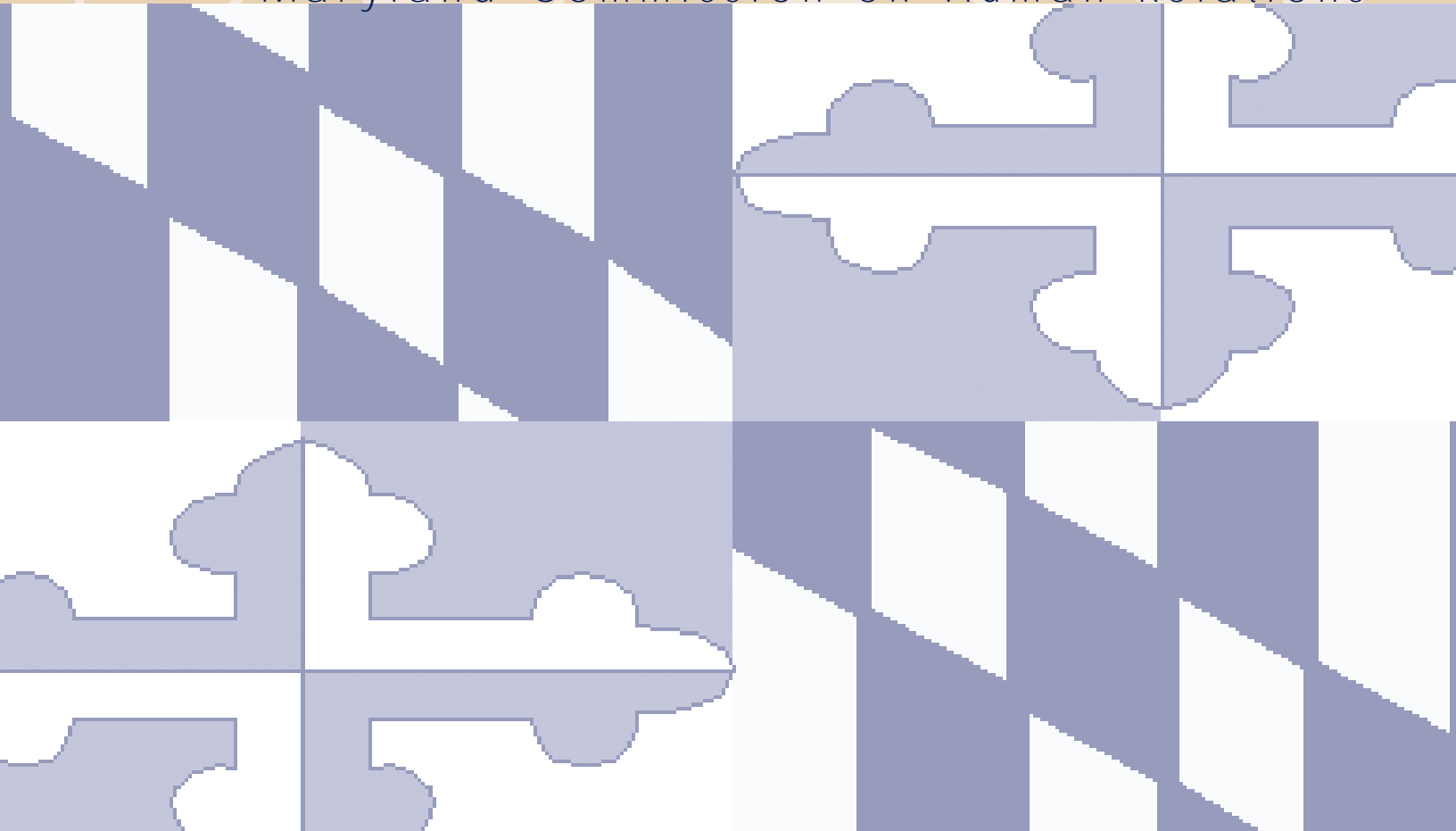


1927-2002
Maryland Commission on Human Relations



6 St. Paul Street, 9th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202-1631
www.mchr.state.md.us

Celebrating 75 years of Providing Equal Opportunity

2002 annual report

OUR **V I S I O N** IS TO HAVE A STATE THAT IS FREE OF ANY TRACE OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION.

MARYLAND COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS



It is the mission of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to ensure equal opportunity to all through the enforcement of Maryland's laws against discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing; to provide educational and outreach services related to the provisions of this law; and to promote and improve human relations in Maryland.

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Letter of Transmittal

State of Maryland Commission on Human Relations



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Silvia S. Rodriguez
Vice-Chairperson
Oretha Bridgwaters
Commissioners
Young R. Choi, Ph. D.
Barbara Dezmon, Ph. D.
Norman I. Gelman
Ernest Leatherbury, Sr.
Rufus McKinney
Jack M. Neville, Jr.
Thomas E. Owen

January 2, 2003

The Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor
The Honorable Governor-Elect Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
The Honorable Members of the General Assembly

Dear Governor Glendening, Governor-Elect Ehrlich and Members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the Commissioners and staff, we hereby submit the Annual Report of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations (MCHR) for the Fiscal Year 2002 in accordance with Article 49B, § 3 (b), Annotated Code of Maryland.

The MCHR plays an important role in safeguarding the rights of Marylanders. In 2002, which marked the Commission's 75th anniversary, the agency continued to make a difference in the lives of Marylanders by delivering services more effectively than ever before. To promote and ensure the right to equal opportunity, the MCHR has intensified its efforts to help individuals and organizations to resolve problems of discrimination.

Through the Community Outreach and Education Unit, the Commission assisted Marylanders in recognizing and preventing unlawful discrimination, directly improving the State's business and social environments. By participating in MCHR training and consultation, employers, housing and public accommodations providers learn to avoid discrimination and conserve the financial resources that might otherwise be spent on litigation and penalties.

Mediation initiatives were expanded through the Case Processing Division. The Commission trained volunteer mediators to help resolve disputes more quickly and cost-effectively, without cost to the State. Due to the high quality of its investigations, the Division brought increased Federal funding to Maryland and reduced the agency's case-processing time to 60% below national averages.

The Commission completed significant litigation in a number of public accommodations and housing cases through the General Counsel's Office and provided technical assistance training on the law. The Systemic Investigations Unit completed several major pattern and practice investigations, including a study of lending discrimination within major financial institutions.

