

**Office of Equity and Civil Rights
Community Relations Commission
Virtual Monthly Meeting
Public Session Minutes
May 15, 2024**

Participating in the virtual conference were Commissioners Todd Yeary (Chair), Nadine Finigan-Carr (Secretary), Amahl Foster, Yvette Ilechie, and Reynaldo Evangelista, Adoté Akwei. Also, present were staff: Caron Watkins (Chief Equity Officer and Director), Lisa Kelly (Chief of Investigations), Danielle Burton (Chief), Andrea Pineda (Investigator), Nate Cohen (Investigator), Zelma Ortiz (Investigator), Martina Gardner-Phillips, John Wesley.

I. Welcome/Call to Order

A. The meeting was called to order at 12:06 pm by Chair Yeary.

II. Approval of the Minutes

A. Commissioner Akwei moved to approve the March 20, 2024 Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Foster. The March 20, 2024 Minutes were approved without objection.

III. Director's Report

A. Caron Watkins (Interim Director) gave the Director's Report.

1. Director Watkins introduced herself and gave a brief history of her former position as the Deputy Chief Equity Officer.
2. She would like to meet with all board chairs and would like to have an open policy regarding the Commission.
3. She deferred the data report and outreach/events to Chief Burton.

B. Danielle Burton (Chief) gave the data and event report.

1. DHCD Informational Hearing took place – April 24, 2024.
 - i. Chair Yeary spoke about the DHCD hearing.
 - ii. Chief burton noted that she will speak to Glenda Curtis of DHCD about and about partnering during Civil Rights Week (CRW).
 - iii. Chair Yeary asked if there is an update regarding CRW planning. Chief Burton and Chief Kelly did not have any updates at that time.
2. Statistical Data
 - i. Regarding EEOC contract, OECR closed over 19 cases with 2 more set to close.
 - ii. OECR Received 3 EEOC transfers.
 - iii. Attachment: April 2024 Graphs - data (attached). *Figures 1-5*

C. Administrative

1. Four Candidates for the Commission had been interviewed.

2. Chair Yeary and Director Watkins will be interviewing candidates for the second round of interviews pending availability.

D. Civil Rights Week

1. Chief Burton reminded Commissioners about Civil Rights Week.
 - i. Chief Burton asked to please send any suggestions for CRW.
 - ii. Chair Yeary asked if Chief Burton could send a draft that Commissioners could use.
2. Dr. Finigan-Carr suggested a “my ballot/my rights” event during the election or before Civil Rights Week.
 - i. She also suggested gaining youth input regarding equity and civil rights.
 - ii. Chair Yeary suggested reaching out to youth and walking them through the voting process.
 - iii. Chief Burton stated that OECR will have a voter registration table each day during CRW.

IV. Commissioners’ Report

- A. Commissioner Akwei said that everything went well while he was out of the country. He mentioned that he had volunteered during the election process.
- B. Commissioner Akwei spoke about challenges with riding the MTA bus and an incident that led to his being put off the bus. Chair Yeary will follow-up on the experience.

V. Open Forum

- A. Next Meeting: June 19, 2024 – regular monthly meeting
- B. Chair Yeary yielded the Executive Session meeting to Commissioner Finigan-Carr.
- C. Dr. Finigan-Carr chaired the Executive Session after the Public Session was adjourned.

VI. Closing

There was no further business to discuss.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioners voted to adjourn at 12:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond
Office of Equity and Civil Rights

