



City of Seattle

# Human Rights Commission

2011-2012 Work Plan

# SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



Established 1963

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

## About the Seattle Human Rights Commission

- Founded in 1963 to protect and advocate for the human rights and equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle.
- Advises the Mayor, City Council, Office for Civil Rights and other City departments on human rights and discrimination.
- Consists of 15 Commissioners and 1 Get Engaged Commissioner, who are nominated by the Mayor or City Council then confirmed by the City Council.
- Staffed by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights.
- Hears citizen appeals of decisions made by the Office for Civil Rights. Commissioners are trained by City attorneys and investigators.
- Meets on a monthly basis at City Hall. All meetings are open to the public.

## 2011-2012 Commissioners

Chris Stearns, **Chair**

Damien Carter, M.D., **Vice-Chair**

Joshuah Marshall, **Secretary**

Merri Ann Osborne

Roslyn Solomon

Jesse Aspuria

Mica Powers

Jessica Andrade

Jennifer Yogi

Martin Penner

Nika Dahlbacka

Marsha Mavunkel

Mariah Ortiz

Michael Plengrat

Greg Ramirez

Andrea Negrete, *Get Engaged Commissioner*

Felicia Yearwood-Murrell, *staff*

Carlton Lieu, *staff attorney*

## What Are Human Rights?

Human rights are those fundamental rights which are necessary for all people to enjoy if the inherent dignity and value of each human being is to be respected. We all have human rights and we all have responsibilities to respect the human rights of others.

When we hear, “I have got my rights,” we usually think of those civil and political rights defined in the U.S. Bill of Rights, which includes freedom of assembly, freedom of worship, and the right to a fair trial. What we may not realize, however, is that social, economic, and cultural rights such as health care, housing, or a living wage, are also human rights guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Human rights laws can provide legal protection to people who have been treated unfairly and can set measurable and attainable standards for all of us to follow.

Our goal is to see that these responsibilities are understood and respected in practice, so that all people in Seattle can enjoy their human rights, everyday.

*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*

Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations 1948

## 2011-2012 Goals and Work Plan

### November 2011 – January 2012

1. Begin work on creation of Human Rights “Lens” similar to RSJI lens based on international human rights enumerated under:
  - Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
  - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); and
  - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966).
2. Research and draft history of Seattle Human Rights Commission, roster of past Chairs and Commissioners, and history of civil and human rights movement in Seattle.
3. Host Community Summit on Right to Food with Seattle University.
4. Release Police Accountability Report.
5. Brief City Council and Mayor on work plan and Commission goals.

**February 2012 – April 2012**

1. Brief Mayor and City Council on Human Rights Lens and progress to date.
2. Study and begin drafting City Council resolution supporting Seattle adoption of standards embodied in International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
3. Conduct Human Rights briefing to City Council.
4. Begin drafting Seattle City Vendor Code of Conduct with UW assistance.
5. Coordinate community-led effort to draft Criminal Records protection legislation.
6. Host two Community Summits
  - Hate Crimes Forum(with LGBT Commission)
  - Police accountability (Commission report)

**May 2012 – July 2012**

1. Begin work on Human Rights Toolkit for City adoption of human rights standards through ordinance, policies, resolutions, and intergovernmental agreements.
2. Propose to City Council resolutions supporting Seattle adoption of standards embodied in International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
3. Propose to City Council resolutions supporting adoption of Conventions on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Rights of the Child.
4. Present draft Criminal Records protection legislation to City Council. Continue work on proposal.
5. Host Community summit on Criminal Records legislation.
6. Propose Seattle City Vendor Code of Conduct (with UW) to Mayor and Council.
7. Continue work on Human Rights Lens.

**August 2012 – October 2012**

1. Develop Human Rights Toolkit for City adoption of human rights standards through ordinance, policies, resolutions, and intergovernmental agreements.
2. Propose City resolution supporting U.S. adoption of Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and Convention on the Rights of the Child.
3. Continue work on Human Rights Lens.
4. Host City summit on Human Rights Standards, City Resolutions, and proposed Human Rights Lens.
5. Continue work on Criminal Records legislation.

**OTHER POSSIBLE ISSUES**

- Homelessness
- Human Trafficking
- Labor Relations
- Religious Discrimination

