

# **Cultivating a Culture of Dignity and Respect:**

## **A Shared Responsibility**

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### **Ontario Human Rights Commission Annual Report 2024 - 2025**



**Ontario  
Human Rights Commission**  
**Commission ontarienne des  
droits de la personne**



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## **Cultivating a Culture of Dignity and Respect: A Shared Responsibility**

**Ontario Human Rights Commission**

**Annual Report**

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Ontario  
Human Rights Commission  
Commission ontarienne des  
droits de la personne

June 26, 2025

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Room 180, Main Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A2

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Dear Mr. Speaker:

Under Section 31.6 (2) of the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) is required to submit a report on its activities for the previous fiscal period by June 30 of each year, to be tabled in the Legislature.

I am pleased to provide you with **"Cultivating a Culture of Dignity and Respect: A Shared Responsibility"**, the OHRC's annual report of its activities from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Sincerely,

**Patricia DeGuire**  
**Chief Commissioner**  
**Ontario Human Rights Commission**

## The OHRC envisions

An inclusive society where human rights are a lived reality and where all people are valued and treated with dignity and respect, feel a sense of belonging, and take responsibility for promoting and protecting human rights.

## The OHRC's mission

To create a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity of all people by promoting and protecting human rights in Ontario by addressing systemic discrimination.

## Land acknowledgement

The OHRC is based in what is now known as Toronto, guests on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The OHRC recognizes that this land is the Traditional Territory of many First Nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, the Chippewa and the Wendat peoples. The OHRC further acknowledges that Toronto is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The OHRC is mindful that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13, the Williams Treaties, and the Dish with One Spoon Wampum. The OHRC is grateful to the Indigenous peoples who have cared for and continue to care for lands across Turtle Island.

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# Message from the Chief Commissioner

I am pleased to present the 2024–2025 Annual Report, for the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC or Commission) highlighting the efforts made to fulfill its mandate to the public.

Ontario is home for over 16.1 million people with diverse abilities, backgrounds, and identities living and working together. Thus, respect for the dignity and worth of every Ontarian is paramount. This respect is crucial to maintaining our democracy.

Human rights are inalienable. Enjoying those rights is a shared responsibility of every person, including governments, employers, unions, and service providers. They must take the lead in upholding the dignity of individuals by complying with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The minimum standards for adhering to their obligations are captured in the *Code*.

The *Code* has primacy, and all other Ontario laws must agree with the *Code*. The preamble of the *Code* is clear that, "it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination". So, it is important to remind Ontarians of this cherished value, especially now - a period where democracy is fragile, there is an increase in reports of hate-motivated incidents, systemic racism, discrimination in employment, and housing precarity across Ontario and Canada.

The OHRC's role in overseeing the *Code* is crucial. Its goal is to create a safe, respectful, and valued environment for all individuals by upholding human rights across all sectors. Over the past year, the Commission has addressed systemic discrimination and amplified the

voices of its collaborators, highlighting our collective responsibilities. Our efforts spanned various areas, from educational reforms, to celebrating Ontarians for volunteering to help foster a human rights culture in Ontario, to Indigenous-specific discrimination in Ontario's healthcare system, to collaborations aimed at mitigating the impacts of technology on human rights.

### **These include:**

- providing a status update to ensure all Ontario students have access to the supports they need to learn to read, in the [Two-Year Anniversary Update of the Right to Read Report](#)
- launching [Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System](#), an Action Plan that calls on duty-holders to take immediate and decisive steps to address the discrimination Black students and educators experience in the public education system
- working in collaboration with the Law Commission of Ontario to deliver the [Human Rights Impact Assessment](#) tool to help organizations assess and mitigate the human rights impacts of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems
- celebrating human rights champions through the second biennial [Daniel G. Hill Human Rights Awards](#)
- launching the [Did You Know](#) social media campaign using facts about everyone's human rights and obligations under the *Code*
- working with Indigenous communities to address [Indigenous-specific discrimination in Ontario's healthcare system](#)

- continuing to collaborate with the Toronto Police Service (TPS) and Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB) to implement recommendations from the 2023 inquiry report on anti-Black discrimination in policing, [From Impact to Action](#)
- developing policy guidance concerning determinants of health, including housing, homelessness, and human rights to help address the housing and homelessness crisis.

These achievements and ongoing efforts at the OHRC underscore the need for cultural transformation to ensure inclusivity and a strong sense of belonging for everyone. Global crises should reinforce our commitment to democracy, reminding us that the *Code* assists in addressing discrimination in education, health, housing, and employment—key socio-economic determinants, which impact the lives of Ontario's most marginalized individuals.

The Commission remains committed to working tirelessly with rights-holders and duty-holders to promote a robust adherence to the *Code* through education, policy development, public inquiries, and strategic litigation. We will continue to cultivate a culture of dignity and respect in your communities and invite you to join our efforts to improve the quality of life of every Ontarian.



**Patricia DeGuire**  
**Chief Commissioner**



# 2024-2025 By the numbers

## Media coverage

400

The number of people who watched the [YouTube](#) live stream of the Action Plan [\*Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System\*](#) during the launch on March 27, 2025. Media coverage from 6 media outlets.

21,558

The number of times the *Dreams Delayed* Action Plan [social media campaign](#) was seen.

3,518

The number of times the [Human Rights Impact Assessment for AI technologies](#) tool was seen on social media platforms.

## Website Interaction 2024-2025

**215,238**

Total number of people who accessed [OHRC eLearning](#).

**171,307**

People who accessed [Working Together](#) through the OHRC website and external learning management systems.

**23,337**

People who accessed [Call it out: Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Rights](#) through the OHRC website and external learning management systems.

**13,232**

People who accessed [Human Rights 101](#) through the OHRC website and external learning management systems

# **Indigenous reconciliation**



## Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group

The OHRC is committed to learning from and seeking guidance from the Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group (Advisory Group). The Advisory Group consists of individuals from diverse First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities and organizations, who have knowledge of discrimination and inequality Indigenous peoples continue to experience in Ontario.

During May, October, and January 2024–25, the Advisory Group met three times. Members provided valuable guidance on the OHRC's engagements related to Indigenous-specific discrimination in healthcare. In addition, the Advisory Group gave feedback on a draft guide and fact sheets, addressing anti-Indigenous discrimination in retail settings, and a policy statement on culturally appropriate hiring practices for Indigenous-specific positions. Also, members shared information about emerging and ongoing human rights issues facing their communities. Through their generous sharing of time and knowledge, the members of the Advisory Group continue to assist the OHRC addressing the priorities and needs of diverse First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous peoples.