Maryland enjoys a national reputation as a leader in civil rights due to the work and dedication of the MCHR staff and Commissioners and the support of the Governor and General Assembly. We extend our appreciation to the Governor and the General Assembly for your continuing commitment to the people of Maryland.

Very truly yours,

Silvia S. Rodriguez
Chairperson

Henry B. Ford
Executive Director

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Maryland Commission on Human Relations

The Maryland Commission on Human Relations represents the interests of the State to ensure equal opportunity for all through the enforcement of Article 49B, Annotated Code of Maryland. The MCHR hears complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations from members of protected classes under Article 49B.

The Commission is an independent agency that serves individuals, businesses, and community concerns throughout the State. The Commission's mandate is to protect legally defined groups, develop bias-free selection, hiring, retention, and promotion procedures by employers; increase housing opportunities to all groups in Maryland; ensure equal access to public accommodations and services; increase knowledge and understanding of anti-discrimination laws and help to improve human relations within the State.

2002 Initiatives

To fulfill these mandates, the Commission set forth the following objectives in its Managing for Results plan for fiscal 2002:

- ▲ In order to affect a general cultural shift toward more conciliatory atmospheres within organizations and reduce case-processing time, the plan aimed to increase the proportion of complaints resolved through mediation.

In 2002, the Commission established a Mediation Unit and increased the number of cases referred to mediation by 34% in its first six months of operation. (Refer to Case Processing section, pages 6-8).

- ▲ In order to reduce barriers to equal opportunity, the plan directed that information, education programs and collaborations be developed to help business and community groups eliminate discrimination and provide greater awareness of MCHR services.

MCHR diversity and technical assistance training was delivered to more than 2,000 individuals in 2002. "Hits" to the MCHR website increased by 500%. (Refer to Community Education and Outreach, 16-17; Office of the General Counsel, 14-15; and Technology Services, 18.)

- ▲ In order to advance human relations within the State, the plan called for the MCHR to have a prominent and useful role in addressing Hate Crimes.

The Commission produced a community resource guide, provides training on preventing and addressing hate crimes and continues to monitor and respond to reported hate crimes. (Refer to Case Processing page 11, and Community Education and Outreach, 16- 17.)

- ▲ In order to eliminate patterns of discrimination that have widespread impact on protected classes, the plan specifies that systemic investigations be undertaken.

The Systemic Investigations Unit completed several studies including three major investigations of lending institutions suspected of unlawful discrimination. (Refer to Office of the General Counsel section, page 15.)

THERE IS HEREBY CREATED A COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS TO CONSIST OF NINE MEMBERS WHO SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR for a term of six years, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate (Article 49B / 1 [a]) WHENEVER ANY PROBLEM OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ARISES, THE COMMISSION IMMEDIATELY MAY HOLD AN INVESTIGATORY HEARING. The purpose of the hearing shall be to resolve the problem promptly by the gathering of all the facts from all interested parties and making such recommendations as may be necessary. The Commissioners, in addition to their other duties, shall serve as an appeal board for the review of decision of the hearing examiner (Article 49B / 3 [c] and [d])

- ▲ In order to provide prompt, thorough investigations and resolutions of allegations of discrimination, the plan promised a reduction of the average time to process complaints to below the Federal standard.

The Commission reduced the average age of open cases to 60 % below national averages in 2002, and decreased processing time of public accommodations cases by 36%. (Refer to page 8.)

- ▲ In order to reduce barriers to equal opportunity, the plan calls for effectively serving all Marylanders.

The Commission directed its primary publications to be translated into Spanish to assist Maryland's Latino population in understanding equal protections under the law. (Refer to page 16.)

2002 Commissioners

Silvia S. Rodriguez, Chairperson, was appointed to the Commission in 1982 and began her appointment as Chairperson in 1995. She is a business owner and resides in Montgomery County. Her term expires in 2003.

Thomas E. Owen, Vice Chairperson, was appointed to the Commission in November 1998. He is a retired educator, and resides in Harford County. His term expires in 2007.

Oretha Bridgwaters was appointed to the Commission in 1995. She is an educator residing in Prince Georges County. Her term expires in 2006.

Young Choi, Ph.D., was appointed to the Commission in April 1998. Commissioner Choi is an educator and a resident of Howard County. His term expires in July, 2005.

Barbara Dezmon, Ph.D., was appointed to the Commission in November 1997. She is an educator and a resident of Baltimore County. Her term expires in 2007.

Norman I. Gelman was appointed to the Commission in October 1998. He is a retired public policy consultant and resides in Montgomery County. Commissioner Gelman's term expires in 2005.

Ernest Leatherbury was appointed to the Commission in November 1997. He is a law enforcement official residing in Somerset County. His term expires in 2005.

Rufus W. McKinney was appointed to the Commission in 1996. He is a retired attorney and corporate executive and resides in Montgomery County. His term expires in 2003.

J.M. Neville, Jr., A.C.S.W., L.C.S.W.C. was appointed to the Commission in November 1997. He is a behavioral health professional and resides in Baltimore County. His term expires in July, 2005.

Commissioner Activities

- ▲ Chairperson was recognized as one of 16 Outstanding Women in Maryland Government for her support of equal rights.

- ▲ Chairperson worked with Montgomery County Human Relations Commission to expand covered bases of County's equal rights protections.

- ▲ MCHR Commissioners supported Annual Human Rights Day in Annapolis through participation in the Maryland Human Rights Network.

- ▲ Commissioners assisted in organizing the second annual Hate Crimes Summit which brought together community leaders, police personnel, Human Rights agencies, and members of the public to provide resources and information on addressing and preventing hate crimes.



Chairperson Silvia S. Rodriguez was recognized as one of 16 Outstanding Women in Maryland Government.

Case Processing Division

The Case Processing Division provides intake, investigation, mediation and processing services for the complaints filed with MCHR in housing, public accommodations and employment. The Division provides those services through a Case Control Unit and four Investigative Units. One of the Investigative Units, Field Operations, has full service offices in Hagerstown, Leonardtown, Cambridge and Salisbury.

