

ANNUAL 2003 REPORT

MCHR

Enhancing Civil Rights
for over 75 years
1927 - 2003

MARYLAND
COMMISSION
ON
HUMAN
RELATIONS

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Maryland Commission on Human Relations



It is the mission of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to ensure equal opportunity for 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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Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.

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Thomas E. Owen

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Roberto N. Allen
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Barbara Dezmon, Ph.D.
Norman I. Gelman
Peter R. Lee
Pamela J. Scarbro

January 1, 2004

The Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor
The Honorable Members of the General Assembly of Maryland

Dear Governor Ehrlich and Members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the members and staff of the Commission on Human Relations, we respectfully submit to you this Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2003 in accordance with Article 49B, § 3 (b), Annotated Code of Maryland.

Protecting the rights of Marylanders is of critical importance during times of economic stress and shifts in population demographics. In 2003, the Commission continued to demonstrate the State's commitment to providing equal opportunity in order to build a healthy society and thriving economy.

Through the Community Outreach and Education Unit, the MCHR reached more than 4,500 Marylanders with training to help individuals and organizations eliminate discrimination, resolve conflict and achieve inclusiveness. The Unit reached an additional 3,500 individuals through events, collaborations and partnerships, building a network of support throughout the State.

Due to the high quality of its investigations, the MCHR further reduced overall case processing times in 2003, while demonstrating the superior quality of its investigations with one of the highest acceptance rates of completed cases in the nation, according to Federal audits. Through the Mediation Program, the Case Processing Division doubled the number of cases that elected to participate in mediation and increased the mediation settlement rate by almost ten percent.

The Commission completed significant litigation in a number of cases through the General Counsel's Office and provided leadership in organizing national and regional events to promote understanding and implementation of anti-discrimination laws. The Systemic Unit completed investigations of two financial institutions accused of mortgage lending discrimination, and neared completion of an investigation of alleged racial bias in a state agency's licensing process.

Throughout its 76-year history the MCHR has been attuned to the changing needs of this diverse state. Thanks to the support of the Governor and the General Assembly, the MCHR staff and commissioners continue to provide the quality of leadership that has made Maryland a national leader in civil rights.

Very truly yours,

Thomas E. Owen
Chairperson

Henry B. Ford
Executive Director

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MARYLAND COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

The Maryland Commission on Human Relations (MCHR) represents the interest of the State to ensure equal opportunity for all through the enforcement of Article 49B, Annotated Code of Maryland. The MCHR receives filed complaints of discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations from members of protected classes who are covered under this law.

The Commission is an independent agency that serves individuals, businesses, and communities throughout the State. Its mandate is to protect against discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation and genetic information. In housing cases, discrimination based on familial status is also unlawful.

In addition, the Commission seeks to assist employers in developing bias-free selection, hiring, retention, and promotion procedures by employers; works to increase equal housing opportunities to all groups in Maryland; to ensure equal access to public accommodations and services; and to promote knowledge and understanding of anti-discrimination laws and help to improve human relations within the State.

2003 HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The Systemic Investigations Unit completed investigations of two financial institutions accused of mortgage lending discrimination. *(See page 7.)*
- ◆ Through the Case Processing Division and the Office of the General Counsel, the MCHR obtained over \$1,011,080 in monetary benefits for the people of Maryland. *(See page 8.)*
- ◆ General Counsel's Office assisted the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in planning and organizing the first national conference for State and local attorneys who handle fair housing cases for their jurisdictions. *(See page 7.)*

- ◆ MCHR's Mediation program more than doubled the number of cases that elected to participate in mediation services and increased the mediation settlement rate by almost ten percent. *(See page 9.)*
- ◆ The Community Outreach and Education Unit helped MCHR reach more than 8,000 individuals in Maryland through events and training. *(See page 13.)*
- ◆ The Commission celebrated its 75th Anniversary in March 2003 with an event that honored the Commission's achievements since its inception in 1927, and celebrated Maryland's progress and national leadership in civil rights.

