

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

**hrc** 

**HUMAN RELATIONS  
COMMISSION**

Embrace Diversity. End Discrimination.



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**Annual Report  
FY 2016**

**D. Michael Lyles, Esq., Executive Director**

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14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Suite L-105 Upper Marlboro, MD. 20772

T: 301.883.6170 F: 301.780.8244 E: [hrcstaff@co.pg.md.us](mailto:hrcstaff@co.pg.md.us) : [www.civilrights.mypgc.us](http://www.civilrights.mypgc.us)

# Executive Director's Summary



## Dear Citizens, Visitors and Friends of Prince George's County,

FY2016, which ended on June 30, 2016, was an eventful year. Staff remained resolved to turn around investigations with high quality and in a timely manner, despite suffering from unanticipated staff shortages. The year was highlighted by continued effort to maintain a focus on the Human Trafficking Task Force commitment undertaken by the Executive Director in 2013 and was the first year the agency saw complaints and questions from businesses involving the new Ban the Box legislation. While none of the Ban the Box cases made it to hearing, we did have help from the business community and citizens in trying to work through some of the initial fits and starts associated with complying with the new county ordinance.

The Commission also served a major role in supporting our professional association, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA), where I served as interim Treasurer 2014-2015, attempting to manage the financial aspects of the organization after the former treasurer resigned. We successfully transitioned that position by election to Commission Chair Merrill Smith. IAOHRA also held its annual conference in Birmingham, Alabama and took all attendees on a civil rights tour through the south as a way of instilling in the Civil Rights workers from across the country the historical significance of the efforts in which we are involved on a day to day basis. The half-day trip to Selma, Alabama and the Edmund Pettus Bridge to walk the path of those who were beaten on "Bloody Sunday" was a pointed reminder of why our work is still so vital. We are more energized than ever to do quality work for the citizens of Prince George's County.

As always, we appreciate the County Executive, and his management team, particularly Community Relations Director Musa Eubanks for entrusting us with the role of civil rights protector and allowing us the fiscal and managerial freedom to get the job done. We brought more cases to trial as a result and FY2017 will be a year of final commission decisions from hearings conducted in FY2016. Although our mediation staff has been beset by staff shortages, we anticipate using outside counsel to also assist the Commission in resolving more cases short of trial. We also anticipate hiring a new Paralegal and a new investigator shortly. We thank not only our senior investigators for holding down the fort, but also our newest investigators: Langston Clay, a 20 year veteran officer of the Metropolitan Police Department and V'Hesspa Glenn a Master's recipient from Bowie State University, for stepping up and hitting the ground running.

Our big task in FY17 will be to introduce new housing anti-discrimination legislation to enable our Commission to become a US Department of HUD partner in fighting housing discrimination under the Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP). In March we applied for a major grant from the Department of Justice to help with our anti-human trafficking



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efforts. Although we were not awarded the grant, we are more than ready to tackle the application and win the award next time. And finally, we thank the many volunteers, citizens and public officials who have heard about the great things we are doing at the Human Relations Commission and have seen the value of this “little agency with the big mission,” and have asked us to come out and speak with their communities about a variety of issues around diversity, inclusion, anti-discrimination and police community relations. We appreciate the support.

Sincerely,

Embrace Diversity and End Discrimination

*D. Michael Lyles*

D. Michael Lyles, Esquire  
Executive Director



## Letter from Commission Chairperson



Dear Citizens of Prince George's County,

FY2016 was yet another busy one for the Human Relations Commission. We, the entire Commission, look forward to continuing the important work that began some 35 years ago when the Commission was created. I am truly grateful to Vice-Chair Heath, Secretary Eidelman, Commissioner Jackson, Burson, Lowe, Howell, Folsom, Johnson and Langbehn for their commitment. I would also like to thank the Executive Director and his staff for their support in fulfilling the Commission's mission.

As the County's official Civil and Human Rights Agency, we are honored and fortunate to be nominated and confirmed to serve in what is one of our nation's most revered local civil rights investigatory and quasi-judicial bodies. That authority means that the County continues to support and remain committed to a county where each citizen is free to grow and prosper in an environment free of discrimination, bigotry and other unlawful practices.

With a constantly changing Human and Civil Rights landscape, we are consistently doing more outreach to individuals and groups in our diverse county. We have worked and will continue to work with our partners in law enforcement, the LGBTQ community, the Muslim community, the political community, those with disabilities, and many others in our commitment to create the best county in the land.

*We, the citizen, must remain mindful that each one of us, regardless of race, color, sex, economic status, ideology, national origin, disability, etc. are created equal and the sum of all of us is always better. We are blessed with life and while we are all here we should strive to leave it a better place than it was yesterday. We must always stand for justice, stand for human rights, stand for civil rights, and stand for love of each other.*

I encourage you to visit our webpage, (<http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/1528/Human-Relations>), on the county's website to learn more about the Commission. In closing, please feel free to contact the Commission if you have any question or concern through the website or by calling us at 301-883-6170.

Sincerely,

*Merrill Smith Jr.*



## Our Guiding Principles

### VISION

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION IS COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY: WHERE ALL ARE FREE TO PURSUE THEIR TALENTS AND DREAMS UNHINDERED BY BIAS, MISUNDERSTANDING AND CONFLICT BASED ON RACE, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, OCCUPATION, MARITAL STATUS, POLITICAL OPINION, PERSONAL APPEARANCE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITY, OR FAMILIAL STATUS.

### MISSION

IT SHALL BE THE MISSION OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, AS THE COUNTY'S CIVIL RIGHTS EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT AGENCY *TO*:

- Provide residents, businesses and visitors an efficient and cost effective administrative alternative for investigating, mediating and adjudicating complaints of unlawful discrimination in the areas of housing, employment, law enforcement, education, public accommodations and real estate transactions;
- Be professional, competent and fair to all those we serve;
- Value staff for their skill, dedication and creativity—in turn, the Commission will provide a positive work environment based on mutual respect and dignity, where personal and professional development is encouraged;
- Always seek ways to improve our systems and processes in the interest of producing more thorough investigations while resolving cases in a timely manner;
- Work to ensure that our services are equally accessible to those of various abilities and of limited English proficiency.