The Division receives complaints directly from individuals who believe they have been victims of unlawful discrimination and also processes cases for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

New Mediation Unit Enhances Quality of MCHR Services

In November 2001, the Commission hired a Mediation Program Director to spearhead an innovative mediation initiative. The new MCHR Mediation Program formally began in January 2002 as an alternative to litigation for disputing parties.

The Mediation Program receives many case referrals directly at the intake level when a charge is first filed. Cases are also referred to mediation from investigations staff and from the General Counsel's Office when mediation may become appropriate at a later phase in case processing. At this time, the majority of cases referred to mediation are employment cases.

Since January 2002, approximately 40 volunteer mediators have been recruited and trained. To improve efficiency, a new database system has been developed to track mediation outcomes and the intake process has been improved to encourage early resolution of complaints. To promote the benefits of effective mediation, the MCHR investigative staff has been trained in conflict resolution techniques. The MCHR has also enhanced the program by creating and distributing a mediation newsletter, holding continu-

ing education classes for the volunteers, and offering mediation services in three MCHR offices:

Baltimore, Leonardtown, and Salisbury. All of these elements have allowed the MCHR to pioneer an agency-wide dispute resolution program that has been an overwhelming success.



Mediation Program Director Tara Letwinsky leads mediation volunteers during an MCHR training session.

Mediation allows cases to be processed effectively while saving the parties and the State money and time which might otherwise be spent on investigations and litigation. A successfully mediated case only takes about 73 days to close from the time it is sent to the program versus an average 224 days for a case which must go through the entire process. The program focuses not only on resolving individual charges but also on repairing the relationships among disputing parties in all cases.

One of the goals for the program is to close cases quickly and efficiently and to promote a State free of discrimination by teaching the public to have a direct hand in resolving their own disputes. The Commission's goal is to set a standard of excellence for alternative dispute resolution throughout Maryland.

Program Highlights

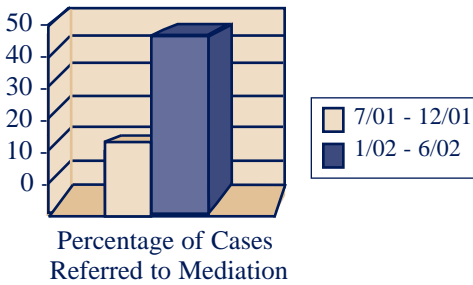
- ▲ MCHR signed an exclusive Memorandum of Understanding with the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) committing the Department of Human Resources to mediate all charges filed against them with the MCHR.
- ▲ Program Director participated in numerous state dispute resolution organization meetings and co-facilitated several training programs including a seminar for the Maryland Association of Conflict Resolution Organization's (MACRO) Business & Government Initiative 2nd Annual Conference, "Workplace Mediation Conference" in May 2002.
- ▲ Program Director developed a comprehensive, qualitative survey to be completed by the program participants. The survey is used to measure outcomes and other success factors for the program.

Since the new mediation program did not start until halfway through FY 2002, it is most helpful to make comparisons between the first six months of the year (July 2001 – December 2001) and the last six months of the year (January 2002 – June 2002). The comparisons below clearly illustrate the impact the program improvements made after January 1, 2002.

Percentage of Cases Referred to the Mediation Program

July - December 2001: 30 out of 488 total cases were referred to the new mediation program.
6.7% of cases were referred

January - June 2002: 215 out of 533 total cases were referred to the new mediation program.
40.3% of cases were referred

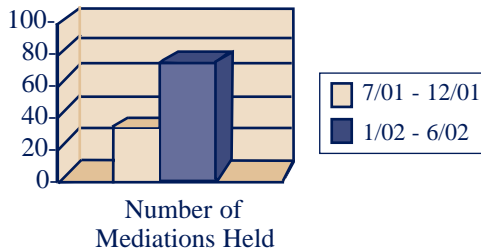


Number of Mediations Held

July - December 2001:
30 mediations were conducted.

January - June 2002:
68 mediations were conducted.

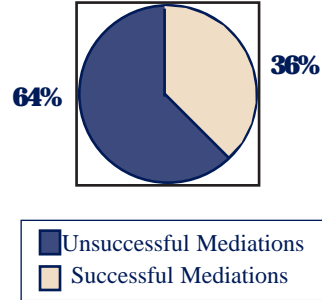
127% increase in the second half of the fiscal year



Percentage of Cases Resolved in Mediation

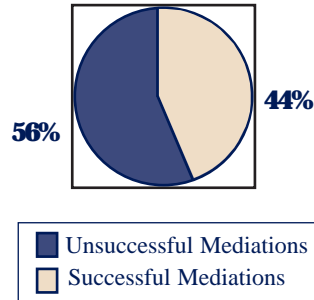
July - December 2001:
 11 out of 30 cases resolved in mediation.
36% of cases successfully resolved through mediation.

July - December 2001



January - June 2002:
 30 out of 68 cases resolved in mediation.
44% of cases successfully resolved through mediation.

January - June 2002



The primary focus of the Division for FY 2002 was, again, on delivery of services in a more efficient manner, while maintaining the highest level of quality of the investigative process.

Intake & Closures

The Case Processing Division was very successful in achieving its objectives in spite of a reduction in staff. The Division was affected by the loss of three case processing positions due to budget constraints. The Division is pleased to report that once again, all contractual obligations were met with a 100% acceptance rate from our Federal partners. While the average time to process a case did decrease in FY 2002, particularly in regard to Public Accommodations cases, the decrease was lower than projected primarily due to the loss of staff.

- ▲ **Intake:** During FY 2002, the Division received a total of 1013 individual complaints of discrimination as follows:

Employment	747	(74%)
Housing	117	(11%)
Public Accommodations	149	(15%)
Total	1013	(100%)

Charts I and II on page 9 provide the county of origin and bases distribution of the complaints.

- ▲ **Closure:** During FY 2002, the Division obtained directly, or in coordination with Office of the General Counsel, over \$561,000.00 in monetary benefits for the people of Maryland.

During FY 2002, the Division completed all work on a total of 880 individual complaints of discrimination as follows:

Employment	661	(75%)
Housing	116	(13%)
Public Accommodations	103	(12%)
Total	880	(100%)

Chart III on page 10 details case closures in FY 2002.

