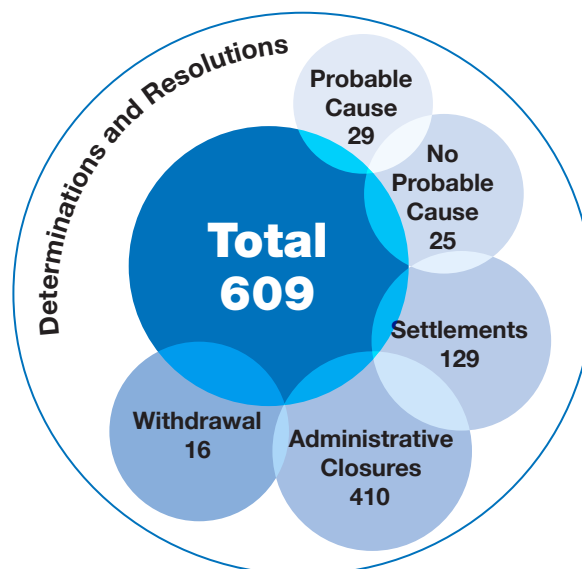
- Probable Cause determinations;
- No Probable Cause determinations;
- administrative closures; and
- settlements.

When LEB has done a full investigation, a determination of either Probable Cause or No Probable Cause is issued. In making this evaluation, LEB uses the following standard: whether probable cause exists to credit the allegations of a complaint that an unlawful discriminatory practice has been or is being committed by a respondent where a reasonable person, looking at the evidence, could reach the conclusion that it is more likely than not that the unlawful discriminatory practice was committed.

LEB also commonly seeks to negotiate a settlement. In such cases, the parties and the Commission enter into a conciliation agreement, which is an enforceable Commission order. Some cases also resolve through a private settlement agreement and then a withdrawal of the case; the monetary recovery in those cases is included here. Finally, cases resolved through the Commission’s Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution are also included in these totals.

LEB issues an administrative closure in many cases, most commonly where LEB determines that continuing the investigation is not in the public interest because it is unlikely to lead to a determination of probable cause that a discriminatory practice occurred. Notably, administrative closure preserves a complainant’s right to bring the same claim in another forum.

Finally, some complainants request to withdraw their cases because they have decided not to pursue the matter.

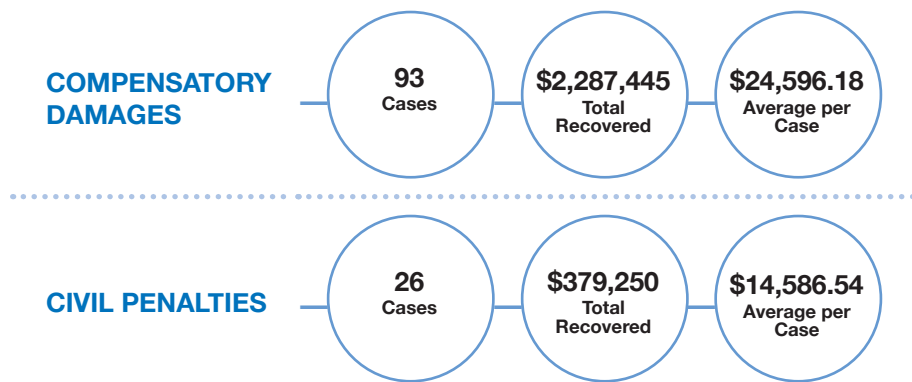


Note that several cases had both a determination of Probable Cause and then a successful settlement in the same reporting period of 2017. The average time to resolve these cases was 581 days,

a slight increase from 2016 when the average time to resolve a case was 536 days. This year’s average time reflects the fact that the Commission continued to see an increase in reporting from the public for the second year in a row. At the same time, the LEB continued its approach of conducting in-depth investigations into discrimination to ensure entities were fully complying with the City Human Rights Law, spending more time reviewing policies and interviewing witnesses and victims to determine whether there were additional violations.

## Damages Awards and Civil Penalties

In 2017, the Commission ordered the payment of \$2,666,695 in combined civil penalties and compensatory damages, up significantly from previous years (\$1,452,136 in 2016 and \$1,351,984 in 2015). In 2017, 93 cases involved an award of compensatory damages (\$2,287,445) and 26 cases had a civil penalty (\$379,250). Twenty cases had both. The average compensatory award was \$24,596.18 and the average civil penalty was \$14,586.54. The amounts ordered come from cases resolved through conciliation agreements, cases settled through mediation and private agreements, and final Commission Decisions and Orders.





# OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The Office of the Chairperson (OC) is responsible for directing the management of the agency; convening the members of the Commission; setting the general policy direction for the agency; addressing intergovernmental affairs; engaging with other City agencies on human rights-related issues; responding to inquiries from the public regarding the Commission's work; developing, reviewing, and negotiating legislation; promulgating legal enforcement guidance and rules; drafting and submitting comments to state and federal agencies during their rulemaking processes; and identifying new opportunities to advance the Commission's mission. In addition, the OC has a significant adjudicatory role to play in the law enforcement process, including issuing Decisions and Orders in cases filed at the Law Enforcement Bureau.

## New Rules to Strengthen Employment Protections

The Commission strengthened employment protections under the City Human Rights Law this year by issuing new rules on the Fair Chance Act, which requires employers to consider an applicant’s qualifications and extend a conditional offer of employment before inquiring into their criminal history. The Commission also issued new rules on the Stop Credit Discrimination in Employment Act, signed into law by Mayor de Blasio in May 2015, which prohibits consideration of an applicant’s credit history for most jobs in New York City.

The Commission’s new rules strengthen employment protections by highlighting the narrow construction of exemptions in the law and reinforcing the broad reach of each protection. The rules, which went into effect on December 24, 2017, are the first substantive rulemaking by the Commission on Human Rights in decades.

## New Legal Protections for New Yorkers



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

Two new protections were added to the City Human Rights Law in 2017, including:

### Uniformed Services

As of November 19, 2017, the City Human Rights Law protects current and former members of the military against discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. In partnership with the Department for Veterans’ Services, the Commission published educational materials to inform the public about the new protections and provide guidance about preexisting protections that frequently impact veterans, including protections based on disability and lawful source of income.

### Salary History

As of October 31, 2017, the City Human Rights Law prohibits employers from asking job applicants about their salary history during the hiring process. The Commission issued guidance on the salary history protections, including an FAQ and materials advising applicants and employers of their respective rights and obligations under the new provision of the law. The Commission convened a roundtable with employers, participated in panel discussions and Continuing Legal Education presentations, and met with hundreds of employment lawyers to help educate the City’s business communities about the law’s new salary history protections.

## Decisions and Orders

The Commission published seven Decisions and Orders in 2017, which are viewable on the agency's website. Below are a few examples.

- The respondents in Commission on Human Rights ex rel. Martinez v. Musso were held liable for gender discrimination and retaliation after the individual respondent fired the complainant for protesting his sexual harassment. The complainant was awarded \$38,448, comprising \$22,277 in back pay, \$4,170 in pre-determination interest, and \$12,000 in emotional distress damages. The Commission also imposed a fine of \$18,000 and required the respondents to undergo training and post a notice of rights at their worksites.
- In Commission on Human Rights ex rel. Agosto v. American Construction Associates, the respondents turned away a prospective renter who attempted to cover her rental security with a government-issued security voucher. The Commission held that respondents discriminated against the complainant based on her lawful source of income, causing her to be street homeless for a period of approximately two months. The Commission awarded the complainant \$13,000 in emotional distress damages and imposed a civil penalty of \$20,000. Respondents were also ordered to undergo training and to post a notice of rights at their building.
- In Commission on Human Rights ex rel. Blue v. Jovic, the respondent landlord refused for three years to provide a bathtub necessary for a child with a disability. The landlord also engaged in a campaign of harassment against the child and her mother by making false complaints to the police and fire department and by filing an unwarranted eviction proceeding against them. The Commission awarded \$45,000 in emotional distress damages to the child and \$50,000 to the child's mother, and imposed a \$60,000 penalty, which could be discounted to \$10,000 if the respondent made the ordered reasonable accommodation on time. Respondent was also ordered to undergo training and to post a notice of rights at the building.

## Commission Convened Historic Hearing on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

On December 6, 2017, the Commission convened a public hearing to address sexual harassment in the workplace. This was the first such hearing since the Commission held the country's first public hearings on sexual harassment in the workplace over forty years ago.

The Commission heard from activists and workers from a wide range of industries, including construction, fashion, media, domestic work, tech, finance, hospitality, and others, about their experiences with sexual harassment in the workplace and the challenges they face in reporting it and obtaining justice.

Those testifying represented some of New York City's most vulnerable workers, including women in male-dominated industries, women of color, immigrant workers, and LGBTQ workers.

The Commission is reviewing all submitted written and oral testimony and will issue a report in 2018 with key findings and policy recommendations to better address and combat sexual harassment in the workplace.

## Commission Surveyed Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish, and Sikh New Yorkers



The Commission launched a survey in late 2017 to collect data from Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish, and Sikh communities across the City about their experiences with discrimination, bias, and bias-motivated harassment and violence. Reports of hate- and bias-based attacks against these groups have risen nationally, as xenophobic, Islamophobic, and anti-Semitic rhetoric continue to permeate the national dialogue.

