

**VOLUME I: GENERAL GOVERNMENT
AND QUASI-PUBLIC AGENCIES**

**RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**

Agency Summary

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights

Agency Mission

To enforce Rhode Island anti-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, credit and delivery of services; through impartial investigation, formal and informal resolution efforts, predetermination conferences and administrative hearings, to ensure due process for both complainants and respondents, to provide redress for victims of discrimination, and to properly dismiss cases in those instances in which charges of discrimination lack evidentiary support. To provide outreach and education to the community to ensure knowledge of rights and responsibilities under state and federal anti-discrimination laws.

Agency Description

The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights enforces Rhode Island anti-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, and delivery of services. The employment and public accommodation statutes prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, disability and ancestral origin. The housing and credit statutes, in addition to prohibiting discrimination on the aforementioned bases, also prohibit discrimination based on marital status, familial status, and military status. The housing statute additionally prohibits discrimination on the basis of status as a victim of domestic abuse, housing status, lawful source of income and association with members of a protected class. The delivery of services statute prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The employment law also prohibits employers from inquiring before a first interview, either via an employment application or otherwise, whether an applicant has been convicted of a crime; certain enumerated exceptions apply.

The Commission's major program activities include outreach and education, intake, investigation, conciliation and administrative hearings. Staff members perform outreach and education activities voluntarily and frequently, after normal working hours. Intake involves the receipt and evaluation of inquiries. If the allegations present a prima facie case of discrimination, a formal charge of discrimination is prepared and forwarded to the respondent. Investigators conduct an impartial analysis of evidence obtained from both parties, compare all elements of the case and attempt to negotiate a resolution. Where resolution is not achieved, investigators make a recommendation on the merits of the charge to a Preliminary Investigating Commissioner ("PIC"). The PIC makes a formal ruling as to whether there is "Probable Cause" or "No Probable Cause" in respect to the allegations of the charge. A No Probable Cause ruling terminates proceedings at the Commission. Upon a "Probable Cause" ruling, the commission attempts to conciliate the matter. The parties have the opportunity to elect that the matter be heard in Superior Court. Where conciliation is unsuccessful, and the parties have elected to proceed at the Commission, an administrative hearing is conducted. At the administrative hearing, evidence is admitted and sworn testimony is heard before a Commissioner; a court stenographer also is present. The Commission renders a formal decision and order following an administrative hearing.

Statutory History

The Commission was created and empowered in 1949 by R.I. General Laws § 28-5 (the Fair Employment Practices Act). The Commission has been given statutory responsibility to enforce the following laws: RIGL § 28-5-1 et seq.; § 34-37-1 et seq. (Fair Housing Practices Act); § 11-24-1 et seq. (Hotels and Public Places); § 23-6.3-11 and § 23-6.3-12 (Prevention and Suppression of Contagious Diseases - HIV/AIDS); § 42-87-1 et seq. (Civil Rights of People with Disabilities); and § 40-9.1-1 et seq. (Equal Rights of Blind and Deaf Persons to Public Facilities). In addition to state laws, the Commission assists the federal government in enforcing the following federal laws: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights act of 1968), as amended. During the 2021 legislative session, the Fair Housing Practices Act, R.I. Gen. Laws § 34-37-1 et seq., was amended to prohibit discrimination on the basis of lawful source of income.

Budget

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights

	2022 Actuals	2023 Actuals	2024 Enacted Budget	2024 Revised Budget	2025 Recommended
Expenditures by Program					
Central Management	1,836,227	2,022,428	2,368,347	2,489,651	2,505,726
Total Expenditures	1,836,227	2,022,428	2,368,347	2,489,651	2,505,726
Expenditures by Object					
Salary and Benefits	1,461,629	1,559,207	1,955,845	1,968,808	2,038,174
Contract Professional Services	(49,157)	(16,800)	36,919	103,811	42,250
Operating Supplies and Expenses	417,107	474,709	375,083	412,532	420,802
Subtotal: Operating	1,829,579	2,017,116	2,367,847	2,485,151	2,501,226
Capital Purchases and Equipment	6,649	5,312	500	4,500	4,500
Subtotal: Other	6,649	5,312	500	4,500	4,500
Total Expenditures	1,836,227	2,022,428	2,368,347	2,489,651	2,505,726
Expenditures by Source of Funds					
General Revenue	1,524,555	1,758,445	2,009,246	2,071,702	2,055,616
Federal Funds	311,672	263,984	359,101	417,949	450,110
Total Expenditures	1,836,227	2,022,428	2,368,347	2,489,651	2,505,726
FTE Authorization	14.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0