According to federal audits, MCHR again demonstrated the superior quality of the investigations with one of the **highest acceptance rates of completed cases in the nation** in FY 2002. In addition, federal audits of other FEPAs (Fair Employment Practice Agencies: State and local commissions that have the same or similar contractual relationship with EEOC), **revealed that the MCHR inventory of open cases is less than half the age of the national average of open cases.** The age of the pending inventory is an indicator of the time an agency takes to complete a case.

The information below demonstrates that the age of MCHR's pending inventory is dramatically lower than the national average.

FEPAS – 557 days
(national average age of open case)
MCHR – 225 days
(60% lower than national average)

Average Age of Pending Case	2001	2002	% Change
Employment	255	224	-12%
Housing	295	212	-28%
Public Accom.	370	238	-36%

Field Operations

The MCHR provides a full range of services at convenient locations throughout Maryland. In addition to Baltimore, the MCHR has four hub locations in Hagerstown, Leonardtown, Cambridge and Salisbury. The MCHR also provides services at satellite locations in Oakland, Cumberland, Frederick, Prince Frederick and Hughesville. The intake, investigation, mediation referral, settlement and education services provide a strong, local presence, which promotes MCHR's mission throughout Maryland.

After the filing of any complaint the Executive Director shall **CONSIDER THE COMPLAINT AND SHALL REFER IT TO THE COMMISSION'S STAFF FOR PROMPT INVESTIGATION** and ascertainment of the facts.. (Article 49B / 10[a]).

CHART I. INTAKE OF CASES FY 2002
EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION,
AND HOUSING

FREQUENCY BY COUNTY

REGION COUNTY	E	PA	H	TOTAL
WEST				
ALLEGANY	9	2	0	11
FREDERICK	17	2	5	24
GARRETT	0	0	0	0
WASHINGTON	37	4	1	42
CENTRAL				
ANNE ARUNDEL	67	24	6	97
BALTO. CITY	157	36	18	211
BALTO. CO.	134	27	20	181
CARROLL	10	2	1	13
HARFORD	19	2	1	20
HOWARD	35	2	5	42
MONTGOMERY	49	6	21	76
PR. GEORGE'S	47	9	28	84
SOUTHERN MARYLAND				
CALVERT	10	1	0	11
CHARLES	18	2	2	22
ST. MARY'S	25	0	0	25
EASTERN SHORE				
CAROLINE	2	1	1	4
CECIL	4	1	2	7
DORCHESTER	18	1	0	19
KENT	3	1	1	5
QUEEN ANNE'S	6	1	2	9
SOMERSET	6	0	2	8
TALBOT	22	0	0	22
WICOMICO	45	2	0	47
WORCESTER	9	23	1	33
TOTALS	747	149	117	1013

CHART II. INTAKE OF CASES FY 2002*
EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION, & HOUSING

TOTAL INTAKE

BASIS	E	PA	H
RACE			
BLACK	339	48	55
WHITE	31	1	1
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	2	1	0
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN	1	0	0
OTHER	19	4	0
SEX			
FEMALE	155	4	9
MALE	61	25	2
SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
	17	2	0
AGE			
	138	29	0
DISABILITY			
	149	63	42
RETALIATION			
	122	0	2
RELIGION			
7TH DAY ADVENTIST	1	0	0
MUSLIM	4	0	1
JEWISH	0	0	0
PROTESTANT	0	0	0
CATHOLIC	2	0	0
OTHER	10	0	1
NATIONAL ORIGIN			
HISPANIC	2	0	4
EAST INDIAN	2	1	1
OTHER	34	2	0
FAMILIAL STATUS			
	NA	NA	10
COLOR			
	1	0	4

* *Employment, Public Accommodation and Housing cases filed on alleged basis of discrimination. Charges may be filed on multiple bases.*

CHART III. CLOSED CASES FY 2002*
EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION, & HOUSING

CLOSED CASES FY2002

BASIS	E	PA	H
RACE			
BLACK	262	27	52
WHITE	33	3	5
ASIAN	3	0	1
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN	1	0	0
OTHER	7	2	0
SEX			
FEMALE	133	6	9
MALE	56	10	1
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2	0	0
AGE	123	13	NA
DISABILITY	100	19	39
RETALIATION	99	0	2
RELIGION			
7TH DAY ADVENTIST	0	0	0
MUSLIM	3	0	1
JEWISH	1	0	0
PROTESTANT	0	0	0
OTHER	3	0	1
NATIONAL ORIGIN			
HISPANIC	4	2	5
EAST INDIAN	1	1	1
OTHER	31	3	2
FAMILIAL STATUS	NA	NA	14
COLOR	2	0	6
MARITAL STATUS	1	0	0
TOTALS	865	86	139

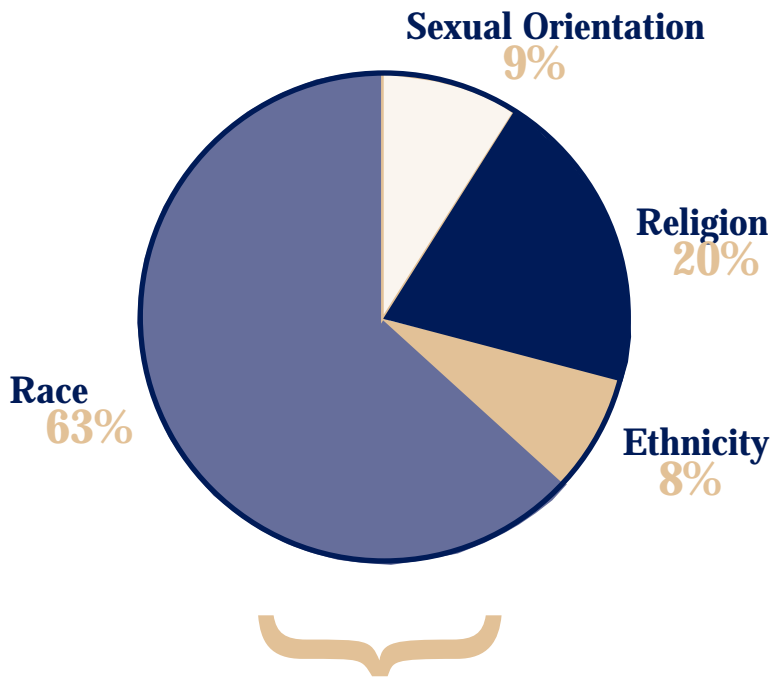
* Cases may be filed on more than one basis; totals of complaint bases exceed closures.

