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Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2024  
Renée Battle-Brooks, Esq.  
Executive Director

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## WELCOME

During FY2024, the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights (OHR) welcomed new staff members to enhance the work of its mission. Andrea Lopez Herrera joined the team as a community development assistant in the Public Outreach and Engagement Division before transitioning to her current role as an investigator; Fernando Gomez joined the team as the compliance monitor with the Language Access Division; Tiana Davis took over as the community development assistant following Andrea's move into investigations; and Kyla Hanington took on the role of acting Clerk to the Commission when the previous Clerk left for another opportunity.

The administration and four divisions of the Office of Human Rights are:



Renée Battle-Brooks  
Executive Director



Jose Villegas  
Deputy Director and  
Investigation Division Manager



Felipe Urquilla  
Human Trafficking Division Manager



Henry Jimenez  
Language Access Compliance Program Division  
Manager



Kyla Hanington  
Public Outreach and  
Engagement Division Manager

The Office of Human Rights invites you to learn more in this annual report and by visiting [civilrights.mypgc.us](https://civilrights.mypgc.us).

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Dear Prince Georgians:

As I reflect back on Fiscal Year 2024, which ran from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, I am struck both by our collective division and by our collective beliefs and desires. The following report will show the work of our agency to bridge our divisions and to support the beliefs and dreams of all of our residents: to live freely, in harmony with each other, and free from discrimination.

On December 7, 2023, while driving to work, I listened to the radio and heard various stories about Pearl Harbor, the Republican Presidential debate, the shooting at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, the war in Israel and Gaza, and the testimony of three university Presidents before Congress on the increase in antisemitism on college campuses. I stopped at a Dunkin Donuts drive-thru (don't judge!) and as I waited, I reflected on the various news stories I had just heard. I thought about the times we are living in and what they mean to our democracy, pondered ways that we should take our responsibility of speaking out strongly against hate and hate speech in all forms, and wondered about the health of our nation and ideals.

When I arrived at the window to pay, the cashier explained that the car ahead of me had paid for my order because the car ahead of them had paid for their order. As I gave my credit card to pay for the car behind me, the young cashier beamed and I thought, "The person who paid for me knew nothing about me! They didn't know or care about my political perspective, my beliefs on any particular issue, my ethnicity, my education, or my faith. They were just kind to another human. This is so simple. All we have to do in this country, and in this world, is to treat others the way we want to be treated!"

What if today, this week, this month, and this year, we give ourselves the simple challenge of having "Dunkin Donuts Moments." I challenge you to join me in this. Let's start by treating each other the way we want to be treated. Let's start by being just a tiny bit more generous than we have to be. Just a little bit more gracious. Just a little bit more kind.

We don't have to agree with each other politically, theologically, or environmentally, but we can – and we should – treat each other kindly and with respect. We can – and we should – stand up against hate and hate speech. And how do we do that? By standing up in kindness.

Join me today after you finish reading this report. Join me in sharing a Dunkin Donuts Moment.

*Renée Battle-Brooks*



## MISSION, VISION, and VALUES

### MISSION

The Prince George's County Office of Human Rights is committed to the pursuit of justice for those harmed by discriminatory behavior, predatory acts, and denial of services through thorough investigations; a cohesive response to human trafficking through its Human Trafficking Division; enforcement of language access to equal government services for all; and robust education and outreach to build community and to reduce incidents of hate, bias, and violence.

### VISION

The Office of Human Rights champions a better tomorrow by embracing diverseness while pursuing justice for those harmed by civil and human rights violations.

### VALUES

The Prince George's County Office of Human Rights holds the following core values:

<b>Respect:</b>	We value everyone and treat people with dignity and professionalism.
<b>Compassion:</b>	We are kind and caring to everyone we encounter.
<b>Trustworthiness:</b>	We are thorough, skilled, and professional in all our efforts.
<b>Honesty:</b>	We are truthful and accountable in word and action.
<b>Family:</b>	We appreciate the connections we make and care about the wellbeing of each other and everyone we encounter.

## EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS

OHR is fortunate to have on its staff skilled, motivated, and creative professionals. Each member of OHR's team functions across divisions, bringing their help, ideas, and efforts to co-workers and thus improving OHR's service to the County and the region. For FY2024, some of our staff members shone particularly brightly and were recognized for their immense efforts on behalf of the Office of Human Rights and for the larger community as a whole.



*Renée Battle-Brooks with Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller*

Executive Director Renée Battle-Brooks received the 2024 Governor of Maryland's Virginia Mahoney Award. The award "recognizes an outstanding leader who has set the standard for excellence in the field of victim services (and recognizes) a prominent state leader or high-ranking official who has epitomized true leadership in support of victims' rights." Ms. Battle-Brooks was honored by Governor Wes Moore and Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller for her lifelong commitment to service, to combatting human trafficking including her work as Chair of the Human Trafficking Task Force, her leadership of the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights, and her tireless efforts towards increasing justice for and supporting victims of crime.



*Jose Villegas with Renée Battle-Brooks and Chief Administrative Officer Tara Jackson*

Jose Villegas wears many hats in the office, serving as both the Deputy Director and as the Manager of the Investigation Division. He supervises both the Investigative team and administrative personnel, fields questions from and provides support to all staff, encourages Office of Human Rights' team members, advises on legislation, manages the budget, and brings his extensive knowledge in civil and human rights and County Government work to all of his interaction, making him an invaluable member of not just the Office of Human Rights but of Prince George's County Government. During Public Services Week, Jose was recognized by the Office of the County Executive for his exceptional contributions.



The Language Access Compliance Division, comprised of Manager Henry Jimenez, compliance analyst Analucy Benavides, and compliance monitor Fernando Gómez, was recognized with a 2024 National Association of Counties (NACO) Achievement Award, honoring the division's extraordinary efforts to conceptualize, develop, and implement a language access strategy across County Government that meets both the legislation requirements, the needs of those seeking County Government services, and the training and support of County Government staff to ensure successful implementation of this extensive and needed program.