COMMISSIONER ROSTER

Fiscal year 2003

(Served during period July 1-June 30, 2003)

Silvia S. Rodriguez, Chairperson,

(Montgomery County) was appointed in 1982. Following 21 years of dedicated service, first as a member, then as Chair of the Commission, her term expired in June 2003.

Thomas E. Owen, Vice Chairperson, *(Harford County)* was appointed to the Commission in 1998, his term expires in 2007.

Oretha Bridgwaters *(Prince George's County)* was appointed to the Commission in 1995. She resigned her appointment in July 2002.

Charles Cresswell *(Baltimore County)* was appointed to the Commission in March 2003. His term expires in 2005.

Barbara Dezmon, Ph.D. *(Baltimore County)* was appointed in 1997. Her term expires in 2007.

Norman I. Gelman *(Montgomery County)* was appointed in October 1998. His term expired in June, 2003.

Ernest Leatherbury *(Somerset County)* was appointed in 1997. He served on the Commission until his death in February 2003.

Rufus W. McKinney (Montgomery County) was appointed to the Commission in 1996. His term expired in June 2003.

J.M. Neville, Jr. (Baltimore County) was appointed in November 1997. He resigned his appointment in November 2002.

Appointed after June 30, 2003:

Thomas Owen, Chairperson.

John W. Hermina, Vice Chairperson (Prince George's County). His term expires in June 2009.

Pamela J. Scarbro (Anne Arundel County). Her term expires in June 2005.

Roberto N. Allen (Baltimore City). His term expires in June 2007.

Peter R. Lee (Baltimore County). His term expires in June 2005.

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 circuit and 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. The Unit seeks out patterns and practices of unlawful discrimination, recommending action when appropriate.

SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION

Employment

Nathaniel Mitchell v. Kiewit Construction Co. MCHR settled a case of race discrimination in employment against Kiewit Construction Co., obtaining \$90,000 in lost wages for the complainant. As part of the settlement agreement, the company developed and implemented a personnel policy that addresses discrimination prevention and provides procedures for employees to report discrimination.

Public Accommodations

The MCHR entered into the following settlement agreements requiring modifications to make certain public accommodations accessible, as required under Article 49B § 8, which states: *"It is unlawful...to refuse, withhold from, deny or discriminate against any person the accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, sales, or services because of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability or sexual orientation of any person."*

The Irish Inn at Glen Echo (formerly The Inn at Glen Echo), Montgomery County: The Inn's new owners agreed to install a ramp, new restrooms, and widen aisles to make the restaurant accessible to those who use wheelchairs for mobility.

Starrk Moon Kayaks, Havre de Grace: The owner agreed to make van accessible parking spaces, install a ramp, widen aisles and install a shelf at the check-out to make the retailer accessible to wheelchair-users.

A Cook's Table, a cooking school and retailer in Baltimore's Inner Harbor agreed to install a ramp, widen aisles, and require staff to attend sensitivity training in order to accommodate those who use wheelchairs.

Housing

Dorso v. Smith. The MCHR successfully litigated a case involving an interracial couple that was subjected to on-going racial harassment by a neighbor trying to force them to move. In addition to injunctive relief, a civil penalty in the amount of \$5,000 was assessed against the respondent, Elton D. Smith. The complainants were compelled to undergo mental health treatment as a result of the harassment, and damages were awarded to compensate them for the

costs incurred. The respondent was found guilty of violating Article 49B, Section 24 which makes it illegal *“to coerce, intimidate, threaten, interfere with or retaliate against any person in the exercise or enjoyment of . . . any right granted or protected by [Article 49B].”*

Franklin v. Peter Richardson et al.

The complainant in this case alleged that she was prevented from purchasing a home located on an “adult only” street of a Wicomico County mobile home park because of her minor child. The case was settled prior to the scheduled jury trial. The respondent agreed to pay \$11,250 in addition to other injunctive and administrative relief. The respondent was found liable for violating Article 49B, § 22 which makes it illegal to discriminate against any person in the sale or rental of a dwelling because of their familial status.

