



**Gina M. Raimondo,
Governor**

**State of Rhode Island and
Providence Plantations
Fiscal Year 2018
Budget**

**Volume I – General Government
and Quasi-Public Agencies**

Agency

Rhode Island Commission For Human Rights

Agency Mission

To enforce state and federal anti-discrimination laws.

Agency Description

The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights enforces Rhode Island anti-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, and delivery of services. The employment and public accommodation statutes prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, disability and ancestral origin. The housing and credit statutes also prohibit discrimination based on marital status, familial status, housing status and association with members of a protected class. The housing statute additionally prohibits discrimination on the basis of status as a victim of domestic abuse. The delivery of service statute prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

The Commission's major program activities include outreach and education, intake, investigation, conciliation and administrative hearings. Staff members perform outreach and education activities voluntarily and frequently, after normal working hours. Intake involves the receipt and evaluation of inquiries. If the allegations present a prima facie case of discrimination, a formal charge of discrimination is prepared and forwarded to the respondent. Investigators conduct an impartial analysis of evidence obtained from both parties, compare all elements of the case and attempt to negotiate a resolution. Where resolution is not achieved, investigators make a recommendation on the merits of the charge to a Preliminary Investigating Commissioner ("PIC"). The PIC makes a formal ruling as to whether there is "Probable Cause" or "No Probable Cause" in respect to the allegations of the charge. A No Probable Cause ruling terminates proceedings at the Commission. Upon a "Probable Cause" ruling, the commission attempts to conciliate the matter. The parties have the opportunity to elect that the matter be heard in Superior Court. Where conciliation is unsuccessful, and the parties have elected to proceed at the commission, an administrative hearing is conducted. At the administrative hearing, evidence is admitted and sworn testimony is heard before a Commissioner; a court stenographer also is present. The commission renders a formal decision and order following an administrative hearing.

Statutory History

The commission was created and empowered in 1949 by Title 28, Chapter 5 of the General Laws of Rhode Island (the Fair Employment Practices Act). The commission has been given statutory responsibility to enforce the following laws: R.I.G.L. § 28-5-1 et seq.; R.I.G.L. § 34-37-1 et seq. (Fair Housing Practices Act); R.I.G.L. § 11-24-1 et seq. (Hotels and Public Places); R.I.G.L. §§ 23-6-22 and 23-6-23 (Prevention and Suppression of Contagious Diseases); R.I.G.L. § 42-87-1 et seq. (Civil Rights of People with Disabilities); and R.I.G.L. § 40-9.1-1 et seq. (Equal Rights of Blind and Deaf Persons to Public Facilities). In addition to state laws, the Commission assists the federal government in enforcing the following federal laws: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VIII of the Federal Fair Housing Law, as amended. During the 2013 legislative session, there was one substantive change to the laws enforced by the Commission. On July 15, 2013, Governor Lincoln Chafee signed into law the so-called "Ban the Box" legislation. The law, which became effective on January 1, 2014, amends the state Fair Employment Practices Act to prohibit employers from inquiring before a first interview, either via an employment application or otherwise, whether an applicant has been convicted of a crime; certain enumerated exceptions apply.

