

**Seattle Human Rights Commission
2013 Work Plan**

Seattle Human Rights Commission's work plan for 2013 is centered in the implementation of the December 10, 2012 **City Council's Resolution declaring Seattle a human rights city** and adopting international human rights framework to accomplish the City's commitment to "protecting, respecting and fulfilling the full range of universal human rights, including civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights."

The Resolution provides an extraordinary opportunity to permeate the framework of international human rights principles to strengthen and improve the impact of laws and policies on local communities and gives the Commission an invaluable tool for designing its work plan.

SHRC will work with a solid international human rights framework, as set forth in all US endorsed international human rights declarations: the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (ADRDM) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Also SHRC will implement in its work all signed and ratified international human rights treaties and charter in the light of the obligations created for the United States by virtue of its Constitution. Ratified treaties are supreme law of the land. Those treaties are: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS Charter).

Further, the SHRC will bring to life in its work international treaties that although signed, are pending ratification by the Congress. Those are the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the American Convention on Human Rights (American Convention). These treaties bring an obligation for the US not to contravene their object and purpose, and as the Commission supports federal ratification that will bring better protection to vulnerable populations, we will work toward local full implementation.

The SHRC's 2013 work plan description is framed within its mandate and will include the international human rights lens mentioned above, when appropriate, in the analysis of the topics and issues that requires the Commission's involvement.

1. City Advice and Recommendations

- a. **Bring international Human Rights Home:** as a continuation of the work started with the City Council's Resolution we will work toward local adoption and implementation of human rights treaties
- b. **Implement Human Rights Standards in city measures,** evaluating communities human rights impacts, such as those that are discussed within: City Center Initiative, Yesler Terrace Redevelopment, Police Accountability and reform, City Budget with human rights perspective, and the Amendment of the City's Vendor Code of Conduct, among others issues that could be brought before the Commission.
- c. **Propose policies with a human rights perspective:** seek protection against discrimination based on arrest and conviction records in employment and housing; ensure the right to housing and meet the need for emergency housing, consider environmental and human rights impacts in coal transportation.

d. **Promote changes to ordinance or charter, with a human rights perspective:** establish Indigenous Peoples' Day, **include Parental Status as a protected class in employment discrimination law**, institute representative voting for City Council.

2. Federal and State Advocacy

a. **Support State Legislation** that will have a direct impact on human rights: advocate for abolishment of the death penalty in Washington State, seek Compensation Law for Wrongfully Convicted People, ban the use of arms, seal juvenile records, among others that the Commission is considering or receives request for support.

b. **Support Federal Legislation** that will have a direct impact on human rights: Senate Version of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Integral Immigration Reform and provisional measures as granting Temporary Protected Status for Guatemala and Ratification of international treaties

3. Appeal panel for discrimination cases

a. Timely and effective appeals review

b. Creating tools for better decisions

4. Outreach and Education to offer the public opportunities to learn about universal human rights and how those rights affect their lives.

a. right to food forum

b. **SHRC 50th Anniversary Celebration**

c. Education activities high schools, city council

d. Human Rights Day Celebration

e. Human Rights Award-Native American Leader

f. Best Practices, other Human Rights Commissions in US

The SHRC work plan is vast and it is structured in a way that could preserve its flexibility as human rights concerns in the City of Seattle arise and need attention, as well as could establish short, medium and long term goals that will be evaluated in its annual report.