Moore v. Country Club Apartments

The MCHR settled a housing discrimination case in which an apartment complex owner refused to grant a waiver to allow a tenant to keep a service animal in her apartment without paying an additional deposit. In the settlement, the respondent agreed to pay \$5,000 to the complainant, pay a \$500 civil penalty to the State, and participate in sensitivity training. The landlord also promised to provide a letter of apology and make sure that any negative credit information that arose from the situation be removed from the complainant’s credit report. The respondent was found guilty of violating Article 49B, §22 which makes it illegal to refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services necessary to afford an individual with a disability equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

COURT OF APPEALS

MCHR v. Talbot County Detention Center

The Commission undertook an investigation of an employment discrimination complaint by a female correction officer at the Talbot County Detention Center. The Detention Center wanted to have a management representative and an attorney present to record statements made by witnesses at confidential interviews between the complainant and the MCHR investigation. The

Commission sought an injunction from the Circuit Court to prevent Detention Center management from being present but the injunction was denied. The Court of Appeals reversed that decision and issued the injunction, holding that the Center’s presence would “have the effect of intimidating or influencing witnesses and frustrating the truth-seeking and confidential nature of the investigative process.”

MCHR v. Freedom Express/Domegold

The Court of Appeals affirmed the authority of the MCHR to issue and enforce subpoenas in its investigations in resolving an appeal made by the respondent in an employment discrimination case. The respondent claimed that MCHR lacked jurisdiction to subpoena documents that would prove that the company employed the minimum fifteen employees to make it liable under Article 49B, Annotated Code of Maryland for employment discrimination. The Circuit Court had initially declined to enforce the subpoena. The Court of Appeals reversed the lower court and ordered that the subpoena be enforced.

MCHR v. Kaydon Ring & Seal, Inc.

Reversing a decision by the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the Court of Special Appeals ordered this case back to the Office of Administrative Hearings for an Administrative Law Judge to resolve evidence of racial discrimination. This decision came after two hearings, three written decisions and three prior appeals of an MCHR action awarding \$20,328.60 plus interest to a discharged Jamaican worker. A fourth decision is pending.

SYSTEMIC UNIT

The Commission’s Systemic Unit initiates pattern or practice investigations and litigation based on research it conducts in response to information from individuals or groups indicating company-wide patterns of discrimination. Systemic investigations involve extensive interviews of numerous witnesses, reviews of thousands of documents, data entry, and advanced statistical analysis. When an investigation is completed, the Unit institutes litigation with the

Office of Administrative Hearings or State circuit courts in each case where probable cause is found. In addition, the Unit negotiates agreements with respondents for class-wide relief at all stages of cases, conducts compliance reviews, and designs empirical studies of discrimination.

During FY 2003, the Unit:

- ◆ Completed investigations of two financial institutions accused of mortgage lending discrimination. In one case, the Unit found probable cause to believe that a national bank had engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination based on race and national origin, while in the other case, the Unit found no probable cause. A large security contractor accused of discriminating against black employees in a reduction-in-force was found not to have engaged in discrimination.
- ◆ Instituted litigation on behalf of 26 employees of a Baltimore-based industrial laundry that was found to have engaged in a pattern of racial harassment, sexual harassment, and racial discrimination concerning compensation, job assignments, and work hours harassment. Twenty-seven Statements of Charges were filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- ◆ Began to execute the conciliation phase of a major mortgage lending case begun in FY 2002, that potentially involves hundreds of victims.
- ◆ Neared the completion of a statewide investigation of alleged racial bias in a state agency's licensing process.
- ◆ Reviewed and analyzed the results of 30 tests by fair housing testers who contacted insurance agencies for quotes on homeowner's insurance.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In cooperation with the Community Outreach and Education Unit, the General Counsel and staff provided technical assistance training on Article 49B,

Annotated Code of Maryland to employers, employees, realtors, property-owners, landlords, managers, educational institutions, State and local government agencies. Topics included discrimination based on sexual harassment, sexual orientation, genetic information and disability. Other trainings covered fair housing law and mortgage lending practices. General Counsel's office provided in-service training for MCHR investigators and orientation for MCHR volunteer mediators regarding the agency's procedures for handling employment, housing and public accommodation complaints.