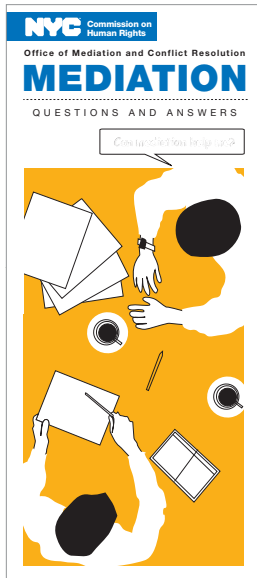
More than 3,000 New Yorkers completed the survey, which was available in Arabic, Bengali, English, French, Hindi, Punjabi, Russian, Urdu, and Yiddish, among other languages.

The Commission will publish a final report on its findings in 2018 with the aim of informing the Commission and other City agencies about how to better address and combat bias-motivated harassment, discrimination, and violence against Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish, and Sikh communities in New York City.

# **OFFICE OF MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution (“OMCR”) provides parties with mediation services at no cost.

## Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution



The Commission transformed its Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution (“OMCR”) in 2017. OMCR provides parties with mediation services at no cost.

OMCR developed and implemented a new voluntary mediation program in early 2017 providing a neutral and empowering process for all parties to facilitate a quick, efficient and mutually acceptable resolution of claims. The new program allows OMCR to assist in facilitating resolutions at various stages of the process, including pre-investigation, mid-investigation, conciliation and/or after a finding of Probable Cause.

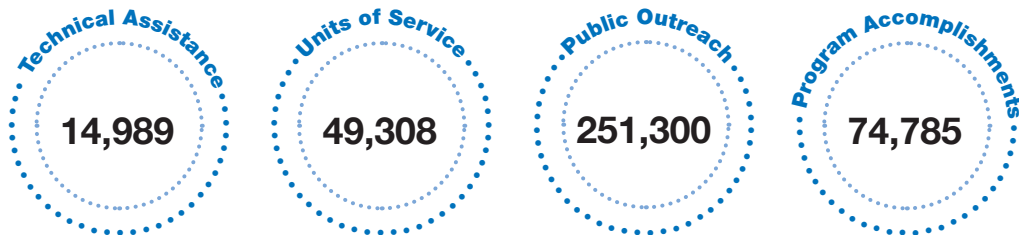
During 2017, the OMCR director successfully mediated 11 cases to resolution. The resolved cases represent, in the aggregate, values totaling \$333,715.12, excluding non-economic terms such as agreements to provide reference letters and conduct trainings.

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS BUREAU

The Community Relations Bureau (“CRB”) promotes understanding and respect among New Yorkers. Its five borough-based Community Service Centers provide resources to help New Yorkers understand their rights and obligations under the City Human Rights Law.

## Our Impact

The Commission continued to educate New Yorkers about their rights under the City Human Rights Law through public outreach efforts, including grassroots outreach, events, and the distribution of Commission literature. Through outreach and service, the Commission delivers technical assistance to individuals with questions about the City Human Rights Law.



## Bias Response Team Takes Action

The Commission's newly formed Bias Response Team responded to 86 bias incidents in 2017, primarily arising from incidents of discrimination based on perceived gender identity and religion. Responses included contacting victims to inform them of their rights, providing instructions on how to file complaints, and engaging in community-based actions, including literature drops, events, and days of action. Examples of incidents the team responded to include:

- The team worked with elected officials and several City agencies to respond to tenant harassment at a Queens condominium.
- The team conducted workshops for the Bronx's Community Board 7 in response to incidents of anti-Semitic slurs at the New Jewish Home to provide education to community members regarding their rights under the City Human Rights Law, and to connect them to the Commission's resources.
- The team provided Know Your Rights training to attendees of the Beit-ul-Maqdis Islamic Center of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn after the Center was vandalized. This outreach was conducted to support the community and to supplement the investigation undertaken by criminal law enforcement officials.



## Fighting for Fairer Housing for All New Yorkers



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

The Commission continued to educate housing providers and community groups on their rights and responsibilities, offering 263 fair housing workshops and presentations to 2,709 attendees, and providing technical assistance to 1,350 people as part of the Citywide Task Force in Housing Court, as well as through tenant organization meetings.

The Commission also hosted its fifth annual Fair Housing Symposium, which this year was held at Hostos College in the Bronx. The symposium provided Know Your Rights workshops to over 200 tenants, advocates, service providers, attorneys, and tenant organizations with a special focus on combating lawful source of income discrimination. Commission attorneys were also on site to take housing complaints from attendees.

## A Focus on Racial Justice



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

In May, following the brutal assault of an immigrant street vendor from Burkina Faso in the South Bronx, the Commission hosted its first forum for African immigrant communities at the Metropolitan College of New York in the Bronx. The forum was an opportunity to inform people about their rights under the City Human Rights Law. More than 20 community-based organizations and City agencies were on hand to provide information on government resources and legal protections for African immigrants.