## Members

- Brian Eyolfson (Chair), Member of Couchiching First Nation and OHRC Commissioner
- Nancy Rowe (Giidaakunadaad), Knowledge Keeper, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Tim Bucci, Director of Justice, Six Nations of the Grand River
- Doug Cheechoo, Special Projects Officer, Mushkegowuk Council
- Emmanuel Dowuona, Director, Policy and Government Relations and Stan Williams, Policy Analyst, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- Karen Drake, Member of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, Associate Professor, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University and former OHRC Commissioner
- Lyndia Jones, Health Director, Independent First Nations
- Coralee McGuire-Cyrette, Executive Director, Ontario Native Women's Association
- Jennifer St. Germain, Chief Strategy Officer, Métis Nation of Ontario
- Maurice Switzer, Citizen of Mississaugas of Alderville First Nation, Principal, Nimkii Communications, and former OHRC Commissioner

## Observers:

- Human Rights Legal Support Centre
- Indigenous Justice Division, Ministry of the Attorney General

## Combating anti-Indigenous discrimination in healthcare

In April 2024, the OHRC announced its commitment to work with Indigenous partners to develop human rights policy guidance to address and combat longstanding and widespread Indigenous-specific discrimination in Ontario's healthcare system.

Indigenous partners have urged the OHRC to take swift action to address this critical issue.

The OHRC acknowledges that Indigenous organizations and communities have long documented the various forms of Indigenous-specific discrimination displayed in healthcare delivery. The OHRC appreciates the invaluable work that has already been done and, together with Indigenous partners, aims to build upon it by applying a human rights perspective.

Healthcare providers in Ontario have a legal duty to prevent and address discrimination, including Indigenous-specific discrimination. The OHRC is working on developing practical guidance to help healthcare providers to fulfill these legal obligations. The guidance will help First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous people in understanding how their rights are protected under the *Code* when seeking healthcare. Also, it will serve as a resource tool for Indigenous

organizations and communities to hold healthcare providers accountable.

To inform this work, throughout 2024-25, the OHRC conducted focus groups and interviews with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous health professionals, organizations, and communities across the province. The goal was to gain a better understanding of systemic challenges, potential solutions, and wise practices for creating a culturally safe and discrimination-free healthcare environment. The OHRC also carried out an online survey to gather information about the lived experiences of discrimination. In the coming year, the OHRC will release an engagement report summarizing what was gathered and heard during consultations.

## Anti-Indigenous discrimination in retail

The OHRC has been collaborating with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC), University of Toronto Indigenous law students and staff from Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC) to develop a guide providing human rights information about anti-Indigenous discrimination in retail settings. This work is part of the OFIFC and PBSC's joint Indigenous Human Rights Program (IHRP).

Many Indigenous people experience discrimination while shopping. This guide will provide information about the protections afforded under the *Code* regarding the discrimination and harassment Indigenous people may experience in retail settings. It is intended for Indigenous people as rights-holders, to support them in exercising their right to non-discrimination. Also, it is a guide for duty-holders in retail settings - e.g., business owners, employees, third-party vendors - to



enhance their understanding of their responsibility to prevent discrimination and harassment against Indigenous customers.

The guide will provide an overview of *Code* protections and key definitions (e.g., racial discrimination, harassment, and poisoned environment). It will examine the negative experiences of Indigenous people in retail settings – highlighting various lived experiences. These experiences can range from unkind remarks, tones or being ignored, to more extreme examples of discrimination, including racial profiling and targeted surveillance by staff or security personnel.

This guide will also address the distinct discrimination and harassment that First Nations individuals registered under the *Indian Act* may face when presenting their Status card. This includes situations where they use the card as identification or when they try to receive the tax exemption to which they are entitled under Treaty and related agreements. Specifically, the guide will clarify that although vendors are not required to provide the tax exemption at the point-of-sale, they must comply with the *Code* in their treatment of First Nations customers who present a Status card.

The guide will be accompanied by two educational fact sheets, which give practical summaries of the detailed information:

- one resource will be designed for right-holders to assist them in determining whether they have experienced discrimination prohibited by the Code. Also, it will outline tangible steps they can take if they believe their human rights have been violated.
- Another resource will be tailored to the needs of duty-holders, to help them understand what anti-Indigenous discrimination and harassment may look like within their businesses. It will also provide



guidance on actions which can be implemented to prevent and address human rights violations.

After the release, the OHRC will continue to collaborate with OFIFC and PBSC to widely distribute and promote the guide and fact sheets, especially within Indigenous communities and organizations. Also, we will look for opportunities for public education. Educational initiatives may take many forms, such as legal education sessions at IHRP clinics in Thunder Bay and Ottawa, webinars for friendship centres across Ontario, a thematic episode on the IHRP podcast, and video clips as part of a social media campaign.

“The OFIFC is pleased to be working with the OHRC to raise awareness around anti-Indigenous racism and its pervasiveness in everyday life events like shopping. We hope this work grows the understanding of human rights within the Indigenous community, giving people the tools and confidence to assert those rights in the face of racism and discrimination.”

**Sean Longboat, Co-Executive Director  
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)**

“PBSC is grateful for the OHRC’s longstanding partnership in the Indigenous Human Rights Program, including our collaboration on high-quality educational resources addressing discrimination against Indigenous people in retail settings. These resources will be a valuable support within the program’s Human Rights Clinics and, more broadly, raise awareness and empower action against these too-common injustices across the province.”

**Jason Goodman, Former Director  
Family Justice, Pro Bono Students Canada**

## Hiring for Indigenous-specific positions

The OHRC is developing a policy statement on how to appropriately hire for Indigenous-specific positions. This initiative was launched at the request of, and in consultation with the Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group to address widespread of false claims of Indigenous identity.

The policy statement will guide employers on hiring for Indigenous-specific positions in line with *Code* obligations. It will outline how employers can work with local Indigenous peoples and organizations to develop culturally safe and acceptable processes for confirming claims concerning Indigenous identity. The policy statement will be supplemented by a contextual guide with additional information on the historical and modern context related to these issues.