Hate Crimes Monitoring

As part of its mission to eliminate unlawful discrimination and improve human relations within the State, the MCHR investigates hate crime incidents and provides community outreach services to address and prevent hate crimes. The MCHR monitors hate crime activity in cooperation with the Maryland State Police.

There were a total of 731 hate incidents reported to the agency in 2002, an increase of 35% over 2001. Thirty-one incidents involved practitioners of the Islamic faith and occurred after the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center bombing. The majority of the 66 reported hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation occurred at colleges and universities. Maryland public schools have seen a steady rise in racially motivated incidents since the year 2000.

The Maryland Commission on Human Relations provides accurate reporting and classification of hate incidents in cooperation with the Maryland State Police, and offers leadership in addressing hate related incidents by providing victim assistance, education for law enforcement personnel in responding to hate crimes and community education.



Hate Crimes were reported on the bases of race, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity in 2002.

Office of the General Counsel

The Office of the General Counsel is the legal advisor and counsel to the agency. It is an independent law department created by the legislature in Article 49B, § 2(c), Annotated Code of Maryland. The office is charged with representing the agency at all hearings and judicial proceedings to which the MCHR is a party. The attorneys in the general counsel's office handle litigation before the Office of Administrative Hearings, Commission appeal panels and State and federal appellate courts. In addition to litigation responsibilities, the General Counsel's Office provides all opinions to the agency's staff, responds to legal inquiries from the public, drafts legislation and regulations, provides staff training, and, upon request, technical assistance training to those outside the agency. The Systemic Investigations Unit operates within the General Counsel's office. It seeks out patterns and practices of unlawful discrimination, recommending action when appropriate.

Litigation: Employment

Kulmert and Heward v. Double T Diner

The Commission reached a Settlement Agreement in a sexual harassment case in April of 2002, ending a contentious legal battle that lasted almost 12 years. The Agreement requires Double T Diner to pay two former waitresses \$40,000 and \$20,000 respectively. The women were forced to resign their waitress positions after being repeatedly harassed by the owner.

Public Accommodations

In 2002, General Counsel's Office negotiated a number of settlements to provide access to public accommodations for those who use wheelchairs for mobility. Activists in the disability community filed several of the complaints.

Reuter v. Sista's Cards and Gifts

The Respondent agreed to replace the existing door providing entry into the establishment, and to

ensure that barriers would not block retail aisle space to those who use wheelchairs.

Reuter v. Blaustein Building

The Respondent agreed to install an automated door device and ramp to provide entry into the building and to replace the existing elevator structure and call buttons to be accessible to wheelchair users.

Reuter v. Mayor and City Council of Baltimore (Abel Wolman Building)

Baltimore City settled this case prior to the public hearing by agreeing to alter an existing front entrance, adding a wheelchair ramp alongside the building and a wheelchair lift to provide interior access up a stairway.

Reuter v. Hilltop Carryout

The parties reached an agreement in which the Respondent agreed to remove the column barrier at the entrance, and provide ramp access for wheelchair users.

Reuter v. Matsuri

The Respondent, a restaurant in Baltimore's Federal Hill, agreed to put in a door that makes the restaurant accessible to wheelchair users.

Reuter v. Beadazzled

The Commission negotiated a settlement with the Charles Street retailer to install an interior ramp in order to make the store accessible to wheelchair users.

Phillips v. Johansson's Down Under

The Respondent agreed to make the pub, located on the lower floor of the two-story dining facility, accessible to wheelchair users by installing an elevator to provide access as part of a more expansive renovation.

Phillips v. Clayworks

The Commission negotiated settlement with the Mount Washington pottery studio to make classes accessible to wheelchair users.

Cepko v. CVS Pharmacy

The Commission reached a Settlement Agreement with a CVS Pharmacy outlet located in Baltimore prior to the scheduled public hearing. The pharmacy agreed to modify the existing entrance by adding an automated door device and to maintain accessibility of retail aisle space for those who use wheelchairs for mobility.

Housing

The MCHR successfully resolved several housing cases in 2002, involving disability and mortgage lending discrimination.

Riddic v. Hearth. A settlement in the amount of \$30,000 was reached in a case in which an apartment manager refused to allow a woman who had become disabled to move to a lower floor in order to permit her wheelchair accessibility to her home.

Alexander v. Levin. Respondent had refused to make an accommodation in his “no written lease” policy so that the Complainant, who is disabled, could obtain a ground lease for his mobile home. Respondent agreed to pay the Complainant \$15,000 after the case was presented in Circuit Court.

Moore v. First Mortgage Services, Inc. The Commission obtained an Order from the Circuit Court to obtain relevant information in a loan discrimination case.

Wine v. Residential Realty Group. The Respondent agreed to maintain the signage at a parking space designated for the Complainant. Respondent also agreed to provide any additional accommodation necessary to allow the Complainant, who is disabled, equal opportunity to use and enjoy his home.

The MCHR continued to pursue penalty awards under Maryland’s fair housing “hate crimes statute.”

Price v. Mosetti. The Commission obtained a Default Judgment and Order to Show Cause why Respondents Benjamin and Kenneth Mosetti should not be cited for contempt for failure to comply with a Judgment to pay \$40,305 in penalties and damages issued in Circuit Court.

The judgment was issued on December 8, 2000 by an administrative law judge in awarding the highest penalty available under the housing “hate crimes” statute. The judgment included a \$10,000 civil penalty payable to the General Fund of the State of Maryland.

Court of Appeals

Karasek v. Freedom Express. The Commission argued before the Court of Appeals of Maryland the issue of the Circuit Court’s authority to control how the Commission conducts an investigation prior to a final agency decision in a subpoena enforcement action.

Coleman v. Talbot County Department of Correction. The Commission successfully argued before the Court of Appeals of Maryland the issue of the Circuit Court’s jurisdiction to issue injunctive relief pursuant to Article 49B, § 4, to stop Respondent from interfering with a Commission investigation.

2002 Initiatives

In addition to litigation responsibilities, The General Counsel’s Office responds to legal inquiries from the public, drafts legislation and regulations, provides training to agency staff and those outside the agency.

FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC maintenance of business and good government assure all persons Equal Opportunity in receiving Employment regardless of Race, Color, Religion, Sex, Age, Familial Status, National Origin, Marital Status, Disability, Genetic Information or Sexual Orientation **IT IS UNLAWFUL** for an owner or operator of a Place of Public Accommodation to withhold from, or deny any of the facilities and privileges of a place of public accommodation . **IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND TO PROVIDE FOR FAIR HOUSING THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF MARYLAND, TO ALL ITS CITIZENS IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL TO COERCE, INTIMIDATE, THREATEN, INTERFERE WITH, OR RETALIATE** against any person in the exercise or Enjoyment of their Home (Article 49 B, Annotated Code of Maryland, / 4, 5, 19, 24).

Consultation on Creating Human Relations Agencies

General Counsel and Executive Director provided consultation and technical assistance to local and international jurisdictions seeking to create human relations (rights) agencies in Kent County and Cumberland City. Assistant General Counsel and Executive Director met with an international delegation from Turkey to discuss human rights laws and procedures.

Response to Post-September 11, 2002

General Counsel staff participated in several initiatives in response to the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, including the Interfaith for Racial Justice's Racial Healing Week, the U.S. Department of Justice's "Islamic, Middle Eastern Awareness and Training Seminar" for law enforcement agencies, the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office's (MACRO) Muslim/Arab American Discussion Group and "***We Are One Community, Fighting Acts of Ethnic, Racial, Religious and Other Prejudice Post 9/11***," and the National Conference for Community and Justice's (NCCJ) "Voice of Conscience." General Counsel and MCHR Hate Crimes investigator helped plan the Annual Hate Crimes Summit co-sponsored by the MCHR, the Coalition Against Violence and Extremism (COVE), the U.S. Department of Justice and the Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA). General Counsel also participated in the National Issues Forum held at the National Press Club. Systemic Unit Attorney was a panelist on the Terrorism Roundtable held by the Maryland Multi-Housing Association.



Glendora C. Hughes, MCHR General Counsel (center) with Senator Jennie M. Forehand (left) and Edith Brandt-Tarrell (right), Maryland Port Authority at Annual Human Rights Day in Annapolis.

Publications and Media

- ▲ Through the work of the Systemic Unit Attorney and an Assistant General Counsel, the agency unveiled its newly amended Disability Guidelines. The comprehensive new Disability Discrimination Guidelines amend the current regulations to address discrimination against persons with disabilities in the areas of employment and public accommodations. The new regulations represent the first major revision of the Guidelines in over 20 years and include a section on making historic buildings wheelchair-accessible.
- ▲ General Counsel's article "***Genetically Incorrect: Genetic Privacy and Protection in the Workplace***," was published in the January/February 2002 edition of The Maryland Bar Journal.
- ▲ Systemic Unit Attorney appeared in a debate on the "***Gender Wage Gap***" on The Marc Steiner Show on WYPR FM (Baltimore).

Outreach Activities

General Counsel helped to plan the 2nd Annual Human Rights Day in partnership with COVE and the Maryland Human Rights Network (MHRN). In addition, General Counsel and legal staff participated in various outreach activities in response to passage of legislation adding sexual orientation and genetic information as covered bases to Article 49B. Activities included staff training and technical assistance regarding the new law for many organizations throughout the year.

General Counsel and staff presented lectures and training regarding sexual harassment law and prevention, disability discrimination law, fair housing, predatory lending, legal updates on the State's anti-discrimination law and workplace mediation.

Systemic Investigations Unit

During FY 2002, the Systemic Investigations Unit, despite continued understaffing and the permanent loss of one position due to the hiring freeze, accomplished the following:

▲ **Completed three major pattern and practice investigations** of lending institutions that were accused of racial and/or national origin discrimination in refusing to make home mortgage loans to minority applicants in the Baltimore, Prince Georges, and Montgomery County metropolitan area. In two of the cases where African-Americans were denied at a much higher rate than White applicants, a statistical analysis of data revealed that non-discriminatory factors like applicants' credit scores and financial ratios – rather than applicant race – were statistically significant predictors of the lenders' decisions. In the third case, involving a bank, the analysis of data revealed that applicant race (African American) and national origin (Latino) were statistically significant predictors of outcome even when credit-related and financial variables were controlled for.

▲ **Completed a report, *Lenders With Majority Black Customer Bases (May, 2002)***, which analyzed Year 2000 mortgage lending data to identify lenders that might be targeting African-Americans for predatory lending. From data on over 500 lenders that received applications for conventional (non-government-backed) loans related to property in Maryland, it was found that 31 lenders had originated a majority of their applications and loans from African-American customers. A profile of the 31 lenders showed that virtually all of them were sub-prime lenders (specialists in making high-cost loans to persons with flawed credit), and some were subject to consent decrees with the Department of Justice and/or pending legal actions related to predatory or discriminatory practices.

▲ **Began a statewide study of the State's licensing and regulation of day care providers** and the role of provider race in the process. The study was initiated in response to a directive to the Department of Human Resources (Child Care Administration) by the Maryland House of Delegates, Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Resources.

▲ **Engaged in class-wide settlement efforts in an employment discrimination case** involving a respondent who was the subject of 30 separate probable cause findings involving allegations of racial discrimination in compensation, job assignments and scheduling, racial harassment and sexual harassment. The conciliation efforts, though unsuccessful, lead to 30 separate certifications for public hearings, including a Commission Complaint, the most cases ever certified against the same respondent.

▲ **Extended the study *Employment of Women and Minorities in Maryland State Government (June, 2001)*** to include data on hiring, promotion, and adverse personnel actions over three years (1999 to 2001), by 30 large State agencies.

THE COMMISSION SHALL... CONDUCT STUDIES CONCERNING THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATORY housing practices... [and file] a complaint in the same manner as if the complaint had been filed by an individual... (Article 49B, / 9 [b]).

Community Outreach & Education

In its second year, the activities of the Community Outreach and Education Unit (COEU) have continued to increase awareness of the Commission's and the State's commitment to protecting Marylanders against discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing. In addition, it provided opportunities to prevent discrimination and foster inclusiveness through a variety of new formats such as diversity education, exposure to mediation techniques and through expanded partnerships with universities, businesses and human rights groups.

