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The City of Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations Fair Housing Commission

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Cherelle Parker
Mayor

Renee Chenault Fattah

Executive Director

This report highlights key programs and activities facilitated by PCHR and FHC in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, which covers the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

HISTORY OF PCHR & FHC



"A city charter providing equal opportunity for everyone ... would be the best possible answer to the demagogues on the left and on the right who exploit discrimination and segregation in the United States and mock our democratic principles."

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) was established in 1951 under the Home Rule Charter. The charter is often called Philadelphia's constitution because it governs all aspects of local government. Philadelphia's charter was the first in the nation to include civil rights language and was written by trailblazing civil rights attorney and economist Sadie T.M. Alexander. According to Alexander, "a city charter providing equal opportunity for everyone ...would be the best possible answer to the demagogues on the left and on the right who exploit discrimination and segregation in the United States and mock our democratic principles."

Alexander would go on to become the first African American woman to Chair the Commission. Almost 75 years later, her words hold true and guide PCHR in its mission.

PCHR enforces the City's Fair Practices Ordinance and a host of other laws written to prohibit discrimination and promote equality.

The City's Fair Housing Commission (FHC) was created in 1962 to protect tenant rights, to ensure the safety of tenants and to foster good landlord tenant relations. Although PCHR and FHC are separate commissions, they came together in the early 1990s because of the city's budget crisis and to the present day continue to share a budget, staff, and work together protecting the rights of Philadelphians and all who visit our City.

OUR MISSION

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) is the City's official civil rights agency. Our mission is to fight discrimination and promote equality by enforcing an important set of anti-discrimination laws, by resolving community conflicts through mediation, dialogue and other dispute resolution methods and by educating the public on their legal rights and responsibilities.



LAWS PCHR ENFORCES

PCHR is empowered by the Home Rule Charter to enforce the anti-discrimination laws, including the local Fair Practices Ordinance (FPO) § 9-1100 of the Philadelphia Code, 9-3500. FAIR CRIMINAL RECORD SCREENING STANDARDS § 9-3500 of the Philadelphia Code; the City's "Renter's Access Act" (the Fair Housing Ordinance at § 9-800 of the Code and the Fair Practices Ordinance at § 9-1108 of the Code).

The Fair Housing Commission (FHC) enforces the Fair Housing Ordinance, § 9-803 which addresses unfair rental practices in housing, particularly The Renter's Access Act 9-1108 (3)(4) and 9-810 of The Philadelphia Code.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

CHERELLE L. PARKER
Mayor

Office of the Mayor 215 City Hall Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215) 686-2181 FAX (215) 686-2180

December 1, 2025

Hello Friends:

Philadelphia is the birthplace of this nation, a city founded on the ideals of liberty, justice, and equal opportunity. These principles continue to guide our work and define who we are.

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) plays an essential role in ensuring that this city remains One Philly, a place where every person is treated with dignity and respect, and where equity and equality meet hand-in-hand. This annual report reflects the exceptional work of the PCHR team as they enforce our civil rights laws, support our communities, and protect the rights of everyone who lives in or visits our city.

PCHR's leadership in addressing intergroup conflict, building community trust, and enforcing inclusive legislation helps create conditions where every Philadelphian feels safe, valued, and empowered to participate fully in civic life.

As Philadelphia prepares for the 250th birthday celebration, we can look back at our long history with pride. Ours is a city of many firsts, including groundbreaking legislation that makes it illegal to discriminate against one's natural hair. That spirit of leadership continues to inspire us as we build a safer, stronger, and more welcoming Philadelphia for all.

I extend my deep appreciation to the staff of PCHR, the Commissions, and every resident who champion fairness and justice in their daily lives. Together, we are building a safer, stronger, and more welcoming Philadelphia, one that honors our past while forging a brighter future for all.

Sincerely,

Cherelle L. Parker

Kerelle L. Parker

Mayor

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Renee Chenault Fattah

Executive Director

On behalf of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) and the Fair Housing Commission (FHC), we are excited to share our FY2025 Annual Report.