*Analucy Benavides, Renée Battle-Brooks, Henry Jimenez, and Fernando Gomez*



## LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

During the 2024 Maryland General Assembly, the Office of Human Rights supported, tracked, and followed statewide legislation that assists in furthering the mission of the office. The following list is of legislation upon which the Office of Human provided comment.

Bill #	Bill Name	Bill Description	Status
HB 0133/ SB 0448	Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland	Establishing the Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland; requiring the Commission to study the history of the African American soldiers who fought for the Union Army; requiring the Commission to make certain recommendations regarding the funding, design, construction, and location of an appropriate memorial dedicated to African American Civil War soldiers; and requiring the Commission to report its findings and recommendation to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2024.	Supported and provided comments
HB 0179	Indigenous Peoples' Day - Rule of Interpretation and Replacement of Columbus Day	Replacing references to Columbus Day in certain provisions of law with references to Indigenous Peoples' Day; and establishing that Indigenous Peoples' Day is to be observed on October 12 or, if the United States Congress designates another day for the observance of Columbus Day, the day designated by the United States Congress.	Supported and provided comments
HB 0148	Department of Transportation - Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response (See Someone, Save Someone Act)	Requiring the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement a certain training program for certain transportation-sector employees on the identification and reporting of human trafficking victims; requiring, by January 1, 2025, and each January 1 thereafter, employers to certify that all their employees have completed the training; requiring employers to provide a new employee with the required training within 90 days after the date of hire; requiring employers to establish certain reporting procedures; etc.	Supported and provided comments
SB0153	Maryland Department of Transportation - Child Exploitation and Human	Requiring the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement a certain training program for certain transportation-sector employees, taxicab drivers, and transportation network operators on the identification and reporting of suspected child	Supported and provided comments



	Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response	exploitation and human trafficking; requiring certain transportation-sector employers to establish procedures for reporting suspected child exploitation and human trafficking to certain entities; etc.	
HB 0508 / SB 0550	Children - Labor Trafficking	Altering the definition of "abuse" to include labor trafficking of a child by any individual for purposes of provisions of law governing children in need of assistance cases and child abuse and neglect reporting; expanding provisions of law relating to the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator Grant Program to apply to child victims of labor trafficking; and requiring the Department of Human Services to include labor trafficking in its annual report on child sex trafficking to the Governor and the General Assembly.	Enacted
HB0566	State and Local Government - Real Property - Confederate Naming Prohibited	Establishing the Commission on State and Local Government Real Property Bearing Confederate Names to develop and implement a framework to identify real property owned by the State or a political subdivision that bears a Confederate name; and requiring the Commission to make recommendations regarding the real property that should be renamed and report its findings to the Governor, the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City, the governing body of each county, and the General Assembly by October 1, 2031.	Supported and provided comments
HB0620	Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Human and Sex Trafficking	Requiring that a certain program on the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault include, for students in grades 6 through 8, material promoting the awareness and prevention of human and sex trafficking.	Supported and provided comments
HB0884 / SB0862	Public Health - Pregnancy - Coercion (Protecting Pregnant Women Against Coercive Abuse and Human Trafficking)	Prohibiting an individual from committing or threatening certain actions, including certain actions related to sex trafficking, with the intent of coercing a pregnant woman to have an abortion; providing that a pregnant minor is considered an emancipated minor for purposes of eligibility for public assistance if the minor is denied financial support from a parent or	Supported and provided comments

		guardian due to the minor's refusal to have an abortion; etc.	
HB0602	Employment Discrimination – Sexual Orientation	Altering certain provisions of law prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sex and gender identity to also prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.	Enacted
HB 1397	Human Relations - Discrimination - Protected Characteristics	Altering certain provisions of law prohibiting discrimination based on certain protected characteristics to include prohibitions on discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religious beliefs, marital status, and disability; and withdrawing and repealing Chapter 244 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2023.	Enacted

## COUNTY LEGISLATIVE IMPACTS ON OHR

During FY2024, the Office of Human Rights supported, tracked, and followed countywide legislation that assisted in furthering the mission of the office.

Bill #	Bill Name	Bill Description	Status
CB-097-2023	Returning Citizens Fair Chance to Housing	For the purpose of alleviating housing discrimination suffered by returning citizens and those with criminal convictions is their quest for adequate and suitable housing by prohibiting landlords from making inquiries into a prospective tenant's criminal history.	Enacted
CB-075-2023	The Real Estate Appraisal Bias Ban of 2023	For the purpose of clarifying that there is a ban on real estate appraisal bias in Prince George's County and directing the Office of Human Rights to publicize its enforcement of the ban on real estate appraisal bias in Prince George's County.	Enacted

## INVESTIGATION DIVISION

The Investigation Division conducts investigations into complaints of civil rights violations in the areas of Employment, Housing and Residential Real Estate, Public Accommodations, Education, Law Enforcement, and Commercial Real Estate, for nineteen protected classes. In addition, the Division investigates “Ban the Box” violations, a law prohibiting inquiry into the criminal history of an employment candidate before the conclusion of the first interview. Certain employers and categories of jobs are excluded from this law.

When filing a complaint of discrimination, three requirements must be met:

- 1) the incident of discrimination occurred within Prince George’s County;
- 2) the person seeking to file the complaint is the aggrieved party; and
- 3) the last discriminatory action(s) occurred within required time frame as stated below

The filing time for a complaint of employment discrimination is 300 days from the last discriminatory action(s). Any complaint in which the employer has over 15 employees is dually filed with the Office of Human Rights’ partner, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), under a work share agreement, and the OHR conducts the investigation of those complaints. Similarly, complaints filed directly with the EEOC are dually filed with the OHR. The EEOC conducts the investigation of those complaints directly filed with them unless the complaint is transferred to the OHR. Employment harassment complaints must be filed within two years of the last discriminatory action.