Figure 1- CRC Statistical Data – Reported Discrimination

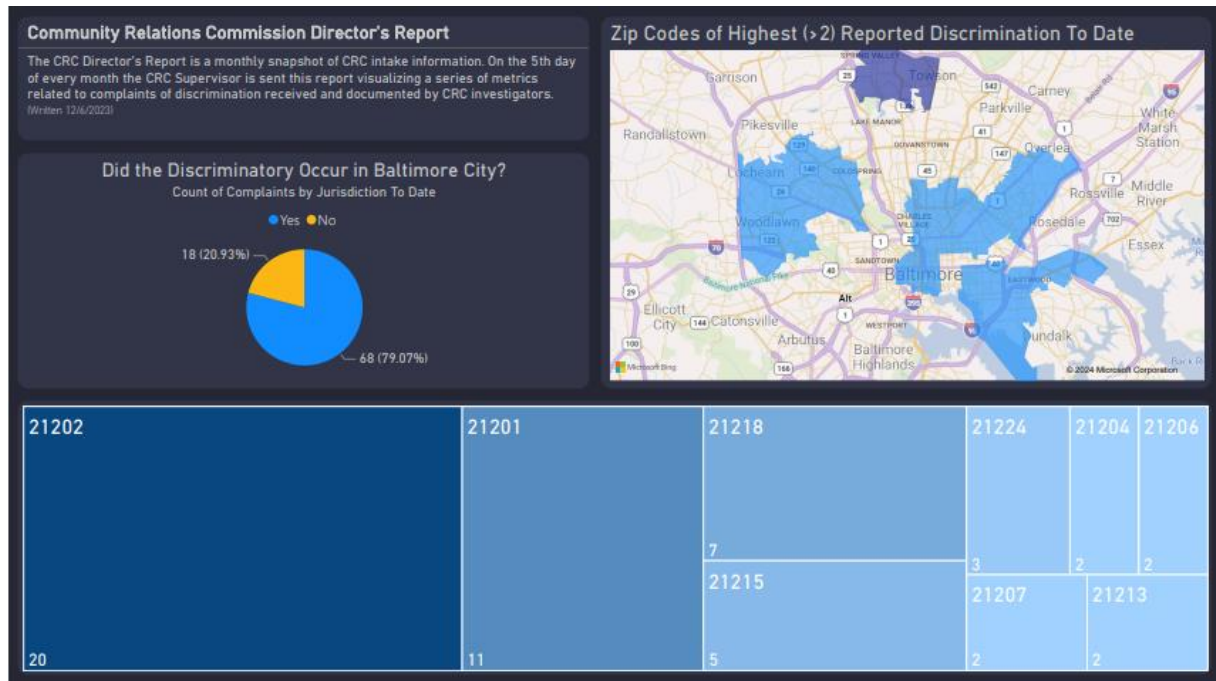


Figure 2-CRC Statistical Data – CRC Complaints FY24

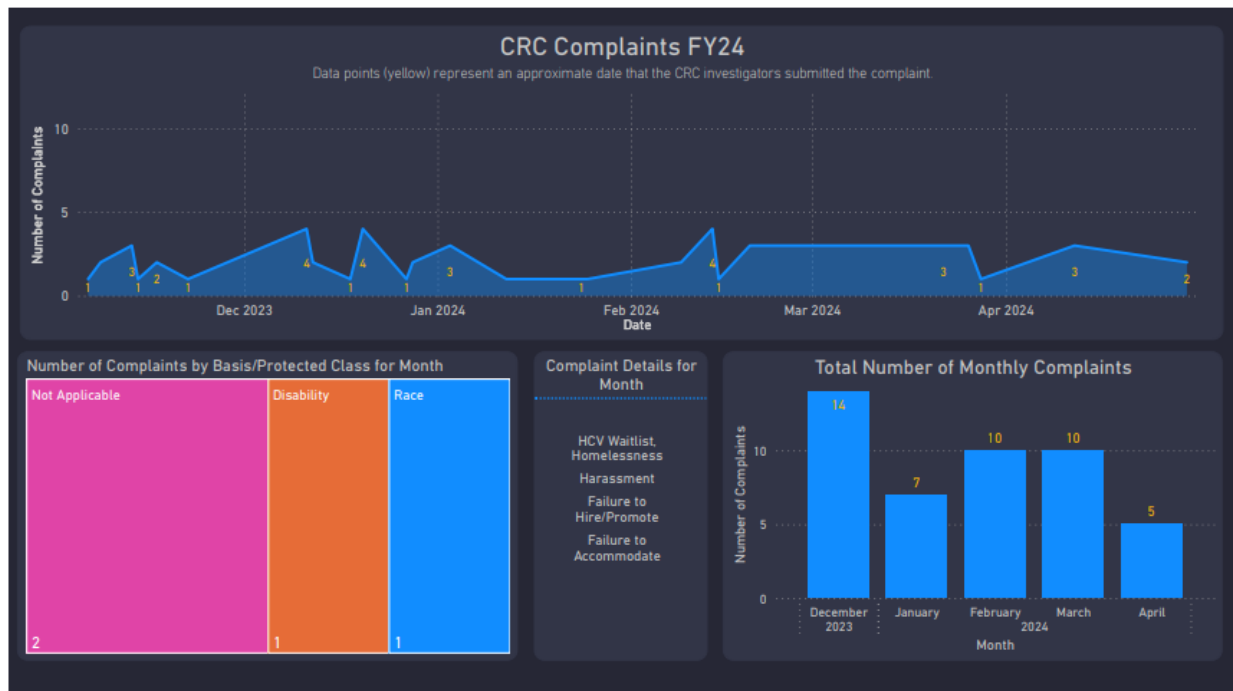