### CORE VALUES

**PUBLIC SERVICE:** We are committed to serving and educating the public in a professional, impartial and efficient manner. Quality investigations, alternative dispute resolution and adjudications will be accomplished by utilizing skilled and motivated employees who are responsive to the needs of those who interface with the Commission.

**DEDICATION:** We will demonstrate our commitment to public service by being responsible, dependable and proactive professionals who will exhibit pride and excellence in fulfilling our mission.

**TEAMWORK:** We will empower our employees to achieve a quality work product and harmonious work environment through open communication, positive interaction and the spirit of cooperation.

**RESPECT:** We respect the diversity, talents and ideas of all Commission Staff, our most valued resource. We honor the right of every member of our team and the public to contribute, to be heard and to be treated with dignity.

**INTEGRITY:** We pledge to fulfill our duties and responsibilities without bias and the aim of producing the right result in the public interest.

# Legislative Initiatives

## Division 12 Legislative Initiative

Since last fiscal year, the Human Relations Commission has continued to enforce equal opportunity laws under Division 12 of the Prince George's County Code. With the inclusion of the County's Ban the Box ordinance (CB-78-2014), as introduced by Councilmember Obie Patterson, the Commission continues to ensure that County residents with a negative criminal history are granted the opportunity to at least be interviewed and considered for a position before any inquiry is made into criminal system involvement.

The Commission is prepared to move forward with new housing legislation, the Prince George's County Fair Housing Act, which is intended to repeal and replace provisions related to discrimination in housing. Such provisions include, but are not limited to promoting equal access to housing, guaranteeing equal opportunity in the sale, rental, loaning and financing of housing, and prohibiting other discriminatory practices as related to housing and residential real estate. The enforcement of such legislation can award preventive relief, monetary damages, and civil penalties against the Respondent for violations under this Act.

During this Fiscal Year, the Commission has been recommended as a principal enforcer of Councilmember Deni Taveras' Landlord-Tenant Code—Drug Activity and Prostitution legislation. Under this proposed legislation, the Human Relations Commission would make available resources to property owners and landlords of rental properties as it relates to inquiries and/or complaints regarding prostitution and/or human trafficking. The Commission will also provide voluntary biannual certifications for apartment rentals identified by Sec. 13-162.00.03 (a).



- ▲ DIVISION 12
- ▲ HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES AND BAN THE BOX

## APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Q1) Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to a criminal offense?

- YES  
 NO  
 NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS



## Human Trafficking Initiatives and legislation

The Prince George's County Human Trafficking Task Force continues to combat human trafficking in Prince George's County. In October 2015, the Human Relations Commission and the Prince George's County Human Trafficking Task Force successfully hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual DMV Regional Task Forces Conference to bring together the local task forces in an effort to share information, resources, and plans of action as it relates to human trafficking in and around our area. The training prepared our local task force with the preparation of proposed legislation to enforce human trafficking signage requirements in adult entertainment establishments, hotels/motels, resorts, and massage parlors. We continue to train law enforcement, conduct community awareness sessions and organize agencies and non-profit partners to assist victims.





TABLE OF LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS TO THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ACT

CURRENT ORDINANCE

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

*The Executive Director of the Prince George’s County Human Relations Commission and his staff endeavored to create a Human Trafficking taskforce to combat the prevalence of human trafficking in our area. As a result of our involvement, we have been instrumental in getting several pieces of legislation passed.*

CB-79-2014: HUMAN TRAFFICKING –  
LODGING ESTABLISHMENTS – ROOM RENTAL

**PASSED:** *this bill prohibits room rentals by the hour. This bill is particularly helpful towards thwarting human trafficking because the majority of human trafficking activity takes place in hotels or motels that will allow room rentals by the hour. If such a practice is made illegal, it reduces opportunities for promoting human trafficking and effectively serves its purpose.*

CB-80-2014: HUMAN TRAFFICKING –  
LODGING ESTABLISHMENTS – EMPLOYEE  
TRAINING

**PASSED:** *this bill requires the training of employees of lodging establishments to detect instances of human trafficking. At these lodging establishments employees do not know how to detect a human trafficking situation. This bill would require employers to train their employees on how to detect human trafficking and these training tools will be supervised by law enforcement.*

CB-81-2014 –MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT  
LICENSING

**PASSED:** *this bill requires additional information for licensing of massage establishments, operators, managers and technicians. A large amount of human trafficking also takes place in massage parlors that are used for human trafficking purposes. Requiring more stringent checks on licensures for these places works to reduce the potential occurrences of human trafficking.*

Our Performance

The Prince George’s County Human Relations Commission measures performance via the following: See Addendums 1 and 2

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## Outreach & Education

The practice of connecting the Community to information, services, education and opportunity is defined as Outreach & Education. For The Prince George's County Human Relations Commission, this practice is a performance cornerstone. For this reporting period, the Commission has continued to improve and expand on its existing Outreach & Education Initiatives while engaging the Community through a variety of Outreach opportunities.

**CIVIL RIGHTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM:** The Prince George's County Human Relations Commission continues to seek committed attorneys and other professionals for participation in its annual Civil Rights Fellowship Program. Under the program, persons with a committed interest in civil rights law will serve as Fellows to the Human Relations Commission, serving at the pleasure of the Executive Director. Fellows taught about the agency and its mission, performing assignments alongside staff and are encouraged to take part in monthly Commission meetings and Public Hearings as well as participate in Outreach activities. The monthly Commission meetings and hearings before the Commission offer a candidate a first-hand opportunity to witness and assist with the Commission's processes and to observe how the rights of those discriminated against are championed by this independent government entity.

This fiscal year the Commission's two fellows, Melanie Furr and Najla Howell, actively participated in all efforts to execute the vision and purpose of the Commission.