## Media highlights

- The Sudbury Star, December 24, 2024 “[Indigenous family kicked off North Bay city bus, awarded compensation](#)”
- Law Times News, May 1, 2024 “[Ontario Human Rights Commission addresses Indigenous-specific discrimination in healthcare](#)”
- The Manitoulin Expositor, March 19, 2025 “[Indigenous children in care face poorer health outcomes, a crisis StatsCan report highlights](#)”

# **Criminal justice**



## From Impact to Action progress update

The OHRC is actively monitoring the progress of the Toronto Police Service (TPS) and Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB)'s in implementing the recommendations set out in its 2023 report, [From Impact to Action](#). That report contains over 100 recommendations aimed at meaningfully addressing systemic anti-Black racial discrimination in policing.

To rebuild trust with Black communities, it is essential that these recommendations are acted upon through specific, systemic, and concrete measures that are independently monitored and enforceable. The OHRC remains committed to this process and the elimination of systemic anti-Black racism in policing.

## Recognizing the dignity of people living in extreme poverty

Unhoused individuals are disproportionately Indigenous people, and those living with mental health disabilities, individuals with substance use disorders or receiving social assistance, young and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Many of these individuals turn to panhandling to survive.

On April 2, 2024, in its decision *Fair Change v Ontario*, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice struck down sections of the *Safe Streets Act* which prohibited panhandling in certain circumstances in public places, including near ATMs, transit stops, and public toilets – because they violated the right to freedom of expression in section 2(b) of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter)*. The Court also found that provisions deeming certain behaviours to be “aggressive” – such as

panhandling while intoxicated – violated the *Charter* section 11(d) presumption of innocence.

The OHRC intervened in the *Charter* challenge to advocate that human dignity, which is the foundation for equality rights in the *Code* and *Charter*, should be front and center when considering the alleged rights violations. Although the Court did not find that section 15 equality rights were infringed in this case, it agreed with the OHRC’s arguments that asking for money is a vital form of social interaction, and that panhandling may be the only form of expression available to many individuals asking for help.

As a result of this decision, people who panhandle for survival will no longer face accumulating fines they cannot pay, or risk incarceration when their conduct does not pose a threat to public safety or interfere with the use of public space. The Court’s decision sets an important precedent for respecting the dignity and right of street-involved people to be seen and heard.

## Media highlights

- CBC News, April 26, 2024, [“Thunder Bay police board administrator’s 2-year term ends, report recommends that local control resume”](#)
- CBC News, June 7, 2024, [“Prisoners in Hamilton put in segregation at far greater rate than any other Ontario jail, data shows”](#)
- Toronto Star, March 7, 2025, [“Senior police officer accused of coverup”](#)



# **Health and well-being**



## Policy guidance on housing, homelessness and human rights

Given the increased housing and homelessness challenges throughout Canada, including this province, the OHRC is developing policy guidance to help duty-holders understand how their actions could potentially violate the rights of individuals at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, including those living in encampments. This guidance will also promote awareness of human-rights based approaches to addressing the housing and homelessness crisis in a way that respects the dignity and human rights of individuals.

## Letters to municipalities regarding homelessness and encampments

In Spring 2024, the OHRC sent letters to two municipalities regarding their approaches and responses to the crisis of unsheltered homelessness in their communities.

The OHRC acknowledges the challenges all municipalities face in addressing interconnected issues of housing and homelessness, mental health and substance use disorder issues, and poverty. All levels of government share responsibility, however, municipalities are often on the front lines of tackling these systemic social issues.

On March 24, 2024, the OHRC wrote a [letter](#) to the Town of Cobourg expressing concerns that its Emergency Care Establishment By-law may impose unnecessary restrictions on emergency and transitional housing, potentially having a discriminatory impact on marginalized

individuals protected under the *Code*. These include people living with disabilities, such as those with mental health and substance use disorder disabilities, individuals receiving public assistance, Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+, youth, and women and children fleeing intimate partner violence.

On May 1, 2024, the OHRC wrote a [letter](#) to the City of Kingston raising concerns regarding the City's plans to require unsheltered homeless persons at Belle Park to dismantle their shelters and pack up their belongings during the day. The letter highlighted a court ruling that where there are not enough accessible shelter beds, the state cannot prohibit individuals experiencing homelessness from building their shelter on public land. Such prohibition violates the individual's *Charter* right to life, liberty, and security of the person.

The OHRC encouraged both municipalities to work collaboratively with other levels of government, duty-holders, and affected stakeholders to adopt a human rights-based approach which focuses on the needs of people experiencing homelessness and supports their permanent transition out of homelessness.

## Media highlights

- Storeys, June 20, 2024, "[StatCan Finds Link Between Heat-Related Deaths And Rental Units](#)"
- Global News, April 10, 2024, "[Ontario Human Rights Commission concerned with Cobourg emergency shelter bylaw](#)"
- The Kingston Whig Standard, May 13, 2024, "[Human rights commissioner cautions Kingston about encampment plan](#)"



# Education



## Two-Year anniversary update of the *Right to Read* inquiry report

On September 5, 2024, the OHRC, in collaboration with Dyslexia Canada, released a [two-year](#) update highlighting significant changes to the education system since the release of the [Right to Read](#) inquiry report.

Released in February 2022, *Right to Read* was the first report of its kind in Canada, advocating for critical changes in Ontario’s approach to teaching early reading. The Report includes 157 recommendations for education sector duty-holders on how to address key issues and uphold the right to read. The *Right to Read* has prompted other jurisdictions across Canada to reconsider their reading instruction and inspired human rights commissions in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to initiate similar initiatives.

The recommendations across six themes provide a blueprint to ensure that the one million children in Ontario, who require systematic and explicit instruction annually, receive the necessary support to learn to read. These recommendations include:

- 1. Curriculum and Instruction:** Adopting a new Kindergarten program and Grades 1 to 8 language curriculum that features direct and systematic instruction in foundational reading skills; and training current and future teachers on evidence-based approaches to teaching students to read.
- 2. Universal Screening:** Screening every student, at least twice a year from Kindergarten to Grade 2, to identify students at risk for reading difficulties using standardized, evidence-based screening tools.

- 3. Reading Interventions:** Standardizing and providing stable funding for evidence-based reading interventions and making access to interventions equitable for all students.
- 4. Accommodations:** Providing and supporting appropriate, effective, and timely accommodations.
- 5. Professional Assessments:** Improving access to professional assessments and ensuring greater consistency and transparency in the assessment process.
- 6. Systemic Issues:** Setting clear and consistent standards for school boards and mandating better data collection, analysis, and reporting; improving communication with students and parents and guardians; working with experts in the science of reading to implement the OHRC's recommendations.

In the two-year update report, the OHRC uses these themes as benchmarks to assess the progress and impact of the recommendations in the *Right to Read* report. The update report explores the landscape two years into the landmark initiative, including some essential changes that have been made and many more that are underway.

