

Questions: Human Rights Task Force Meeting: January 23, 2007

1. Does the Board believe a Human Rights Advisory Committee is important? If so, why?
2. Should the mission and responsibilities of the Committee match the funding available to them? If budget cuts are necessary, should Lane County keep the door open for human rights?
3. Research shows that several similar programs across the country have a different name, i.e., human relations. This name allows for a broader focus in its work and to help create a distinct identity from the Eugene City Human Rights Program. Would the Board consider changing the name of LCHRAC to the Human Relations Advisory Committee?
4. The Human Rights Task Force feels strongly that rural representation needs to be a key component of the Human Rights program and that it is the rural needs that distinguish this program from the city program. Do you agree that this is important? How should the County involve representatives of our rural communities in the work of LCHRAC? Some alternatives that have been discussed are:
 - a. Each Commissioner appoints 1 member from their district to the Committee
 - b. Meetings are rotated throughout each district
 - c. The County provides transportation for committee members driving long distances to meetings
 - d. Use technology, such as email, conference calls, or teleconferencing to include members who live too far to attend meetings
 - e. Surveys
 - f. Liaisons
 - g. Each Committee member is assigned to focus on one rural community.
5. Should LCHRAC and/or LCHRAC staff have the responsibility to take human rights complaints? For three years this function was contracted out to Community Mediation Services (CMS) and has recently gone back to County staff, with the new Human Rights .5 FTE position. There are implications with committee members taking this responsibility including resources, liability and position requirements in order to accommodate this need. When there is a steady stream of complaints, it takes approximately .25 FTE to handle them. (Attached is a typical report from CMS.)
6. Should LCHRAC have the ability to advocate for individuals coming to them with human rights issues, and if so, what limitations, if any, should be in place?
7. Should the Committee be allowed to advocate for groups or broader issues? Should they have the authority to speak on behalf of LCHRAC, rather than the County, on non-financial, human rights matters only? For example, if a public official makes a discriminatory comment, should the committee be authorized to speak to that?

- Case 4 Open Date: Feb. 21, 2006 Close Date: Mar. 2, 2006
 Bias Type: Economic/Employment status (Claimant: male, father, Latino, unemployed)
 Complaint Type: Housing (independent)
 Incident Type: Utility (Electric) cut-off
 Location: Veneta (County)
 CMS Action: 2 phone conversations with claimant over one week; checked in with utility company; communication matters cleared up via shuttle
 Outcome: Matter resolved; discrimination not an apparent factor in incident
- Case 5 Open Date: April 3, 2006 Close Date: April 4, 2004
 Bias Type: Sexual Orientation (Claimant: male, HIV tenant)
 Complaint Type: Housing (TBA program)
 Incident Type: Unfair Eviction notice
 Location: Lane County (North River Rd. area outside Eugene limits)
 CMS Action: 2 phone conversations with claimant over 2 days; recognition that other agencies were involved; assurance that the discrimination would be logged and reported.
 Outcome: Claimant advised to move out by HIV Alliance and TBA housing case-workers
- Case 6 Open Date: April 4, 2006 Close Date: (still open)
 Bias Type: Disability – Mental (Claimant: male, representing his wife)
 Complaint Type: Housing
 Incident Type: medical plan changed with harms to spouse
 Location: Cottage Grove (County)
 CMS Action: 3 phone conversations with claimant over 3 weeks; claimant wants shuttle mediation; check-in call to accused party; party-2 open to possible mediation
 Outcome: Pending
- Case 7 Open Date: April 4, 2006 Close Date: (still open)
 Bias Type: Racism (Claimant: female, Latino)
 Complaint Type: Housing (Mobile Home Park)
 Incident Type: Denied housing
 Location: McKenzie Bridge (County)
 CMS Action: In-person intake on April 19 with claimant and 7 other tenants; forthcoming intake just with claimant on April 27; recommendation for claimant to report incident to OR Fair Housing; party-2 contact in conjunction with Salem housing agency.
 Outcome: Pending

NOTES on Case 7: The claimant involving racial discrimination was one of 7 other tenants, most being on disability, who lodged numerous complaints about the management of the same mobile home park. For some further details, see intro to paper, "Are Human Rights Cases Suitable for Mediation."

Referral Sources: ACLU (2), Lane Co. office, Spfd. City Managers Office (2), Eugene City HRC, HIV Alliance.

Case numbers for 2006, are now comparable to the average quarterly referrals in 2004.

Human Rights Program of Community Mediation Services for Lane County and Springfield complaints

Quarterly Report, April 2006

By Ted Lewis

Summary of First Quarter Cases (7)

County Cases: 5 Springfield Cases: 2
Discrimination Cases: 2 (#5, #7)
Hybrid Cases: 5 (where dispute elements are primary)

- Case 1 Open Date: Jan. 24, 2006 Close Date: Feb. 2, 2006
Bias Type: Disability – Mental (Claimant: male, homeless?)
Complaint Type: Law Enforcement/Security
Incident Type: Physically harmed
Location: Springfield
CMS Action: Phone conversation with claimant at Spfd. City office;
recommendation to re-contact CMS for follow-up assistance.
Outcome: Claimant never called CMS back; no other contact info.
- Case 2 Open Date: Jan. 19, 2006 Close Date: Mar. 8, 2006
Bias Type: Disability – Mental (Claimant: male, vet, on disability)
Complaint Type: Sheriff Dept./County Jail
Incident Type: treatment by staff; loss of safety, protection
Location: County Jail
CMS Action: 2 phone conversations; 1 in-person intake at CMS; claimant wanting
mediation dialogue to resolve grievances.
Outcome: Mediation at Jail on Feb. 28 with two sergeants; resolution: satisfactory to both
- Case 3 Open Date: Feb. 6, 2006 Close Date: Mar. 24, 2006
Bias Type: Medical Condition (Claimant: Female, diabetic)
Complaint Type: City Management/Law Enforcement
Incident Type: Forced Medical Treatment at accident site
Location: Springfield
CMS Action: 3 phone conversations with claimant over 2 weeks; checked in with
Springfield workers familiar with previous resolution processes; mediation not viable.
Outcome: Referral to possible attorney; pros and cons of litigation discussed