



CCHR, A Closer Look

January 2021

Happy New Year! We hope that you enjoyed the holidays and had a few days to relax and unwind. A new year brings excitement as we look forward in anticipation of great things to come. Speaking of great things to come, we are excited that President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice-President Elect Kamala Harris will be sworn in January 20th! We wish them well and look forward to working with the new administration to bring civil and human rights back to the forefront.

We are also encouraged that new vaccines to fight COVID-19 are beginning to be rolled out across the country, which will hopefully slow down the pandemic which has taken more than 350,000 American lives, and over 1.85 million worldwide.

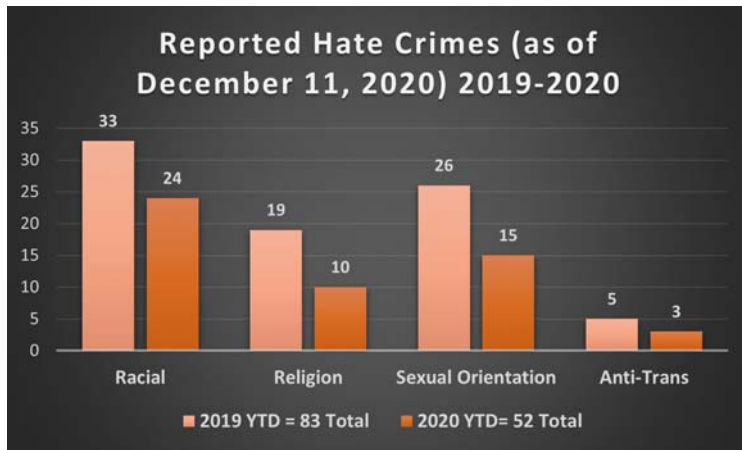
At the CCHR, we are taking this opportunity to reevaluate our work and look at ways to better serve the public. We will work on strengthening our community relationships and developing new ones. We are also making plans to offer more virtual workshops and webinars and looking at new ways to fight discrimination and hate crimes. None of this will be possible however, without you. So, thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement as we continue this important work. Have a happy and healthy New Year!

Ken Gunn
Acting Commissioner

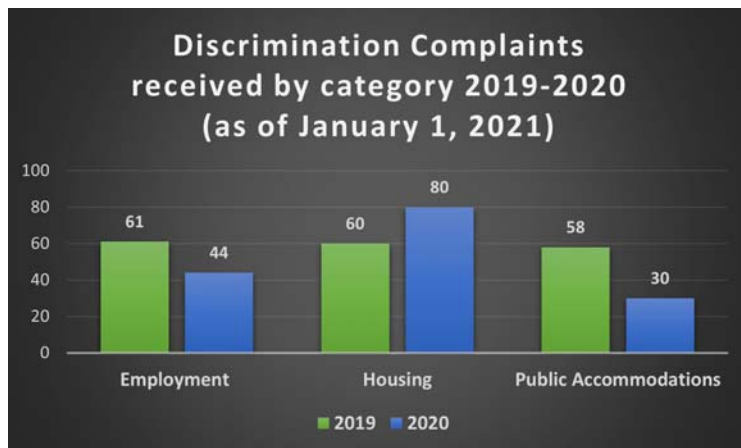
Reported Hate Crimes and Discrimination Complaints Impacted by Covid-19

Hate Crimes

Combatting hate crimes is a priority for the CCHR. Our Inter-Group Relations Unit (IGR) is responsible for this important area of the agency's work and uses a multi-faceted approach to advocate for victims of hate crimes. For 2020, reported hate



crimes were down 25% as compared to 2019. Considering this is the lowest number of reported hate crimes since 2011, one would have to believe the pandemic has been a factor. With the shelter in place order, schools being closed, and limited opportunities for public gatherings, the conditions and triggering events that can lead to hate crimes were greatly reduced. Similarly, while there were efforts by some to polarize the nation and increase racial tensions, we are proud that here in Chicago, multicultural voices came together to speak out against racism and discrimination, keeping hate-based violence at a minimum.



The number of complaints the CCHR receives annually may be dependent upon many factors, including the economy, social and political movements, the availability of housing, as well as access to public subsidies such as Housing Choice Vouchers. Even the weather can play a role in the number of complaints received by the CCHR, given that many complaints are filed in-person by individuals who come to the CCHR's office.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic clearly impacted the number of complaints received by the CCHR. The department received roughly 9% fewer total complaints of discrimination than it received in 2019. While fluctuations in overall number of complaints filed are not unusual from year to year, what is unusual is that in 2020, the number of complaints filed in each category varied markedly from the previous year. In 2020, there were more housing discrimination complaints filed than in 2019, while there were marked decreases in employment and public accommodations complaint filings. For information about filing a discrimination complaint with the CCHR call 312-744-4111.

Detention Center

Human Relations Specialist Jennifer Scott conducted nearly 40 virtual workshops with the Chicago Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. The workshops have been with boys and girls and have focused on Conflict Resolution, Anger Management and Personal Skill Building Peace Circles. To make the sessions even more interactive, participants were able to conduct art projects as part of the trainings.

The group discussions were a huge success! The staff and youth expressed how much they enjoyed the peace circles; even though they were facilitated through a television monitor. The young ladies especially liked the art projects, which they said gave them a sense of accomplishment after they mastered a specific technique. Some of their comments included, "this was cool," "this course was about life and how to live better," "I'm more peaceful, less... stressed out" and, "I'm happy." The program will continue in 2021.

Mayor Lightfoot Launches, Together We Heal Initiative



Together We Heal (TWH) launches a journey aimed at building racial healing across Chicago. The Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice is calling on every Chicagoan to do their part to foster racial healing, learning, and restoration in every neighborhood across our City. It seeks to promote civic unity by encouraging Chicagoans to connect across lines of difference and support a collective conversation about our truth and our promise as a City. Everyone is encouraged to join this citywide effort.

For more information, please visit: [TogetherWeHeal](https://www.togetherweheal.org)

Announcements

Director of Policy and Outreach, Kelly Suzanne Saulsberry will be leaving the CCHR in January to pursue other opportunities. Congratulations Kelly! We wish you all the best!



Kelly Suzanne Saulsberry

New Voices on the CCHR Board of Commissioners



Esther Nieves



Kim Fountain

The CCHR is happy to welcome representatives of the CCHR Advisory Council on Women and the CCHR Advisory Council on Equity to the CCHR Board of Commissioners!

Representing the Women's Council will be Kim Fountain, Chief Operating Officer for

the Center on Halsted, and representing the Equity Council will be one of its co-chairs, Ester Nieves, Independent Consultant.

Kim and Ester join Butch Trusty, Chair of the LGBT Council and Emanuel Johnson, Chair of the Veterans Council as advisory council representatives on the CCHR Board of Commissioners. Welcome Kim and Ester!

Board of Commissioners

Board Meetings:

January 14, 2021
February 11, 2021
March 11, 2021

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
via Zoom

*Meeting times are subject to change.
Please call (312) 744-4404 for more information.

[Join CCHR's Board Meeting](#)

Chicago Commission on Human Relations

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[CCHR Website](#)

Filing Complaints

Employment: (312) 744-4111

Housing: (312) 744-5879

Public Accommodation: (312) 744-5879

Credit: (312) 744-5879

Hate Crimes: (312) 744-4874



Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot

Commissioner Nancy C. Andrade



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