During FY25, PCHR made substantial gains. This report provides a snapshot of the impact of our dedicated staff and Commissioners over the past fiscal year under the leadership of former Executive Director and newly elected Court of Common Pleas Judge Kia Ghee. Thanks to Kia's leadership and commitment, the agency rose to new heights, and I look forward to building on her work of fighting discrimination and promoting unity across our city.

PCHR enforces a host of ordinances and regulations that are among the oldest and strongest civil rights laws in the nation. These legal safeguards exist to protect human rights, promote dignity, and preserve harmony among the people who live in and visit our city. I am grateful to Mayor Parker for entrusting me with the responsibility of leading this historic civil rights agency, where every day we commit to addressing discrimination, intolerance, and

inequality. I have lived in Philadelphia for more than five decades, and as a lawyer and a journalist, I believe in both the power of law to improve people's lives and the impact of narrative and story to promote empathy and understanding among diverse communities.

The mission of PCHR demands our vigilance in the enforcement of our laws and the protection of our rights. Discrimination and inequality need to be challenged when it first surfaces-whether in our places of work, on our streets, or in our communities. Failing to act creates a destructive domino effect that ripples through every sector of society. And the Commission's goal to promote equality, protect civil rights, and foster a culture of One Philly has never been more crucial.

Make no mistake, the current political landscape and retreats in key areas of civil rights create substantive barriers to the significant gains and advancements of the past. Today, we face challenges in every area of our work, protecting Philadelphians from discrimination and ensuring the right to live with dignity and respect. But we will not be deterred, and in the new year we pledge to push forward. In the words of civil rights trailblazer Sadie TM Alexander:

"Life has two rules: number 1, never quit!

Number 2, always remember rule number one."



OUR COMMISSIONERS



Kareem E. ThomasPCHR Chairman

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations is the nation's oldest municipal human relations commission — a legacy born right here in our city of neighborhoods, resilience, and justice. As Chair, I am deeply proud to serve alongside Commissioners and staff who lead with both conviction and compassion.

Each day, the PCHR and Fair Housing Commission teams carry forward our collective charge — advancing equity, confronting discrimination, and protecting the rights and dignity of every Philadelphian. Every investigation, mediation, and outreach effort reflects not only the enforcement of law but the living expression of our city's values: fairness, empathy, and unity.

This past year, our teams have stood firmly on the front lines — challenging bias, addressing housing and workplace inequities, responding to hate, and ensuring that access and opportunity are never reserved for a few but extended to all. This is what justice in motion looks like.

PCHR COMMISSIONERS

Kareem E. Thomas Chairperson

Rabbi Rebecca Alpert Ajoa Abrokwa Darelee Hamilton, Esq. Tue Ho, Esq. Sarah Ricks, Esq.

FHC COMMISSIONERS

Juan Baez, Esq. Shalisa Brunson, Esq. Darlene Butler Jennifer Sang, Esq.

Equity is not a destination — it is a journey we take together, one rooted in accountability, courage, and hope. It is an honor to lead this work and to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those who believe that Philadelphia's greatest strength lies in our shared humanity.

Kareem Thomas

WHAT WE DO



PCHR is a quasi-judicial agency empowered by the Home Rule Charter to enforce Philadelphia's civil rights laws and to deal with intergroup conflict within the city.

PCHR's commissioners have broad authority, including the power to receive and investigate complaints, initiate their own investigation of alleged discriminatory practices, hold public hearings pursuant to investigations, and make those findings public.

The Commission can compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents. The Commission's mandate also includes establishing and conducting educational programs to promote the equal rights and opportunities of all Philadelphians.

In addition, the Commission's Dispute Resolution Program provides mediation, conciliation, counseling, and referral services to neighborhoods where residents and others have ongoing conflicts.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

PCHR and FHC staff members are available who are fluent in:

Mandarin Khmer Spanish

PCHR recognizes that the population eligible for services includes individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP). PCHR is committed to ensuring these individuals have proper access to services. It is the City's policy to grant access to services or programs to every person, even when the person has a limited ability to speak, understand, read or write English.

PCHR intends to take reasonable steps to provide LEP persons with meaningful access to service and programs.

Our Language Access plan can be found online: https://tinyurl.com/languag eplan



WHAT WE DO



Investigation of Complaints

PCHR accepts complaints that are filed in person, by mail, by fax, or online via the PCHR's website.