2003 INITIATIVES

The General Counsel's Office:

- ◆ Assisted the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in planning and organizing the first national conference for State and local attorneys who handle fair housing cases for their jurisdictions. MCHR Attorneys also participated in panels and workshops at the event. Over 200 attorneys from around the country participated in the conference.
- ◆ Participated in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Baltimore Technical Assistance Program (TAP), which provides assistance to employers on how to handle employment discrimination complaints filed on the federal, State or local level.
- ◆ Assisted the National Conference on Community and Justice (NCCJ) in conducting dialogues on diversity, tolerance and discrimination in healthcare, and participated in NCCJ annual media day to discuss how minority groups are portrayed in the news.
- ◆ Planned and participated in the annual Maryland Human Rights Day in Annapolis to provide information on civil rights legislation before the 2003 General Assembly.
- ◆ Made presentations on home insurance discrimination before the Legislative Committee of the Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors, and presented on mortgage lending trends at a housing conference in Carroll County.

- ◆ Participated in National Dialogue on Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare hosted by the National Coalition Building Institute and the American Assembly.
- ◆ The Systemic Unit Attorney published an article on Maryland's new disability guidelines for the June, 2003 issue of the *Maryland Bar Bulletin*.

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 an Intake 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).

INTAKE & CLOSURES

- ◆ **Intake:** During FY 2003, the Division received a total of 1,074 individual complaints of discrimination as follows:

Employment	857	(80%)
Housing	103	(9%)
Public Accommodations	<u>114</u>	<u>(11%)</u>
Total	1,074	100%

Charts I and II (see page 10) show the number of complaints filed under each protected class category (basis distribution) and county of origin of the complaints.

- ◆ **Closure:** During FY 2003, the Division obtained directly, or in coordination with Office of the General Counsel, over **\$1,011,080** in monetary benefits for the people of Maryland.

During FY 2003, the Division completed all work on a total of 1,010 individual complaints

of discrimination as follows:

Employment	708	(70%)
Housing	145	(14%)
Public Accommodations	<u>157</u>	<u>(16%)</u>
Total	1,010	100%

Chart III (see page 11) provides the basis distribution of the cases closed.

The Case Processing Division was very successful in achieving its objectives in spite of a reduction in staff. The Division is pleased to report that once again, our contractual obligations were met with a 100% acceptance rate from our Federal partners. An indicator of success is that, 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 addition, federal audits of other State and local commissions that have the same or similar contractual relationship with EEOC **revealed that the MCHR inventory of open cases is 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 chart below demonstrates that the age of MCHR's pending inventory of employment and housing cases is **dramatically lower than the national average**.

National average age of open employment cases	589 days
MCHR	236 days

National average age of open housing cases	270 days
MCHR	181 days

FIELD OPERATIONS

The Field Operations Unit provides services to the people of Maryland in convenient locations throughout the State. MCHR field offices are located in Hagerstown, Cambridge, Salisbury and Leonardtown. Full services are available through all offices, including intake, investigations, mediation, settlement and outreach services. While many of the services offered by MCHR can be accessed through the MCHR web site, the Field Operations Unit provides a strong, local presence, which promotes the mission of MCHR.

MEDIATION UNIT

The MCHR Mediation Program formally began in January 2002 as an alternative to litigation for disputing parties. Since then, the Unit has grown to three full-time staff members who continue to pioneer an agency-wide dispute resolution program that has been an overwhelming success.

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 becomes appropriate at a later phase in case processing.

As of June 2003, over 100 volunteer mediators have been recruited and trained. These volunteers now mediate cases in all five MCHR offices statewide including: Baltimore, Cambridge, Hagerstown, Leonardtown, and Salisbury. In FY 2003, the Mediation Unit conducted two 40-hour basic mediation-training courses and held six advanced mediation skills trainings in an effort to offer ongoing advanced training to volunteer mediators. The Unit has also partnered with several community mediation centers statewide to establish active community connections and to help recruit a diverse group of trained volunteers.