### Fellow- Melanie Furr

Miss Melanie Furr is a recent graduate of Towson University. She received her Bachelors of Science in Anthropology/Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice and a minor in Psychology. During her time volunteering with the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission as a Fellow, she has had the opportunity to work alongside the Executive Director and the Investigators to learn ways and techniques to ensure the protection of the civil rights of citizens in her community. Miss Furr's career goal is to become a FBI Agent. Her personal plans are to exceed any expectations or stereotypes that society may have placed upon her as a woman of color. Whether she is investigating claims of discrimination, analyzing intelligence, or taking part in improving her community, her efforts will be to ensure the positive future of not only herself, but her Country as a whole

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**Fellow- Najla Howell**

Miss Najla Howell is a graduating senior attending Coppin State University. She majors in Political Science with a minor in Anthropology. Miss Howell will be awarded with her Bachelor's degree in May 2017. Her goal is to attend University of Baltimore for Law school and she aspires to be a Judge.

**OUTREACH:** The Prince George's County Human Relations Commission will continue its outreach efforts and collaboration with the Hispanic population through its "CASA de Maryland" initiative. CASA was founded in 1985 to improve the quality of life and legal justice for Latinos and low-income families through education, training and advocacy services. CASA does not accept complaints and therefore refers housing discrimination and other types of discrimination complaints to the Commission, on-site at the CASA headquarters.

**OTHER OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD INCLUDE**

- June 27, 2015 - Commission attended the DCHD Housing Fair held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center located in Washington, D.C.
- July 1, 2015 - PGC Executive Director, Michael Lyles, lead a presentation held at the PGC Police Personnel Division located in Lanham, Maryland.
- August 30, 2015 - Participated in County Council Chairman Mel Franklin Family and Friends Day at the Show Place Arena.
- September 4-7, 2015 - Participated in the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival at the Roosevelt Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.
- September 10-13, 2015 - Commissioners Smith, Heath, Jackson and Johnson participated in the 2015 Prince George's County Fair at the Rosecroft Raceway located in Fort Washington, Maryland.
- September 20, 2015 - Commissioner Smith attended the Hispanic Festival at Lane Manor Park located in Adelphi, Maryland.
- September 26, 2015 - Commissioner Eidelman attended the Riverdale Park Cares Community and Resource Day located in Riverdale, Maryland.



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- October 4, 2015 - Participated in Kinderfest at Watkins Regional Park in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.
- October 17, 2015 - Commissioner Eidelman attended the American Indian Festival at the Patuxent River Park located in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

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## Meet Our Commissioners

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### **Chairperson – Merrill Smith Jr.:**

Commissioner Merrill Smith, Jr. is a small business owner and the Chairperson for the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission. Prior to joining the Commission, Mr. Smith worked in the private sector for nearly 25 years in various capacities including Chief Operating Officer, Vice-President of Operations, and Regional Vice-President. A native of Georgia, Mr. Smith has a passion for Civil and Human Rights that has led him to serve as a Commissioner.

Commissioner Smith is President of Van McCoy legacy branch of ASALH, a proud supporter of the 105 Voices of History Choir and is a graduate and lifetime alumni of The Ohio State University. Mr. Smith also has a Lean Six Sigma Certificate from Villanova University. Commissioner Smith has been a resident of Prince George's County since relocating to the area in 2003.



### **Secretary- Nora Eidelman:**

Commissioner Nora Eidelman was born in Asunción, Paraguay and currently resides in College Park, MD. Commissioner Eidelman is a graduate of the University of Maryland University College, and is currently employed with Community Legal Services of Prince George's County, Inc., where she serves as Deputy Director. Commissioner Eidelman served on several boards including the Prince George's County Child Resource Center and the Family Crisis Center. She was the co-chair of the Hispanic Community Task Force, a member of the Prince George's County Circuit Court Latino Task Force, a founding member of the Prince George's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and a founding member of the Maryland Latino Coalition for Justice.

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**Commissioner Katrina Burson:**

Commissioner Burson has been a professional registered nurse for 20 years. She is currently employed as a Clinical Research Associate for a large non-profit organization in Rockville, Maryland. Commissioner Burson has spent most of her career caring for and advocating on behalf of vulnerable populations. Commissioner Burson is also a strong supporter and activist for LGBTQ equality and is passionate about building relationships for and with the LGBTQ community. The right of equality should not be mutable based on ethnicity, race, sex, gender or sexual orientation. Commissioner Burson was born and raised in Houston, Texas but relocated to Maryland in 2012. Commissioner Burson lived abroad in London, England for nearly a decade. While there she worked on numerous projects on behalf of the LGBT Community. She carried her passion to Maryland and continues to be a volunteer with the Prince George's County Youth Equality Project. Commissioner Burson is married to her partner, Kenya. They have one son, Kenneth, who is currently serving in the United States Armed Forces. In her spare time, she develops real estate. Commissioner Burson is proud to be living in a state that recognizes marriage equality and actively seeks to unite communities and reduce discriminatory practices in public domains.



**Commissioner Gerald Folsom:**

Commissioner Folsom, son of Mary Nell and late George Thomas Folsom, is originally from Quitman, Georgia and is employed by the U.S. Department of Transportation as a Senior Transportation Specialist in Washington, D.C. He currently serves on the ministerial staff of Community of Hope AME church under the direction of Rev. Tony Lee in Hillcrest Heights, MD. He serves as ministry leader of Community of Hope's Social Justice and Public Service Ministry and Assistant Men's Ministry leader. On Friday, April 11, 2014, Commissioner Folsom was ordained as an itinerant elder in the AME Church at the Washington Annual AME Conference. Commissioner Folsom has received his Ph.D. in Communication and Culture from Howard University in Washington, D.C., Master of Divinity from Howard University, his M.A. in Organizational Communication from Bowie State University in Bowie, MD, and B.S. in Liberal Arts from Excelsior College in Albany, NY. Commissioner Folsom is a life member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and currently serves as the Second District Chaplain, overseeing the spiritual needs of Omega men in Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Folsom served as the Co-Chairman of the Public Engagement Committee on the Transition Team for the Honorable Rushern L. Baker III, County Executive, Prince George's County, MD. On November 7, 2012, he was appointed by the Prince George's County Executive as a Commissioner on the County's Human Relations Commission (County's Civil Rights Agency). He is married to Joyce Folsom and they reside in Upper Marlboro, MD.



