



Office of Human Rights

OHR (HM)

MISSION

The mission of the DC Office of Human Rights (OHR) is to eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity, and protect human rights in the city.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The DC OHR investigates complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and educational institutions, according to the DC Human Rights Act of 1977 and other numerous local and federal laws. OHR also prevents discrimination by educating DC government employees, private employers, workers, and the community at large of their rights and responsibilities under the law.

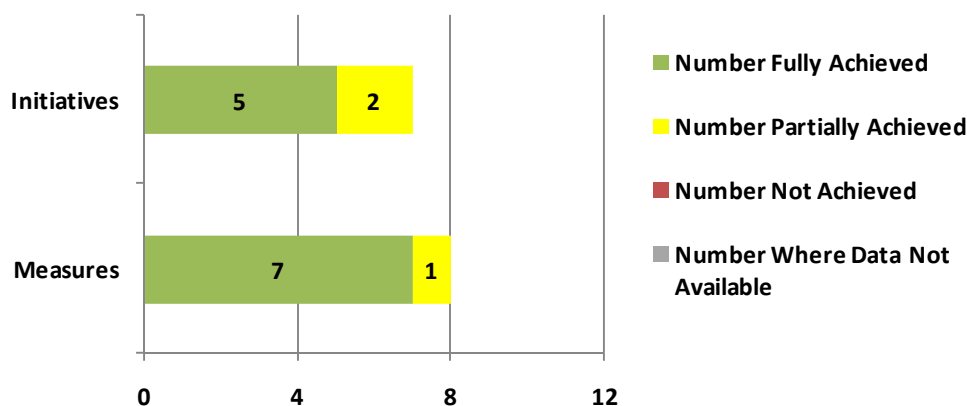
AGENCY OBJECTIVES

1. Improve the effectiveness of the investigative process by shortening response times and strengthening quality controls.
2. Promote awareness of local and federal antidiscrimination laws by educating employers, workers and residents of the District of Columbia in order to prevent further discrimination.
3. Effectively collaborate with DC Government agencies to promote and enforce equal access to government services by Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations that live in, work in, and visit the District.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ In the area of enforcement, OHR continued to reduce its backlog (69 aged cases by year's end) in spite of sharp increases in all types of cases (32% increase in employment cases, 42% in housing cases, and 87% in language access cases).
- ✓ OHR created a human rights outreach and education program and launched two awareness campaigns that focused on the District's fair housing protections and foreign language access rights.
- ✓ OHR developed an on-line training course focused on diversity and equal employment opportunity.

OVERVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE






Performance Initiatives – Assessment Details

Performance Assessment Key:

-  Fully achieved  Partially achieved  Not achieved  Data not reported

OBJECTIVE 1: Improve the effectiveness of the investigative process by shortening response times and strengthening quality controls.

 **INITIATIVE 1.1: Backlog reduction**

Fully Achieved. On October 1, 2007, the OHR Director issued new guidelines for cases considered "aged" or "backlogged". The intake, mediation and investigation divisions adjusted their targets to discharge cases according to the new guidelines. For example, in the area of fair housing, the new timeline to complete cases is 90 days instead of 100 days. Accordingly, the mediation division adjusted the scheduling of mediations for these cases to 20 days instead of the previous 30 days. Throughout this process, OHR eliminated inefficiencies in its investigative operations, updated its operating procedures manual, and shortened the amount of time people wait for a determination. The overall result for this initiative is faster response to customers and a diminishing backlog (69 as of September 30, 2008).

 **INITIATIVE 1.2: Quality assurance panel**

Fully Achieved. OHR established a semi-independent quality review panel for cases investigated and closed in FY08. Panel members included representatives from OHR, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Human Rights Commissions of surrounding jurisdictions. The process was to randomly select between 25 and 30 employment case files closed in FY08 for each review. An evaluation criteria was developed and 82% of the reviewed cases scored "very good" or higher.

 **INITIATIVE 1.3: Testing**

Partially Achieved. OHR engaged the DC Equal Rights Center to conduct testing on complex fair housing cases filed at and investigated by OHR. As of September 30th, 2008 ten cases were tested, which represents 19% of the total fair housing docket in FY08. This FY08 initiative resulted in more thorough investigations and more accurate determinations by the agency. In situations of cases in the pre-investigative phase, testing was crucial to either formally docket the case or dismiss it due to lack of evidence.