Mediation allows cases to be processed effectively while saving the parties involved and the State money and time often spent on investigations and possible future litigation. The program focuses not only on resolving individual charges but also on repairing the relationships between disputing parties in all cases. The goal is to close cases quickly and efficiently and **to teach members of the public to have a direct hand in resolving their own disputes.**

Effective conflict resolution promotes a state free of discrimination and improves human relations in Maryland. MCHR's mediation program has become known for its creative recruitment efforts, cutting-edge training classes, and continuous quality assurance. In only two years, the program has set a standard of excellence for alternative dispute resolution throughout Maryland.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The Unit has continuing contracts to mediate employment discrimination disputes for the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). A new contract was added to mediate disputes with the Governor's Office for Individuals with Disabilities.
- ◆ The Program Director created and delivered two new training courses for MCHR mediation volunteers that are setting the standard for training in Maryland: *Disability Issues in Mediation* and *Impasse Strategies for Mediators*.
- ◆ The Program Director extended outreach efforts in the State as a guest speaker, trainer and seminar leader at numerous events including the Chesapeake Regional Human Resources Association Conference, the Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution Conference, the Montgomery County Mediation Program meeting, the Scottish delegation visit to the United States sponsored by the Maryland Conflict and Resolution Office (MACRO), and the Maryland Multi-Housing Association Annual Meeting.

MCHR Mediations	2002	2003
Percentage of total cases electing mediation	13%	30%
Number of mediations held	98	174
Percentage of cases successfully resolved through mediation	42%	51%

CHART I. INTAKE OF CASES FY 2003*
EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION, &
HOUSING CASES:

CHARGES FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2003 ACCORDING TO
 ALLEGED BASIS OF DISCRIMINATION

TOTAL INTAKE

BASIS	E	PA	H
RACE			
BLACK	353	42	47
WHITE	25	5	5
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	2	0	0
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN	2	0	1
OTHER	16	4	0
SEX			
FEMALE	162	7	2
MALE	44	2	1
SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
	24	1	0
AGE			
	150	4	0
DISABILITY			
	167	53	49
RETALIATION			
	132	1	3
RELIGION			
7TH DAY ADVENTIST	2	0	0
MUSLIM	4	0	0
JEWISH	1	0	0
PROTESTANT	6	0	0
CATHOLIC	0	0	0
OTHER	13	2	0
NATIONAL ORIGIN			
HISPANIC	7	0	3
EAST INDIAN	0	0	2
OTHER	27	0	0
FAMILIAL STATUS			
	NA	NA	4
MARITAL STATUS			
	0	0	1
COLOR			
	0	0	1

CHART II. INTAKE OF CASES FY 2003
EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION,
AND HOUSING CASES

FREQUENCY BY COUNTY

REGION	COUNTY	E	PA	H	TOTAL
WEST					
	ALLEGANY	7	1	0	8
	FREDERICK	28	6	2	36
	GARRETT	6	0	0	6
	WASHINGTON	40	2	3	45
CENTRAL					
	ANNE ARUNDEL	64	8	8	80
	BALTO. CITY	159	16	15	190
	BALTO. CO.	144	26	20	190
	CARROLL	12	11	1	24
	HARFORD	22	2	4	28
	HOWARD	41	2	2	45
	MONTGOMERY	72	10	14	96
	PR. GEORGE'S	60	9	17	86
SOUTHERN MARYLAND					
	CALVERT	12	0	2	14
	CHARLES	25	7	3	35
	ST. MARY'S	25	2	0	27
EASTERN SHORE					
	CAROLINE	12	1	1	14
	CECIL	4	1	2	7
	DORCHESTER	27	1	0	28
	KENT	8	0	1	9
	QUEEN ANNE'S	6	1	2	9
	SOMERSET	2	0	2	4
	TALBOT	22	2	2	26
	WICOMICO	47	3	1	51
	WORCESTER	12	3	1	16
TOTALS		857	114	103	1,074

* *NOTE: Cases may be filed on more than one basis; therefore, totals exceed number of charges received.*

CHART III. CLOSED CASES FY 2003*
 EMPLOYMENT, PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION, &
 HOUSING CASES:

CHARGES FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2003 ACCORDING TO
 ALLEGED BASIS OF DISCRIMINATION

CLOSED CASES FY2003

BASIS	E	PA	H
RACE			
BLACK	319	57	60
WHITE	29	2	5
ASIAN	0	0	0
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN	2	0	0
OTHER	16	4	0
SEX			
FEMALE	149	7	5
MALE	50	16	1
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	18	3	0
AGE	119	18	0
DISABILITY	142	64	49
RETALIATION	131	2	1
RELIGION			
7TH DAY ADVENTIST	1	0	0
MUSLIM	1	0	0
JEWISH	0	0	0
PROTESTANT	1	0	0
OTHER	6	1	1
NATIONAL ORIGIN			
HISPANIC	3	0	2
EAST INDIAN	1	1	3
OTHER	39	2	2
FAMILIAL STATUS	NA	NA	13
COLOR	2	2	0
MARITAL STATUS	1	0	0

* *Note: cases may be filed on more than one basis; therefore totals exceed number of cases closed.*

HATE CRIMES MONITORING

The MCHR monitors, investigates and provides outreach services to address and prevent hate crimes. A hate crime is best described as “A reported act that appears to be motivated, or is perceived by the victim to be motivated, all or in part, by race, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation or disability.” Since the intent of such crimes is to intimidate groups of people, hate crimes or incidents are defined as much by motivation and perception as by injury and damages to property. To be considered a hate incident, the act is not required to be a crime under any federal, state, or local statutes.

Although many perceive hate crimes as actions that are primarily promoted by organized groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, research has shown that most hate crimes are in fact committed anonymously by individuals. The MCHR, as part of its mission to improve human relations in the State, has identified the task of helping Marylanders to recognize and address hate crimes as a priority. The MCHR provides accurate reporting and classification of hate incidents in cooperation with the Maryland State Police. This information is accessible to law enforcement and human rights groups for use in addressing and preventing hate crimes in communities throughout the State. Through investigations and outreach staff, the MCHR provides assistance to victims of hate crimes and education for law enforcement personnel and community education.

Reported Hate Crimes

Number of hate incidents reported between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2003 committed within the general public, colleges, universities and public schools.

Race	452	72%
Ethnicity	30	5%
Religion	104	16%
Sexual Orientation	46	7%
<u>Disability</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>.01%</u>
Total	633	100%

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The Community Outreach and Education Unit (COEU), in conjunction with businesses, organizations, agencies, and faith communities, helps to provide the information, training and other resources that are needed to ensure that all Marylanders can live and work in a state where equal access to housing, employment, and public accommodations exists for all.

Through the COEU, the Commission informed approximately 8,000 individuals about equal rights protections and the goals of cultural diversity awareness through events and training. Training sessions in diversity, sexual orientation, genetic information, sexual harassment prevention, disability sensitivity and access issues, workplace communication, hate crimes awareness, conflict resolution, technical assistance and the law, and fair housing were presented by the COEU Training Specialist, general counsel's office, investigations and mediation staff.

The unit continued to broaden awareness of MCHR services through participation in events such as the Maryland Multi-Housing Association Terrorism Roundtable, Fair Housing Conferences in Carroll and Frederick Counties, the HUD Fair Housing Conference, 2003 Business Symposium, Charles County African-American Festival, Annual Hate Crimes Summit and Human Rights Day in Annapolis. Publications on Hate Crimes, Fair Housing, MCHR Services, Age, Pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and Sexual Harassment Protections provided information to assist the public. With the addition of bilingual staff, both training and mediation services are now available in Spanish.

Through outreach and training initiatives, the COEU helped to increase direct inquiries to the agency and "hits" to the MCHR website by more than double over the previous year (*see page 14*).