The update report highlights important changes to the education system, including:

- Ontario revised the Grade 1 to 9 language curriculum and instructional guides to reflect the recommendations in the *Right to Read* in English and French. The new language curriculum was designed to improve early reading instruction and reduce the need

for intervention. A revised Kindergarten Program will be implemented in September 2025.

- Ontario issued a policy/program memorandum which mandates early reading screening every year for all students in Kindergarten to Grade 2 students beginning in September 2024.
- The Ministry of Education is developing a French-language reading intervention program.

Many school boards embraced the *Right to Read* and began updating practices. Educators have been creative and are working tirelessly to further their learning and in supporting their colleagues to facilitate the transition.

“The impact of our early initiatives has been very positive. We have witnessed increased confidence and proficiency in reading and writing skills, empowering students to unlock their full potential and succeed academically.”

**S. Krause**  
**Near North School District**

Some recommendations that have not seen enough progress include:

- **Teacher education and additional qualification courses:**  
Presently, there remain many new and experienced teacher candidates who are not equipped to apply the Science of Reading in their instruction; nor are they aware of the *Right to Read* Inquiry recommendations. The OHRC has provided detailed recommendations outlining the necessary changes to the Additional

Qualification (AQ) courses for teachers. There is still much work to be done.

- **Accommodations:** There is a need for more evidence of systematic changes to transparency and accountability related to accommodations and modifications.
- **Professional assessments:** Professional assessments should not be a prerequisite for interventions and accommodations, and all students waiting to be assessed should receive effective support.

We are just at the beginning of a marathon, one that spans a lifetime and potentially impacts our children for generations. The responsibility of ensuring children realize their right to read is shared among the province, school boards and educators, along with teachers' unions, the Ontario College of Teachers, and Faculties of Education.

Moving forward, the OHRC intends to actively focus on ensuring the implementation of the recommendations in the *Right to Read* Inquiry report. The OHRC urges all duty-holders in the education system to put students first. That will require the elimination of silos and collaboration in creating a comprehensive plan, including pragmatic data collection, for lasting, systemic change to ensure every child realizes their right to read.

"I am so happy and optimistic for the changes taking place in Ontario. I truly believe that this will make an incredible difference in the lives of students, families, and our communities. Our kids deserve this change."

**L. Mason, Parent**  
**Renfrew County District School Board**

## Dreams Delayed: Action Plan to address systemic anti-Black racism and discrimination in education

The OHRC is committed to tackling systemic racism, discrimination and harassment within Ontario’s publicly funded education system. With the release of its Action Plan entitled, [\*Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario’s Public Education System\*](#), the OHRC has taken active decisive steps to ensure that all students and educators, in particular Black and educators, can thrive and flourish in a supportive and discrimination-free and harassment-free learning environment.

*Dreams Delayed* builds on the foundational advocacy of Black communities and expands on the OHRC’s longstanding commitment to addressing anti-Black racism and human rights in education. Guided by principles of dignity, respect, and collective responsibility, the objective of the Action Plan is to address systemic barriers and discrimination which disproportionately affect Black students and educators. It outlines 29 calls to action, emphasizing accountability and transparency, monitoring and evaluation, and student well-being as vital components of systemic change.

### A Blueprint for Change

At its core, the Action Plan serves as a roadmap for duty-holders—including the Ministry of Education, school boards, administrators, educators, unions, faculties of education and others—to fulfill their legal obligations under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. The aim is to



dismantle structures which have historically marginalized Black students and educators. The plan is structured around three key pillars:

### **1. Accountability and Transparency**

Accountability is essential for ensuring equality and non-discrimination in education. The Action Plan advocates for a fundamental shift - from process-based approaches to outcome-focused accountability. This includes:

- a formal, public acknowledgment of anti-Black racism in education and a clear strategy for addressing it
- a provincial framework for human rights in education, which ensures that all duty-holders prioritize initiatives to combat anti-Black racism
- centralized data collection on student achievement and well-being, disaggregated by race, to track progress and identify disparities

### **2. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Continuous monitoring is essential for creating lasting change. Effective monitoring and evaluation lay the groundwork for informed decision-taking, ensuring that strategies are data-driven and objective. The Action Plan emphasizes the need for clear progress indicators and mechanisms to hold duty-holders accountable. This includes:

- all duty-holders developing and implementing a human rights indicator framework that includes benchmarks and measures of success
- education duty-holders reviewing and updating their complaints procedures to effectively receive, investigate, and resolve complaints of discrimination and harassment

- the Ministry of Education working with school boards to develop and implement an Early Intervention System (EIS) to track and address potential racial discrimination and harassment complaints reported within the board or schools.

### 3. Student Well-Being

An education system that prioritizes well-being is one where all students feel valued, safe, and empowered. Black students should be able to learn in environments free from racial discrimination and harassment. Some of the OHRC's calls to action include:

- expanding the Graduation Coach Program for Black Students to provide mentorship and support
- increasing access to culturally responsive guidance counseling at key transitional stages in education
- approving education spaces where Black students can see themselves reflected in their learning environments and feel a sense of belonging

## Key Outcomes and Expectations

The Action Plan sets a timeline for measurable improvements in Ontario's publicly funded education system, including:

- **Increased achievement and opportunities for Black students:** Improved EQAO results, higher graduation rates, and enhanced well-being.
- **Stronger relationships between Black students, educators, and families:** A reduction in suspension, expulsion, and exclusion rates,



unjustified streaming, and disproportionate referrals to police and child welfare agencies.

- **Fair and equal opportunities for Black educators:** Increased representation, increased hiring, retention, and career advancement opportunities for Black educators and administrators, along with stronger accountability measures for addressing workplace discrimination.

## A Collective Responsibility

Creating an education system free from discrimination and harassment is not the responsibility of any one group; it is a shared obligation among duty-holders, policymakers, educators, parents, and communities. *Dream Delayed* represents both a challenge and an opportunity for all duty-holders in Ontario's publicly funded education system to take meaningful steps toward dismantling systemic racism and ensuring that every student, regardless of background, has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Through *Dreams Delayed*, the OHRC is reaffirming its commitment to human rights in education while calling on all stakeholders to work together to build a future where Black students and educators are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

"I wholeheartedly support the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Action Plan, particularly its focus on fostering an equitable, discrimination-free environment within Ontario's publicly funded education system. This initiative is critical in ensuring that Black educators and administrators can work with dignity, free from systemic barriers, bias, and harassment.