The Commission also hosted a series of events focused on racial justice. These included a panel discussion on the impact of gentrification in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a mobile legal services clinic at a neighborhood church in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and a community response effort that included providing Know Your Rights information and legal screenings to Brooklyn community members following reports of racial discrimination in a local restaurant.

## Empowering Immigrant Communities



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, the Commission held a town hall and resource fair in Washington Heights co-sponsored by major Spanish-language media outlets and several elected officials. The event was an opportunity to educate communities about their rights under the City Human Rights Law related to discrimination based on immigration status and national origin, and to provide resources focused on economic empowerment.

The Commission also co-hosted a summit for Latinx and Black schoolgirls with the Office of the Bronx Borough President and Councilmember Vanessa Gibson. Held in the South Bronx, the summit was an opportunity to educate girls and young women about their rights under the City Human Rights Law.

## Making New York City More Accessible

The Commission continued its work on behalf of people with disabilities through Project Equal Access, which identifies barriers to accessibility in housing, workspaces, and public accommodations, and resolves them prior to intervention by the Commission’s Law Enforcement Bureau. Individuals, housing providers, disability rights organizations, and social service providers have praised this innovative program in which Commission staff regularly conduct workshops and engage in collaborative discussions with relevant parties to address accessibility issues and encourage quick resolutions.

In 2017, Project Equal Access successfully negotiated 216 modifications across the City, including accessibility improvements like the addition of ramps and automatic door openers in restaurants and apartment buildings, the creation of accessible supermarket checkout lanes, and the addition of lifts in medical facilities.



## Working with Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

The Commission continued its work educating incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals about their rights under the Fair Chance Act, which protects individuals from discrimination in employment based on their criminal history. In 2017, CRB conducted 305 outreach and educational activities for 9,169 individuals, while providing technical assistance to 918 people about the Fair Chance Act.

Outreach efforts included workshops on the Fair Chance Act with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Services and the New York City Department of Probation at office sites where probation clients report monthly. Presentations on the Fair Chance Act were also conducted for clients of Workforce1, via the New York City Department of Small Business Services, before they went to job interviews. The Commission also presented workshops on the Fair Chance Act at the Manhattan Detention Complex, the Brooklyn Detention Complex, and the Vernon C. Bain Center in the Bronx.

## Supporting LGBTQ Youth



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

The Commission built upon its longstanding work with LGBTQ communities by joining First Lady Chirlane McCray’s NYC Unity Project – the City’s first-ever multi-agency strategy to deliver services to LGBTQ youth. This bold commitment unites 16 City agencies to offer new and enhanced programs and support to ensure every LGBTQ young person in NYC is safe, supported, and healthy. The Commission, alongside the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Mayor’s Center for Faith and Community Partnerships, spearheaded the Unity Project’s work with faith communities.

Through the Unity Project, the Commission was tasked with the specific role of galvanizing houses of worship that affirm LGBTQ youth and serve as safe spaces. The culmination of this work led to the

launch of the Unity Project Faith Network – a group of LGBTQ affirming faith leaders, houses of worship, and community-based organizations that are committed to providing resources for leaders and houses of worship that seek to be more affirming.

The Commission also hosted open houses for LGBTQ youth in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island in collaboration with the Brooklyn Pride Center, Destination Tomorrow, the Caribbean Equality Project, and the Staten Island Pride Center. The open houses celebrated National Coming Out Day and provided resources to LGBTQ youth regarding their rights under the City Human Rights Law.

CRB also continued its work with local schools by collaborating with several Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) across the City to raise awareness about bias-based harassment in LGBTQ youth communities.

## Partnering with Faith Communities



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

The Commission continued to unite and engage faith communities across the City to celebrate diversity and inform faith-based communities about their rights against religious discrimination and harassment.

The Commission held its Second Annual Iftar in the City, this year in Brooklyn Heights, to celebrate Ramadan. The iftar convened over 500 New Yorkers from different faiths.

The Commission partnered with community leaders, religious officials, and community-based organizations to host an interfaith Seder at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah. The Seder was co-sponsored by Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, The Interfaith Center of New York, the Islamic Center at New York University, Union Theological Seminary, New York Divinity School, and Centro Altigracia de Fe y Justicia.

The Commission organized an interfaith forum at JCC Harlem that brought together Christian, Jewish, and Muslim community leaders to discuss the intersection of race, ethnicity, and faith in the face of Harlem’s gentrification.

