

2015 Annual Report

Justice. Fairness. Equity.

Seattle Office for Civil Rights

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Justice.

Fairness.

Equity.



This is the goal of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) : to achieve race and social justice, advance civil rights and end barriers to equity.

I am very proud of all that we accomplished in 2015. From hosting a series of national speakers on racial equity that drew thousands of attendees, to working to add greater protections for renters, the Seattle Office for Civil Rights continues to be a national leader in civil rights and social justice. In 2015, SOCR increased the use of the Racial Equity Toolkit, an analysis tool, in city programs and policies. We took aggressive enforcement and public engagement action through Fair

Housing testing. And we advanced Seattle's transgender rights through passage of the All Gender Restroom Ordinance.

This summary of our department's work in 2015 provides a snapshot of the commitment and energy that the staff of SOCR brings to work each and every day. For more information about us, visit www.seattle.gov/civilrights or call 206-684-4500. We look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Lally".

Patricia Lally

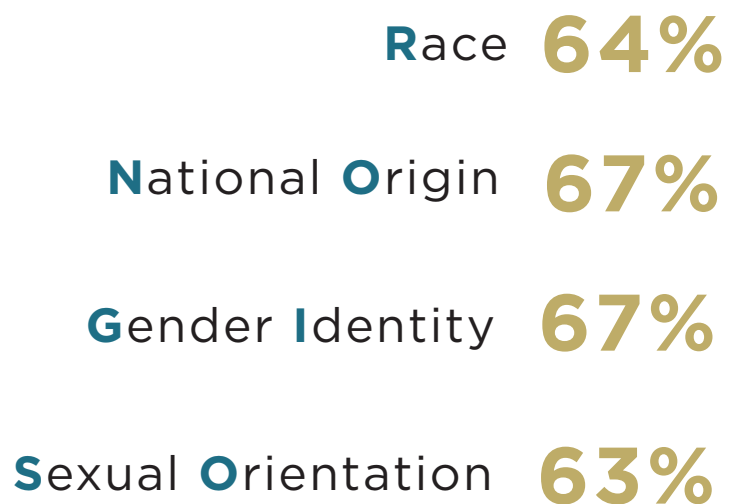
CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT



SOCR RELEASES FAIR HOUSING TEST RESULTS

In May 2015, SOCR filed director's charges of illegal discrimination against 13 property owners after on-site fair housing testing in 2014 showed evidence of housing discrimination. All but one of the property owners agreed to settle the charges and reimburse Seattle for the costs of testing.

Testing revealed evidence of different treatment in more than half of all results.



PERCENTAGE OF TESTERS RECEIVING DIFFERENT TREATMENT



FAIR HOUSING CAMPAIGN

Metro buses declared, “Fair housing is my right” from one end of Seattle to the other in November 2015 as part of SOCR’s Fair Housing Campaign.

In addition to running ads on buses and in print, SOCR contracted with five nonprofit organizations to hold a total of 48 workshops across Seattle, connecting with more than 700 people. At the outreach sessions we heard important stories directly from renters on additional barriers they are facing in today’s rental market. Their perspectives are helping to inform our work in 2016.

Thanks to our community partners: [Entre Hermanos](#), [Equal Rights Washington](#), [Solid Ground](#), [Tenants Union](#) and the [Urban League](#).

CIVIL RIGHTS CASE SPOTLIGHT:

The Seattle Hearing Examiner ruled in SOCR’s favor in a case involving a disabled woman and her adult son. SOCR’s investigation found that a local low-income housing provider had failed to accommodate them; the housing provider appealed our decision. The Hearing Examiner awarded \$1,000 to the charging party, and an additional \$1,000 in civil penalties to SOCR. The housing provider also was ordered to offer the next two available units that would meet the residents’ needs.

Cases closed by basis

● Disability	48
● Race	34
● Retaliation	27
● National Origin	21
● Sex	17
● Use of Section 8	13
● Age	9
● Family Status	3
● Marital Status	3
● Sexual Orientation	2
● Gender Identity	2
● Religion	2
● Breastfeeding	1
● Creed	1

*Please note: some cases list multiple bases, so this annual total adds up to more than 165

Cases closed in 2015

● Employment	66
● Housing	72
● Public Accommodations	27
● Total Closures	165

Types of Resolution

● No Cause	91
● Settlement	38
● Reasonable Cause	11
● Administrative Closures	25

\$16,350



employment

\$19,197



housing

\$2,860



public accommodations

2015 FINANCIAL SETTLEMENTS.
ALL FINANCIAL SETTLEMENTS GO TO THE
CHARGING PARTIES.

**CIVIL RIGHTS
CASE SPOTLIGHT:
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

SOCR investigated a man's claim that two separate drivers from the same auto share company refused to pick him up because he was using a service animal. In settlement, the company paid the man \$2,000 and agreed to several policy changes, including training all their drivers about service animal requirements and enforcing a "one-strike rule" – a second violation of service animal policies will result in the driver's permanent removal from the company's system.

