



# Commission on Human Rights

December 21, 2023

Press Contact: Claire Gross, [press@cchr.nyc.gov](mailto:press@cchr.nyc.gov), (212) 416-0250

## ***NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS 2023 ACTIONS TO COMBAT AND RESPOND TO ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION.***

*2023 Exemplifies Holistic Approach to Fighting for Equity and Tackling the Root Causes of Discrimination in Our City.*

**New York** – As 2023 comes to a close, the New York City Commission on Human Rights (“CCHR”) highlights campaigns, settlements, events, and initiatives that provided essential services to New Yorkers in the last 12 months. Through a coordinated effort that harnessed the power of community outreach, legal action, and multi-media engagement, CCHR made strides towards fostering a city where everyone can live, work, and thrive, free from discrimination.

“When New Yorkers come to CCHR, we know what’s at stake: a safe home, stable employment, and the freedom to enjoy all that our city has to offer. We do not take this responsibility lightly,” said **Commissioner and Chair of the New York City Commission on Human Rights, Annabel Palma**. “The protections afforded under the city’s Human Rights Law are not privileges, they are rights afforded to everyone in our great city. As I think back on this year, I am reinvigorated by the work we have accomplished and stand ready to face the challenges to come.”

Highlights of CCHR’s work during 2023 include:

**Ensuring Timely Solutions that House New Yorkers:** Housing New Yorkers and increasing housing opportunities are two of the Adams administration’s top priorities. Under the Adams administration, CCHR’s Source of Income Unit, which was launched in 2018, has expanded significantly. Now, at its most robust, the unit has successfully resolved 145 pre-complaint interventions to address source of income discrimination head on—four times the number of similar resolutions from the previous year.

**Crafting Settlements to Expand Housing Opportunities for Voucher Holders:** such as requiring housing providers to set aside a certain number of units specifically for voucher holders and/or [requiring brokerages to offer monetary bonuses to brokers who work with and place the highest number of tenants with public sources of income in homes](#). During this year, CCHR has secured

55 set aside units for voucher holders and worked with a housing provider to have all open units set aside for 18 months so that voucher holders have access to rental units.

**Spotlighting the Right to be Free From Discrimination in Housing :** In conjunction with city-wide efforts to increase access to safe, affordable housing for voucher holders, CCHR launched [“Vouchers Pay. Discrimination Doesn’t.”](#), a multilingual campaign that garnered an estimated 35 million impressions and 144 thousand visits to the CCHR’s website.

**Partnering with Academia and the Private Sector to Fight Discrimination:** [In September, CCHR launched a first-of-its-kind partnership with Fordham University’s Real Estate Institute.](#) The collaboration resulted in a continuing education course to stop illegal voucher discrimination. By taking CCHR’s class, realtors and brokers receive 1.5 credits towards the renewal of their license, which is required every two years.

**Combatting Sexual Harassment in the Workplace:** CCHR’s commitment to eliminating sexual harassment in New York City remained a focus of enforcement and education efforts. CCHR issued a post-trial [Decision & Order](#) involving persistent workplace harassment, and CCHR awarded \$250,000 in emotional distress damages to the complainant. [In November of 2023, CCHR announced a \\$330,000 settlement with Gucci America Inc., \(“Gucci”\) in a matter involving egregious sexual harassment.](#) Gucci also agreed to provide anti-sexual harassment training, to revise their gender-based harassment policy, and alter their reporting structure to deter future harms.

**Implementing New Human Rights Law Protections:** Mayor Adams signed two pieces of legislation that expanded the city’s Human Rights Law: [recognizing that domestic violence includes economic abuse](#) and [prohibiting height and weight discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations](#). As the agency responsible for preventing discrimination through education and outreach, each change led to new public facing resources and collaborations with stakeholders. To this end, CCHR launched [“Different Bodies Same Rights,”](#) an education campaign informing all stakeholders of their rights and responsibilities to ensure that New York City is a place where everyone can work, live, and thrive regardless of body size.

**Garnering National Recognition for Bias Prevention Training:** The White House’s national strategy to combat antisemitism highlighted CCHR’s unique training, [‘Understanding Jewish Experiences and Antisemitism’](#) as a valuable resource to address bias and discrimination faced by Jewish communities in the US and to foster unity. This workshop is often taught in conjunction with CCHR’s training, [‘Understanding Muslim Experiences and Combating Anti-Muslim Bias’](#) and is one of many workshops and trainings that CCHR offers to cultivate dignity, respect, and compliance with the city’s Human Rights Law.

**Cultivating Human Rights Leadership among New York City Students:** CCHR’s Youth Equity and Solidarity Council (“YES Council”), comprised of 15 students from high schools across New York City, meet regularly to discuss issues and develop tools to effect change. The week of Human

Rights Day, YES Council members presented at the UN to the Assistant Secretary General, staff at the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, and sibling agency leaders. The students spoke about what they see and experience as critical human rights issues in New York City and offered short- and long-term solutions. The more than 500 attendees included UN member state representatives and students from various New York City high schools. Themes of the event included systemic racism, mental health, equity in education, and homelessness.

**Forging New Paths to Engage Transparently with New Yorkers:** At the end of 2023, CCHR hosted the inaugural Human Rights Summit at the National Museum of the American Indian. Nearly 200 people attended, ranging from sibling agencies to City Council staff, community and faith-based organizations, and attorneys in public and private practice. The sessions were designed to educate New Yorkers about CCHR's enforcement process through case studies and to discuss prevention tools that CCHR employs. Attendees participated in CCHR's "Bystander Intervention Training" and then had the option to attend one of two CCHR-led trainings: "Reasonable Accommodations for People with Disabilities" and "Human Rights Law 101."

**Investing in Partnerships to Combat Bias and Hate:** CCHR launched a new collaboration with the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes ("OPHC") to award Community Project Grants that promote community respect, prevent hate violence, and seek to address hate crimes, bias-motivated incidents, and discrimination. CCHR and OPHC reviewed proposals and each awardee received up to \$5,000 per grant of OPHC funds. Participating organizations included The African International Collaborative Center, Liberation Drum Circles, Juneteenth Queens, Malikah, Strands for Trans, Art in the Park Inc., and Angry Asian Womxn among others. At the Human Rights Summit, CCHR and OPHC launched the 2024 application period.

**Protecting Aging New Yorkers from Discrimination:** CCHR is an active member of the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers ("CONY"), which is an inter-agency collaboration established to realize and institutionalize an age-inclusive New York City through structural, legislative, and systemic solutions. CCHR provided trainings on anti-age discrimination to older adults returning to the workforce in both English and Spanish, in addition to presenting trainings on bystander intervention. Over 250 older adults participated in these workshops.

###

The New York City Commission on Human Rights enforces the New York City Human Rights Law—one of the most comprehensive civil rights laws in the nation. The Law includes 27 protected classes in housing, employment, and public accommodations. If you have witnessed or experienced discrimination, contact the Commission at 212-416- 0197 or [www.nyc.gov/reportdiscrimination](http://www.nyc.gov/reportdiscrimination).