



Seattle Human Rights Commission

2026 Work Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seattle Human Rights Commission (HRC) was established in 1963 to advocate for justice and equal opportunity, to advise the City of Seattle on human rights issues, and to collaborate with public and private sectors to educate them on methods to prevent and eliminate discrimination city-wide.

The SHRC is organized into four (4) committees; Communications, Events, Appeals and Policy Review, and three (3) Task Forces; Housing and Unhoused, Criminal Legal System Reform and Human Trafficking. The SHRC 2026 Work Plan outlines the work of these committees and task forces to hold Appeals Hearings, consult with and make recommendations to the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) with regard to problems arising in the City which may result in discrimination, and human rights offenses. Together with other Commissions, the Office of Civil Rights, elected officials, advocacy groups and, most importantly, the people experiencing these violations, we aim to reduce discrimination, hear, and address community needs.

SHRC Priorities:

- Recruit for a full 21-seat commission
- Collaboration under a new leadership structure
- Timely completion of all appeal hearings (avg 2 per month)
- Launch new Policy Review Committee
- Engage with community and Seattle City Council
- Partner with other SOCR commissions on shared goals

SHRC Committees:

Appeals Committee: In collaboration with the City Attorney's office, the SHRC conducts appeals hearings to review potential acts of discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations within the city and to confirm proper investigation has been conducted by SOCR.

New Policy Review Committee: In order to consult with and make recommendations to SOCR on discrimination issues, the SHRC has launched a new Policy Review Committee. This Committee reviews City policies associated with issues most frequently challenged through discrimination appeal hearings and makes recommendations to the SOCR Director on policy and procedural revisions.

Communications Committee: The SHRC Communications Committee is responsible for extending our reach to engage with community by supporting the development and dissemination of SHRC press releases, outreach materials related to SHRC Events, community polls, SHRC website content and social media posts.

Events Committee: In addition to planning and implementing the annual Human Rights Day Event each year in December, the Events Committee assists in the planning of SHRC Task Force-led events in order to increase opportunities for community engagement and to align commission work with community priorities.

2026 list of Events

- May 9: Listening Session with community and electeds, Van Asselt Community Center
- June 27: Housing as a Human Right
- August 15: Arts for Human Rights
- October 3: Human Trafficking Taskforce event
- December 12: Human Rights Day

We are looking to increase Councilmember presence at our meetings and attendance at our events. SHRC looks forward to strengthening partnerships with City Council, the City Attorney's Office and with our sister commissions.

SHRC Task Forces:

Criminal Legal System Reform Task Force: The 2026 priorities for the Criminal Legal System Reform Task Force are the rights of immigrants and refugees. The Task Force plans quarterly meetings with partner organizations like CPC and OPA along with the CLS policy team. Specific issues of note are city camera surveillance and how that data is used, continued support of recent legislation related to the prohibition of face coverings by law enforcement, and national research of eviction trends resulting from ICE activity.

The Criminal Legal System Reform Task Force will hold a listening session event May 9th with community and electeds at the Van Asselt Community Center. Invitations to the event will be shared with councilmembers.

Housing and Homelessness Task Force: The 2026 focus for the Housing and Homelessness Task Force is to engage unhoused community members in discussion of the practice of Encampment sweeps. Regular community listening sessions will be planned for the months of May through November in various districts. The purpose is to better understand protocols and policies governing this practice.

The Housing and Homelessness Task Force will hold the Housing as a Human Right Event, June 27th. More to come on venue and time.

Human Trafficking Task Force: The 2026 focus for the Human Trafficking Task Force is on engagement and Impact. The Task Force will continue information and data gathering to compile and share relevant data, create partnerships with local organizations like WashACT, REST and Everstrong. The Human Trafficking Task Force plans to continue work with FIFA World Cup group seattlefwc26 to support Human and Labor Trafficking prevention during this global event.

The Human Trafficking Task Force will hold an Anti-Human Trafficking event, October 3rd. More to come on venue and time.