**CIVIL RIGHTS
CASE SPOTLIGHT:
FAIR EMPLOYMENT**

SOCR found that the local branch of an engineering company had discriminated against an African American employee, who endured racial slurs, harassment and firing. After we issued our finding, the charging party filed a civil suit in the court system.

RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE



37
Listening
Sessions
held in
2014.



2015 Arts
Cohort
Participants

2015-2017 RSJI THREE-YEAR PLAN

After extensive community engagement the Race and Social Justice Initiative released its 2015-17 Three-Year Plan. The Plan calls on Seattle city government to set measurable targets for the City's progress and to empower community leadership.

"We believe that change is not just possible; in fact change is happening," the Plan concludes. "In the next three years, Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative is committed to changing the City of Seattle as an institution and supporting the community's vision of systemic change."

To begin implementing the Plan, Mayor Ed Murray required departments to document at least four uses of the City's Racial Equity Toolkit every year.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

Seattle's 20-Year Comp Plan Embraces Racial Equity

Equitable development is one of three City of Seattle key policy areas for racial equity. In 2015, Mayor Murray and City Council unanimously agreed to make Race and Social Equity a central Core Value of the updated 2015 Comprehensive Plan, which will provide a vision and roadmap for Seattle's development during the next two decades.

TURNING COMMITMENT INTO ACTION

SOCR began a training partnership the Office of Arts & Culture to help Seattle arts groups turn their commitment to racial equity into actions for real change. Participating organizations – including the Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Art Museum and a host of smaller arts organizations – used the training to develop plans to create racial equity within their own organizations, as well as with other artists, their audiences and partners.

RACIAL EQUITY FUND

SOCR provided grants to Seattle community-based organizations to build capacity in the community to address structural racism. Recipients in 2015 included Daybreak Star Summer Day Camp, Partners for Black Parent Involvement, Non-Profit Assistance Center, YWCA Girls First Youth Intergroup Dialogue Project, Washington Dream Act Coalition and Multi Media Resources and Technology Institute

Funding for the grants came from Seattle City Council and the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. The Racial Equity Fund extends into 2016 with another round of community grants.

POLICY



ALL-GENDER RESTROOM ORDINANCE

On August 14, 2015, Mayor Ed Murray signed the City of Seattle's All-Gender Restroom Ordinance. The new law requires single stall restrooms to be re-signed as all-gender in public places and City-controlled buildings. SOCR began taking reports from the public to enforce the new requirement on March 9, 2016. The public can tweet #AllGenderRestroomSEA to report violations.

The ordinance also reaffirms the right of individuals to use gender-specific facilities consistent with their gender identity in any restroom open to the public in Seattle.

All-gender restrooms are single-occupant restroom facilities with "all-gender" signage that anyone can use regardless of gender. They benefit a variety of people, including those who require the assistance of a differently gendered caregiver, parents with differently gendered children, and transgender and gender nonconforming individuals.