**Commissioner Gail Heath:**

Commissioner Heath is a labor relations professional, with experience working for labor unions and management in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Commissioner Heath has a Bachelor's of Arts in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Juris Doctorate from the Howard University School of Law. Commissioner Heath is originally from Chicago, IL, and has a brother who proudly serves in the U.S. Army and a sister. She has served as a Commissioner since 2012 and is a resident of Laurel.



**Commissioner Walter L. Howell Jr.:**

Commissioner Howell has broad public sector management, administrative and supervisory experience. He recently directed the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services – Office of Internal Integrity overseeing the agency's Investigation Division and Administrative Hearings Division. He also served as a child support enforcement executive with the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. Commissioner Howell was also selected by Maryland State Superintendent of Schools to serve as the Maryland State Department of Education Liaison Officer to Prince George's County Public Schools concerning the governance, management and finance of the public school system. Commissioner Howell has also served as a commissioner for the Prince George's County Commission for Children, Youth and Families; and the Prince George's County Board of Social Services. Commissioner Howell holds a Master in Public Administration degree

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from Harvard University, a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Pennsylvania, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Morehouse College and is also a graduate of the United States Presidential Management Fellows Program and the Johns Hopkins University Leadership Development Program for Minority Managers



**Commissioner Eric Jackson:**

Commissioner Jackson is a partner with The Sack Law Firm P.C., a full service law firm based in McLean, Virginia. He has a diverse law practice which includes representation of individuals, law firms, associations and emerging and large companies in business litigation, employment and intellectual property cases. Commissioner Jackson also assists families and children with special needs in navigating the educational and legal labyrinths necessary to obtain special education services. Prior to joining The Sack Law Firm P.C., Commissioner Jackson was a partner at Jenner & Block LLP and Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi L.L.P. in Washington, D.C. Commissioner Jackson earned an A.B., Values, Technology, Science and Society from Stanford University and a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School. Commissioner Jackson is active in the community. On November 7, 2012, he was sworn in as a Commissioner of the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission. He previously served as Vice Chair of the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Committee. A father of three active children, Commissioner Jackson resides in Fort Washington, Maryland.



**Commissioner Janelle Johnson:**

A native of Hampton, Virginia, Commissioner Janelle Johnson attended the University of Illinois with a full scholarship in track and field. She competed in the 1995 Olympic Festival and qualified for the 1996 Olympic Trials. Commissioner Johnson transferred to George Mason University graduating with a degree in Broadcast Journalism, later receiving her Master's Degree in Business from Johns Hopkins University, after relocating to the Washington D.C. area in 1998. She has held positions in various technology companies, including Sprint and Lockheed Martin, where she served as the corporate Diversity Manager. Her current work assignment is with the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) in the Office of the Secretary. She is also an ordained minister on the ministerial staff of Reid Temple AME Church. Commissioner Johnson believes her greatest commitment is to serve God, people, and the community.

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County Executive



**Commissioner Eugene Langbehn:**

Commissioner Langbehn is a retired career and vocational rehabilitation counselor with a Master's Degree in Counseling and Personnel Services with specialization in counseling individuals who have disabilities. Commissioner Langbehn has an AA degree in Paralegal Studies. Previously, Commissioner Langbehn was employed in administrative positions with the State of Maryland, including legal assistant to the State Appeals Officer for the Department of Human Resources. He was appointed to the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission in 2012 and also serves on the Prince George's County Commission for Individuals with Disabilities. Commissioner Langbehn founded and chairs Maryland United for Peace and Justice, a statewide non-profit, advocacy and education coalition. He serves on boards of non-profits, including Pax Christi Metro DC and Baltimore, and Progressive Maryland, and he helped found Maryland Committee to Amend. Previously, Commissioner Langbehn was an elected member of the Democratic State Central Committee of Maryland and Political Action Chair of the AFSCME State Employees Council 92. As a Chief Steward with AFSCME, he handled employee grievances. His disabilities include multiple chemical sensitivity and toxic encephalopathy. After becoming disabled, Commissioner Langbehn served on the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities and The Advisory Board of the ADA Information Center for the Mid- Atlantic Region.



**Commissioner Troy Lowe, Esquire:**

Commissioner Lowe is a product of Prince George's County. He matriculated through St. John's Catholic school, then Surrattsville Senior High School, both in Clinton, Maryland. He was a four year letterman in football at Surrattsville. After receiving his bachelor's degree from Johnson C. Smith University, Commissioner Lowe went on to pursue his juris doctorate in 2005 at The Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan. Commissioner Lowe was admitted to the Maryland bar in 2009 and began practicing law as a contract attorney with the United States Department of Justice. In 2011, Commissioner Lowe opened his private practice in Upper Marlboro, Maryland where he focuses on personal injury litigation and family law matters. Commissioner Lowe prides himself on the level of service and attention he provides to each client. His top priority is to ensure each client is confident that their best legal interests are represented. In 2014,



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Commissioner Lowe was appointed as a Commissioner of the Human Relations Commission where he serves to protect the civil rights of the residents of Prince George's County.