To file a complaint under the County Code, Division 12, Housing and Residential Real Estate Subdivision, a housing complaint must be filed no later than one year after the date of the last discriminatory action. Any complaints in the areas of Public Accommodations, Education, Law Enforcement, and Commercial Real Estate must be filed within 180 days from the last discriminatory action.

The Division also investigates violations under the Displaced Service Employee Protection Act. This law protects service employees from being displaced if a new contract is awarded to a different company. A complaint under the [Displaced Service Employee Protection Act](#) must be filed within one year of the alleged violation.

### **FY2024 Update**

Over the last year, the Investigation Division continued work to fulfill its mission of investigating and enforcing anti-discrimination statutes, both local and federal.

The Investigation Division lost one of its six investigators due to a resignation. The Investigation Division thanks former Investigator F. Mahmood for her five years of service with the agency and for protecting the civil rights of all County residents and visitors. Fortunately, the Investigation Division went on to hire and welcome its new investigator, A. Lopez-Herrera.

In FY2024, the Investigation Division saw an increase in cases filed under the County’s anti-discrimination statute in the area of housing and residential real estate. This increase occurred because of a housing education campaign to inform County residents of changes made to the Housing and Residential Real Estate subdivision under the Prince George’s County Code, [Division 12](#).

In addition to enforcing the previously mentioned statutes, the Investigation Division’s authority was expanded in FY2024 when the County enacted [Subdivision 1A. Returning Citizens Fair Chance to Housing Act](#). This new law allows returning citizens and those with convictions the ability to search for adequate housing without being subjected to discrimination based on their criminal records. The County also enacted the Real Estate Appraisal Bias Ban of 2023 Act, which made clear that appraisal bias/discrimination is a real estate transaction a prohibition covered by the County’s anti-discrimination statute.

The following table shows the number of investigation intake appointments scheduled and held, resulting in 52 cases in the areas of housing and residential real estate, public accommodation, and employment. Through its partnership with the EEOC, the Division accepted 88 transferred cases from the EEOC. The Investigation Division completed investigation of 102 cases, leading to 12 probable case findings.

### **FY2024 Investigation Division Statistics**

<b>Investigation Division</b>	
<b>Intakes Scheduled</b>	160
<b>Intakes Held</b>	141
<b>Cases Initiated</b>	52
<b>Housing and Residential Real Estate</b>	12
<b>Public Accommodation</b>	2
<b>Employment</b>	38
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	0
<b>Commercial Real Estate</b>	0
<b>Ban the Box</b>	0
<b>Displaced Service Employee</b>	0
<b>Cases Transferred from EEOC</b>	88
<b>Investigations Completed</b>	102
<b>No Cause Findings</b>	67
<b>Administrative Closures</b>	23
<b>Cause Findings</b>	12
<b>Conciliation Conferences</b>	10 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Successful Conciliations</b>	7
<b>Cases Certified for Public Hearing</b>	2 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Commission</b>	
<b>Public Hearings Conducted</b>	0 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Decisions Issued</b>	2 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Matters Appealed to the Circuit Court</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> During FY2024, OHR conducted ten conciliation conferences, and the two remaining conciliation conferences will be scheduled for FY2025.

<sup>2</sup> Two cases were certified for public hearings, and the public hearings will be conducted in FY2025.

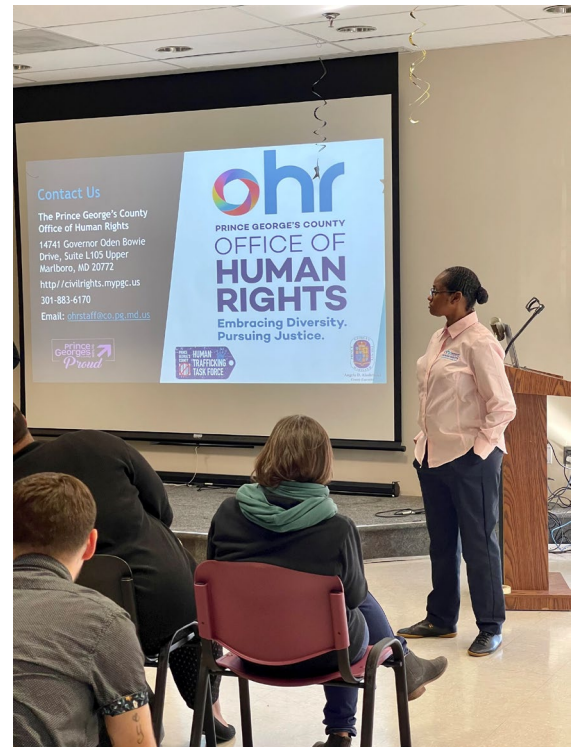
<sup>3</sup> During FY2024, the Human Rights Commission did not conduct a public hearing.

<sup>4</sup> During FY2024, the Human Rights Commission issued one decision from a public hearing held in FY2023 and issued a summary judgment order on a case prior to the scheduled public hearing.

In addition to protecting civil rights under the County’s anti-discrimination statute, the Investigation Division staff educated residents by participating in community events and conducting “Know Your Rights, Know Your Responsibilities” training for employers. The list below includes some of the events the Investigation Division staff attended in FY 2024:

- August 2023 – National Night Out: Cities of Hyattsville, Mount Rainier, Bowie, the Town of Upper Marlboro, and the Town of Berwyn Heights
- August 2023 – County Council District 3 Town Hall Riverdale
- April 2024 – County Council District 3 Town Hall and Resource event

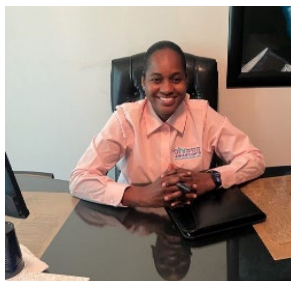
The Investigation Division staff conducted five “Know Your Rights and Know Your Responsibilities” trainings. These trainings were provided to companies upon request and included municipal employees, a Military and Veteran Services students group from the Prince George’s County Community College, and an organization with an apprenticeship program.