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote awareness of local and federal antidiscrimination laws by educating employers, workers and residents of the District of Columbia in order to prevent further discrimination.

 **INITIATIVE 2.1: Community education program – We ALL Belong!**

Fully Achieved. OHR revamped its website to enable greater interaction with the public. The revamped site has online complaint filing (which now amounts to 48% of all filing at OHR) and training registration. The website also includes a new video that educates the public on patterns of discrimination and describes OHR services. OHR videos and PSAs have also aired on channel 16 and other cable networks. In the area of fair housing, OHR launched a campaign in January 2008 that included multiple community-based forums and training on housing discrimination, a partnership with WMATA for posters throughout the mass transit system, ads through local English and non-English newspapers, and partnerships with various legal and advocacy groups. As result, OHR experienced an unprecedented number of inquiries on housing discrimination and the number of formal



complaints increased by 42% compared to FY07. In the area of Equal Employment Opportunity Training, OHR trained 1,060 DC employees in FY08, including employees from 57 DC government and independent agencies.

● **INITIATIVE 2.2: City-wide diversity training**

Fully Achieved. OHR developed an on-line, interactive, scenario-based Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity training. The goal of the training is to increase District government employees' knowledge of workplace diversity, inclusion, and equal employment rights. The training will also be available to the general public through the OHR website. OHR will launch the training in November, 2008.

OBJECTIVE 3: Effectively collaborate with DC Government agencies to promote and enforce equal access to government services by Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations that live in, work in, and visit the District.

● **INITIATIVE 3.1: Language access "Know Your Rights" campaign**

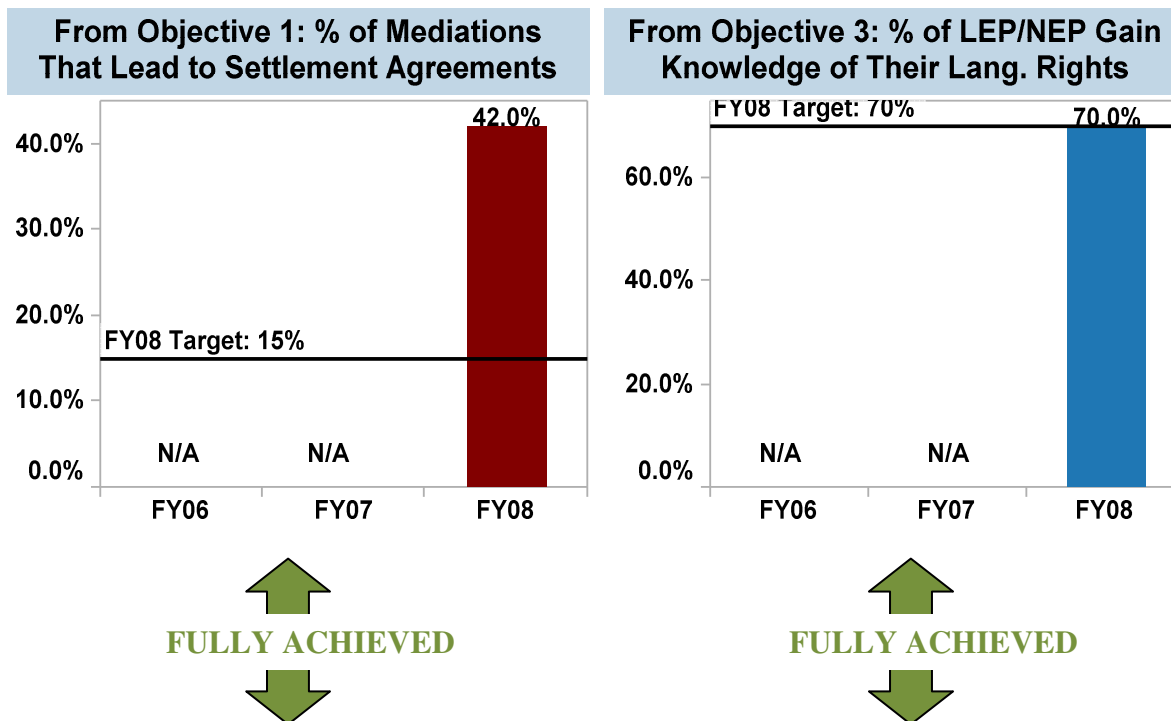
Fully Achieved. In October 2007, Mayor Fenty announced an awareness and education campaign to inform every Limited English Proficient (LEP) resident in the District of their rights under the Language Access Act. OHR partnered with OLA, OAPIA, OAA and the Language Access Coalition to distribute 10,000 "Know Your Rights" cards printed in six different languages and English. OHR also established a partnership with DCPS to inform every household with LEP children enrolled in DCPS (6000+ households) of their rights and the services provided by OHR. OHR also partnered with WMATA and DDOT for a language access ad and billboard campaigns. In addition, OHR participated in several Spanish and TV radio interviews and organized community workshops to promote the District's inclusiveness of LEP communities.