Outreach and training initiatives reached more than 3,000 in 2002 and, through word of mouth, MCHR web pages, media placements, radio and television appearances and event participation, information about MCHR services reached thousands more.

As a result of State budget cuts, the unit lost one of its 3.5 positions. In spite of the cut-backs, the Community Outreach and Education Unit has met or surpassed virtually all of its estimated objectives. This has largely been accomplished by a higher-than-estimated popularity of community training programs in diversity and cultural sensitivity, a trend which is expected to continue as the pool of training participants expands. New training selections, such as conflict resolution workshops, sexual orientation awareness, and classes that provide a combination of technical assistance and cultural sensitivity training attracted many new audiences to MCHR's services.

Program Highlights

- ▲ MCHR training was delivered to more than 2,000 individuals in 2002. Topics included Sexual Orientation, Sexual Harassment, Diversity, Discrimination Law, Hate Crimes, Mediation, and the Social Aspect of Fair Housing.
- ▲ Diversity training is custom-designed for the needs of the audience to which it is delivered. The training which was

most requested in 2002 fell into the following categories: Prejudice Reduction, Cultural Awareness, Racism, Workplace Attitudes, Homophobia and Respect for Others.

- ▲ Training was delivered to a wide variety of groups, such as universities and colleges, businesses, schools and community groups.
- ▲ Community outreach efforts reached all regions of the State, affording additional opportunities to bring government services to the people.
- ▲ Collaborations with outside groups on the best practices in diversity enhanced mutual understanding and quality of programming, as well as building important partnerships.
- ▲ Policy briefings and workshops were delivered to a variety of leadership groups in the public and private sectors to educate on the value of diversity and emphasize the advantages of creating a discrimination-free environment.
- ▲ Printed publications on MCHR Services, Fair Housing, Education and Training Offerings, Mediation, Hate Crimes, Age Discrimination, and fact sheets on cultural diversity, sexual orientation and legislation information were disseminated to approximately 40,000 throughout Maryland.
- ▲ MCHR's primary publications were translated into Spanish.

Training

One of the main goals of education is to provide factual information and assist in the process of attitudinal change when dealing with the issue of discrimination.



Training Specialist Keith Merkey discusses cultural awareness with the staff of the Engineers Club in Baltimore.

Through the Community Outreach and Education Unit (COEU) and General Counsel's Office (see page 15), workshops and training sessions were delivered to many Maryland businesses and agencies in FY 2002. The COEU has provided training sessions to businesses, community organizations and academic institutions such as:

- ▲ Shire Laboratories
- ▲ HR Solutions
- ▲ ARC of Baltimore
- ▲ Woodland Job Corps Engineer's Society
- ▲ St. Mary's College
- ▲ University of Maryland
- ▲ McDaniel College
- ▲ Salisbury University
- ▲ Towson University
- ▲ Community Colleges of Baltimore County
- ▲ Girl Scouts of Central Maryland
- ▲ Caroline Center
- ▲ Department of Juvenile Justice
- ▲ Chase-Brexton Health Services

Programming topics have included diversity and tolerance education, workplace issues, and, in conjunction with the Office of the General Counsel, sexual orientation, gender, sexual harassment and fair housing issues. In addition, the Mediation Unit has developed conflict resolution training and a volunteer program which has expanded the pool of volunteer mediators throughout the State.

Knowing that persons learn and experience differently, the trainings are designed to be interactive and participatory as well as

reflective and personal. COEU has participated in statewide and regional workshops focusing on discrimination, employment law, and prejudice reduction.

Many of these organizations use COEU workshops several times a year and have developed ongoing relationships for training and consultation.



Engineers Club staff members participate in diversity training exercise.

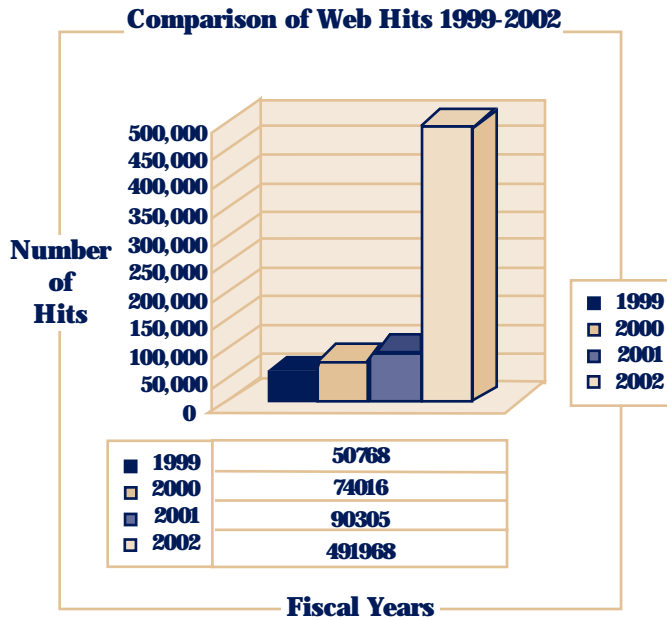
The Commission shall **RENDER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO FEDERAL STATE, LOCAL AND OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS,** and institutions that are formulating or carrying on programs to prevent or eliminate discriminatory housing practices (hold) Conferences to acquaint interested persons with the provisions of this subtitle.. (Article 49B / 26 [2], [3]).

Technology Services Unit

The Technology Services Unit provides state-of-the-art technology support for maximum performance and responsiveness to internal and external users. The Unit also provides Webmaster services for the agency's web site.

MCHR Web Site

The MCHR web site is continually expanding and changing to better serve all of our external and internal customers. During fiscal year 2002, visits ("hits") to the MCHR website increased more than 500% over FY 2001. The increase coincides with additional MCHR outreach initiatives and an overall increase in web usage. During 2002, the MCHR website received 491,965 visitors, compared to 90,305 in FY 2001.



Systems for Increased Efficiency

In 2002, the IT Unit added an MCHR Intranet link to the main website for increased efficiency. Available on line are an IT Service Request, Personnel Action Request, and

Equipment Loan Request forms. The Intranet, which is linked to the MCHR website, is available to employees at headquarters and all field locations.