The process begins in our Central Intake Unit, which reviews clients' concerns of discrimination, unfair rental practices, and neighborhood disputes. Here, the decision is made concerning jurisdiction and whether the complaint can be addressed by either PCHR or FHC.

If we cannot help, we will refer the client to another agency. In FY25, close to 3,000 inquiries came into our intake unit.

For PCHR to accept a complaint, it must be filed within 365 days of the person being made aware of the discriminatory act, and the alleged discriminatory act must have taken place in Philadelphia.

CENTRAL INTAKE SERVICES	FY 2025
Clients Assisted - Total Requests for Information	2,720

COMPLIANCE DIVISION



"The Compliance Division is the small yet mighty team responsible for the enforcement of 11 laws in the City of Philadelphia. The most consequential of the laws enforced by Compliance is the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance (FPO). The FPO prohibits discrimination in housing, real property, employment, public accommodations and the delivery of city services, thereby promoting equal rights and equal opportunity for all living, working and visiting our city. Compliance is committed to conducting high-quality, neutral, confidential investigations of complaints with a focus on thoroughness and excellence. The ultimate goal is to remedy and alleviate discrimination by ensuring adherence with the important laws PCHR enforces. During these most challenging times in our country, the work of PCHR Compliance is of utmost importance."



REVENUE GENERATED FY 25

Settlements

\$523,752.86

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- With an ongoing active case inventory of approximately 200 cases, the Compliance team investigates and closes most cases at an average closure rate slightly over one year.
- As a Fair Employment Practices Agency (FEPA),
 Compliance has met or exceeded their Equal Employment
 Opportunity Commission (EEOC) contract every year for the past five years.
- Ensuring neutral and confidential processes in FY25, Compliance facilitated a total amount of settlements at \$523,723.86. This number reflects the total of settled cases, both during the investigation and post-investigation for 34 cases. There were private/confidential monetary settlements for an additional 27 cases, not included in the \$523,752.86 amount. The total number of cases resolved via settlement in FY25 is 61.

PROTECTED CLASSES

The Compliance Division is comprised of attorneys, supervisors, investigators, and intake coordinators who conduct the intakes and investigations of discrimination complaints filed with the agency and oversee the mediation and hearing process. Over the decades, the protected status under the Fair Practices Ordinance has been expanded to prohibit discrimination based on the following:

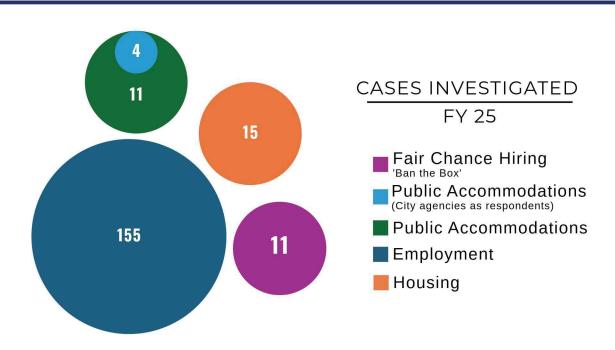
- Religion
- Sex
 - (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- National Origin
- Domestic or Sexual Violence Victim Status
- Genetic Information
- Source of Income
- Race
- Color
- Ancestry
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Reproductive Health Autonomy
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Familial Status
- Marital Status
- Childbirth or related medical condition

COMPLIANCE DIVISION



LEGISLATION

During FY25, PCHR worked closely with City Council on a tenant-friendly amendment to Chapter 9-1100 of the Fair Practices Ordinance, which expanded protections against source of income discrimination in housing.