Having dedicated over 30 years to education as a Black educator in Ontario, I have witnessed firsthand both the progress made and the persistent challenges that remain. While steps have been taken, the reality is that systemic anti-Black racism continues to impact Black students and educators alike. A truly inclusive school system must actively address these disparities, ensuring that all educators and students feel valued, supported, and empowered.

This action plan is a bold and necessary step in that direction. Let us stand together in championing its implementation, recognizing that real change requires collective commitment, accountability, and unwavering support.”

**The Hon. Dr. Jean Augustine**

"This comprehensive Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Education (ABRDIE) Action Plan is a necessary and welcomed initiative, strengthened by clear accountability measures and embedded transparency. It is imperative that school boards, governing bodies, and the ministry adopt and implement this plan with urgency and commitment. Systemic change requires sustained, meaningful action—not performative gestures."

**Natasha Shakespeare, President  
Parents Against Racism Simcoe County**

“Disproportionately high suspension rates and persistently low graduation rates serve as stark indicators of systemic inequities facing Black students within the education system. Similarly, Black

educators and administrators encounter systemic barriers that impede their entry and professional advancement.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) Action Plan on Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System is a welcome step towards addressing these critical issues. These actions and related practices are in alignment with the OCDSB's Roadmap Compass to transform the narratives, access, opportunities and outcomes in its learning and workplace culture to be bias aware and discrimination free so that Black students and staff can reach their highest potential."

**Jacqueline Lawrence, Equity Advisor  
Ottawa Carleton District School Board**

## Looking Ahead

The OHRC will continue advocating for the full and effective implementation of the recommendations in the Action Plan. In the coming months, the OHRC will work closely with education stakeholders to transform commitments into tangible improvements in the experiences and outcomes of Black students, educators, and the whole student body. The ultimate goal is to remove the barriers and create an education system where every student can flourish without having their dreams delayed.

## Media highlights

- CBC, June 29, 2024, "[School's out for summer, but these courses are enticing teachers to hit the books](#)"
- Globe and Mail, December 27, 2024, "[As demand for disability accommodations in universities grows, professors contend with how to handle students' requests](#)"
- Toronto Star, March 27, 2025 "[Ontario human rights watchdog calls for 'bold' action to combat anti-Black racism in schools](#)"
- The Niagara Falls Review, February 18, 2025, "[Literacy screening targets reading gaps for Niagara's kids](#)"

# **Human rights culture**

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## A new tool to assess and mitigate human rights impacts of artificial intelligence systems

The focus on artificial intelligence (AI) is shifting from research and development to real-world applications that impact people's lives. As our reliance on these technologies grow, organizations have a crucial responsibility to ensure they are used safely and compliant with basic legal principles. In Ontario, this includes ensuring that their use of AI technologies aligns with the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the Canadian *Human Rights Act*, and the *Charter*.

Early uses of AI have demonstrated that preventing and addressing adverse human rights impacts is challenging. Public and private organizations must thoroughly evaluate their AI systems and internal procedures to ensure robust mitigation strategies. The latest AI regulations worldwide increasingly require organizations to conduct impact assessments before deploying AI systems. In this context, the OHRC and Law Commission of Ontario, with contributions from the Canadian Human Rights Commission, released the Human Rights Impact Assessment for AI technologies (HRIA) in November 2024.

The HRIA incorporates a risk-management framework to help organizations determine whether their AI systems could impact human rights. Through a series of questions and explanations, the HRIA aims to:

- strengthen knowledge and understanding of human rights impacts
- provide practical guidance on specific human rights impacts, particularly in relation to non-discrimination and equality of treatment



- identify practical mitigation strategies and remedies to address bias and discrimination from AI systems

The HRIA has two parts. Part A guides the user in assessing their AI system for human rights implications. The user is asked questions about the AI system's treatment of individuals and communities and categorizes the system into one of several potential risk levels. Part B is about mitigation. It guides the user on the steps that can be taken to minimize the identified human rights issues. By completing the HRIA, organizations undergo a rigorous process that helps ensure their development and use of AI technologies are valid and reliable, safe, privacy-protective, transparent, accountable, and human rights-affirming. In doing so, they enhance public confidence and trust that their use of technology respect human rights principles.

Efforts to develop AI safety and ethics frameworks frequently overlook or misinterpret human rights concerns. Organizations with existing AI frameworks will find the HRIA complementary by providing essential guidance to policymakers and other decision-takers. The tool supports a human rights-based approach to AI guardrails that can be integrated with other governance practices on critical issues, including broader human rights such as privacy.

Since its launch, the OHRC has received positive feedback from organizations in Ontario, Canada, and other jurisdictions who are incorporating the HRIA into their AI governance activities. The OHRC has encouraged developers, administrators, policymakers, and other duty-holders to work with the HRIA tool to ensure that the opportunities, benefits, and protections associated with the use of AI are available to all Ontarians without discrimination.

“AI offers many benefits, but also has well-documented risks. The AI impact assessment released today is a practical, step-by-step tool that will help organizations identify and manage AI risks to human rights. The LCO and OHRC have worked together to develop the first human rights impact assessment based on Canadian human rights law.”

**Raj Anand**

**Chair of the Law Commission of Ontario Board of Governors**

## **Submission on Bill 194, Strengthening Cyber Security and Building Trust in the Public Sector Act**

In 2024, the OHRC continued its push for robust and comprehensive guardrails regarding the development, procurement, implementation, and use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies.

On May 13, 2024, Ontario introduced Bill 194, *Strengthening Cyber Security and Building Trust in the Public Sector Act* to the legislature. The proposed legislation, among other things, aims to regulate the use of AI technologies in certain areas of the public sector. In addition, the government invited the public to make written submission regarding the bill.

The OHRC provided a submission on Bill 194 as a part of the public consultation process. In its submission, the OHRC called for embedding human rights principles in the public sector’s use of AI technologies and expanding the scope of the regulations to include more public sector areas than set out in the draft legislation.



The Chief Commissioner also appeared before the Committee on Justice Policy and emphasized the importance of incorporating the OHRC's recommendations into the legislation and its regulations.

Bill 194 was passed by the legislature and received Royal Assent on November 25, 2024. The OHRC continues to engage with the government regarding next steps and potential consultations on the legislation's upcoming draft regulations.

## Ensuring courts consider the equality rights of people experiencing homelessness

In December 2024, the Ontario Superior Court heard an Application brought by 14 unhoused individuals who claimed that the City of Hamilton's encampment evictions violated their rights under section 7 and section 15 of the *Charter*.