### Meet the Investigation Division Team



Jose Villegas is the Division Manager and has been with the Office of Human Rights for 20 years.



S. Leslie is a Senior Investigator and has been an investigator with the Office of Human Rights for 23 years.



Charles Floyd is a Senior Investigator with over 15 years of experience at the Office of Human Rights.



Langston Clay is an Investigator and has been with the Office of Human Rights since October 2015.



Caitlin Mohler is an Investigator and has been with the Office of Human Rights since October 2017.



Beau Giebels is an Investigator and has been with the Office of Human Rights since April 2023.



Andrea Lopez Herrera is an Investigator and has been with the Office of Human Rights since January 2024.





## HUMAN TRAFFICKING DIVISION

### Prince George's County Human Trafficking Task Force

The Prince George's County Human Trafficking Task Force (PGCHTTF) experienced a full revival in FY2024 with partners proving to be ready to work at full throttle after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Task Force accomplished rebuilding all six committees with Chairs and Co-Chairs as well as the development and enhancement of subcommittees for Victim Services and Public Outreach and Training. Strategies were revisited by each committee to continue furthering the goals of increasing the identification and recovery of victim-survivors, increasing the identification and the quality of prosecution of traffickers, and educating the community.



#### **Victim Services – Chair Jatnna Gomez, University of Maryland SAFE Center**

The Victim Services Committee focused its efforts on highlighting survivor voices in the advocacy for housing resources in the County. Engaging survivor voices led the committee to form a housing subcommittee that met monthly with a strategic plan to advocate, gather resources, and connect those interested in providing affordable, long-term, secure housing solutions to survivors of human trafficking. The housing subcommittee and the Victim Services Committee conducted a housing summit which gathered almost twenty stakeholders from the State and County, including nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, hospital representatives, independent landlords, faith community representatives, and housing advocates. During the summit, stakeholders heard from the experiences of four survivors who shared their unique stories, challenges, sources of support, and hopes for solutions in their journey to secure housing in Prince George's County. The summit culminated with a call to action from the Chair of the PGCHTTF to all in attendance, and their networks, to not only continue their efforts but to take what they learned and turn it into new, actionable efforts. This call to action led to a collaborative effort between the PGCHTTF, Continuum of Care, local shelters, and nonprofit organizations to apply for a grant to bring more emergency housing resources to the County. The efforts of the committee continued by working as a bridge to partnerships between new agencies and local housing resources.

#### **Legislative – Major Heather Bruha, USAF**

The Legislative Committee welcomed a new Chair to continue spearheading the legislative efforts that strengthen victim-survivor services, enhance the prosecution of traffickers, and educate the public on anti-sex trafficking. The committee focused on the infrastructure necessary to accomplish six goals:

- (i) to increase financial relief available to survivors of trafficking;
- (ii) to improve processes for identifying trafficking survivors;
- (iii) to develop a continuum of care for trafficking survivors including transitional and long-term housing, vocational training and job placement, and access to support services;
- (iv) to improve survivors' experiences in the court system;
- (v) to expand access to victim services to foreign nationals; and,
- (vi) to prevent and address the criminalization of trafficking survivors.

#### **Law Enforcement – Felipe Urquilla and Renée Battle-Brooks, Office of Human Rights**

The Law Enforcement Committee continued increasing engagement and partnerships with municipal, state, and federal law enforcement partners. Increased engagement led to the committee Chair and

Administrator joining efforts led by municipal law enforcement entities as well as additional outreach and speaking events involving the Public Outreach and Training Committee and the Victim Services Committee. The Victim Services Liaison continued to be an asset to the committee and information-sharing between law enforcement partners and victim-survivors. The increased communication between entities led to more collaborative efforts in identifying trends and patterns of human trafficking and traffickers.

**Public Outreach and Training – Detective Antonio Hill, Prince George’s County Police Department; Jamie Sokolis, University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center; Reverend Janelle Johnson**



The Public Outreach and Training Committee welcomed a new Co-Chair and started four subcommittees: hospitality, youth, healthcare, and general public/general services.

The Hospitality Committee met with key partners to develop a strategy for engaging lodging establishments in ensuring consistent compliance with [CB-80-2014](#) which mandates yearly certification in the completion of anti-human trafficking training.

The Youth Committee worked on processes to include the voice of youth in the anti-human trafficking efforts.

The Healthcare Committee worked on developing training for professionals who work with individuals that are impacted by sexually transmitted infections.

The General Public/General Services Committee worked on structuring outreach opportunities and a process to maintain a data base of up-to-date resources.

The Public Outreach and Training Committee engaged the community through partnerships with the Bowie Baysox Stadium and Northwest Stadium, formerly known as FedEx Field. Faith-based partners, law-enforcement agencies, non-government organizations, and local government agencies continued to be key partners in training and outreach events. The PGCHTTF began a training partnership with the Prince George’s County Police Department’s Training and Education Division, Officer In Charge Advanced Officer Training and was part of the weekly mandatory in-service training of all sworn officers.

**Labor Trafficking – Susan Esserman, University of Maryland SAFE Center**

The Labor Trafficking Committee seeks to promote a collaborative, multi-agency response to labor trafficking and labor exploitation in the County, by enhancing prevention, identification, investigation, and prosecution and by facilitating referrals and the provision of services to labor trafficking survivors.

In the wake of a New York Times investigative series bringing to light the prevalence of exploitative migrant child labor across the US, the Labor Trafficking Committee held a meeting focusing on the vulnerability to labor trafficking of unaccompanied children in Prince George's County. Representatives from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the Office on Trafficking in Persons from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services shared updates regarding the Biden-Harris Administration's approach to addressing ORR processes and the vulnerability and risk of unaccompanied children to trafficking. Their proposed changes included an expansion of post-release services for unaccompanied minors released to sponsors and stronger coordination among federal law enforcement and service providing agencies. Organizations working with the unaccompanied children shared concerns and raised questions.