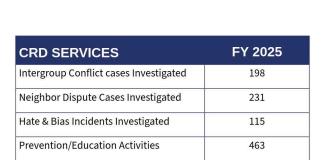


COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIVISION



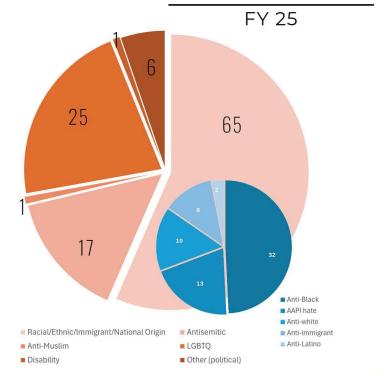
"The Community Relations Division (CRD) is the City's peacemaking unit. We offer mediation and other conflict intervention strategies for neighborhood and community tensions before they escalate into crime and violence. We also conduct training in conflict resolution, de-escalation, and other prosocial skills to teach people to resolve their disputes thoughtfully and peacefully. When tensions arise out of hate and bias, we can address them through strong partnerships that span communities, law enforcement and government. From empowering individuals through training or assisting them with intervention services to addressing hate impacting the community; the goal of CRD is to ensure everyone who lives, works, or is visiting Philadelphia feels safe from harmful conflict escalation and hate."

Outreach is central to PCHR's mission of protecting civil rights. which is why the work of the Community Relations Division (CRD) is vital. Through community events, education, and partnerships, CRD aims to raise awareness, build trust, and ensure that all residents. especially those in underserved communities - know their rights and how to access our services. Philadelphia, like other parts of the country, experienced an alarming increase in hate crimes in FY25. Much of this activity was fueled by the growing political division as a license to hate. Our CRD team addressed incidents of discrimination affecting Asian Pacific-Islander, LGBTO+. Jewish, Muslim, Arab, Latina, Black, and immigrant communities through a variety of activities and trainings.





CASES INVESTIGATED



COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIVISION

HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout the year, the CRD team conducted weekly training to teach the City's Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP). The purpose of this program is to give staff the necessary information and tools to build constructive conflict resolution skills.

Joining forces and collaborating with City departments and State and local field staff, CRD conducted ongoing PCHR services and conflict resolution training throughout the city.

Through meetings, workshops, and conferences, CRD on both a national and international level used its expertise to increase visibility of hate prevention and response processes.

CRD works in countless neighborhoods to reduce minor misunderstandings that, without intervention, would escalate tensions.

For example, when 90-year-old Nancy Jones* was having an ongoing dispute with her neighbor, Bob Peters*, over a wall that Mr. Peters had attached to her home, Ms. Jones was referred to CRD. The team worked with the neighbors over a series of meetings to find a resolution, which resulted in both parties being satisfied. Ms. Jones did not have the resources to hire someone to help her, but the team was able to assist in finding a solution.

CRD's progress would not be possible without the collaboration of community partners, the dedication of our team-spirited staff, and the support of the leaders in every

*Real names were not used for this report





FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION



Alison deMedeiros FHC Attorney

We at the Fair Housing Commission (FHC) are acutely aware of the growing housing crisis facing Philadelphia and other major cities across the country. A safe and desirable place to live is a core part of the American dream, yet a shortage of affordable, stable housing is putting this goal out of reach for far too many people. Research shows that housing is a key social determinant of health, influencing access to employment, education, health care, and more. In response to this crisis, FHC remains committed to enforcing the Fair Housing Ordinance (FHO), Chapter 9-800 of the Philadelphia Code, the Renters Access Act, and other applicable ordinances and regulations enacted to ensure that Philadelphia tenants have stable and safe housing. We provide tenants the opportunity to participate in a no-cost, neutral, adjudicative hearing process, where they are afforded important rights – including the ability to hold landlords accountable for terminating tenancies in properties with code violations or in situations where tenants have withheld rent to compel needed repairs.

Fair housing enforcement is critical in helping all Philadelphia residents live in the communities of their choice in housing that is safe and habitable. Housing impacts health, employment opportunities, education, access to transportation, and many other quality-of-life factors.

The FHC is a neutral agency that enforces the Fair Housing Ordinance 9-800 of the Philadelphia Code, which addresses unfair rental practices in housing, particularly when a property has been cited for code violations.

Each year, hundreds of tenants file complaints with the FHC seeking relief after their landlords engage in unfair rental practices. Whether its terminating a lease when a property is cited for code violations or retaliation against a tenant when they exercise their legal rights, the number of complaints into our office substantially increased in FY25.

FHC also conducts educational outreach to inform both tenants and landlords of their legal responsibilities.