The OHRC sought to intervene in this case to protect the human rights of Ontarians experiencing ongoing marginalization and homelessness. Before this case, Ontario courts had found that bans on encamping breach the *Charter* section 7 right to life, liberty, and security of the person where there are insufficient accessible shelter options for unhoused people in the municipality. However, courts had not analyzed the disproportionate impact of encampment evictions on women, Indigenous persons, and persons with disabilities. The OHRC sought to advance the case law by bringing a human rights lens to the section 7 analysis and helping the court to analyze how encampment evictions violate the right to be free from discrimination because of sex, disability, and race/Indigeneity under section 15 of the *Charter*.

The Superior Court denied the OHRC's request to intervene and ultimately dismissed the Application. The decision has been appealed to the Court of Appeal for Ontario. The OHRC will seek leave to intervene in the appeal to continue advocating for the equality rights of marginalized Ontarians.

## Daniel G. Hill Human Rights Awards

The OHRC recognized recipients of the 2024 Daniel G. Hill Human Rights Awards during a ceremony held in the Chang School of Continuing Education at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) on November 21, 2024. Over 40 guests gathered to celebrate and honour human rights champions for their outstanding contributions to advancing and fostering human rights culture across Ontario.

"These three recipients have shown purpose, dedication, and passion in cultivating a culture in Ontario, which acknowledges the dignity and worth of every individual, where people can enjoy their equal rights and opportunities without discrimination and harassment."

**Patricia DeGuire, Chief Commissioner  
Ontario Human Rights Commission**

## Legacy

Named after Dr. Daniel G. Hill, the OHRC's first director and first Black chairperson, the awards honour the legacy of OHRC trailblazers like Dr. Hill.

The ceremony included greetings on behalf of the Hill family, sharing reflections on one of the earliest human rights visionaries.

“Dr. Daniel G. Hill believed the path of higher education was a vital way for racial[ized] people to forge social and economic opportunities and insulate from racism and contribute to the Canadian society and to continue the ongoing and vital struggle to advance human rights for all.”

The ceremony also included a special presentation in recognition of activist Ruth Malloy and the 70th anniversary of Ontario's *Fair Accommodations Practices Act*, the predecessor of the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

## Award recipients

**Stefan Enrique Joseph Kallikaden**, Youth & Access to Education Coordinator at FCJ Refugee Centre in Toronto, and graduate from the Community Worker Program at George Brown College received the **Young Leader Award** for leadership advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion, youth rights and access to education. Stefan accepted the Young Leader Award with a call to action for improving equitable access to services for newcomers and vulnerable populations: “The journey with the LGBTQ2+ and youth rights and access to education is something core to me and close to my heart. My work is centred

around giving people the tools to access and facilitate the process of informing their future.”

**Lorin MacDonald**, human rights lawyer and accessibility advocate, received the **Distinguished Service Award** for her tireless and outstanding contributions to advance disability advocacy across Ontario. Lorin said she was honoured to receive the award commemorating Dr. Hill’s legacy: “Dr. Hill, our province’s first Black Human Rights Commissioner, but not the last, showed us that one person’s courage to stand up can inspire thousands to stand together. This award belongs to the countless individuals who work tirelessly, often without recognition, to advance human rights and equity in our communities.”

**Rosemary Sadlier**, consultant, social justice advocate, and author received the **Lifetime Achievement Award** in recognition of her exceptional lifetime commitment to social justice and raising awareness about Black history in Ontario and Canada. Rosemary said: “It is important to talk about history because this is what Dr. Daniel G. Hill recognized. My seeing his example of a Black person identifying, prioritizing, and privileging people of African origin in this country was so inspiring for what I went on to do. I am hopeful that the issuing of this award to me, bearing the name of Daniel G. Hill, will inspire other people to make their mark in this country. History is a context that also applies to social justice, education, community work, and activism.”

The OHRC expresses its heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to its Staff Awards Committee and the Selection Committee for their contribution towards the success of the event.

## Fostering a human rights culture: Did You Know?

As part of the OHRC's work to foster a human rights culture in Ontario and raise awareness about ongoing issues in employment, housing, and services, the OHRC launched the *Did You Know?* social media campaign. The OHRC shared facts, among others, about how the *Code* protects employees against reprisals and the obligation of employers to address workplace discrimination and harassment. Each post included a link to OHRC's resources and tools including the [OHRC Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability](#), [Your guide to special programs and the Human Rights Code](#), and the [Policy on preventing discrimination based on mental health disabilities and substance use disorder](#). The OHRC continues to develop social content to raise awareness about human rights.

## Ontario Heritage Fair Awards

The OHRC is delighted to be a sponsor of the Ontario Human Rights Award, which recognized students for their achievement in demonstrating the history, impact and fostering of human rights culture in Ontario. This initiative, led by the Ontario Heritage Fair Association, provides students in 14 school boards, four First Nations and through independent submissions with the opportunity to explore their cultural heritage and Canadian history through innovative and learning-based activities and tools.

This year's projects focused on Truth & Reconciliation, racial equity, and the elimination of racial discrimination.

Congratulations to the 11 award recipients on their achievements!

## Toronto Newcomer Day Information Fair

On May 23, 2024, the OHRC participated as one of 142 exhibitors at the Toronto Newcomer Day Information Fair held at Nathan Phillips Square. This annual event is organized to welcome and inform newcomers on how to access services, including services from the human rights system. Also, it created an opportunity for dialogue, allowing participants to learn about rights and responsibilities under the *Code*.

The OHRC was pleased to meet with newcomers and organizations to provide them with practical tools for supporting and promoting human rights. Through public education and engagement, the OHRC will keep looking for opportunities to raise awareness of human rights issues arising from its priority areas.

## Community Advisory Group

The Community Advisory Group plays a vital role in enhancing the OHRC's understanding of important and emerging human rights issues which affect diverse communities across the province. The group provides guidance and feedback on specific OHRC initiatives and helps build and strengthen relationships within the communities the OHRC serves.

Comprising 44 rights-holder organizations throughout Ontario, the Community Advisory Group represents various grounds and social

areas covered by the Code. Among these organizations, 10 specifically support francophone members whose characteristics are protected under the Code.

In 2024-25, the Community Advisory Group held two virtual meetings – in June and November. Member organizations provided the OHRC with valuable feedback on effectively disseminating its [Human Rights-Based Approach to Policy and Program Development](#). Also, they discussed strategies to address homelessness, and explored the various ways artificial intelligence impacts the human rights of individuals who are protected under the *Code*.