The Labor Trafficking Committee also convened representatives of the Maryland Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission to get their broader thinking on establishments/sectors where there may be labor exploitation and how the committee might coordinate a response to circumstances of concern. The committee discussed potential risks for labor trafficking in tobacco stores in Prince George's County, challenges to identifying victims, and possible next steps.

Given the broader goal of increasing awareness about labor trafficking among vulnerable communities, the Labor Trafficking and Outreach Committees cohosted a meeting to begin development of a Know Your Rights training plan for at-risk workers. The discussion identified at-risk communities for focused outreach and potential outreach partner organizations within those communities. Those ideas included unions, schools, and faith-based community centers. The committee worked on implementing this outreach.



After many months of working on groundbreaking proposed legislation, on April 25, 2024, the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy committee of the Prince George's County Council heard testimony regarding legislation that would prohibit County contractors and subcontractors from engaging in sex and labor trafficking. Contractors and subcontractors found, after an investigation by the Office of Human Rights, to be involved in sex and labor trafficking could be subject to meaningful penalties, including debarment,

suspension, contract termination, and breach of contract damages. On July 2, 2024, the Prince George's County Council unanimously passed [CB-23-2024](#), making Prince George's County the first in the nation to take meaningful and concrete steps to combat human trafficking through its procurement laws.

The proposal that became initiated as legislation by County Executive Angela Alsobrooks was developed by the Prince George's County Human Trafficking Task Force Chair, Renée Battle-Brooks, in conjunction with the Labor Trafficking Committee Chair, the University of Maryland SAFE Center's Founder and

Executive Director Susan Esserman, and the pro bono support of the law firm Steptoe LLP's Associate Caitlin Conroy.

### **Data and Analytics – Sgt Brendan Gill, Prince George's County Police Department**

The Data and Analytics Committee (DAC) was established on August 2<sup>nd</sup> of this fiscal year to capture the prevalence of human trafficking (both sex and labor) within the County and surrounding jurisdictions. The Data and Analytics Committee collected raw, actionable data to analyze, evaluate, and disseminate human trafficking information to stakeholders for enhanced interagency and community-based anti-trafficking efforts. The collected data enables analysis and understanding of systemic benchmarks in the furtherance of eliminating human trafficking. This work is ever evolving and ongoing.

Several needs were identified through these efforts and became the committee goals for calendar year 2024 and are as follows:

1. Create, design, and implement a secured data collection, storage, access, and sharing system to, when allowed by local, state, and federal law:
  - capture the prevalence of human trafficking (both sexual and labor exploitation) within Prince George's County and surrounding jurisdictions;
  - explore the knowledge and training of human trafficking stakeholders; and
  - provide a data driven platform enabling analysis and understanding of systemic benchmarks in the furtherance of eliminating human trafficking.
2. Enable coordination of victim survivor centric services for government agency representatives, service providers, and private/public entities.
3. Determine the perceived needs of human trafficking victim-survivors;
  - target enforcement and identify/implement evidence-based investigative strategies.
4. Assist other Human Trafficking Task Force committees with data collection, storage, and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.
5. Identify legislative gaps to best accommodate victim-survivors protection needs.
6. Identify ways Artificial Intelligence (AI) could intersect with human trafficking:
  - perform trend and pattern analysis within AI advancement and prevalence within social media applications;
  - host information sessions discussing the dangers of AI within Human Trafficking;
  - generate and create a Standard Response Model for mitigating instances of AI involvement within human trafficking; and
  - assist legislative and enforcement efforts within AI related PGCHTTF investigations.

During FY2024, the DAC hosted multiple virtual webinars to educate, discuss, and provide guidance to state, national public safety and private sector institutions who encountered Generative Artificial Intelligence tools and learned how they intersect with sex and labor exploitation.

## Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2024 Actual
<b>Resources (Input)</b>	
Full-time staff	1
<b>Workload, Demand and Production (Output)</b>	
Total engagements, outreach, & training events	288
<b>Impact (Outcome)</b>	
Change in engagements and events from prior year	44%

## LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLIANCE PROGRAM DIVISION



# LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Ensuring County Government Services for All

The Language Access Compliance Program Division (LACP) ensures equitable access to County government services to all people in the language of their preference.

The Division provides central coordination and oversight of the County’s implementation of language access requirements, policy guidance, training, and technical support to covered entities, compliance monitoring, investigation and enforcement, and community outreach to the County’s limited-English proficient and non-English proficient residents.

LACP rolled out in three phases:

- Phase One: Fiscal Year 2021—Program development
- Phase Two: Fiscal Years 2021-2023—Implementation, education, training, and technical support
- Phase Three: Fiscal Year 2024—Enforcement



During FY2024, the Division continued the implementation phase to increase the number of County Government entities achieving and remaining in compliance with the County’s language access legislation. To accomplish this, LACP took the following steps:

1. Added 15 County entities to the Language Access Compliance Program for a total of 44 entities that received language access technical assistance;
2. Onboarded 11 Language Access Compliance Program coordinators appointed by entities new to the program;
3. Ensured 32 County government entities acquired telephonic interpretation capabilities;
4. Updated the Language Access Data Collection and Reporting System (LADCRS) in partnership with the Office of Information Technology, allowing County employees to upload bulk encounters and other relevant data;
5. Created two systems’ trainings on NeoGov, the platform Prince George’s County Government uses for human resources functions, including trainings, for its employees, for LACP coordinators and all government employees covering all of the LADCRS’ functions;
6. Trained 22 LACP coordinators on the use of the Language Access Data Collection and Reporting System by using the new Neogov training;
7. Conducted 6,955 trainings to County Government employees;



8. Conducted 26 site visits to deliver materials and provide language access technical support;
9. Received a total of 1,787 language access inquiries from County Government employees;

10. Informed the public about language access rights through a Language Access Compliance Program advertising campaign. The LACP designed three graphics which community members to know



their rights and to ask for proper assistance in the language of their preference when seeking government services; and,

11. Engaged in strategic outreach campaigns in Spanish and Mandarin, including with several local media outlets:

- messaging through El Tiempo Latino newspaper and its social media portals:
  - El Tiempo Latino newspaper messages provided 510,000 impressions;
  - El Tiempo Latino newsletter messages provided 291,512 opens;
  - El Tiempo Latino website’s digital impressions were 302,021, and 686 digital clicks;
  - El Tiempo Latino Facebook live message provided a reach of 27,112, impressions of 112,857, and views of 7,958; and
  - El Tiempo Latino Facebook posts provided a reach of 33,618, impressions of 130,264 and 39 clicks.