**COMMISSION PERFORMANCE MEASURES (Addendum 1)**

<b>Proposed Changes</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure Name</b>	<b>FY 2014 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Estimated</b>
2.2	2.2	<b>Resources (input)</b>				
	2.2	Number of commission mediators	2	2	2	1
	2.2	<b>Workload, Demand and Production (output)</b>				
	2.2	Number of mediations scheduled	24	54	60	30
	2.2	Number of conciliations scheduled	6	6	6	6
	2.2	Number of mediations conducted	17	36	40	20
	2.2	Number of conciliations conducted	4	3	4	6
	2.2	Number of mediations closed with settlement	10	17	20	10
	2.2	Number of cases that reached a resolution through conciliation	3	3	0	2
	2.2	<b>Efficiency</b>				
	2.2	Number of ADR sessions conducted per mediator	10.5	19.0	20.0	26.0
	2.2	<b>Quality</b>				
	2.2	Percentage of mediated cases that reached an agreement	59%	49%	59%	50%
	2.2	Percentage of cases that reached a resolution through conciliation	75%	100%	0%	33%
	2.2	Percentage of customers satisfied with mediation services	100%	100%	100%	100%
	2.2	<b>Impact (outcome)</b>				
	2.2	Percentage of discrimination cases that reached an agreement through ADR	43%	53%	50%	46%
		<b>Resources (input)</b>				
	4.1	Number of Investigators	6	6	6	6
		<b>Workload, Demand and Production (output)</b>				
	4.1	Number of intake interviews conducted	144	139	144	216
	4.1	Number of Cases opened as result of intakes conducted	70	62	90	100
	4.1	Number of investigated complaints with "cause" findings	5	0	6	8
<b>Proposed Changes</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure Name</b>	<b>FY 2014 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Estimated</b>
	4.1	Number of investigated complaints with "no cause" findings	33	71	60	90
	4.1	Number of administrative closures and voluntary withdrawals	15	22	22	24
	4.1	Number of investigated cases closed w/l 180 days	23	22	22	50



	4.1	Number of closed investigations subject to quality audit	30	30	30	40
	4.1	Number of "no cause" findings appealed to the Commission	7	13	7	10
	4.1	Number of subpoenas served by investigators	3	4	25	15
	4.1	Number of MPIA requests processed by staff	11	5	11	12
<b>Efficiency</b>						
	4.1	Average number of cases investigated per investigator	11	11	11	10
	4.1	Average number of open cases per month	62	69	62	49
<b>Quality</b>						
	4.1	Average case age in days	255	255	268	154
	4.1	Percentage of cases closed within 180 days	33%	39%	33%	50%
	4.1	Audit Score of closed audited cases (out of 10)	9.25	9.00	9.00	9.00
<b>Impact (outcome)</b>						
	4.1	Percentage of appeals of investigative findings sustained by the Commission	100%	99%	95%	97%
	4.1	Percentage of "no-cause" findings reversed or remanded by the Commission	0%	1%	5%	3%
	4.2	Number of commissioners	13	12	11	10
	4.2	Number of cases certified for public hearing	4	3	5	7
<b>Proposed Changes</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Measure Name</b>	<b>FY 2014 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Estimated</b>
	4.2	Number of hearings held	1	0	4	5
	4.2	Number of decisions issued	1	0	3	4
	4.2	Number of decisions issued within 180 days	1	0	3	4
	4.2	Number of decisions appealed to Circuit Court	1	0	1	1
	4.2	Number of decisions overturned on appeal	0	0	0	0
	4.2	Number of Outreach Events attended	5	7	7	8
<b>Efficiency</b>						
	4.2	Percentage of decisions issued within 180 days	100%	100%	90%	90%
<b>Quality</b>						



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	4.2	Percentage of decisions overturned on appeal	0%	0%	0%	0%
	4.2	Average number of days decisions are issued after a hearing	180	180	200	190
	4.1	<b><i>Impact (outcome)</i></b>				
	4.2	Number of decisions issued in favor of Complainant	0	0	4	2
	4.2	Number of decisions overturned on appeal	0	0	0	0

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# Important Information

## THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION



### DUTIES OF A COMMISSIONER

**DUTIES:** The Commission, along with its Executive Director, is the agency empowered to enforce the civil rights laws of Prince George's County. Primary duties of the 13 member commission are to: 1) conduct administrative hearings involving claims of unlawful discrimination. 2) Serve as the civil rights policy arm of county government; and 3) perform community outreach activities aimed providing information to citizens about cultural diversity and civil rights enforcement.

**TIME COMMITMENT:** Attendance at mandatory monthly commission meetings held on the 4th Monday of the each month at 6:00 pm. At the meetings, the Commission manages administrative details related to hearings, case closures, policy pronouncements, research and community outreach. Some preparation time prior to the meeting may be necessary depending on the agenda items established by the Executive Director and the Chair. Meetings typically last no more than 2 hours.

**HEARINGS:** Public Hearings are held at the discretion of the Commission, usually after a recommendation by the Executive Director, who is authorized to bring the charges of a civil rights violation. The hearings are scheduled at the pleasure of the Commission and are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Timely written decisions are required within 180 days after each public hearing.

**PANELS:** Commissioners hear cases in panels of three or four members, divided by subject area (Housing, Public Accommodations, Employment, Education, Real Estate, Lending, Law Enforcement Discrimination). A panel chair, assigned by the Commission Chairperson, presides over any hearings or related meetings. The Commission has the authority to award money damages, levy fines and issues cease and desist orders or other injunctive relief directed at penalizing or stopping discriminatory conduct.

**TERM:** Three years, depending on year of appointment.

**BENEFITS:** Although the position is non-stipend, funding is provided for travel and training in connection with civil rights conferences and meetings throughout the year. Reimbursement for certain expenses related to the performance of Commission duties is also permitted.



[www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/civilrights](http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/civilrights)

Prince George's County Human Relations Commission  
FY2016 Case Audit Report

**Definitions:**

- Case Jacket:** A case jacket is the folder where documentation and correspondence obtained throughout an investigation is stored for review and future retrieval. Case jackets need to be kept in the best possible condition to protect what has been attained, but to also show that care was placed into the presentation and image that the Human Relations Commission (hereafter referred to as the 'Commission') conveys to the public.
- Strength:** The level of effort and care put into an investigation from start to finish which can be reflected by reviewing a case jacket and its contents. To obtain a higher end score in the area of Strength during the case audit, the case jacket should have all required forms and documents relevant to the investigation in its correct place. The investigation was complete and thorough, with the important questions answered. To obtain a lower score, the case jacket is missing several forms and documents that are required to be in a closed case. The investigation was poor and could have been much better in quality.
- Timeliness:** The amount of time that it took to complete an investigation. Cases transferred from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission office to the Human Relations Commission, are scored based on the amount of time the Investigator had the case, not based on its actual age. Grading in the Timeliness category is based on the below time-based scoring system:

Days	180 and less	181-360	361-540	541-720	721 and older
Score	4	3	2	1	0

- Organization:** This category is scored on how well the case jacket being reviewed is kept during and after the investigation. To achieve a higher score, the case jacket should show minimal signs of damage. Documents are crisp, neat and in their correct place. The table of contents is detailed and lists exactly where the relevant documents are located for easy review. To achieve a lower score, the case jacket is torn, beat up and falling apart. Documents inside the case jacket are not hole-punched and are ripped or unreadable. There is no table of contents available to inform reviewers where specific relevant documents are.