### **Member organizations:**

- Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes
- Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario
- Advocacy Centre for the Elderly
- ARCH Disability Law Centre
- Association pour l'intégration sociale d'Ottawa
- Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic
- Black Health Alliance
- Black Legal Action Centre
- Bridges Community Health Centre
- Canadian Centre for Housing Rights
- Canadian Civil Liberties Association
- Canadian Mental Health Association – Ontario
- Centre for Independent Living in Toronto



- Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs
- Centre francophone du Grand Toronto
- Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
- Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change
- Elizabeth Fry Society Northwestern Ontario
- Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario
- FrancoQueer
- John Howard Society of Ontario
- Justice for Children and Youth
- Justice for Migrant Workers
- La Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne
- Le Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury
- Le Centre des services communautaires Vanier
- Maytree
- MIAG Centre for Diverse Women and Families
- Le mouvement Ontarien des Femmes Immigrantes Francophones
- National Educational Association of Disabled Students
- Neighbourhood Legal Services (London & Middlesex)
- Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
- Ontario Federation of Labour
- Shepherds of Good Hope
- Solidarité des femmes immigrantes francophones du Niagara

- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- TG Innerseives
- The 519
- United Way Centraide - North East Ontario
- Urban Alliance on Race Relations
- Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor
- Working for Change
- YWCA Toronto

## Media highlights

- CBC News, December 12, 2024, "[Toronto's handling of refugee crisis was anti-Black racism: ombudsman's report](#)"
- The Auroran, March 20, 2025, "[Ontario Human Rights Commission weighs in on emergency housing issue](#)"
- CBC News, January 7, 2024, "[Ontario accessibility act needs updates and improved enforcement, says provincial advocacy group](#)"

# **The OHRC's operational priority – organizational impact**

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## Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded that each year in the OHRC's history has been marked by pivotal moments and significant efforts. This year is no different. In 2024-25, the OHRC continued to work on its commitment to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of a dynamic organization. I am proud of the work we engaged in to improve the OHRC's internal operations, with a stronger focus on measuring and tracking the outcomes of our collective effort to address human rights issues.

Building and maintaining connections with Ontarians is fundamental to the OHRC's mission. The OHRC has reaffirmed its commitment to improving services, providing necessary and relevant resources, and strengthening the culture of human rights in Ontario. Ongoing web presence enhancements remain vital to the OHRC's need to connect with all Ontarians.

The OHRC is dedicated to the professional development of its staff, attracting top talent, and nurturing a high performing, engaged, inclusive, and resilient workforce. The OHRC's staff possess the passion, integrity, and expertise to navigate Ontario's evolving and complex landscape of human rights challenges. This year, the OHRC improved processes and tools to manage and track the achievements of its multi-year operational plan. These improvements will help the OHRC become a more data-centric agency where opportunities and emerging risks are more visible, and where activities align with the changing needs of Ontarians.

Looking ahead, the OHRC will continue to foster a culture of human rights in Ontario, fulfilling its mandate under the *Human Rights Code*. A

robust, autonomous, and well-resourced OHRC has the potential to make significant progress in advancing human rights for everyone.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Michael Harris**  
**A/Executive Director**

## Website Transformation Project

In 2022, the OHRC embarked on an initiative to upgrade and transform its 10-year-old website. This initiative culminated in the launch of a new website in October 2024.

The aging website hindered the addition of new and engaging content and made it more difficult to meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

The transformation of the website allowed the OHRC to create a modern design, build a new brand, and improve the user's experience. The OHRC staff successfully migrated a significant amount of content to a new platform, ensuring that the new website meets the AODA accessibility guidelines by complying with the WCAG 2.0 AA website standard.

## Year 2 of Strategic Plan – Performance Update

In early 2024, to support the objectives in the [2023–25 Strategic Plan](#) and to assist with the evaluation of ongoing operational performance, the OHRC introduced a new framework for measuring progress toward strategic objectives. The OHRC collected progress updates for key results related to strategic objectives, and planned activities on a quarterly basis. These are integral to the OHRC's performance management system, which aims to improve capacity to make evidence-based decisions.

The following performance indicators represent the intended outcomes of the OHRC's work from 2023 to 2025. The key outcomes are observed

more clearly by duty-holders and community organizations which deliver services and advocate for justice. Many indicators rely on information solicited from stakeholders. Where results are not available, the OHRC expects to establish baselines and collect data in 2025.

## Indigenous Reconciliation

**Outcomes:** The OHRC is a trusted ally to Indigenous communities in the work of reconciliation

**Performance Measures:** Percentage of Indigenous partners who agree that the OHRC maintains relevant and effective relationships

**Baseline:** TBD\*

**Targets:** Five per cent (5%) increase (by year 3) in the number of Indigenous partners who agree that the OHRC maintains relevant and effective relationships based on the results of the biennial survey (By year 3)

**Results:** N/A

## Criminal justice and Health and well-being

**Outcomes:** Duty-holders have and use accessible, relevant, and practical human rights tools

**Performance Measures:** Percentage of duty-holders who report having accessed relevant and practical human rights tools

**Baseline:** TBD\*



**Targets:** Ten per cent (10%) increase in the number of duty-holders who report they have accessed relevant and practical human rights tools (By year 3)

**Results:** N/A

## Education

**Outcomes:** Duty-holders in the education system are implementing changes that address systemic discrimination.

**Performance Measures:** Percentage of school boards that have a plan to implement the Right to Read recommendations

**Baseline:** 0%

**Targets:** Year-over-year increase to 100% by year two (75% in year 1 and 100% in year 2) of school boards having a plan to implement the Right to Read recommendations (By year 3)

**Results:** N/A

## Human rights culture

**Outcomes:** The public is more knowledgeable about human rights

**Performance Measures:** Public satisfaction with the OHRC's products

**Baseline:** TBD\*

**Targets:** Eighty per cent (80%) satisfaction with OHRC products (By year 3)

**Results:** N/A

## Organizational impact

**Outcomes:** Improved employee experience

**Performance Measures:** Percentage increase in employee experience rates

**Baseline:** 69.5%

**Targets:** Two per cent (2%) increase in the employee experience rate based on the results of the biennial employee experience surveys

**Results:** 73.4%

## Operational Key Performance Indicators

In addition to its Operational Plan, the OHRC has developed an OHRC Action Plan. Its goal is to ensure compliance with leading practices and legislation while fostering a healthy, inclusive, and supportive work environment. The themes from historical 2023–24 Action Plans (i.e., Accessibility, Anti-Racism, French Language Services, Mental Health and Wellness, Employee Experience) have been merged into one framework where progress toward achieving commitments is monitored closely.