EQUITY IN HOUSING THROUGH HALA

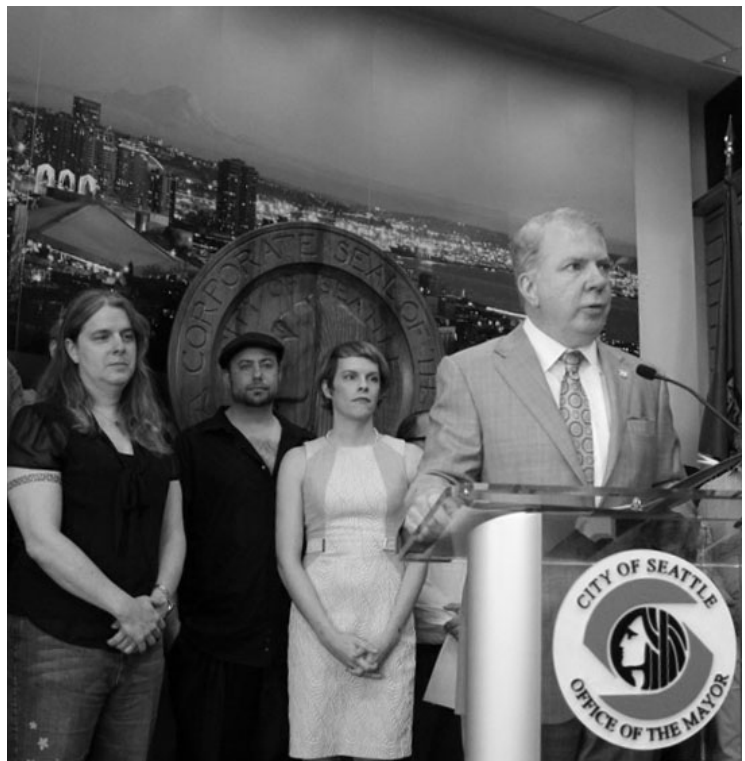
SOCR participated in Mayor Murray's 2015 Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) stakeholder committee process. The committee developed two proposals to augment civil rights protections for renters in Seattle, including expanding source of income protections and improving fair access to housing for people with criminal records. SOCR began work on these policies in 2015.



MAYOR'S LGBT ACTION PLAN

Anti-LGBTQ hate incidents rose sharply in 2015 (a 46% increase over the first seven months of 2014). In response, Mayor Murray unveiled an action plan to support a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for LGBTQ people in Seattle.

The Action Plan encompasses Public Safety, LGBTQ Youth, the Built Environment, and Public Understanding. As part of the plan, SOCR'S Gender Justice Project was directed to carry out a variety of projects related to gender identity and sexual orientation.



EVENTS

RSJI National Speaker Series: *The World We Want NOW*

The RSJI Speaker Series welcomed the community to three different events in Fall 2015.

12 OCTOBER 2015

Indigenous People's Day

The City of Seattle celebrated the second annual Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 12 with an appearance by Winona LaDuke, Native American activist, environmentalist and author. Indigenous Peoples' Day recognizes that Seattle is built upon the homelands and villages of the Indigenous Peoples of this region and honors the many contributions that Native American communities have made to our community.



12 NOVEMBER 2015

Restorative Justice

On November 12 Seattle welcomed Fania Davis, co-founder and Executive Director of Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, to speak on restorative approaches that engage families, communities, and systems to end violence and incarceration.



12 DECEMBER 2015

Seattle Human Rights Day

This year's theme was "Black Lives Matter," and featured Kimberlé Crenshaw, critical race theory scholar and a professor at UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School.



29 JUNE 2015

Pride

SOCR coordinated the City's participation in the 2015 Pride Parade, which celebrated the U.S. Supreme Court's decision just days earlier that legalized same sex marriage across the country.

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Commission

More than 200 people packed into Seattle City Hall on July 22 for "Trans Homelessness: Stories & Statistics," a forum to address the needs of homeless or formerly homeless transgender people. SOCR Director Patricia Lally participated in the panel discussion for the event, which was sponsored by the Seattle LGBT Commission and several other organizations.

Unable to attend? Seattle Channel was there, [so you can watch the video for the event online](#).

Women's Commission

The Seattle Women's Commission added its support to the City of Seattle's proposal to provide four weeks of paid parental leave to City of Seattle employees. The City authorized the new benefit in May 2015.

Commission for People with disAbilities

The Seattle Commission for disAbilities was a proud sponsor of the 25th anniversary celebration of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Events included a public celebration at Westlake Park and a Lunch and Learn at City Hall.

Human Rights Commission

The Seattle Human Rights Commission was a key sponsor of 2015's Seattle Human Rights Day, which commemorates the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. As part of this annual event, the Commission selected the recipients of the 2015 Human Rights awards. Congratulations to this year's recipients:

Rising Human Rights Leaders:

[Youth Undoing Institutional Racism](#)

Organization Human Rights Leader:

[Books to Prisoners](#)

Individual Human Rights Leader:

[Mary Flowers](#)

Coalition Human Rights Leader:

[Rainier Beach Action Coalition](#)

Business Human Rights Leader:

[On Point Real Estate](#)

Artist Human Rights Leader:

[Nikkita Oliver](#)

Honorary Award:

[Africatown Innovation Center](#)

THANK YOU

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