**Objective:** To review and grade cases closed from the time period of June 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the case audit is to review closed cases to discover ways to improve the Commission's investigation process and case jacket presentation for the future. This task is undertaken on a yearly basis by reviewing previous work that has been completed, it provides the Commission with an opportunity to create new ideas or enhance old procedures, figure out trouble areas, and streamline processes, which can advance overall case investigations. The case audit process also gives those outside of the Commission a chance to better understand what exactly they do and what goes into the work.

**2016 Case Audit Conducted by:** Charles Floyd (Investigator) and Langston Clay (Investigator).

**Overall Grade: B+ (3.7)**

In July 2016, thirty (30) cases that were closed from June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015, were randomly chosen from an available pool of eighty-two (82) cases. The 2016 case audit followed the same grading system created in 2015 that consisted of three (3) categories in which to score the cases. The three (3) categories used to review the thirty (30) selected cases were: Strength, Timeliness, and Organization. Cases were scored on a scale of one (1) to four (4), with one (1) being the lowest score and four (4) being the highest possible score. After reviewing all thirty (30) case jackets, each one was scored and an overall average was calculated based on the scores of each individual category and translated into a letter grade for easier review. The overall letter grade of the 2016 case audit was a "B+" with an overall average score of 3.7.

**Strength: B+ (3.8)**

The Investigative Team continues to move forward with the strength of their investigations and the quality of the case jackets as the score has increased from the 2015 audit. The aforementioned information is particularly impressive given the fact that two new Investigators started with the Commission in October 2015. The Investigators in the majority of the cases made sure each relevant case jacket had a Report of Investigation, which laid out their entire investigative process for anyone to pick up, read and understand case progression from beginning to end. The case jackets also had the proper documents and information required in each investigation based on its specific needs. In addition, there were no documented complaints against the Investigators in the case files. Furthermore, all cases that were appealed by the Complainant were upheld by the Commissioners, which speak to the strength and effort the Investigative Team puts into their quality of work.

**Timeliness: B+ (3.6)**

Only two (2) reviewed case investigations took over three hundred-sixty (360) days to complete as a result of being reassigned, but the majority of the reviewed cases scored very high in the Timeliness category. Out the thirty (30) reviewed cases, twenty (20) were closed in one hundred-eighty (180) days or less, an improvement from seventeen (17) cases in 2015. Even though the staff has lost staff members since the 2015

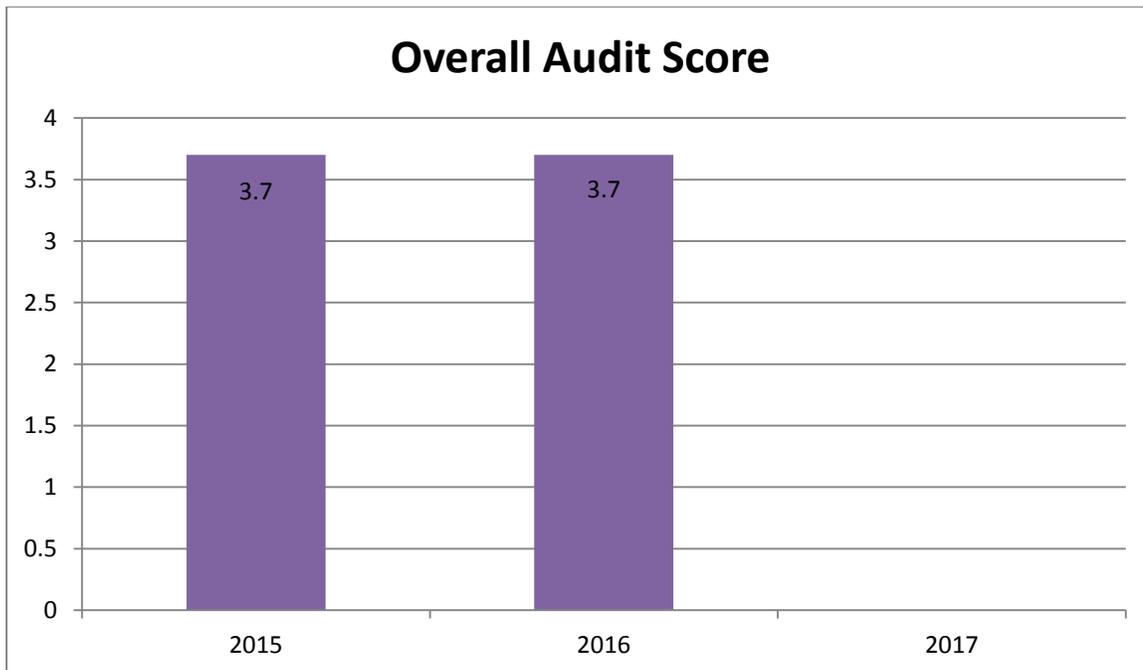
case audit and gained only two (2) new Investigators, the investigative team continues complete the majority of all investigations within one hundred-eighty (180) days.

