

Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission
Quarterly Report
April to June 2026

Discrimination Complaints

- A. Pending from previous quarters
 - 1. Commissioner Bensberg's disability discrimination in employment case
 - a) Filed November 2025
 - b) No probable cause found in April 2026
 - 2. Commissioner Jackson's race discrimination in public accommodations case
 - a) Filed March 2026
 - b) No probable cause found in June 2026
- B. New cases
 - 1. Commissioner Coover's disability discrimination in public accommodations case
 - a) Filed May 2026
 - b) Probable cause found in June 2026; consent agreement out for signatures
 - 2. Commissioner Bensberg's national origin discrimination in public accommodations case
 - a) Filed June 2026
 - b) Investigation in progress

Miscellaneous Inquiries

- A. A woman visiting the Monroe County Jail in a professional capacity believed she was discriminated against because of her facial piercings and hairstyle and that she was not supported by her out-of-county employer afterward. Out of jurisdiction and conflict of interest; referred to the EEOC and the Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC).
- B. A man was arrested by Monroe County Sheriff's deputies last year. Out of jurisdiction and past statute of limitations; referred to ICRC and private counsel.
- C. A man reported that his property manager is harassing him and neglecting maintenance issues. Referred to HAND.
- D. A woman from another county was seeking an advocate for her many disability-related issues. Made several referrals.
- E. An unhoused man with mental health challenges reported a conspiracy among several local organizations to discriminate against him. He refused suggestions and did not leave contact information.
- F. A transgender IU student was featured on a university social media page and received many negative and transphobic comments. Her request to have comments limited was refused. Referred to resources at IU, including the IU Office of Civil Rights Compliance and the LGBTQ+ cultural center.
- G. An individual was evicted from their apartment. Unclear if discrimination occurred, but provided the individual with referrals to financial and housing assistance upon their request.
- H. A woman left a voicemail seeking an attorney recommendation; when we returned her call, she stated that an attorney had taken the case.

- I. A woman left a voicemail about needing to break her lease but did not return a call back.
- J. A woman reported that her landlord had asked a neighbor to harass her because of her disability. She did not follow up with further information.
- K. A woman with a disability reported a conflict with a neighbor. The property manager's involvement was not clear. She did not follow up with further information.
- L. An African-American woman alleged that her property manager racially profiled her by accusing her of illegal drug use. She did not follow up with further information.
- M. A woman in Indianapolis said that a nurse was discriminating against her and preventing her from receiving care. Referred to ICRC and Indiana Legal Services.
- N. A woman had previously filed a housing case with the BMCHRC and received a No Probable Cause finding. At that time, her property manager said that they were willing to provide better communication moving forward. However, they had not followed through as she wanted them to. There was no new claim of discrimination, and the BMCHRC cannot enforce a voluntary "willingness to communicate" after a No Probable Cause finding.
- O. An unhoused man with sex offender status reported a lost job and significant difficulty in finding support, which he attributed to discrimination. The issues were very complex, and we are unable to investigate discrimination based on sex offender status. Met with him and connected him with the After-Hours Ambassador program.
- P. A Black man believed that his apartment complex was discriminating against him after they put up signs forbidding skateboarding. Placed on hold while he decided whether he wanted to proceed.
- Q. A woman believed that a Monroe County judge was discriminating against her based on her disability and sex. Unable to investigate the local judicial system; referred to the Indiana complaint against a judicial officer.
- R. A transgender woman who had previously filed a complaint with the BMCHRC was seeking assistance with a gender marker change and with ongoing challenges with her property manager. Referred to the Indiana Legal Services LGBTQ+ Project but were unable to reinvestigate the same housing challenges, which were found to be unrelated to discrimination.

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. Displayed entries to the 2026 Arts/Essay Contest in the City Hall Atrium from April 1, 2026 to April 30, 2026.
- D. Awarded the annual Human Rights Award to Melanie Davis (individual) and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (organization), with an awards presentation scheduled for July 22nd at the City Council meeting. Issued press release.

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. On April 8, 2026, Shermis and Vosmeier attended the Middle Way House Spring Luncheon.
- I. On April 9, 2026, Shermis attended the MCCSC Transition Fair.
- J. On April 20, 2026, the BMCHRC hosted Dr. Ellen Wu, Former Member of the Indiana Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, for an informational presentation at the monthly commission meeting.
- K. On April 28, 2026, Shermis and Vosmeier attended the Be More Awards.
- L. On April 30, 2026, the BMCHRC hosted the Arts/Essay Contest Awards Ceremony.
- M. On May 6, 2026, Shermis and Vosmeier tabled at the 50+ Expo.
- N. Beginning on May 7, 2026, Shermis presented, and Vosmeier supported, four weekly sessions of the Nonprofit Alliance's Nonprofit Board Development Training.
- O. On May 26, 2026, Shermis and Vosmeier with the CCA hosted the Breaking Down the Barriers event.
- P. On June 12, 2026, Shermis and Vosmeier met with Daisy Dale, a representative of the Muncie Human Rights Commission, to answer her questions about past initiatives and the Municipal Equality Index.
- Q. Shermis attended trainings on "Connecting Corners" (April 2, 2026), "Planning and Zoning for Inclusive Design" (May 19, 2026), "Designing Streets for Everyone" (June 4, 2026), and "The Bumpy Path Ahead" (June 11, 2026).

ADA and Accessibility

- A. A food truck in a convenience store parking lot blocked the accessible curb ramp and accessible parking space. Sent a formal letter telling them to move it.
- B. A woman with a high-risk pregnancy wanted to request accommodations from the Monroe County Court. Directed to the Monroe County ADA Coordinator and presiding judge to request the accommodations.
- C. A 90-year-old woman experienced significant hardship when her property manager did not repair an elevator quickly. Worked with HAND and the property manager to find a solution.
- D. An individual with a wheelchair reported a significant number of problems with sidewalks and curb ramps in their neighborhood via a formal ADA complaint. Coordinated with other departments to respond to the complaint and follow up on each issue.
- E. An individual previously connected with the CCA requested assistance describing venue accessibility for a grant application.

- F. Met with the Fishers Advisory Committee on Disability to discuss Bloomington's programs.
- G. An older couple were disappointed to be turned away from a grandchild's golf event when the Cascades Golf Course did not permit them to reserve or rent a golf cart, which they needed due to a disability. Spoke to several people at Parks and Rec. The golf carts were not available on that day due to another event, but the Sports Services Director was able to find a solution for a future event.
- H. The Indiana Office of Court Services requested information about transportation services. Directed to BT Access.
- I. Parks and Rec requested input on an accessible playground structure that had been damaged and required expensive repairs. They were considering purchasing another accessible playground structure instead. Provided some feedback on the options.
- J. A City councilmember requested input from the CCA on accessibility on Kirkwood. Forwarded her request to CCA members and invited her to a CCA meeting.
- K. A man reported that his property manager was denying an accommodation. Directed him to make a formal request and report back on the property manager's response.
- L. A woman who is blind opposed the proposal to close Kirkwood to vehicle traffic. Spoke to her about the request for input from the councilmember. She provided direct feedback to councilmembers during public input.
- M. A woman experienced challenges with Ubers ordered by BT Access. Directed her to BT Access staff to respond.
- N. Habitat for Humanity requested information about the process for a client to add a curb ramp in front of her home. Spoke with Engineering about the process and referred the representative to them.