- messaging through Radio El zol:
  - El Zol Facebook post provided a reach of 60,480;
  - El Zol Facebook post impressions were 171,449; and
  - El Zol Facebook posts provided 1,235 clicks.



- messaging through Televisa Univision TV channel, streaming platforms, and social media:
  - Televisa Univision TV provided impressions of 35,559;
  - Televisa Univision Mobile streaming provided impressions of 3,797;
  - Televisa Univision Tablet streaming provided impressions of 564; and
  - Televisa Univision Desktop provided impressions of 356



- Messaging through The Washington Chinese Daily News



- The Washington Chinese Daily News provided a reach of 25,000 impressions



In January 2024, Fernando Castro joined the Division as the Language Access Compliance Monitor. He quickly became an integral part of the Office of Human Rights team, conducting multiple site visits ensuring county government entities were in compliance with the Language Access for Public Services Act and providing technical assistance, training and outreach to limited-English proficient (LEP) and Non-English Proficient (NEP) communities.

**Trump, el negociacionista climático en jefe**

El año pasado, EE.UU. se comprometió a reducir sus emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero un 30% para el 2030. Sin embargo, el presidente Trump anunció que se retiraría de este acuerdo y que buscaría negociar un nuevo pacto que sea más flexible y que permita a los países en desarrollo emitir más gases de efecto invernadero.

Una vez más, señalan que el calentamiento global causado por el hombre es un peligro y que el cambio climático es 'perforar perforas, perforas'.

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**Lotte 麗市維州首府Richmond分店隆重開幕**

EARLY STAGES 早期階段

您的孩子的发育是否步入正轨?

联系我们进行免费评估, 了解如何满足您孩子的需求。

(202) 696-8037  
earlystagesdc.org

適合 3 至 5 岁 儿童

The Office of Human Rights also partners with local non-profits who receive County funds. These organizations are also mandated to report data on language encounters and comply with the Language Access for Public Services Act 2017. For FY2024, these organizations reported a total of 117 language encounters.

## Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY2024
<b>Resources (Input)</b>	
LACP coordinators	44
<b>Workload, Demand and Production (Output)</b>	
Language access inquiries	1,787
Employees that completed language access compliance training	6,955
Entities that received LACP technical support	44
<b>Impact (Outcome)</b>	
Overall County entity compliance	76.25%



## PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT DIVISION

The Office of Human Rights recognizes that community building is one of the most effective ways to end discrimination and reduce incidents of hate, bias, and violence. The outreach program is tasked with developing and presenting programming that provides residents the opportunity to learn from each other, see their stories reflected, and build understanding across diverse peoples.



Tiana Davis

It was an exciting year for the Division as it welcomed new staff members. The Division was joined first by Andrea Lopez Herrera as the office's Community Development Assistant, and then, upon Lopez Herrera's transition into an investigator role, by Tiana Davis, who joined the Office of Human Rights in March 2024. The Division was enhanced by their contributions, as Andrea initiated the *Empowering the Game* series, highlighting social justice leaders in sports, and Tiana brought both internal organizational growth and external programming contributions, including developing the *Lunch and Learn* series that debuted at the end of the fiscal year. The Division continued its meaningful programming partnership with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System

and continued building partnerships with entities across the County, including Prince George's County Parks, Marietta House, Prince George's Community College, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, Mixt Food Hall, Joe's Movement Emporium, a variety of County municipalities and faith communities, and the University of Maryland.

Some of our event highlights from FY2024 include:

- Combining our summer Youth Leadership Academy with the library's Social Justice Camp for strong summer youth engagement opportunities;
- Participating in the Braver Angels conference on depolarization;
- Hosting Andrew Aydin, co-writer of Representative John Lewis's graphic novel series, *March*, for a special 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event;



- The debut of *Solidary Stories: A Community-Led Book Discussion* series in partnership with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System and Mixt Food Hall;



- Hosting country music stars Chapel Hart;
- A special International Day of Democracy event on *Supreme Court Decisions and Democracy*;
- Continuing the Rock Banned Book Club, which debuted in the last month of FY2023 and continued each month through the end of FY2024, with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System, inviting participants to consider if, how, and why freedom to access information is important to democracy and to human and civil rights;
- Premiering a new series, *Empowering the Game*, highlighting changemakers in sports. Guests included Prince Georgian and Olympic athlete Khoi Young, part of which was shared on NBC

jttncdcri Loved joining @pgcmls and @pgchumanrights last night to discuss Flamer! Our discussion really helped me absorb some of the spiritual inflections I hadn't picked up on as I read, and it was fun for us to explore how so much happened in what was just a week in the protagonist's life. We also dove into how a book that "will save lives" ended up one of the top ten most banned books in the country last year. And on a personal note, it was fun to contrast Aiden's experience of scout camp in the nineties with my own experience of choir camp.  
#rockbannedbookclub #queerlit

News, and a special *Lacrosse Edition* with Chloë Johnson, Alexis Joseph, Tari Kandemiri, and Patricia A. Thomas;



- Embarking on an extensive faith community outreach push, connecting with a variety of faith communities all over the County;



- Debuting *Social Justice in Community*, a partnership series with the University of Maryland through Dr. Kris Marsh and the Sociology Department and the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System;



- Hosting in-person interfaith events at faith communities in the County, including *Pilgrimage in Faith* at Greenbelt Community Church and *Finding Light in the Darkness* at Hyattsville Mennonite Church;



- Continuing to bring high profile, meaningful guests to the region, from the authors of the study *The Injustice of Place: Uncovering the Legacy of Poverty to America* to Jiaming Tang in conversation about his luminous *Cinema Love* to welcoming back Alabama Poet Laureate Ashley M. Jones and her co-editor Rebecca Gayle Howell and contributors to their anthology *What Things Cost: An Anthology for the People* to Ethel Morgan Smith on her Welty Prize-winning *Path to Grace: Reimagining the Civil Rights Movement* to Dr. Qamar-ul Huda on his *Reenvisioning Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution in Islam* to María Alejandra Barrios Vélez in conversation about her beautiful debut, *The Waves Take You Home*; and
- Participating in a variety of in-person events throughout the County, from all of the staff of the Office of Human Rights participating in National Night Out at locations throughout the County to supporting Prince George’s County Pride.