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ Information was made available about MCHR services and Maryland Anti-Discrimination law to more than 3,500 individuals through participation in events.
- ◆ Training was delivered to more than 4,609 individuals this year, an increase of 130 percent over the previous year. Training was presented to many academic institutions, community organizations, and businesses including:
 - Woodstock Job Corps
 - McDaniel College
 - Caroline Center
 - St. Mary's College
 - McKesson BioServices
 - YO! Youth Leadership Conference
 - Department of Aging
 - Popeye's Chicken
 - Department of Juvenile Justice
 - Downtown Childcare Center
 - Howard Community College
 - Baltimore Police
 - John Steere Company
 - Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital
 - Polytechnic Senior High School
 - ARC of Northern Chesapeake
 - Union Memorial Hospital
- ◆ The COEU assisted in the enforcement of settlement agreements of several MCHR cases by providing diversity training customized to the issues of each complaint.
- ◆ Collaborations and partnerships with organizations such as EEOC, HUD, the U.S. Department of Justice increased the effectiveness and scope of MCHR outreach initiatives.
- ◆ New brochures and fact sheets on Hate Crimes, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy discrimination protections and Sexual Harassment were produced.
- ◆ Spanish translations of many existing publications and MCHR web pages were completed and distributed and outreach to Latino groups was expanded.
- ◆ Media placements included articles on case settlements and editorials. Cable television and radio interviews provided information on discrimination protections.

Through the COEU, MCHR has added significant and visible impetus to the State's commitment to providing equal opportunity in Maryland.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT

The MCHR Information Technology Unit helps MCHR to meet the challenge of providing services the public needs in a venue that is practical and efficient. The Unit's focus is to insure that all agency systems have standardized software, to provide database training for employees, and to increase reliance on electronic storage of information to reduce paper.

Despite budget constraints, the MCHR was able to finish the year without any noticeable diminution of services, demonstrating that the policy of replacing 25% of the agency's computers each year has been a wise management strategy. Because there was no system more than four years old and all systems were technically sound, every employee was able to perform any task necessary to conducting agency business.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ MCHR's web-based complaint form became a part of the Maryland Government web site, resulting in more discrimination complaints being filed on line.
- ◆ MCHR initiated a web-based survey form designed to gauge customer satisfaction with MCHR services.
- ◆ In response to the public's reliance on the Internet for information and access to government, MCHR established web-based presences for our housing discrimination testing program to recruit testers. The site attracted over 100 volunteer testers at no cost to the State.
- ◆ Over one million "hits" were recorded on the MCHR web site, doubling last year's volume. Visits to the agency's web portal increases broad-based awareness of state government's active commitment to eliminating discrimination.
- ◆ Contacts directed to the agency via the web for MCHR services and information more than doubled those of FY2002. 350,000 contacts were tracked. In FY2003, the increased web activity can be linked to an increased awareness of MCHR's mission and services through training and outreach efforts.
- ◆ During the year, a testing database, inventory control system, purchase request system and services database were developed for internal use.
- ◆ Network security was upgraded by installing an enhanced firewall and joining with Network Maryland, the State of Maryland's high-speed network.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

