



# March 19, 2024: House General Subcommittee on General Government

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## Fiscal Year 2025

Executive Director: John E. Johnson, Jr., J.D.

Deputy Executive Director: Kimberly Woolridge, J.D.

Enforcement Director: Marcelina Trevino, M.S.W., J.D.

Budget and Management Services Director: Abdel Aly, C.P.A.

Legislative Liaison: Jerome Reide, J.D., Ph.D.



# MCRC Constitutional Authorization

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The mission of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission is enshrined in the Michigan Constitution: to investigate alleged discrimination and to secure the equal protection of civil rights. In 1964, Michigan became the first state in the nation to include civil rights protections in its constitution. Article 5, Section 29 calls on the Michigan Civil Rights Commission to “...investigate alleged discrimination against any person because of race, religion, color or national origin in the enjoyment of the civil rights guaranteed by law...”

# MCRC Appointments

MCRC Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate



Governor Gretchen Whitmer



Michigan Senate Floor



# Meet the Michigan Civil Rights Commission

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Gloria E. Lara (I), Grand Rapids  
Chair



David Worthams (R), Kalamazoo  
Vice-Chair



Luke R. Londo (I), Hazel Park  
Secretary



Portia L. Roberson - (D), Detroit  
Commissioner



Zenna Faraj Elhasan (D), Dearborn  
Commissioner



Richard Corriveau (D), Northville  
Commissioner



Regina Marie Gasco (I), Petoskey  
Commissioner



Rosann L. Barker (D), Detroit  
Commissioner



# Initiatives and Task Forces

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## Michigan Civil Rights Commission Priorities

Voting Rights, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Artificial Intelligence, (AI), Juvenile Justice

## Key Task Forces

- Michigan Poverty Task Force
- Member of the Interagency Migrant Services Committee
- Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES)
- Homeland Protection Board
- Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion
- Ethnic Intimidation Amendment Work Group

# Executive Director of MDCR



John. E. Johnson, Jr. is the Executive Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and a member Governor Whitmer's cabinet.

Director Johnson leads an agency that has 135 staff and is constitutionally mandated to enforce the state's civil rights laws (ELCRA and PWDORA) and prevent discrimination through community engagement, education, enforcement and equity.



# Some members of the MDCR staff

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The Michigan Department of Civil Rights was created in 1965 to support the work of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. MDCR's Executive Office is in Detroit and staff are also deployed in Lansing and Grand Rapids offices. UAW Local 6000 is the bargaining unit for 69 Enforcement Division staff.





# Department Responsibilities

MDCR is a civil rights law enforcement agency and is the operational arm of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. MDCR is responsible for the enforcement of Michigan's civil rights laws. MDCR services include:

- Enforcement: investigation of discrimination complaints under state and federal laws in partnership with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Education and Training: external trainings on discrimination, DEI, Intercultural Development Inventory Coaching, implicit bias, hate bias and more.
- Community Engagement including monthly Hate Bias Awareness Campaign and annual MI Response to Hate Conference
- Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT)
- Training, guidance and technical assistance relating to disability rights and compliance
- Contract Compliance
- Services to the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (DDBHH) community
- Administration of Michigan's Voluntary Service Animal Identification Program
- Annual Civil Rights Summit



# Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act

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The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA) and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act (PWDCRA) provide protection against and investigation of alleged discrimination in employment, education, housing, public accommodation, and public service. It is unlawful to discriminate against any person because of Religion, Race (including hair texture and protective hairstyles), Color, National Origin, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Expression, Disability, Age, Marital Status, Familial Status, Height\*, Weight\*, Arrest Record\*, and Genetic Information.

It is unlawful to retaliate against any person who exercises rights under either law.



# Offices, Structure, Revenue and Budget

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## Department Structure

Department of Civil Rights (Detroit, Lansing, & Grand Rapids & Marquette)

## Operational Structure

Executive Office, Enforcement, Public Affairs, DODDBHH, IT, and Museums

## Revenue and Budget

FY 2025 Recommended Budget \$32,320,500

\$29,352,400 **General Fund:** (1)

\$2,890,900 **Federal Revenue:** HUD (2) & EEOC (3 )

\$18,700 **Private Funds**

\$58,500 **State Restricted Indirect Funds**

<sup>1</sup> \$1.5 million for museums support.

<sup>2</sup> United State Department of Housing and Urban Development

<sup>3</sup> United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission



# Enforcement Budget

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The Governor's recommended FY25 budget contains of an additional \$5 million for Complaint Investigation and Enforcement (general fund) to reduce the backlog of discrimination cases and complete investigations in a timely manner.

Discrimination is protected against federal and state-protected classes (race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, genetic information, martial status, familial status, height, weight and arrest record.) Complainants may file discrimination claims based on employment, education, housing, public accommodations, public services and law enforcement.

This support will enable the department to deploy three additional teams statewide to investigate claims and builds upon the \$5.7 million ongoing investment made in the current 2024 fiscal year.



# Enforcement: Filing a complaint

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If allegations of unlawful discrimination fall under the laws MDCR enforces and occurs within 180 days of making the complaint, MDCR will prepare a certified complaint for the customer/claimant to sign, date, and return to MDCR.

Once MDCR receives a timely signed and dated certified complaint, it is placed on the docket and a copy is sent to the claimant and respondent, the person or organization the complaint is filed against. MDCR will then conduct an impartial investigation.





# What makes a meritorious complaint?

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MDCR is a law enforcement agency that investigates allegations of unlawful discrimination using legal elements that are based off of the Michigan Model of Jury Instructions. In addition, Investigative Report templates are used by staff to assist with investigating and evaluating complaints on a case-by-case basis, and all are fact specific.