Tenants file a complaint if:

- A tenant is being threatened with an illegal eviction:
- A landlord is raising rent or ending a tenancy in the face of a housing code violation;
- A landlord is retaliating against a tenant for reporting housing code violations to the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) or for filing a complaint with the FHC.



Number of Reported Cases 1499
Number of Reported Cases 1455

OUR TEAM

CENTRAL INTAKE AND FAIR HOUSING

Alison deMedeiros, Esq. Deputy City Solicitor

Brenda MaderaActing Supervisor

Lateefa Boone Human Relations Intake Coordinator

Yomaris Castro-Olmeda Data Support Services Clerk

Alexis Enlow Human Relations Representative

Michael Fontain
Data Support Services
Clerk

Kyle Fraiser Service Representative

Evelyn GravesHuman Relations Intake
Coordinator

Belinda Holguin Human Relations Representative

Libertu Pastor-Bey Human Relations Intake Coordinator

COMPLIANCE DIVISION

Pamela Gwaltney, Esq. Deputy Director

Karen Forman, Esq. Principal Assistant

Miranda Branch Supervisor

Lynette McClain Supervisor

Karla Acosta-Pizarro Administrative Assistant

Adriana Iraci Human Relations Representative

Jorge Pagan Clerk 3

Alexander Rudolph Human Relations Representative

Peter Smith Administrative Technician

Adrienne Stokes Human Relations Representative

Fangyuan (Abigail) Su Human Relations Representative

Alexandra Williams Human Relations Representative

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIVISION

Randy Duque Deputy Director

Shawna Holts Supervisor

Carlos Aviles-Marcano Human Relations Representative

Chanese Drinks Human Relations Representative

David Oliver Human Relations Representative

Bunrath Math Human Relations Representative

Tierra Thompson Human Relations Representative

ADMINISTRATION

Saterria Kersey
Public Information Officer

Jennifer HayesAdministrative Officer

Shaunda Perkins Administrative Technician

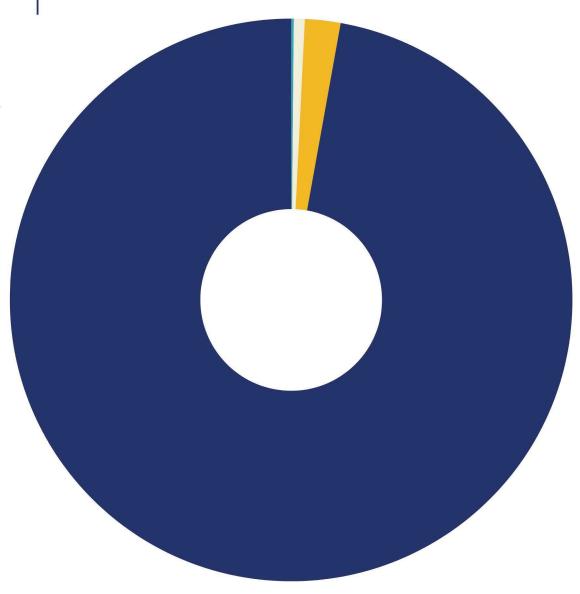
EXPENSES

PCHR's total expenses for FY25 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) were \$2,751,800.54.

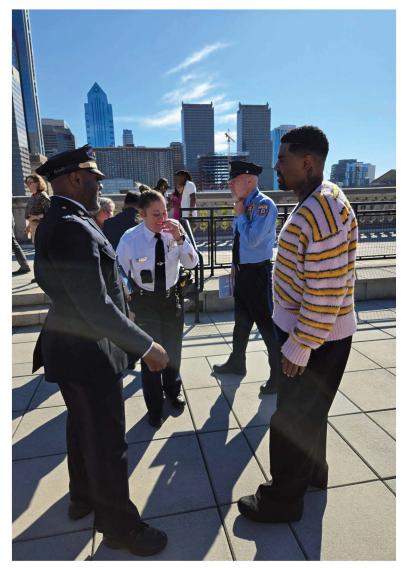
An operating budget for PCHR and FHC is the financial plan that outlines a company's expected revenues and expenses over a specific period, usually a fiscal year. It is a blueprint for managing day-to-day operations and ensuring financial goals align with business objectives.

