

**Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission**  
**Quarterly Report**  
**January to March 2026**

**Discrimination Complaints**

- A. Pending from previous quarters
  - 1. Commissioner Bensberg's disability discrimination in employment case
    - a) Filed November 2025
    - b) Investigation in progress
- B. New cases
  - 1. Commissioner Williams's disability discrimination in employment case
    - a) Filed January 2026
    - b) Settlement reached and complainant withdrew in March 2026
  - 2. Commissioner Young's national origin and age discrimination in employment case
    - a) Filed January 2026
    - b) Complainant withdrew in March 2026
  - 3. Commissioner Jackson's race discrimination in public accommodations case
    - a) Filed March 2026
    - b) Investigation in progress

**Miscellaneous Inquiries**

- A. HAND made an internal request about referring a client to Indiana Legal Services. Provided contact information.
- B. A caller reported that her landlord had found out about her ESA and wanted to charge pet rent unless the caller submitted ESA paperwork. Provided information and explained the process of submitting a doctor's letter and accommodation request.
- C. An unhoused individual requested an appointment regarding police officers and City employees surveilling him. Unable to take complaints against City government and did not appear connected to discrimination. Referred to the After-Hours Ambassadors program.
- D. A woman wrote that a housing application had been denied due to a previous incident where she was the victim of domestic violence. Potentially a VAWA issue rather than a discrimination issue. Did not come in for an intake interview to discuss the situation. Referred to the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana.
- E. A transgender woman was terminated following customer complaints that appeared to be based on transphobia rather than her performance. Unable to take complaint due to conflict of interest; referred to EEOC, ICRC, and Indiana Legal Services.
- F. A man seeking to rent a space for an LGBTQ+ organization was turned down because the property owners did not want to accept any tenants that might attract vandalism. Unable to take the complaint because in Indiana, commercial property owners have significant rights to not rent their property, as commercial leasing is largely governed by the negotiated contract rather than statutory regulations.

- G. A woman called regarding an eviction not based on discrimination. Referred to Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana and the Stride Crisis Center.
- H. An individual wanted to file a complaint regarding unfair incarceration. Referred to the File a Complaint against a Judge form and the Indiana ombudsman.
- I. A Hispanic individual in Bloomington, Minnesota, shared complaints about race and sex discrimination. Referred to the Bloomington, Minnesota, Human Rights Commission.
- J. A woman presented several habitability and safety concerns that her landlord was not addressing. Referred to HAND.
- K. A woman shared a safety concern about bicycle storage pods that were being used for shelter rather than storage. She had contacted several City departments. No discrimination and referred her back to HAND.
- L. A man alleged race and age discrimination related to a May 2025 termination. Past our statute of limitations but remains within the EEOC statute of limitations; sent him the EEOC complaint form.
- M. A woman with a disability reported that the elevator in her complex had been broken for several months. Working with HAND to help speed up the repairs.
- N. An anonymous complaint was made about a broken elevator at a different apartment complex. Working with HAND to help speed up the repairs.
- O. A man reported that a maintenance worker had entered his apartment with a cell phone despite the man's request that he leave the cell phone outside. No evidence of discrimination; referred to a private lawyer.
- P. A man was experiencing problems at his job related to his disability and age. Offered a meeting. He said that he would talk to other resources and health care providers before deciding on his next steps.
- Q. A man reported that an IU office had called the police because of his disability-related behavior. Outside of our jurisdiction; referred to the IU Office of Institutional Equity.
- R. A woman with autism and other disabilities reported that her landlord was discriminating against her by denying accommodations and flexibility. Working with her to learn more.

### **Publicity**

- A. The Human Rights Commission published its monthly newsletter, Rights Stuff.
- B. Updated BMCHRC Facebook Page with relevant human rights stories and articles.
- C. Promoted and received submissions for the annual K-6 Arts and Essays Contest

### **Networking/Education**

- A. Shermis and Vosmeier attended monthly meetings for the Council for Community Accessibility (CCA).
- B. Shermis and Vosmeier attended monthly meetings for the CCA Accessibility Committee.
- C. Shermis attended monthly meetings for the CCA Transportation and Mobility Committee.
- D. Shermis attended meetings of the City's Digital Accessibility Workgroup.
- E. Shermis and Vosmeier attended monthly meetings for the Nonprofit Alliance's Community Outreach Breakfast.

- F. Shermis attended monthly meetings for the Indiana Consortium of City and State Human Rights Agencies.
- G. Shermis attended monthly meetings for ADA Indiana.
- H. Shermis presented and Vosmeier attended a disability awareness workshop for the Parks and Rec Department on January 8, 2026.
- I. Shermis and Vosmeier attended the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Celebration on January 19, 2026.
- J. Shermis attended the ADA Coordinators Round Table on January 29, 2026.
- K. Shermis hosted the NPA's Meet the Media event on February 11, 2026.
- L. Shermis and Vosmeier attended the Black History Month Gala on February 28, 2026.
- M. Shermis and Vosmeier hosted a disability accessibility training for the Bloomington Township Trustee on March 4, 2026.
- N. Shermis attended trainings on "Travel and Tourism for All" (January 21, 2026), "Do I Need an Elevator?" (February 17, 2026), "Texas v. Kennedy (2026)" (February 25, 2026), and "Funding Accessibility" (March 25, 2026).

#### **ADA and Accessibility**

- A. Met with the Economic and Sustainable Development (ESD) Department about accessibility options for a proposed ESD program. The program was ultimately not funded.
- B. Referred City employees to the internal document accessibility helpdesk in response to questions.
- C. Attended a Parks and Rec planning meeting for a future accessible playground project.
- D. Continued to assist an individual with an ongoing accommodation request made to her landlord.
- E. Connected a City staff member with local organizations with expertise in assistive listening devices in response to a question about purchasing them.
- F. Referred an insurance provider to Indianapolis Snow Buddies in response to a question about snow removal in Marion County.
- G. A representative from an external company asked about accessibility requirements for a public kiosk. Provided some technical and functional requirements.
- H. Provided information about Stone Belt, DSI, and CCA in response to a question about jobs, support services, and community inclusion for people in Bloomington with disabilities.
- I. Received an ADA complaint about violations on several City pedestrian corridors. Coordinating with Legal and other departments to respond to the concerns.
- J. A social worker with a hospice organization requested information about service or therapy dog programs. Referred to ICAN, Mad 4 My Dog, Love on a Leash, and Canine Companions.