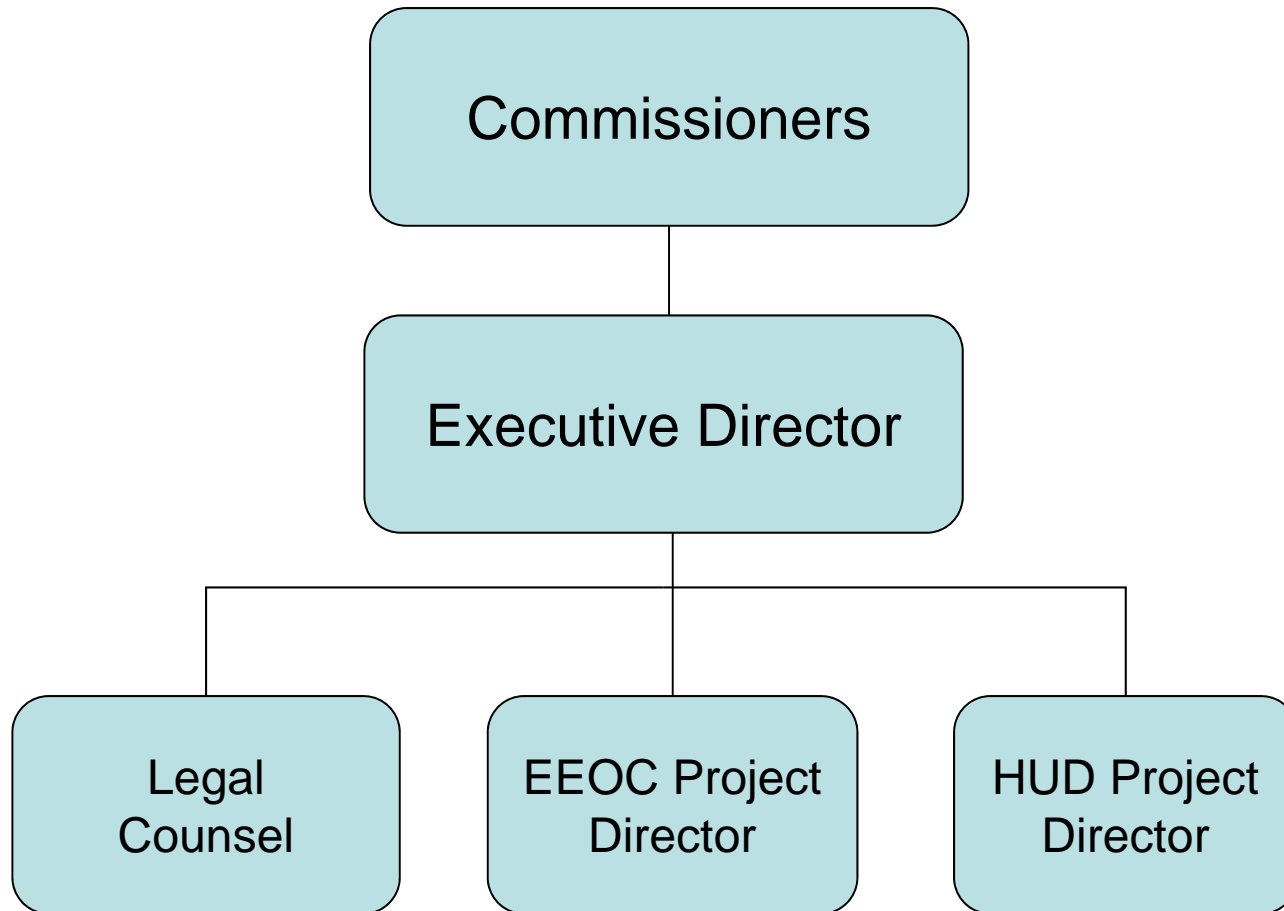
Budget

Rhode Island Commission For Human Rights

	FY 2015 Audited	FY 2016 Audited	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2017 Revised	FY 2018 Recommend
Expenditures By Program					
Central Management	1,556,738	1,521,437	1,581,423	1,646,008	1,690,102
Total Expenditures	\$1,556,738	\$1,521,437	\$1,581,423	\$1,646,008	\$1,690,102
Expenditures By Object					
Personnel	1,298,126	1,267,406	1,317,051	1,375,592	1,418,681
Operating Supplies and Expenses	258,112	254,031	264,372	270,416	271,421
Assistance and Grants	500	-	-	-	-
Subtotal: Operating Expenditures	1,556,738	1,521,437	1,581,423	1,646,008	1,690,102
Total Expenditures	\$1,556,738	\$1,521,437	\$1,581,423	\$1,646,008	\$1,690,102
Expenditures By Funds					
General Revenue	1,225,335	1,242,374	1,258,128	1,247,603	1,258,074
Federal Funds	331,403	279,063	323,295	398,405	432,028
Total Expenditures	\$1,556,738	\$1,521,437	\$1,581,423	\$1,646,008	\$1,690,102
FTE Authorization	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5

The Agency

Rhode Island Commission For Human Rights



Personnel

Rhode Island Commission For Human Rights Central Management

	Grade	FY 2017		FY 2018	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Unclassified					
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - HUMAN RIGHTS	00840A	1.0	103,134	1.0	108,376
STAFF ATTORNEY IV	00834A ¹	1.0	94,800	1.0	94,622
STAFF ATTORNEY III	00832A	1.0	69,243	1.0	71,780
HUD PROJECT DIRECTOR	00326A	1.0	64,770	1.0	66,891
EEOC PROJECT DIRECTOR - HUMAN RIGHTS	00325A	1.0	60,818	1.0	62,831
CHIEF CLERK	00E18A	1.0	54,528	1.0	56,195
SENIOR COMPLIANCE OFFICER (HUMAN RIGHTS)	00322A	3.5	186,091	3.5	191,147
INVESTIGATOR (HUMAN RIGHTS)	00319A	3.0	138,985	3.0	141,593
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE (COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS)	00313A	2.0	82,051	2.0	83,541
Subtotal		14.5	\$854,420	14.5	\$876,976
Turnover		-	(58,564)	-	(22,986)
Subtotal		-	(\$58,564)	-	(\$22,986)
Total Salaries		14.5	\$795,856	14.5	\$853,990
Benefits					
Payroll Accrual			4,700		4,922
FICA			62,069		65,328
Retiree Health			48,953		51,066
Health Benefits			188,137		177,057
Retirement			214,170		219,958
Subtotal			\$518,029		\$518,331
Total Salaries and Benefits		14.5	\$1,313,885	14.5	\$1,372,321
Cost Per FTE Position (Excluding Temporary and Seasonal)			\$90,613		\$94,643
Statewide Benefit Assessment			\$37,337		\$37,110
Payroll Costs		14.5	\$1,351,222	14.5	\$1,409,431
Purchased Services					
Clerical and Temporary Services			17,670		2,550
Legal Services			1,850		1,850
Other Contracts			1,350		1,350
Training and Educational Services			3,500		3,500
Subtotal			\$24,370		\$9,250
Total Personnel		14.5	\$1,375,592	14.5	\$1,418,681
Distribution By Source Of Funds					
General Revenue		12.0	\$1,013,462	12.0	\$1,022,928
Federal Funds		2.5	\$362,130	2.5	\$395,753
Total All Funds		14.5	\$1,375,592	14.5	\$1,418,681