While many of the commitments in the OHRC Action Plan have an internal focus on the employee experience, organizational effectiveness, and legislative compliance, several also relate to services and supports provided to Ontarians. The following Operational Key Performance Indicators show the OHRC's progress and performance in essential areas of public interaction.

## 1. Public complaints about staff and service policies/operational procedures:

**Operational KPIs:** To measure response times related to public complaints and inquiries (including those related to accessibility/accommodation) about OHRC staff and service, policies, and operational procedures (% of complaints that are responded to within the required response time)

**Outcomes:** Public complaints response time meet service standards

**Baseline:** 100%

**Baseline Date:** 2024-25

**Target:** 100% of complaints are responded to within 21 business days

## 2. Public complaints about staff and service policies/operational procedures:

**Operational KPIs:** To measure response times related to public complaints and inquiries (including those related to accessibility/accommodation) about OHRC staff and service, policies, and operational procedures (% of complaints that are responded to within the required response time)

**Outcomes:** Public inquiries response time meet service standards

**Baseline:** 100%

**Baseline Date:** 2024-25

**Target:** 100% of inquiries are responded to within 14 business days

### 3. Freedom of Information:

**Operational KPIs:** To measure the OHRC’s compliance rate in fulfilling its FOI obligations

**Outcomes:** The public gains access to responsive records, in full or in part, when requested

**Baseline:** 100%

**Baseline Date:** 2022

**Target:** 100% compliance rate

### 4. French Language Services:

**Operational KPIs:** To measure the proactive availability of FLS (% of public events held or offered to be held in French, when relevant)

**Outcomes:** FLS are proactively offered to community groups and the public

**Baseline:** 66%

**Baseline Date:** 2022-23

**Target:** 100% of public events are offered in French

### 5. French Language Services:

**Operational KPIs:** To measure the amount of designated bilingual positions (DBP) filled with the appropriate level of French language proficiency

**Outcomes:** FLS are offered in equal quality and availability to English services at OHRC service points (i.e., phone, mail, email)

**Baseline:** 50%

**Baseline Date:** 2022-23

**Target:** 100% of DBPs are filled with the appropriate level of proficiency

## Multi-Year Accessibility Action Plan

The OHRC is committed to advancing the human rights of individuals with disabilities. This mandate under the *Code* is fulfilled through acts such as public education, policy development, public inquiries, and litigation. Also, the OHRC shows its commitment by ensuring, as an organization, that it is fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

### Customer service

By the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)*, the OHRC is committed to ensuring that all individuals have access to and can effectively use its services, goods, and facilities. The OHRC continued to offer communication supports for OHRC-hosted public events, ensured that venues and digital spaces are accessible, and proactively communicated offers for accommodations.

### Information and communications

The OHRC is committed to making sure its information and communications systems and products are accessible to persons with disabilities. The OHRC has continued to review its digital and other communication methods to improve accessibility to its services. The

transformation of the OHRC's [website](#) enabled compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA.

All public documents, including correspondence and publications, continue to be made available in accessible digital formats, and other formats upon request. The use of plain language continues to be consistently applied within publications, documents, training materials, and correspondence.

## Employment

The OHRC is committed to ensuring that the recruitment process is accessible for all candidates. The OHRC continues to inform candidates and employees about their right to accommodation. New employees receive information and training on employees' rights and responsibilities under the *Code*, the *AODA* and OPS policies, all of which foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.

The OHRC will continue to adhere to OPS policies and procedures on employment accommodation for current and prospective employees with disabilities, as well as the standards outlined in the IASR.

## Accessibility training

The OHRC is committed to making sure that all staff remain informed about their rights and responsibilities under the *Code*, the *AODA* and the IASR by providing ongoing training. The OHRC continued to administer and monitor completion of mandatory training on disability-related policies and procedures, including the *AODA* and the requirements of

the accessibility standards under the IASR, and on the *Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

## Procurement

The OHRC is committed to incorporating accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities. The OHRC continued to comply with the procurement standard in the IASR and the accessibility obligations set out in the Ontario Public Service Procurement Directive.



# **Financial summary**



## 2024-2025 Financial Summary

April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025					
Categories	2024-25 Printed Estimates (\$'000)	Revised Budget March 31, 2025 (\$'000)	Actual Expenditures March 31, 2025 (\$'000)	2024-25 Year End Variance from Revised Budget (\$'000)	
				\$	%
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>	\$4,506.9	\$4,466.1	\$4,491.0	(24.9)	(0.6)
<b>Benefits</b>	\$427.8	\$551.8	\$630.6	(78.8)	(14.3)
<b>Other Direct Operating Expenses (ODOE)</b>	\$626.6	\$694.0	\$613.7	80.3	11.6
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$5,561.3	\$5,711.9	\$5,735.3	(23.4)	(0.4)

## 2024-25 OHRC Appointee remuneration

<b>Appointee (full-time)</b>	<b>Total remuneration for FY 2024-25</b>	<b>Annual Salary</b>
Patricia DeGuire, Chief Commissioner	\$193,609.78	\$186,621.00

<b>Appointee (part-time)</b>	<b>Total remuneration for FY 2024-25</b>	<b>Per diem remuneration rate</b>
Violetta Ignieski, Commissioner	\$3,776.00	\$472.00
Randall Arsenault, Commissioner	\$3,776.00	\$472.00
Jewel Amoah, Commissioner	\$3,540.00	\$472.00
Brian Eyolfson, Commissioner	\$4,720.00	\$472.00
Gary Pieters, Commissioner	\$1,416.00	\$472.00
Sandra Bell, Commissioner	\$2,832.00	\$472.00

## Commissioners

OHRC Commissioners have knowledge and expertise in human rights and issues relating to vulnerable populations, public policy, social values, and concepts of fairness, justice, and public service.

### **Patricia DeGuire, Chief Commissioner**

Appointment: August 19, 2023 – August 18, 2026

### **Brian Eyolfson**

Appointment: November 12, 2022 – November 11, 2025

### **Gary Pieters**

Appointment: March 25, 2023 – March 24, 2026

### **Sandi Bell**

Appointment: March 25, 2025 – March 24, 2028



**Ontario**  
**Human Rights Commission**  
**Commission ontarienne des**  
**droits de la personne**

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