

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**



**POSITION DESCRIPTION
COMMISSIONER
D.C. COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments (MOTA) recruits talented and interested individuals from all eight Wards to implement Mayor Bowser's pragmatic, inclusive and hands-on approach to creating pathways to the middle class and a fair shot for all District residents. District Boards and Commissions have key roles in advising District agencies and programs, regulating professions and industry as well as setting and shaping a variety of policy decisions. District boards and commissions vary in size and complexity, yet all are designed to help shape and influence critical decisions and services for District residents. As a result, Commission and Board members must have experience, dedication and commitment to service. The Mayor makes appointments to over 180 different public bodies, including boards and commissions, independent agencies, advisory groups, task forces and organizations.

The D.C. Commission on Human Rights ("Commission") is an agency within the Office of Human Rights that adjudicates private sector discrimination complaints brought under the D.C. Human Rights Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Fair Criminal Records Screening Act. The Commission also provides an appeal process for applicants who were found ineligible for employment under the Criminal Background Checks for the Protection of Children Act.

The District of Columbia Office of Human Rights (OHR) was established to eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity and protect human rights for persons who live in or visit the District of Columbia. The agency enforces local and federal human rights laws, including the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, by providing a legal process to those who believe they have been discriminated against in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and government services. The D.C. Human Rights Act is one of the most robust human rights acts in the United States with 21 protected traits. If OHR finds probable cause to believe discrimination occurred and the parties are not able to reach an agreement, the case is referred to the Commission for a public hearing. Although the Commission is within OHR, the Commission acts independent of OHR in order to adjudicate cases in an impartial manner.

The Commission consists of 15 commissioners nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the D.C. Council, who serve on a voluntary basis. Commissioners are expected to serve a three-year term, be a resident of the District of Columbia and remain so while in office, and attend bi-monthly and special meetings as required by the D.C. Human Rights Act. Commissioners are called on to decide the merits of individual discrimination complaints by serving on a tribunal of commissioners to decide cases after a hearing has been held by an administrative law judge (ALJ). The Commission reviews the matter de novo, including trial transcripts, evidence as presented at trial, the ALJ's Proposed Decision and Order, and any post-trial submissions, and then issues its

Decision and Order, adopting or rejecting – in whole or in part – the ALJs Proposed Decision. Deciding the merits includes both a determination of whether discrimination occurred and the appropriate remedy, including, but not limited to back pay, compensatory damages, and attorney’s fees.

Commissioners are expected to lead committees, take minutes, serve as chair, vice-chair or secretary, and fill any job or committee opening if assigned or elected by the Commission. Commissioners are expected to volunteer their time to strengthen community awareness on human rights issues and provide reports or feedback to the Director of OHR, the Mayor, or the D.C. Council as may be deemed necessary by the Commission. To become more knowledgeable about human rights, it may be necessary to attend specific workshops or trainings regarding the duties and functions of the Commission, the D.C. Human Rights Act, and government ethics.

The Commission is composed of individuals with demonstrated backgrounds or interest in human rights. The Commissioners are a combination of attorneys and non-attorneys who represent the interests of the citizens of the District of Columbia. Commissioners serve a dual role. One is that of an adjudicatory body who must be able to critically analyze facts, decide the merits of complaints, and assess damages. The other of educator and promoter of human rights which requires outreach to the public. Examples of past community outreach include partnering with Georgetown Law School to implement the Youth Ambassador Program in D.C. Public Schools, serving as judges in the Capstone Moot Court competition, and participating in the Youth Law Day. In addition, each year the Commission and OHR award the Cornelius R. “Neil” Alexander Humanitarian Award, given annually to a District resident who has made a significant contribution to advancing human rights and improving quality of life in the District.

More information about OHR, the Commission, and the Commissioners can be found on the OHR website at www.OHR.dc.gov or you can contact the Commission at Commission.COHR@dc.gov.

Applications

Those interested in applying for a Commission vacancy may do so on MOTA’s website at <https://motaboardsonline.com/apply/nYo2do/Commission-On-Human-Rights>. After a vetting process by MOTA, Mayoral nominees must be confirmed by City Council. Once the Council confirms a nominee, the Mayor can issue a Mayor’s Order and swear-in the appointee.