Figure 3-CRC Statistical Data - # of Inquiries

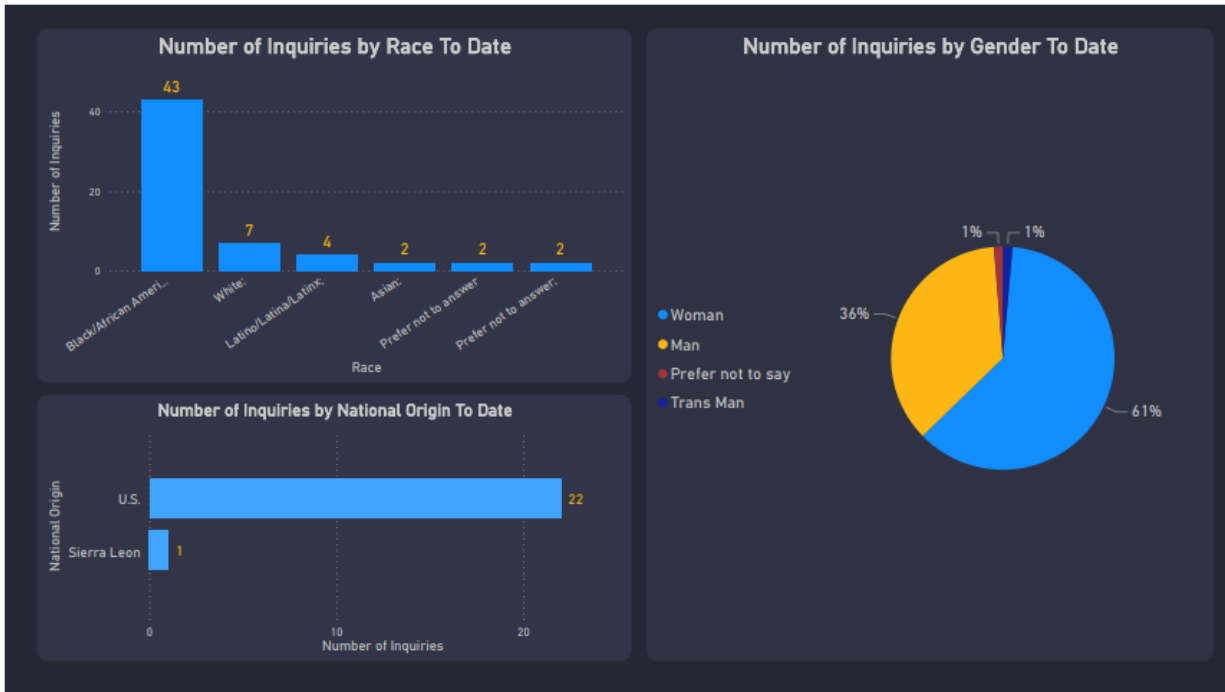


Figure 4-CRC Statistical Data - # of Complaints

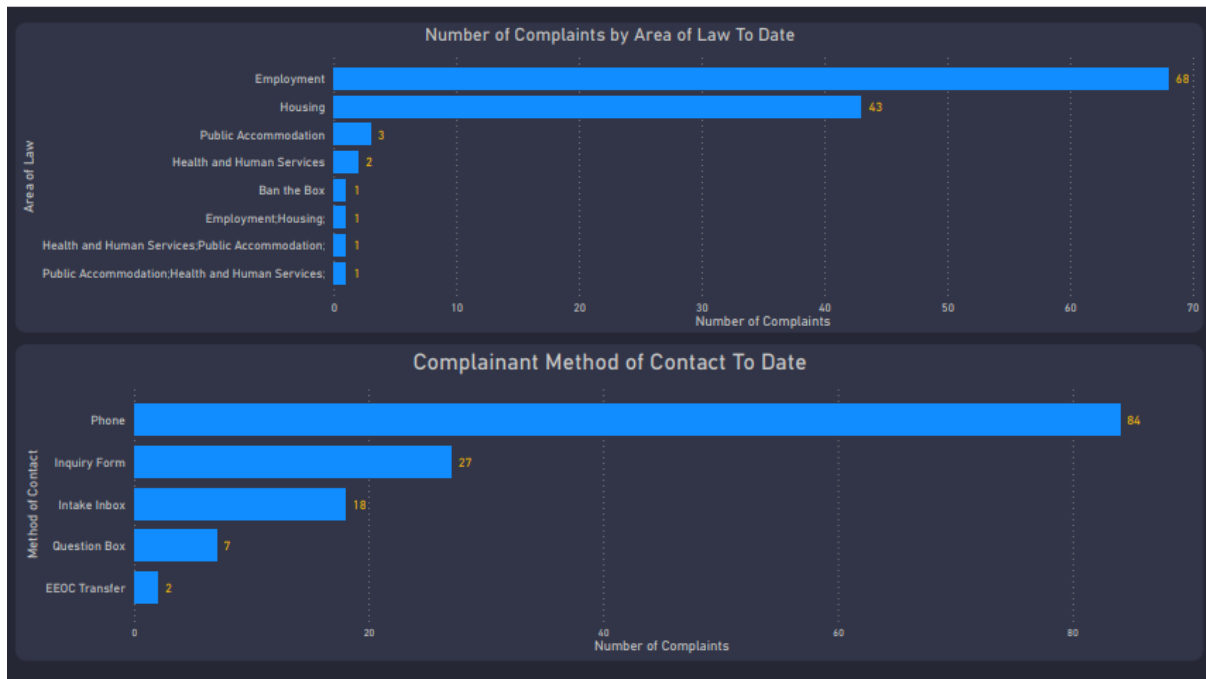


Figure 5-CRC Statistical Data – OECR Community Outreach