Personnel Services	\$2,674,280.07
Services	\$56,178.59
Materials/Supplies	\$17,244.09
Equipment	\$4,097.79

Total Expenses **\$2,751,800.54**



HIGHLIGHTS





SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARDS

Following a hiatus, the Social Justice Awards returns with a new name, but the mission remains the same – to celebrate and honor Philadelphians working toward eliminating discrimination and advancing human and civil rights. The awards honored individuals in: Arts & Culture, Community Service; Law Enforcement/Public Service. The Clarence Farmer Award for social justice was also awarded.





HIGHLIGHTS





On March 19, 2025, PCHR co-sponsored the annual Interfaith Iftar dinner. The event welcomed Philadelphians of all faiths and backgrounds to share a meal, exchange ideas, and build lasting connections through food and dialogue.





TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY FLAG RAISING

PCHR and the Office of LGBTQ+ Affairs hosted a flag-raising event in celebration of Transgender Day of Visibility. The day raises awareness about transgender and gender non-conforming people, and while it's a celebration, it also reminds us that work remains to protect transgender rights globally. The event featured transgender speakers and performers.

YEAR IN REVIEW

AUGUST 2024

 Deputy Director Pamela Gwaltney, Esq., Compliance Supervisors Miranda Branch and Lynette McClain, and other members of the PCHR staff attended the (International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies) IAOHRA conference in St. Louis, Missouri. It was the 75th conference anniversary, and the theme was 'Creating A Human Rights Culture'.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Public Information Officer
 Saterria Kersey attended the
 HBCU Conference at the
 Philadelphia Marriott
 Downtown. The theme was
 "Raising the Bar: Where
 Excellence and Opportunity
 Meet," aligned with the Dept. of
 Education's "Raise the Bar:
 Lead the World" initiative,
 which focuses on connecting
 federal and private resources to
 strengthen the HBCU
 community.

OCTOBER 2024

 Principal Attorney Karen Forman, Esq., spoke with students at Drexel's Kline Institute for Trial Advocacy about civil rights laws and how the laws are enforced by PCHR.





JANUARY 2025

 The HelpMobile is back! Originally introduced in 1968, the mobile extension of the PCHR office brings representatives right to the neighborhood.

YEAR IN REVIEW



MAY 2025

- CRD participated in Philadelphia Police Department's Citywide Antiviolence Basketball Tournament at Temple University.
- PCHR welcomed newly appointed Commissioner, Ajoa Abrokwa, to the Commission.

FEBRUARY 2025

- PCHR staff celebrated the Philadelphia Eagles' Super Bowl victory by proudly sporting team gear and cheering on the hometown team with spirited cries of 'Go Birds!'
- Acting Executive Director Randy Duque represented the City of Philadelphia at the Strong Cities Network Transatlantic Dialogue in Manchester, UK, where he participated in the plenary session, "City-Community Collaboration in Hate Prevention."

MARCH 2025

- Deputy Director Pamela Gwaltney, Esq., presented the updated source of income laws to JG Real Estate.
- The CRD team participated in the annual Block Captain Rally at the PA Convention Center by providing information to hundreds of block captains from across the city.

APRIL 2025

- Acting Executive Director Randy Duque met with a delegation from Uzbekistan to discuss increasing engagement with the growing local Uzbek community.
- Acting Executive Director Randy Duque, Principal Assistant Karen Forman, Esq., and Fair Housing Commission Attorney, Ali deMedeiros, Esq., met with representatives from the Welcoming Center to discuss immigrant housing concerns and potential collaborations to inform immigrant communities of tenant and civil rights for housing.
- Acting Executive Director
 Randy Duque conducted a
 session entitled, "Partnerships
 for Peace" to discuss the
 intersection of conflict
 resolution skills and interagency
 partnerships at the Association
 for Conflict Resolution Greater
 Philadelphia Chapter's webinar
 series.
- PCHR welcomed Commissioner Darelee Hamilton, Esq., to the Commission.

JUNE 2025

 On the last day of the fiscal year, Renee Chenault Fattah officially started her appointment as the Executive Director of PCHR.



Ensuring civil rights in Philadelphia since 1951

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www.phila.gov/fairhousing Email: FHC@phila.gov

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