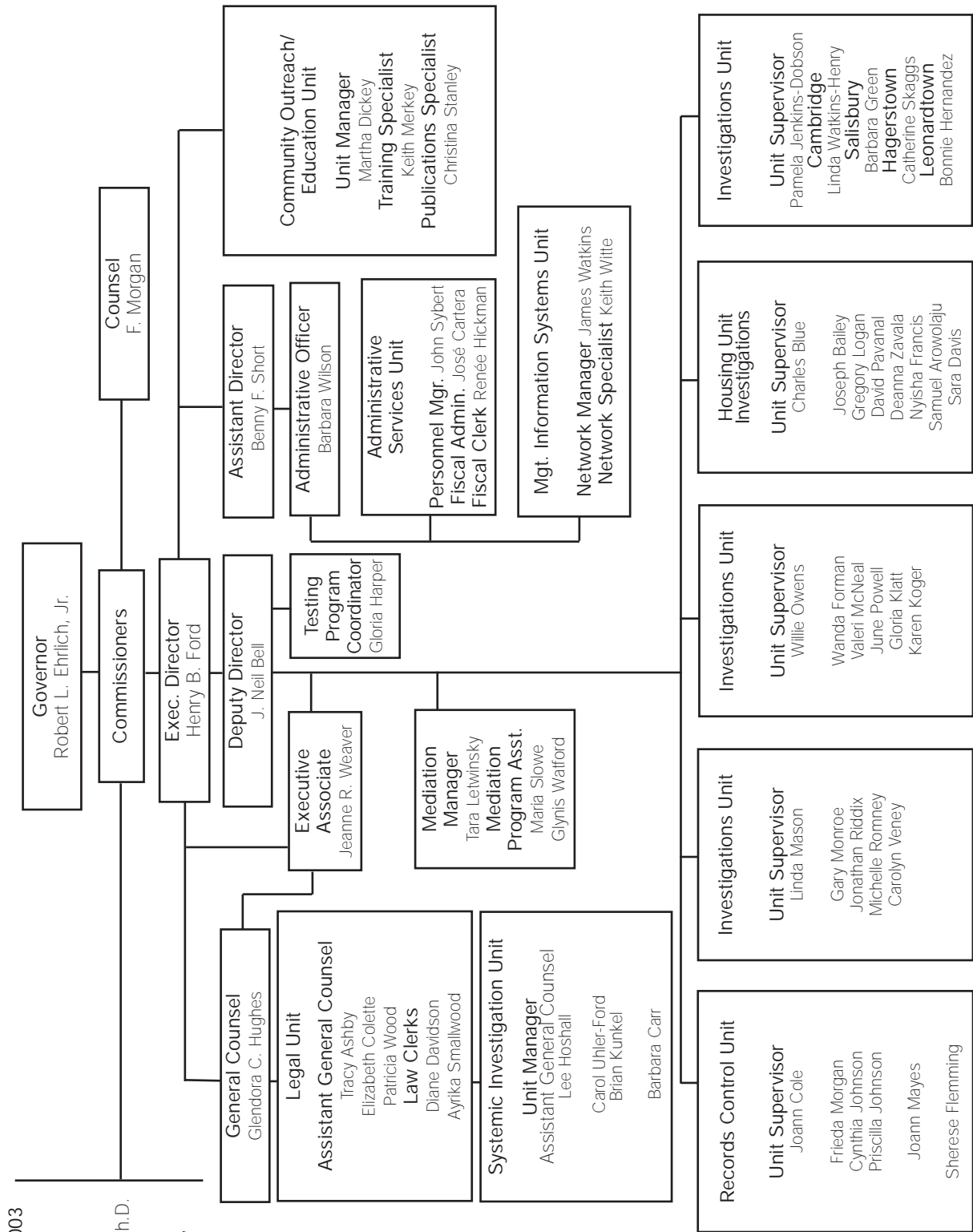
Fiscal Years	2001	2002	2003
Total State General Funds	\$2,681,557	\$2,753,635	\$2,496,035
Federal Funds			
HUD	233,949	286,782	884,685
EEOC	539,561	497,059	138,875
Total Federal Funds	773,510	783,841	1,023,560
Grand Total	3,455,067	3,537,476	3,519,595
Expenses			
Staffing	2,934,310	2,997,778	3,101,200
Operating	520,757	539,698	418,395
Grand Total Summary	3,455,067	3,537,476	3,519,595
Staff Positions			
Authorized Permanent	52.5	53.5	51.5*
Contractual	1	1	5
Total Positions	53.5	54.5	56.5



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

ORGANIZATION CHART

July 1-June 30, 2003



July 1-June 30, 2003
 Silvia S. Rodriguez
 Thomas E. Owen
 Oretha Bridgwaters
 Charles Cresswell
 Barbara Dezman, Ph.D.
 Norman I. Gelman
 Ernest Leatherbury
 Rufus W. McKinney
 J.M. Neville, Jr.
**Appointed after
 June 30, 2003**
 John W. Hermina
 Pamela J. Scarbro
 Roberto N. Allen
 Peter R. Lee

EOO - Equal Opportunity Officer



MARYLAND COMMISSION
ON HUMAN RELATIONS

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EASTERN SHORE

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LOWER EASTERN SHORE

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*For more information on any of the material presented in this annual report,
please call (410) 767-8600, or 1-800-637-6247.*

Visit our website at www.mchr.state.md.us.