¹ FY 17 Cost includes one week of pay for a Staff Attorney IV who retired on July 8, 2016

Performance Measures

Rhode Island Commission For Human Rights

Cases Processed

The figures below represent the number of cases achieving a final disposition (e.g., settlement, No Probable Cause ruling, administrative closure, Decision & Order) as well as cases in which a ruling of Probable Cause has been rendered. Although Probable Cause rulings do not constitute closures, they are recorded in order to present an accurate record of casework completed by staff and Commissioners. The data is from internal agency case-tracking records.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	414	414	405	407	407
Actual	376	425	434	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Outreach Activities

The figures below represent the number of outreach activities conducted by agency staff in compliance with the statutory mandate of R.I.G.L. § 28-5-14. A higher number of outreach activities generally indicates a greater success at compliance with the statute. The data is from internal agency outreach tracking records.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	28	28	36	38	38
Actual	46	45	46	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Average Case Age at Closure

This performance measure assesses the average age, in days, of a case at final disposition. A lower number reflects the more expeditious processing of cases. The data is from internal agency case-tracking records.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	365 Days	365 Days	365 Days	365 Days	365 Days
Actual	308 Days	300 Days	331 Days	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Agency

Public Utilities Commission

Agency Mission

To provide fair regulation of public utilities, CATV, common carriers, and major energy facilities; ensure just and reasonable rates; ensure sufficient utility infrastructure to promote economic development; implement legislative mandates that facilitate renewable electric generation, improve water availability, deliver rapid communications and assure that Rhode Island is on the cutting edge of reliability and environmental quality regulation; and cooperate with other state and federal government agencies to coordinate efforts to meet the above objectives.

Agency Description

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) comprises two distinct regulatory bodies: a three member Commission (Commission) and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division). The Public Utilities Commission serves as a quasi-judicial tribunal with jurisdiction, powers, and duties to implement and enforce the standards of conduct under §39-1-27.6 and to hold investigations and hearings involving the rates, tariffs, tolls, and charges, and the sufficiency and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of railroad, ferry boats, gas, electric distribution, water, telephone, telegraph, and pipeline public utilities, the location of railroad depots and stations, and the control of grade crossings, the revocation, suspension or alteration of certificates issued pursuant to §39-19-4, appeals under §39-1-30, petitions under §39-1-31, and proceedings under §39-1-32. Through participation in the Energy Facility Siting Board, the Commission's chair also exercises jurisdiction over the siting of major energy facilities, pursuant to Chapter 42-98.

The Division, which is headed by an Administrator, who is not a Commissioner, exercises the jurisdiction, supervision, powers and duties not specifically assigned to the Commission, including the execution of all laws relating to public utilities and carriers and all regulations and orders of the Commission governing the conduct and charges of public utilities. The Division has exclusive jurisdiction over the rates, tariffs, tolls and charges, and the sufficiency, and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of common carriers of property and passengers over the State's public roadways, pursuant to Chapters 39-12, 39-13, and 39-14. Additionally, the Division supervises and regulates Community Antenna Television Systems (CATV) in Rhode Island; certifies all public utilities; and has independent regulatory authority over the transactions between public utilities and affiliates, and all public utility equity and debt issuances. The Division's consumer and engineering sections handle approximately 23,000 telephone inquires annually. In addition, the consumer section conducts a high volume of informal reviews and formal evidentiary hearings under the Rules Governing the Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Services. The hearings provide a forum for consumers to develop payment plans, under the guidelines established in the rules.

Statutory History

The PUC and its predecessor agency, the Rhode Island Railroad Commission, have been regulating utilities in this state since 1839. The Railroad Commission was later abolished by an act of the legislature, leading to the creation of the more comprehensive Public Utility Commission in 1912. From 1981 to 1996, the duties of the Administrator of the Division and Chairperson of the Commission were combined in a single position. The Utility Restructuring Act of 1996 later divided these duties into two separate positions: Chairman of the Commission and Administrator, Division of Public Utilities and Carriers.