We invite you to visit OHR's webpage at [civilrights.mypgc.us](https://civilrights.mypgc.us), which is updated regularly to show upcoming events, and where many of OHR's previously held virtual programming can be accessed on demand.

## Performance Measures

<u>Measure Name</u>	<u>FY2024 Actual</u>
<u>Resources (Input)</u>	
<u>Diversity engagement staff</u>	2
<u>Workload, Demand and Production (Output)</u>	
<u>Total engagements, education, and training events</u>	164
<u>Impact (Outcome)</u>	
<u>Change in engagements and events from prior year</u>	11.56%



## YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



FY2024 brought some exciting changes as the summer Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) amalgamated with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System for Social Justice Camp, in recognition of the



symmetrical work of those two programs. This weeklong camp, held in two locations around the County, provided young people the opportunity to engage in in-depth, hands-on learning on issues of social justice import. The YLA is grateful for the opportunity to partner with the library system for this immersive social justice experience for youth.

Following the success of the in-person summer session, after returning to virtual sessions in the Fall, the YLA partnered with Bladensburg Branch Library for a five-week immersive Spring session, during which participants learned about social justice innovators and heard from guest speakers, Reuters journalist and Indiana University's Media School faculty member Elaine Monaghan, who spoke on misinformation and



Office of Human Rights' Executive Director Renée Battle-Brooks, who provided a training on human trafficking awareness.

OHR, in partnership with the Department of Family Services' Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Division, debuted its Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) in September 2021. Originally designed for youth ages 12 to 22, and now targeting those ages 12 to 18, the YLA promotes peer-to-peer education on civil and human rights issues while developing civil and human rights social influencers who are passionate and knowledgeable. The YLA further seeks to develop youth-led ideas, programming, and execution across a wide range of areas.

Applications for the Youth Leadership Academy are taken on a rolling basis. All interested youth are invited to learn more and apply at [civilrights.mypgc.us](http://civilrights.mypgc.us).

## ADMINISTRATION

The Administration section of the Office of Human Rights consists of one person, Sandra Powell, who serves as the Assistant to the Executive Director, the Office Manager, where she manages all administrative functions, and is also responsible for fiscal matters. Ms. Powell is the first person with whom people interact when seeking information or when scheduling intake appointments to initiate discrimination complaints. Ms. Powell performs many other responsibilities for OHR, including:

- Office of Human Resources Management Liaison (training resources)
- Office of Information Technology coordinator
- Payroll
- the agency's Safety Risk Coordinator, and
- the Fiscal Coordinator.

She also serves as the agency vendor contract renewal processor and assists in the formation of the OHR's budget. In addition, Ms. Powell provides administrative support to each of our four divisions: Investigations, Human Trafficking, Language Access and Compliance Program, and Public Outreach and Engagement. The administrative function of the agency is instrumental in allowing the OHR to perform its mission for the residents of the County. We could not do it without her!



*Sandra Powell*

## IMMIGRANT SERVICES & LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE (ISLA) and AMICA CENTER



PROGRAM UPDATE | JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024

### ISLA LEGAL SERVICES

ISLA is part of the SAFE Network, a national network of jurisdictions committed to employing an innovative model of public-private partnerships to address the pressing needs of our immigrant community members.

#### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY



#### COMMUNITY IMPACT

**98 children**

of detained parents impacted

**10**

spouses or partners impacted

**52**

Prince George's County residents received direct legal representation.

**28**

Prince George's County residents represented on protection-based claims.



**7**

Employment Authorizations

**All 9**

Districts had residents supported by this program.

**49**

Intakes conducted, 23 of which were for residents detained outside of the region.

Average Residency  
in the United States  
**12 years**



Range of Residency in  
the United States  
**1-29 years**



[www.amicacenter.org](http://www.amicacenter.org)



@amicacenterfor  
immigrantrights



@amicacenter

The Amica Center, formerly operating under the name ISLA, receives a grant overseen by the Office of Human Rights, providing legal representation to County residents under threat of deportation. This and the following page reflect their highlights from FY2024.



PROGRAM UPDATE | JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024

## JULIO'S STORY

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Our client Julio (name changed) first came to the United States 20 years ago. Julio is the father of three children, all of whom live in Maryland and two of whom are U.S. citizens. Julio was forced to flee his home country, after suffering targeted persecution and severe violence from gangs due to his refusal to join their ranks, his religion, and his family ties. In the U.S., Julio continued to receive threats from the gangs, and is also a survivor of brutal attacks that took place both in and outside of ICE custody.

Amica Center attorneys represented Julio in his application for fear-based protection, which the immigration judge granted in November 2023. Though the government appealed, the Board of Immigration Appeals decided in Julio's favor and dismissed the appeal in May 2024. Throughout this time, Amica Center filed multiple release requests with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to secure Julio's release from detention, given that he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and has experienced safety and medical issues while detained. In ICE detention out of state, Julio recently survived a fall that nearly gave him a concussion and injured his foot.

Additionally, Amica Center filed a habeas petition on Julio's behalf, arguing against ICE's continued detention after he won relief months earlier. Julio was released from out of state detention the first week of August. His family in Prince George's County are thrilled to have him home and Julio looks forward to providing a home and financial support for his three children and partner by resuming work as an electrician.