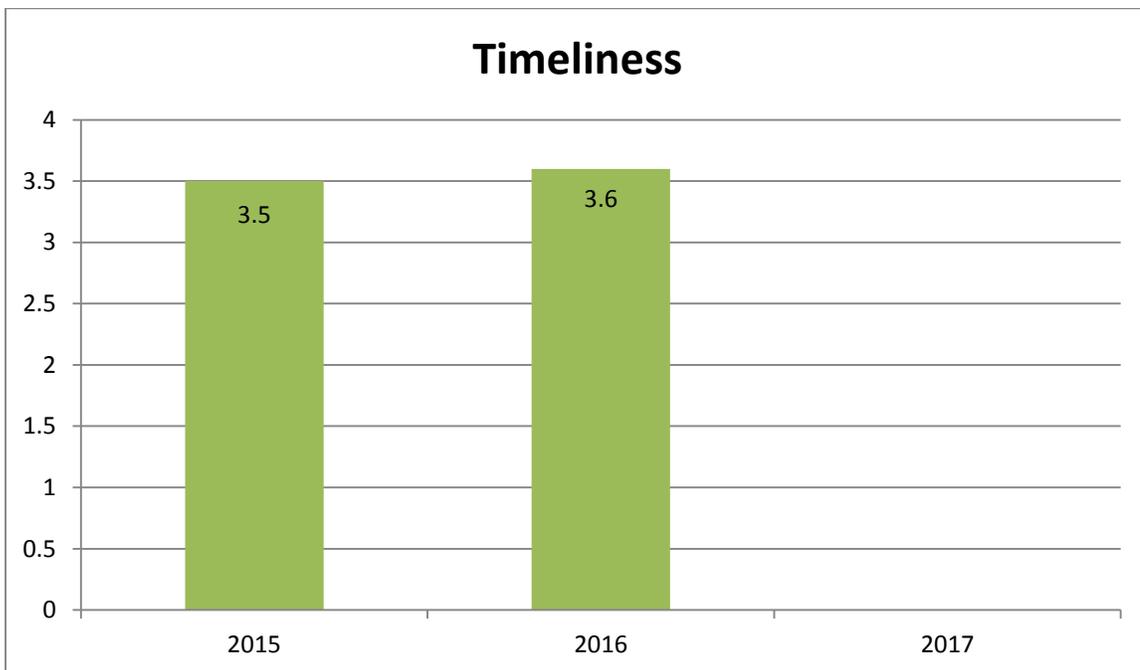
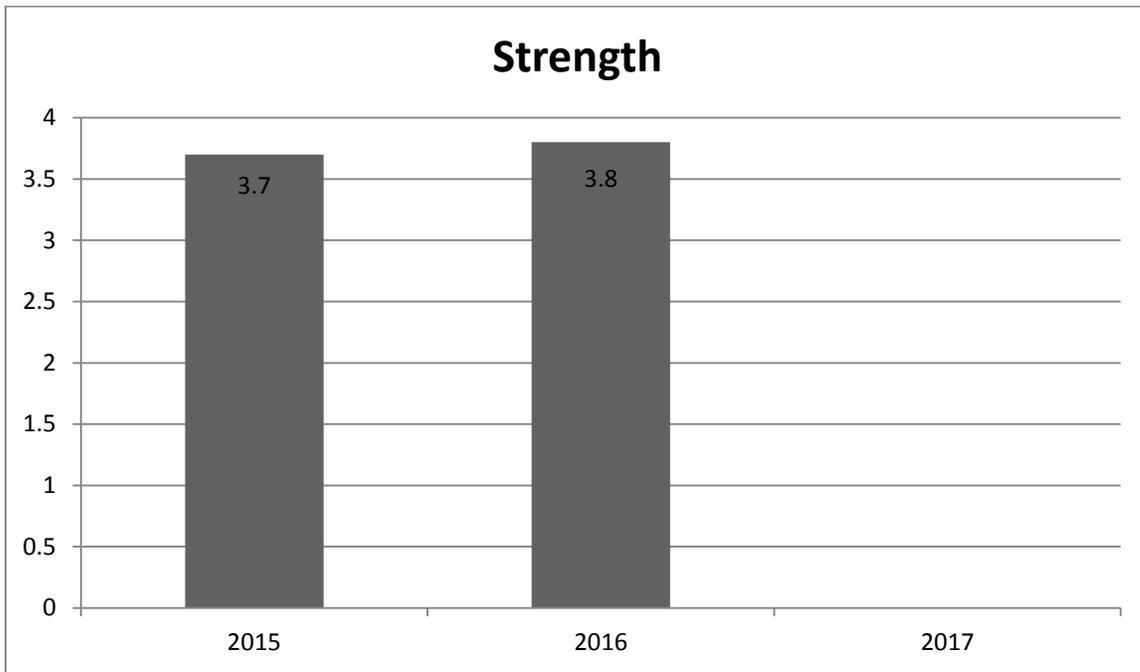
**Organization: B+ (3.7)**

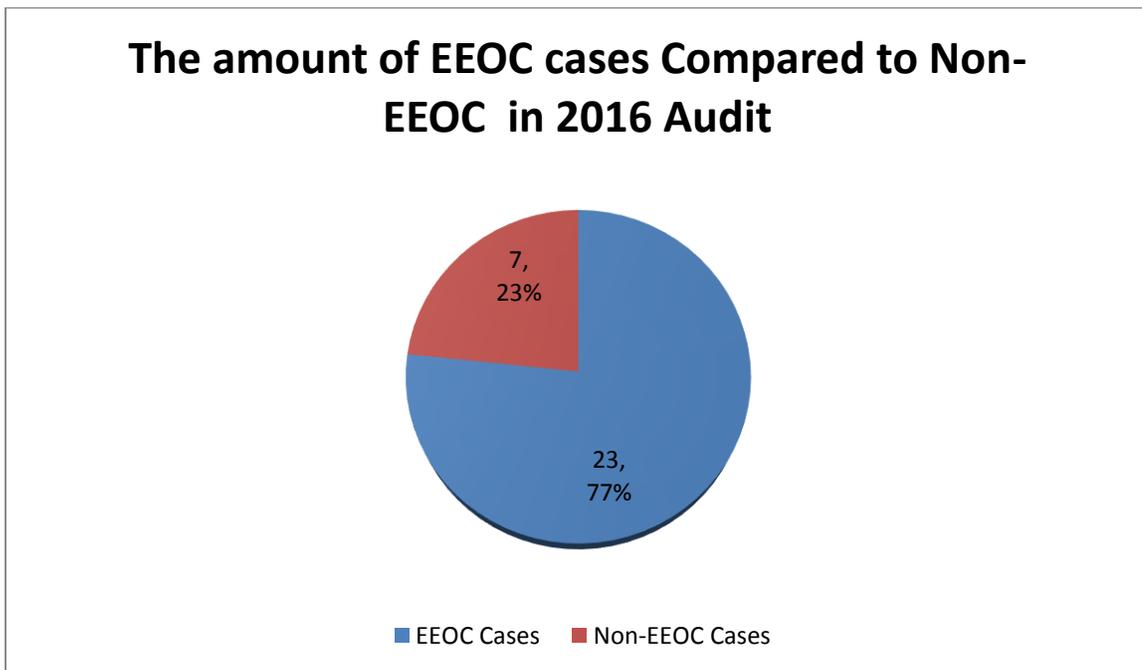
Even though this category dipped slightly lower than last year’s review of 3.9, case jacket quality continues to improve in the category of organization. Investigators know the importance of maintaining and presenting to the Commissioners and others a well-organized case jacket. Unfortunately, some cases did suffer damage (such as torn and creased pages, etc.) due to constant passing within different parties who may have to review or make copies of documents contained inside the jackets. Out of the thirty (30) cases reviewed during this audit, twenty-three (23) scored a four (4) out of four (4).