● **INITIATIVE 3.2: City-wide linguistic and cultural competency training**

Partially Achieved. OHR changed the focus of this initiative from "cultural competency training" to "language access training". During the first few months of FY08, following a public hearing on language access, OHR received multiple complaints addressing the perceived lack of language access progress by the District government. As result, starting in November 2007 OHR implemented monthly training sessions for the DC agencies required to comply with the Language Access Act. The training was geared towards both managers and front line staff, and it was conducted at their employment sites. As of September 30, 2008 the Language Access Program trained 1,027 DC government employees from 17 DC agencies.



Key Performance Indicators – Highlights



More About These Indicators:

How did the agency's actions affect this indicator?

- Mediation is mandatory according to DC law, which is not the case in other jurisdictions. OHR's mandatory mediation program has become a model and its successful settlement rate has been recognized by the federal government.
- OHR has 2 full-time accredited mediators on staff who conducted mediations.

What external factors influenced this indicator?

- OHR also relied on trained and certified arbitrators and mediators as volunteers.

How did the agency's actions affect this indicator?

- OHR engaged in partnerships with a variety of groups to educate Limited English Proficient Populations about their legal rights to access government information and services in their own foreign languages. Partners that OHR engaged include community service providers, advocacy groups, non-English newspapers and media, the mass transit system and multiple DC government agencies.
- OHR's aggressive and targeted educational "Know Your Rights" campaign led to OHR meeting their goal.

What external factors influenced this indicator?

- OHR's partnership with DCPS played a key role. DCPS assisted OHR by informing all 6,000 households with Limited English Proficient children enrolled in DCPS of their rights and the services provided by OHR.



Key Performance Indicators – Details

Performance Assessment Key:

- Fully achieved
 ● Partially achieved
 ● Not achieved
 ● Data not reported

	FY06 Actual	FY07 Actual	FY08 Target	FY08 Actual	FY09 Projection
OBJECTIVE 1: Improve the effectiveness of the investigative process by shortening response times and strengthening quality controls.					
● % of docketed (or newly files) cases processed within 5 business days	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%
● % of OHR complainants satisfied with the agency's intake process	N/A	N/A	75.0%	81.3%	80.0%
● % of mediations that lead to settlement agreements .	N/A	N/A	15.0%	42.0%	20.0%
● # of backlogged cases by the end of the year. (Employment, education and public accommodation: 210 days; housing: 90 days; language access: 6 months).	N/A	N/A	99	69	79
● % of case reviews with "very good" or higher score . . .	N/A	N/A	80%	82%	85%
● % of new Commission cases adjudicated within 18 months of being certified	N/A	N/A	70%	55%	75%
OBJECTIVE 2: Promote awareness of local and federal antidiscrimination laws by educating employers, workers and residents of the District of Columbia in order to prevent further discrimination.					
<i>None applicable to this objective</i>					
OBJECTIVE 3: Effectively collaborate with DC Government agencies to promote and enforce equal access to government services by Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations that live in, work in, and visit the District.					
● % of LEP constituents that indicate "gained knowledge" of language access rights during and after the Know Your Rights Campaign.	N/A	N/A	70%	70%	75%
● % of "covered" agencies under the LAA that receive an overall rating of 3 or more during the periodic language-specific customer service testing contracted out by OHR	N/A	N/A	50.0%	54.6%	60.0%