The IT Unit developed three new applications to reduce paper and improve tracking procedures. These include a Contact Tracking System to track individuals who come to the MCHR for service, a Telephone Call Logging System which tracks all incoming telephone calls and routing, and a new Personnel System to manage human resource data for the agency. The Unit has designed a database that links information from each unit for a variety of uses, including mailing lists, service evaluations and management functions.

State-of-the-Art Equipment for Optimal Performance

Workstation operating systems were upgraded to Windows 2000 and Windows XP in 2002. In addition, a number of laptop units have been added to create mobile capacity for staff field assignments and teleworking. Twenty-two percent of MCHR employees use lap-top computers as their standard system. Seventeen percent have the use of a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) that is interfaced with the current MS Exchange Server.

For investigations and promotional uses, the agency has acquired a high-end digital camera for staff use. The camera takes high quality still photographs, which are stored on a CD-RW disc. The camera can record short moving pictures with sound, providing an expanded capability for documenting investigations.

Creative and effective use of technology has enabled the MCHR to advance its mission in an efficient, cost-effective manner. Through the worldwide web, enhanced administrative systems and judicious use of hardware and software, the MCHR maximizes services to all of its constituents throughout Maryland.

Annual Operating Budget

Alllocated funding in its fiscal year 2002 budget appropriation enabled the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to:

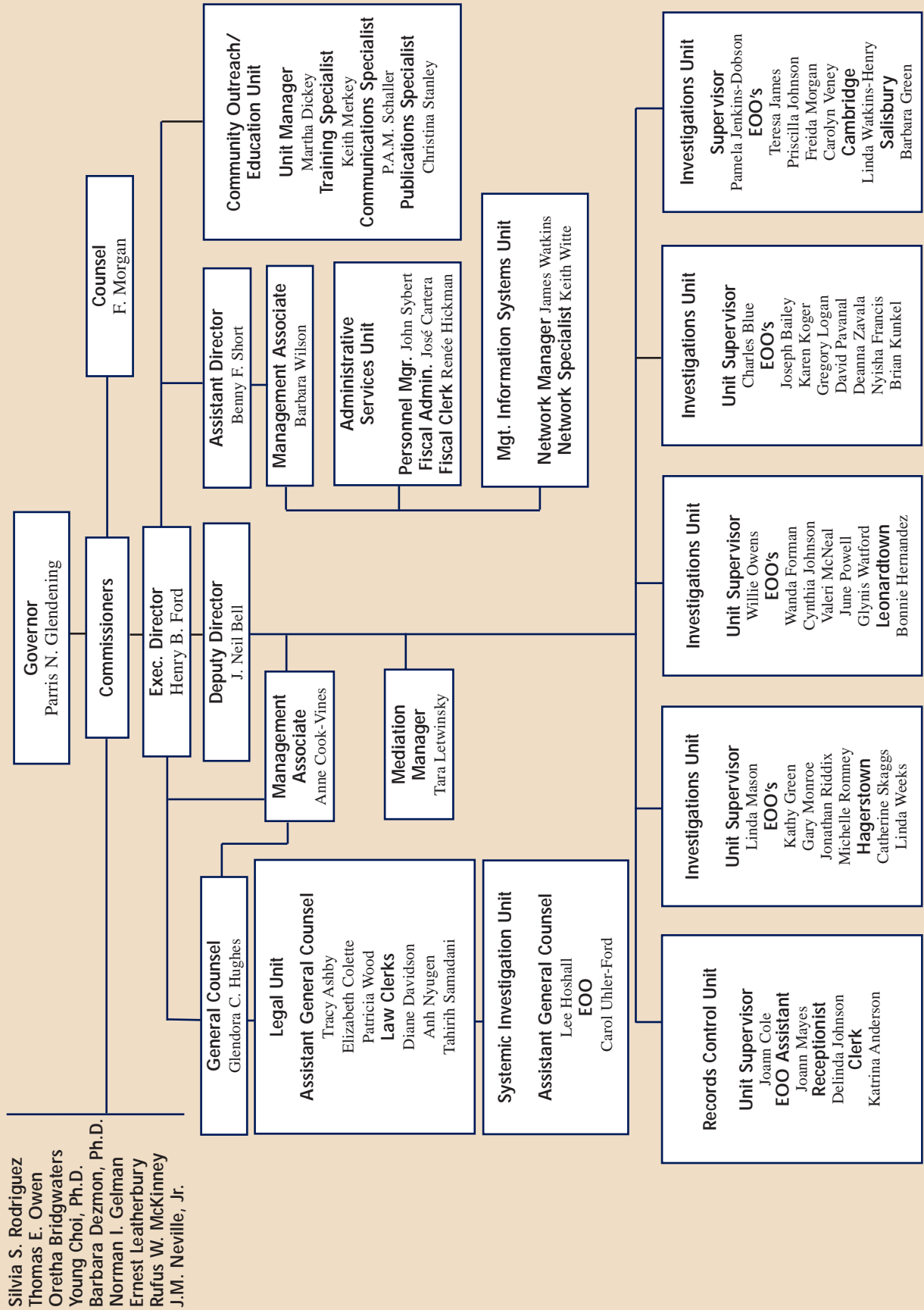
- 1) Continue upgrading the MCHR's automated data and computer network capacity;
- 2) Provide required engineering consultation services to support stakeholders in developing accessible environments for disabled individuals;
- 3) Establish a mediation unit.

Fiscal Years	2001	2002
Total State General Funds	\$2,681,557	\$2,753,635
Federal Funds		
HUD	233,949	286,782
EEOC	539,561	497,059
Total Federal Funds	773,510	783,841
Grand Total	\$3,455,067	3,537,476
Expenses		
Staffing	\$2,934,310	2,997,778
Operating	520,757	539,698
Grand Total Summary	\$3,455,067	3,537,476
Staff Positions		
Authorized Permanent	52.5	53.5*
Contractual	1	1
Total Positions	53.5	53.5



* Number of authorized permanent staff positions was reduced to 51.5 due to statewide cost containment actions in December 2001.

Organization Chart



Silvia S. Rodriguez
Thomas E. Owen
Oretha Bridgwaters
Young Choi, Ph.D.
Barbara Dezmon, Ph.D.
Norman I. Gelman
Ernest Leatherbury
Rufus W. McKinney
J.M. Neville, Jr.

EOO - Equal Opportunity Officer



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