In conclusion, the consistency and progress shown since the 2015 audit is very promising as it shows that new Investigators have taken the knowledge gained from their peers and continued the trend of providing thorough investigations. While unexpected staff changes have occurred, it has not affected the quality of investigation that the Investigative Team provides to the citizens of Prince George’s County, Maryland. It is refreshing to know that as the staff evolves, they continue to improve on all facets of case investigations. The future is looking bright and impressive as the new Investigators have picked up from where past Investigators left off and have the drive to provide a high quality of work.

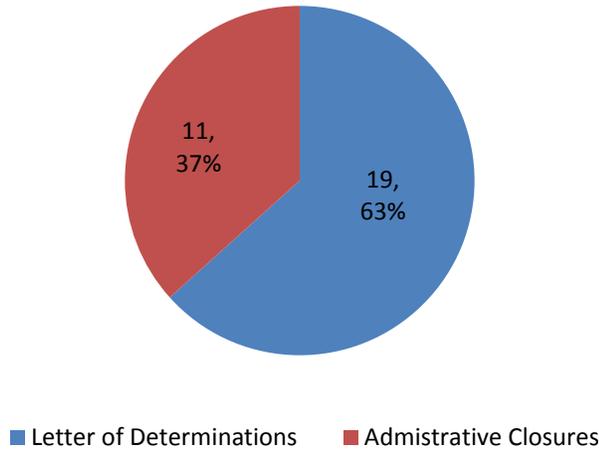
Please see the attached quantitative data below which further shows the breakdown of the thirty (30) cases reviewed during the 2016 case audit:



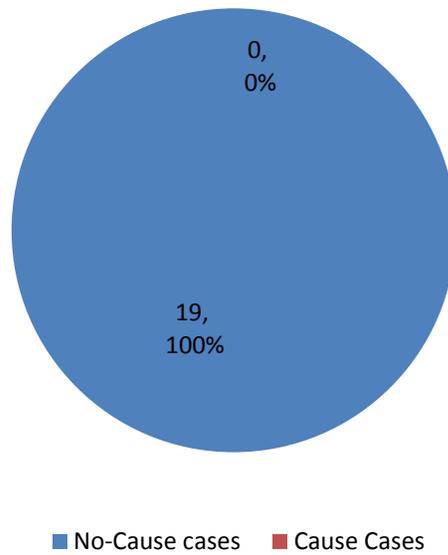




## Number of Letter of Determinations compared to Administrative Closure

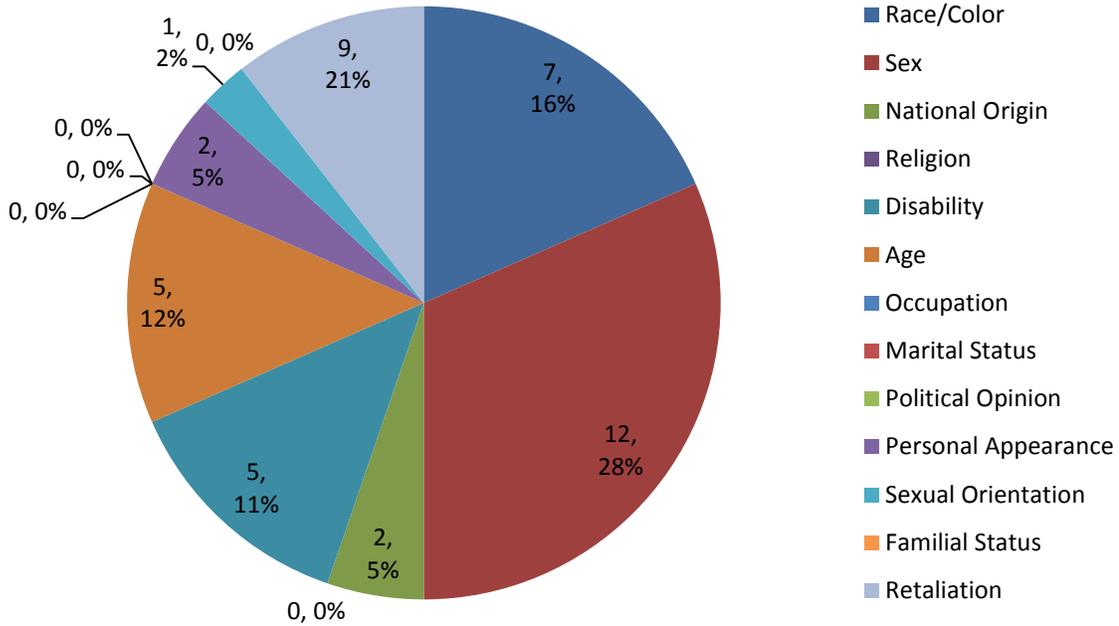


## Number of Cause cases vs. No-Cause cases





## Protected Bases Represented in the 2016 Audit



## Area of Investigation