The Commission co-hosted the first ever interfaith Diwali celebration with the Bronx's diverse South Asian and Indo-Caribbean communities. The event was held at the Sonia Sotomayor Center in partnership with the Vishnu Mandir, a local Hindu temple. Faith and community leaders from Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist communities came together to deliver a message of peace and unity. Over 300 community members attended, and State Assemblymember Luis R. Sepúlveda gave remarks.

# OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The Office of Communications and Marketing communicates the City Human Rights Law's protected areas and categories and the Commission's policies, positions, goals, law enforcement actions, and community outreach efforts to New Yorkers in all five boroughs using a variety of platforms including press, publications, digital and social media and citywide media campaigns.

## Increased News Media Attention

The Commission's Communications team significantly increased media attention to the Commission's enforcement efforts, community engagement, public campaigns, and expansion of the City Human Rights Law. With more than 700 earned media hits (publicity gained through promotional efforts other than paid media advertising) across print, online, TV, and radio, the Commission nearly doubled its press coverage from 2016. At the same time, the Communications team continued to prioritize reaching vulnerable New Yorkers, with nearly half of all press hits in 2017 (358) in ethnic and community media, ensuring that all communities in New York City, regardless of language, religion, or national origin, understand their rights. Below are a few media stories to illustrate this performance:

### ■ Educating Immigrant, Religious, and At-Risk Communities Through the Media

*New York City Has a New Campaign To Fight Discrimination in the Trump Era*  
(Buzzfeed, May 2017)

"People feel more empowered to be more explicit in their discrimination," [Commissioner] Malalis said, adding that the Commission has conducted focus groups and done interviews with scores involved in the incidents. "The last election cycle validated their hate or anger toward certain groups ..."

*When Your Commute Includes Hearing 'You Don't Belong in This Country'*  
(New York Times, March 2017)

"The New York City Commission on Human Rights was concerned enough about post-election incidents on subways that it organized an outreach day in December, with handouts on religious discrimination and reporting harassment distributed at eight subway stations."

### ■ Expanding Ethnic and Community Media Appearances

*Educating Domestic Employees About Their Labor Rights*  
(NY1 Noticias, June 2017)

"The municipal government organized a day to help domestic employees to know their rights and improve their safety in the workplace. Our reporter Piter Ortega was in Queens and has more details about this initiative."

*Commissioner Malalis Talks About Fighting Discrimination in NYC*  
(Hot 97's Ebro in the Morning, April 2017)

"Commissioner Carmelyn P. Malalis stops by Hot 97's Ebro in the Morning to talk about protections under the NYC Human Rights Law, including criminal history protections, racial discrimination, sexual harassment, religious discrimination, as well as available trainings and workshops."

### ■ Reinforcing the Commission as a Venue for Justice

*City Amps Up Fight Against Landlords Who Refuse Housing Vouchers*  
(WNYC, January 2017)

"Carmelyn Malalis, head of the Commission on Human Rights, said the City has increased the number of investigations and complaints about discrimination based on income. 'We wanted to make sure that we were looking at specifically larger housing providers that had the ability to limit people because of just the sheer number of units that they had some sort of control over,' she said."



*City Promises Crackdown on Landlords Who Discriminate Based on Immigration Status*  
(NY1, June 2017)

“City leaders are promising a crackdown on landlords who discriminate against tenants based on immigration status. It comes after officials say they’ve seen a recent uptick in complaints. NY1’s Gene Apodaca filed the following report.”

**■ Highlighting Enforcement Efforts and Settlements**

*Delta Settles with Flight Attendant Who Says She Had Nowhere to Pump Breast Milk*  
(Fortune, April 2017)

“A flight attendant for regional airline Endeavor Air, which most travelers know as Delta Connection, filed a discrimination complaint with the New York City Commission on Human Rights in February 2016. She alleged the company, which is wholly owned by Delta Air Lines, violated a City Human Rights Law when it failed to provide her a private space to pump breast milk close to her work site. Now this case has been settled—which is meaningful because it puts a dollar amount on the emotional damages a woman can claim when her employer doesn’t accommodate pumping on the job.”

**Campaigns and Digital Marketing Reaching New Yorkers Citywide**

**NYC Responds to Rise of Bias Incidents with #YouHaveRightsNYC Campaign**



In June 2017, the Commission launched a citywide anti-discrimination campaign, “You DO Have the Right NYC,” to affirm every New Yorker’s right to live, work, and pray free from discrimination and harassment.

The campaign, which was accompanied by the hashtag #YouHaveRightsNYC, served as a unique opportunity for the Commission to brand itself through a flagship campaign and establish itself as a venue for justice for three target audiences: New Yorkers of faith, people of color, and immigrants. These target audiences were selected based on data from complaints and bias-based incidents occurring across the City.

