

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Director's Quarterly Report

January-March 2021

I. Discrimination complaints

- A. Pending from previous quarters
 - 1. Commissioner Williams' case
 - a. Case alleging discrimination in public accommodations on the basis of race filed in September, 2020
 - b. Complainant amended complaint in March, 2021, to allege discrimination in employment as well
 - c. Investigation pending
- B. New cases
 - 1. Commissioner McAlister's case
 - a. Case alleging discrimination in housing on the basis of disability filed in March, 2021
 - b. Landlord corrected problem (lack of grab bar in restroom) before receiving complaint
 - c. Case withdrawn by complainant in March, 2021
- C. Intake/discussions that have not yet led to formal complaint being filed
 - 1. Black woman, a walk-in appointment, said she had been discriminated against by former employer on basis of race. Has not yet followed up.
 - 2. Caller said she was facing disability discrimination in housing. She said her landlord keeps unfairly citing her for rules violations and told her she could not have people in her apartment for more than 30 days. Scheduled appointment but did not show.
- D. Complaints filed with another agency when BHRC did not have jurisdiction or had a conflict - none

II. Miscellaneous inquiries

- A. Email writer said he felt targeted when he and his husband received a personal letter advocating for a religion which he feels is hostile to the GLBT community. Asked how he could stop receiving such letters in the future. Suggested he write the

person who wrote him and asked to be taken off any mailing list.

- B. Caller, a Black man, said that he had been threatened with action by his landlord for being loud, for threatening another tenant and for skating in the hallway for an Instagram video. He said white tenants are also loud, that he didn't threaten anyone but did use the F word and that the skating did not go on very long. Landlord not subject to the jurisdiction of the BHRC; referred to the ICRC and/or Indiana Legal Services.
- C. Email writer complained that he lives in a block without sidewalks and has to walk in the street. Referred to Public Works. Sidewalk is under INDOT's jurisdiction; let email writer know.
- D. Caller, speaking very fast and crying, said her human rights were being violated because she was being held without consent by a health care provider after the police brought her there. She left a telephone number, but her speaking was so rushed, it was incomprehensible.
- E. Email writer urged the BHRC "to ensure that anyone can talk to any professional about any condition they have and make decisions free of political, illegal or ideological manipulation."
- F. Private attorney representing a local government asked for copies of BHRC materials. Provided.
- G. Caller said her bank accounts had been hacked and the car she lived in had been stolen. She said she reported this to law enforcement. She said police know where one of her cars is but have not retrieved it. She said her father-in-law had stolen items from her. Explained these issues are not within our jurisdiction and referred her to Indiana Legal Services and law enforcement.
- H. Caller said she had been fired by an employer in Southern Indiana for laying her hands on another employee, which she denied having done. She said the employer never liked her and had told her before that he would fire her if she were a temp. She had called EEOC, and EEOC referred her to BHRC. Explained employer not within BHRC's jurisdiction; explained Indiana is an

employment-at-will state; referred to ICRC.

- I. Caller, who works for an employer outside the county, said he had been unfairly accused of talking inappropriately with women at a place of public accommodation. His employer has put conditions on his return to work relating to these unfair and unfounded accusations. Employer not within the jurisdiction of the BHRC; referred to employer's HR department and to ICRC.
- J. Caller said he had been fired, allegedly because he had violated HIIPA, but he said the real reason was because he had complained about race discrimination by a coworker. Said he would email some documentation but has not yet done so.
- K. Email writer asked for recommendations for fair housing and fair employment training; gave recommendations.
- L. Caller said her husband had quit his job and had questions about whether he would be paid for remaining PTO. She said he had been asked to do tasks he was not physically able to do. We left a message explaining that the Indiana Department of Labor could answer PTO-related questions and suggested he call back if he has disability questions.
- M. Caller left message saying he was being evicted and that the landlord was not happy "about money," without further details. In turn, left message asking him to call us back if he feels he is being discriminated against on the basis of a protected classification, and referring him to a private lawyer, Indiana Legal Services or Student Legal Services.
- N. Email writer said she had been abused by her employer. She said her employer was upset with her for wanting to work fewer hours and falsely accused her of theft. No illegal discrimination apparent; referred to Wage and Hour Division of Indiana Department of Labor, as employer may have treated employee as a salaried employee when she was legally an hourly employee.
- O. Email writer said she felt her employer was discriminating against her on the basis of her sexual orientation. Sent her an email with intake questions; no response.

- P. Email writer said that Brown County had created a citizens' advisory commission on human rights and asked for information about all complaints BHRC had received that came from Brown County. Replied that we didn't have data on that; we typically would just refer the out of county resident to the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. Offered to help new commission out if we could.
- Q. Email writer asked if he had to provide an ASL interpreter for a zoom meeting where captioning is available; suggesting asking the person making the request for an ASL interpreter if captioning would work and if not, provide the interpreter.
- R. Business owner required to submit affirmative action plan had questions about best recruitment practices; discussed in general and gave advice.
- S. Caller said he had been denied internal transfers and let go. He said he was the only Black employee and they never considered his requests for more responsible or visible positions. Former employer not in city limits; referred to MCHRC.
- T. Caller left message saying she is being denied prenatal care. She said she is 46 and desperate and feels her rights are being violated. She said she believes in God. Left her a message in turn.
- U. Email writer had questions about age discrimination; answered.
- V. Caller, age 70, was upset that she could no longer sign up for the COVID-19 vaccine, since it was now available only to people age 40. Explained that it was now available to everyone 40 or older, including her, as well as to some people under 40; helped her sign up.
- W. Email writer said in early January that she felt landlord was discriminating against her on the basis of race and committing hate crimes. Repeatedly promised to submit photos and emails but never did and stopped responding. In late March, she wrote again, saying she was being evicted and landlord was using fake photos to show she had damaged her apartment. Referred to Indiana Legal Services.

- X. Caller left a voice mail message, saying he had applied for driver positions with us and asked if we had any openings. In turn, left him a voice mail message letting him know he had reached the wrong number.

III. **Publicity**

- A. Emailed monthly newsletter, Rights Stuff, to 100+ individuals and organizations
- B. DeCriscio Bowe regularly updated BHRC Facebook page

IV. **Networking/education**

- A. McKinney met with Bloomington United subcommittee to develop a web page to help associates of young people who are being recruited to white nationalism
- B. McKinney attended King celebration, a virtual celebration
- C. McKinney attended annual Women's History Month celebration, a virtual celebration
- D. McKinney attended webinar on ADA and full participation in all aspects of life
- E. McKinney attended webinar for ADA coordinators
- F. McKinney met with director of county HRC to discuss collaboration
- G. McKinney attended webinar on service animals
- H. McKinney attended webinar sponsored by Human Rights Campaign on the Municipal Equality Index
- I. McKinney attended webinar on discrimination against Asian Americans
- J. McKinney attended webinar on Supreme Court updates
- K. McKinney attended webinar on access to vaccines

L. McKinney attended webinar for ADA/Title 6 coordinators

V. Affirmative action/common wages/living wages/drug testing policies

A. McKinney reviewed and approved 71 affirmative action plans

B. McKinney found one plan to be unacceptable; successfully appealed to Contract Compliance Committee of the BHRC

C. McKinney followed up on Living Wage Ordinance compliance

D. DeCricsio Bowe reviewed contractors' wage payments for Davis Bacon compliance

E. McKinney reviewed one contractor's drug testing policy

VI. ADA issues

A. McKinney followed up on ADA parking concerns

B. McKinney attended CCA meeting