Personnel Agency Summary

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights

	FY 2024		FY 2025	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Unclassified	15.0	1,204,487	15.0	1,248,448
Subtotal	15.0	1,204,487	15.0	1,248,448
Total Salaries		1,204,487		1,248,448
Benefits				
FICA		92,143		95,503
Health Benefits		201,242		218,767
Payroll Accrual		7,040		7,250
Retiree Health		54,442		49,189
Retirement		361,875		369,706
Subtotal		716,742		740,415
Total Salaries and Benefits	15.0	1,921,229	15.0	1,988,863
Cost Per FTE Position		128,082		132,591
Statewide Benefit Assessment		47,579		49,311
Payroll Costs	15.0	1,968,808	15.0	2,038,174
Purchased Services				
Clerical and Temporary Services		8,500		8,500
Information Technology		86,911		30,500
Legal Services		250		250
Other Contracts		2,000		2,000
Training and Educational Services		6,150		1,000
Subtotal		103,811		42,250
Total Personnel	15.0	2,072,619	15.0	2,080,424
Distribution by Source of Funds				
General Revenue	13.0	1,716,977	13.0	1,715,862
Federal Funds	2.0	355,642	2.0	364,562
Total All Funds	15.0	2,072,619	15.0	2,080,424

Personnel

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights

Central Management

		FY 2024		FY 2025	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Unclassified					
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE	0318 A	1.0	56,248	1.0	57,730
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE (COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS)	0318 A	1.0	49,444	1.0	50,703
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	0323 A	1.0	62,496	1.0	64,441
CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER-HUMAN RIGHTS	0331 A	1.0	93,437	1.0	96,634
CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL	0838 A	1.0	103,592	1.0	108,368
EEOC PROJECT DIRECTOR - HUMAN RIGHTS	0332 A	1.0	85,802	1.0	88,840
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - HUMAN RIGHTS	0844 A	1.0	148,697	1.0	154,967
HUD PROJECT DIRECTOR	0332 A	1.0	85,802	1.0	88,840
INVESTIGATOR (HUMAN RIGHTS)	0326 A	2.0	132,123	2.0	136,647
SENIOR COMPLIANCE OFFICER (HUMAN RIGHTS)	0328 A	4.0	282,204	4.0	291,984
STAFF ATTORNEY V	0836 A	1.0	104,642	1.0	109,294
Subtotal Unclassified		15.0	1,204,487	15.0	1,248,448
Subtotal		15.0	1,204,487	15.0	1,248,448
Total Salaries			1,204,487		1,248,448
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Performance Measures

Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights

Central Management

Outreach Activities

The figures below represent the number of outreach activities conducted by agency staff in compliance with the statutory mandate of R.I.G.L. § 28-5-14. A higher number indicates greater compliance with the statute.

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	51	54	53	52	52
Actual	59	50	46	--	--

Cases Processed

The figures below represent the number of cases achieving a final disposition (e.g., settlement, No Probable Cause ruling, administrative closure, Decision & Order), as well as cases in which a ruling of Probable Cause has been rendered. Although Probable Cause rulings do not constitute closures, they are recorded in order to present an accurate record of casework completed by staff and Commissioners. A higher number indicates greater case production.

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	412	381	359	327	327
Actual	277	304	297	--	--

Average Case Age at Closure

The figures below represent the average age, in days, of a case at final disposition. A lower number reflects the more expeditious processing of cases.

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	365	365	365	365	365
Actual	398	439	332	--	--

Website Visits

The figures below represent the number of unique visits to the agency website by members of the public. [Note: This performance measure was established in FY 2024 and historical targets and actuals are not available.]

	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	--	--	--	7,200	7,200
Actual	--	--	7,365	--	--