Campaign Results				
<b>&gt;34K</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>77M</b>	<b>4,637,000</b>	<b>968,593</b>
Placements citywide over six weeks.	Ethnic and community newspapers and radio stations published advertisements.	Impressions generated through online and outdoor advertisements.	Circulations of advertisements in ethnic print media.	Video views on Facebook, Hulu, and YouTube.

## Commission Promotes New Salary History Ban



In support of the new salary history ban, the Commission launched a digital campaign across social media and targeted websites to reach job seekers, hiring managers and human resources professionals, and ensure that they are aware of this new protection in employment

Campaign Results					
<b>10M</b>	<b>148K</b>	<b>&gt;3K</b>	<b>3,598</b>	<b>14K</b>	<b>128,038</b>
Impressions generated across digital media.	Clicks to the Commission's salary history campaign page.	New likes on the Commission's Facebook page.	Shares of campaign advertisements on Facebook.	Video views on Facebook, Hulu, and YouTube.	Impressions generated on Crain's New York Business.

## Marketing Efforts Highlight Population-Specific Protections

The Commission further ensured that its public education programs were relevant and applicable to its target audiences by creating specific campaigns, materials, and outreach strategies tailored to specific audience segments. Samples of these marketing efforts are described below.



## ■ #WomenInNYC

After the first Women’s March and to promote a specific panel discussion event to empower women, the Commission released two resources: a fact sheet on harassment and a brochure on protections for women under the City Human Rights Law. The Commission also launched a digital advertising campaign to support the distribution of the new materials. The #NYCForWomen campaign page was visited more than 45,000 times in 2017, making it the third most popular page on the Commission’s website.

## ■ Discrimination Survey Project

This past October, the Commission conducted a citywide survey of Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish and Sikh communities to understand how discrimination impacts these communities. The Commission executed an advertising campaign on Facebook in support of the survey. The campaign ran for four weeks and directed members of the Muslim, Arab, South Asian, Jewish and Sikh communities to the survey portal, helping to support the survey’s data collection efforts.

## Marketing Investment in Ethnic and Community Media

The Commission continued its investment in New York City’s rich ethnic and community media outlets, which serve the City’s most vulnerable communities. Through these outlets, the Commission provided essential information to our City’s most vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities. In 2017, 100% of radio and print advertising was either in community or ethnic media. The Commission produced advertisements for ethnic media and social media in various languages, including Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Urdu.

## Launching a New Monthly Newsletter

To expand its marketing strategy to ensure more New Yorkers know their rights, the Commission launched its first-ever monthly newsletter, which provides updates on the agency and its efforts to combat discrimination. The newsletter has gained an average of 100 new subscribers since its launched in September 2017.