An example of an element guide template for a disparate treatment case in employment:

1. Was the claimant a member of a protected class?
2. Was the claimant qualified for the position?
3. Was claimant subjected to an adverse action?
4. Were similarly situated persons of a different protected class treated more favorably than a claimant?
5. Did Respondent provide a legitimate non-discriminatory reason for its action?
6. Was Respondent's reason pretextual?



# Investigating Complaints of Discrimination

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## **In FY 2023, the MDCR Enforcement Division:**

- Closed 1,368 complaints of discrimination
- Secured \$395, 722.71 in settlements for claimants

## **Formal Complaints Filed by Area**

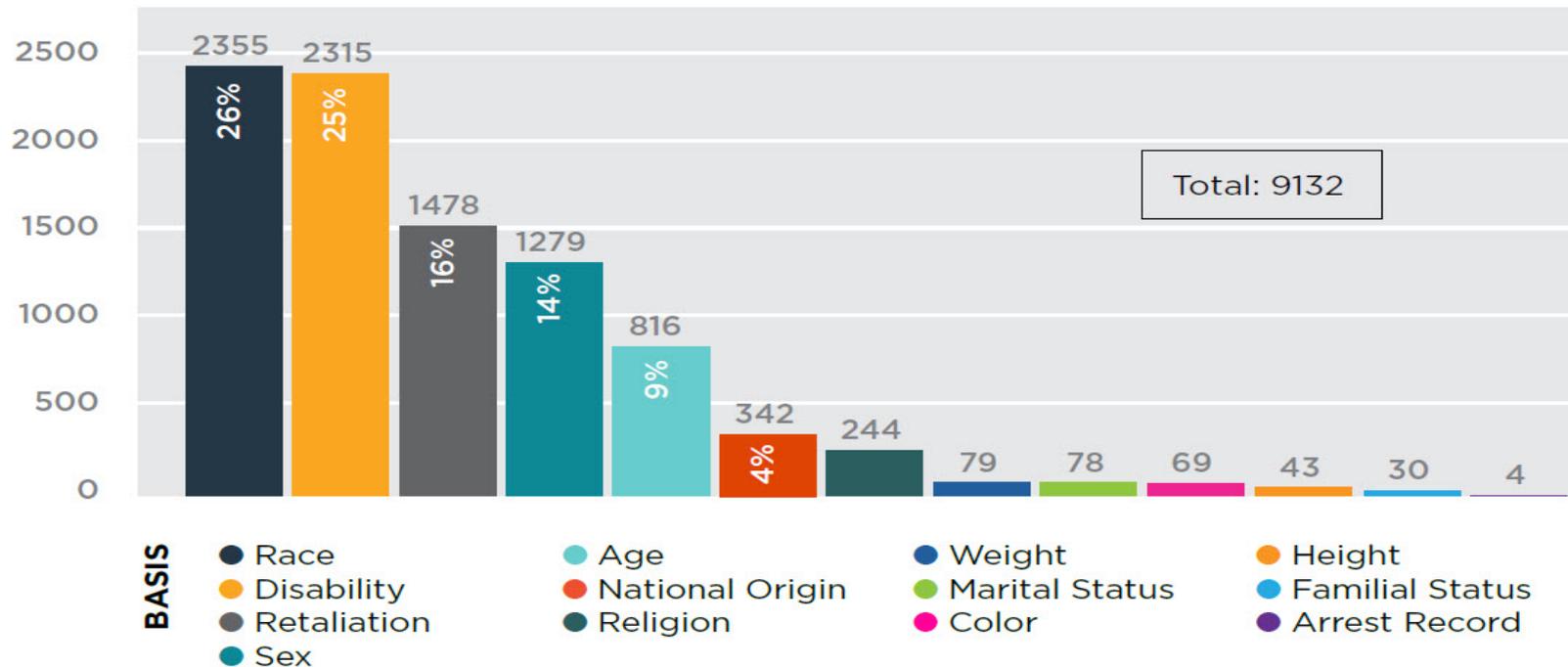
In Fiscal Year 2023, the majority of complaints MDCR received were in the areas of:

- Employment at 56.7%
- Public Service/Public Accommodation at 20.1%
- Housing at 13.8%
- Law Enforcement at 4.7%
- Education at 4.7%.

# Formal Complaints Filed by Basis

**Formal Complaints Filed By Basis**

Time Period From: 10/1/2022 to 9/29/2023



NOTE: 1. A complaint may have multiple issues with more than one basis; the above data may not reflect the total number of certified complaints for that period. 2. Cases may be opened and closed throughout the investigative process; results may vary when subsequently queried.



# Reporting and Metrics

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MDCR tracks its contacts utilizing the Civil Rights Information System (CRIS) database.

- Any contact that comes into the MDCR Intake Service Center is documented in CRIS.
- All Enforcement staff document the progress of complaints and investigations in CRIS.
- Forms and documents are generated through CRIS and allow for tracking of metrics, including but not limited to Summary of Complaints (SOC), Certified Complaints, Investigative Reports, etc., are drafted and finalized in CRIS.
- Working on a Public Facing Portal and Data Visualization tool from FY24 IT budget.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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Toll Free Number: 800-482-3604

Detroit Office: 313-456-3700

Lansing Office: 517-335-3165

Grand Rapids Office: 616-356-0380

Website: [www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr)



[\*\*Michigan.gov/mdcr\*\*](http://Michigan.gov/mdcr)