[www.amicacenter.org](http://www.amicacenter.org)



@amicacenterfor  
immigrantrights



@[amicacenter](https://www.instagram.com/amicacenter)

## HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

### Letter from the Commission Chair



Dear Residents of Prince George's County,

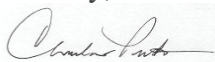
The Prince George's County Human Rights Commission is committed to its mission of adjudicating discrimination complaints filed under the Prince George's County Code, Division 12. The protected bases covered by Division 12 are: race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, occupation, marital status, political opinion, personal appearance, sexual orientation, disability, familial status, or gender identity. In an adjudicatory capacity, the Commission works independently from the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights to determine whether unlawful discriminatory practices on these protected bases has occurred within the county in the areas of housing and residential real estate, employment, law enforcement, education, public accommodations and commercial real estate. When unlawful discrimination is found, the Commission awards relief to complainants and imposes a civil penalty on a respondent, where appropriate.

This fiscal year 2023-2024, eleven Commissioners appointed by the Prince George's County Executive and confirmed by the Prince George's County Council volunteered their time and professional expertise to decide appeals from letters of determination from the Office of Human Rights; decide motions and other matters proffered by parties in cases pending before the Commission; and conduct administrative hearings and issue opinion and orders in cases pending before the Commission. Commissioners brought diverse professional backgrounds to adjudicate matters in an expeditious, fair, and impartial manner in service to all parties and witnesses. The Commission continues to use a virtual platform to best serve parties, representatives, and witnesses during hearings and to meet obligations under the Open Meetings Act to provide the public access to monthly Commission meetings.

As Commissioners, we are proud of how we accomplish our mission in service to the residents of Prince George's County. We are exceptionally proud of our collaboration with the Office of Human Rights this fiscal year to submit changes and updates to the 2011 Rules of Procedures for Hearings Before the Prince George's County Human Rights Commission to the County Executive. We consider ourselves very fortunate to have the services of The Law Offices of Gabriel J. Christian and Associates, LLC (Commission Counsel) and the training and administrative support procured by the Office of Human Rights to enhance the Commissioner experience and that of the parties before us.

As the Commission forges ahead, we want every county resident to be "Prince George's Proud" of how we execute our mission. We are intentional about executing our mission with a sincere commitment to providing every litigant before us the opportunity to be heard with the utmost respect and to render a legally sound, fair, and impartial decision on their claims. I am supported in this commitment by current Commissioners: Vice Chair Joseph Reed, Secretary Keith Adams, Traci Birkhead, Roslyn Brown, Turkessa Brown, Brindisi Chan, Regina Truesdale, Sylvia Johnson and Ademola Oduyebo.

Sincerely,



Charlene Proctor, Esq.

## Who We Are and What We Do:

The Commissioners of the Prince George's County Human Rights Commission, appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by Prince George's County Council, serve County residents as members of a quasi-judicial body. They adjudicate cases of discrimination that go to public hearing, rule on appeals of the Executive Director's findings, and consider issues of discrimination in Prince George's County.

The Human Rights Commissioners are a talented and dedicated group of volunteers who represented the diversity of the community and who relished the opportunity to serve the cause of human rights in Prince George's County. Serving as Human Rights Commissioners during FY2024 were:



**Charlene Proctor, Esq., Chair**

Chair Proctor was appointed to the Commission in 2019, elected Vice-Chair in 2020, and appointed Chair in July 2021.



**Joseph S. Reed, Vice-Chair**

Vice-Chair Reed was appointed to the Commission in 2019 and served as Secretary from 2019 to 2020. He was elected Vice-Chair in 2022.



**Keith Adams, Secretary**

Commissioner Adams was appointed to the Commission in 2022 and was elected as Secretary in August, 2023.



**Roslyn Brown**  
Commissioner Brown was appointed to the Commission in 2022



**Turkessa L. Brown**  
Commissioner Brown was appointed to the Commission in 2023.



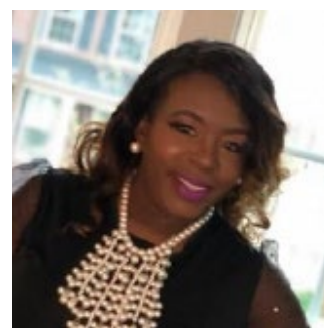
**Brindisi Chan**  
Commissioner Chan was appointed to the Commission in 2022.



**Regina C. Gilmore**  
Commissioner Gilmore was appointed to the Commission in 2023.



**Dr. Traci Birkhead**  
Commissioner Birkhead was appointed to the Commission in 2022.



**Wendi Howard**  
Commissioner Howard was appointed to the Commission in 2019 and resigned during FY2024.





**Daryl Jackson**

Commissioner Jackson was appointed to the Commission in 2023.

**Sylvia Johnson**

Commissioner Johnson was appointed to the Commission in 2019.



**Dr. Ademola Moses Oduyebo**

Commissioner Oduyebo was appointed to the Commission in 2019.

You can learn more about the Human Rights Commissioners by visiting our webpage at:

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/833/Commissioners>.



## CLERK TO THE COMMISSION

The Clerk to the Commission supports the Human Rights Commission with its business, from working closely with Commissioners and the Commission's council, receiving filings for public hearings, providing information to parties coming before the Commission for public hearings to preparing agendas, assisting the Commission's Secretary with minutes, compiling the necessary documents for Human Rights Commission meetings, drafting documents for the Commission, and being a conduit for information between the Commission and the public.

Kyla Hanington stepped in as Acting Clerk when Jacqueline Cochran, who served Clerk to the Commission since May 2022, left that role for another opportunity in April 2024.



*Executive Director Battle-Brooks, far right, participates in a panel discussion on incarceration, part of our Freedom Stories initiative with Joe's Movement Emporium, the Prince George's County Memorial Library System, and Prince George's Community College's Center for the Performing Arts*