## Agency Website and Social Media Improved to Best Serve Our Most Vulnerable Communities

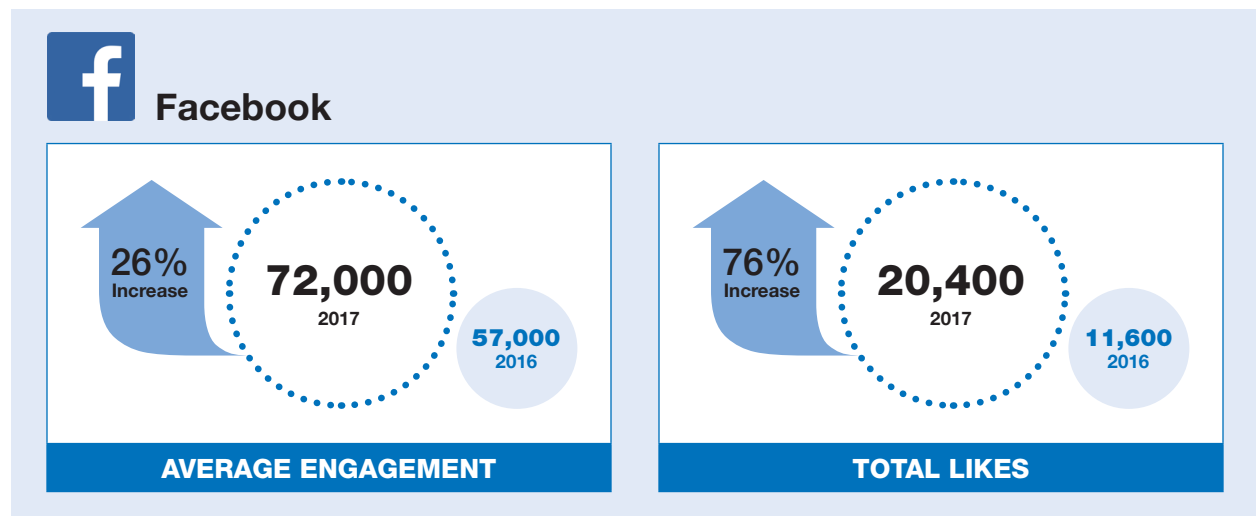
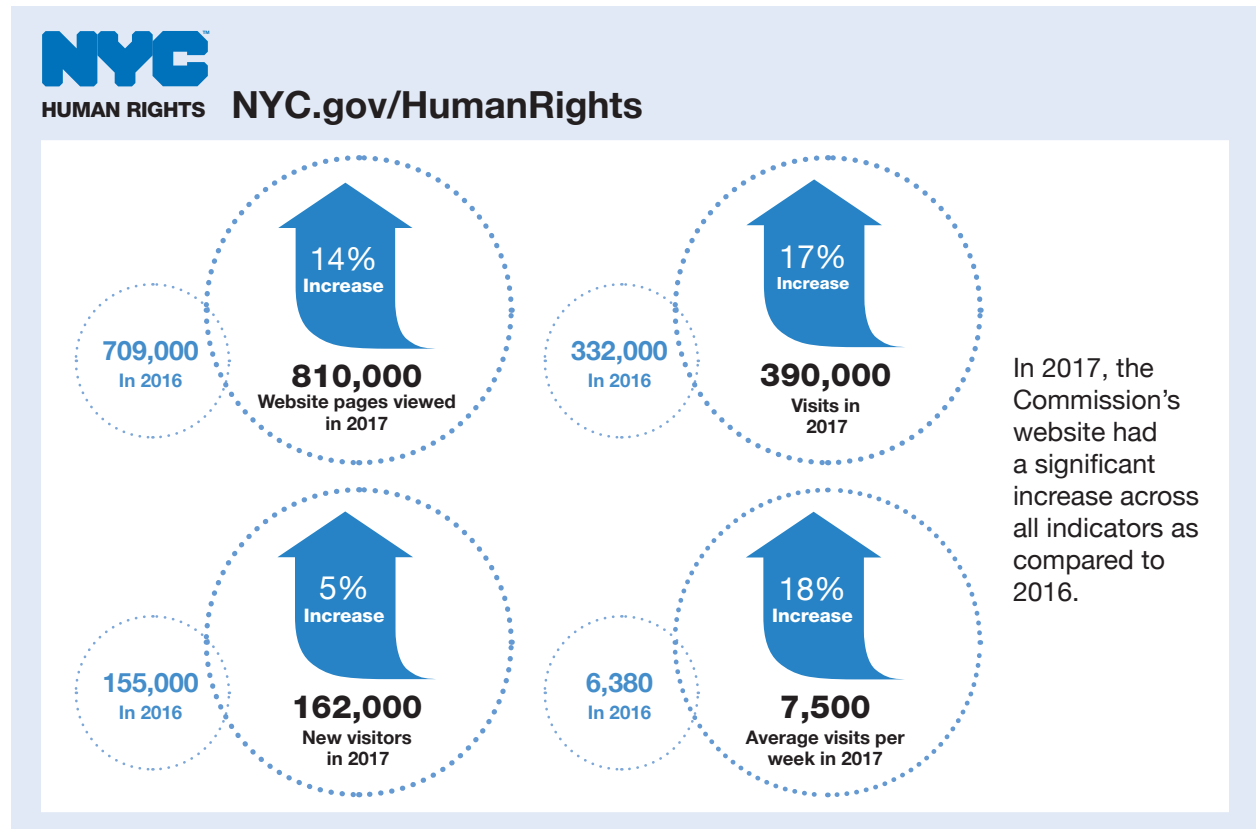
Since its redesign in 2016, the Commission’s website has been improving its user experience, especially for New Yorkers who speak a language other than English and New Yorkers with disabilities.

In 2017, the Commission’s website color and layout was updated to meet new standards of accessibility for people with disabilities. Additionally, the Commission expanded offerings on its website for New Yorkers who speak a language other than English by including literature in Spanish, Arabic, Urdu, Haitian Creole, Korean, Chinese, Russian, French, and Polish.

The website’s page views increased to 810,000 from 709,000 in 2016. Additionally, the website’s visits increased to 390,000 from 332,000 in 2016.

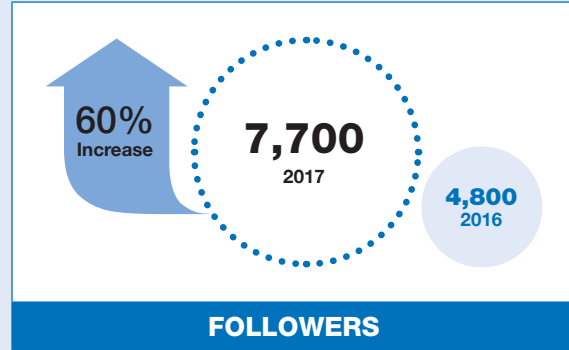
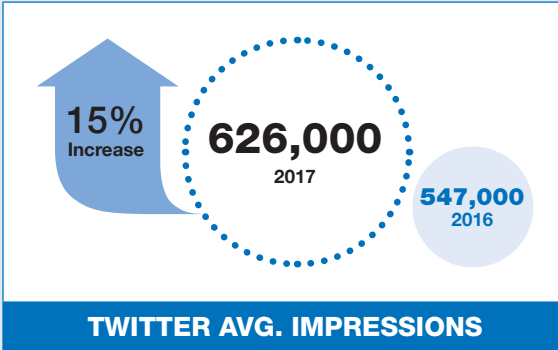
The Commission increased content on social media in languages other than English. The Commission also ensured that images were accessible to people with disabilities by adding alternative text to social media posts. The Commission also increased the size of its Facebook following by 76% and its Twitter following by 60% compared to the prior year.

## 2016-2017 Website and Social Media Metrics Comparison

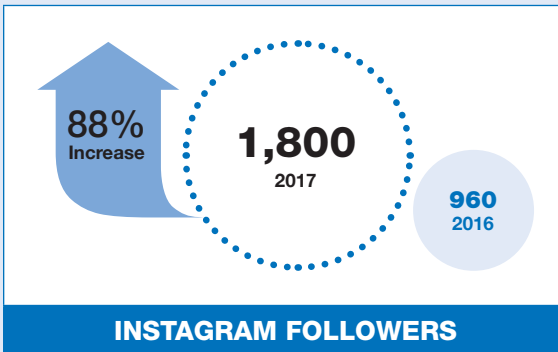




## Twitter



## Instagram



# Data and Market Research Influence New Branding and Visual Graphics Strategy



Photo credit: Adrienne Nicole Productions.

In 2017, an identifying brand was created for each main Commission initiative to make special events and campaigns as impactful as possible. These new brands are based on findings from focus groups and research. The new brands have been applied to all Commission publications, correspondence, campaigns, media, promotional items, events, and signage.

## Redesigning Existing Materials to Improve Reader's Understanding of the NYC Human Rights Law

In 2015, the Commission embarked upon a publications plan that has produced or improved over 20 multilingual brochures and factsheets. The Commission's Communications team continued to work with CRB, LEB, and the OC to revise existing publications and to create new ones.



Improved publications in 2017 include:

- Pregnancy Accommodations at Work notice of rights and factsheet.
- Protections Against Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression brochure and factsheet.



New publications in 2017 include:

- Disability Protections Under the NYC Human Rights Law brochure and factsheet.
- Businesses and Discrimination Protections Under the NYC Human Rights Law brochure.
- Bias-Based Profiling by Law Enforcement brochure.
- Women in NYC brochure and factsheet.



# Office Locations & Contact Information



Photo credit: Franck D. Joseph II.

To file a Complaint or learn more about the Commission, dial 311 and ask for Human Rights.

## Main Office

22 Reade Street  
 New York, NY 10007  
 Dial 311 or (212) 306-7450  
 Fax: (212) 306-7658

## NY Relay Services

Dial 711 or  
 (800) 421-1220 (English)  
 (877) 662-4886 (Spanish)

## Website

[www.nyc.gov/humanrights](http://www.nyc.gov/humanrights)

# Community Service Centers



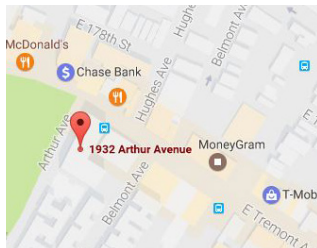
## Manhattan

22 Reade Street  
 New York, NY 10007  
 (212) 306-7450



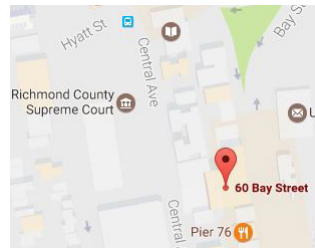
## Queens

153-01 Jamaica Avenue  
 2nd Floor  
 Jamaica, NY 11432  
 (718) 657-2465



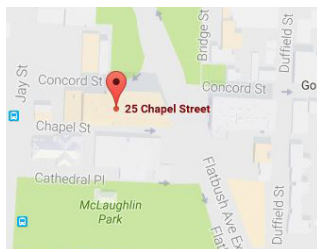
## Bronx

1932 Arthur Avenue  
 Room 203A  
 Bronx, NY 10457  
 (718) 579-6900



## Staten Island

60 Bay Street  
 7th Floor  
 Staten Island, NY 10301  
 (718) 390-8506



## Brooklyn

25 Chapel Street  
 Suite 1001  
 Brooklyn, NY 11201  
 (718) 722-3130



