

Onondaga County
Office of Diversity & Inclusion

Human Rights and Justice Center Oversight Committee
2022 Annual Report



**Onondaga County
Human Rights Commission**



Statement from Montanette Murphy Executive Director

In this annual report, you will find the work that the Human Rights Commission and Justice Center Oversight Committee have been doing for the year 2022. Although at times we struggled to get a quorum for the Human Rights Commission meetings the work still moved forward. The Chief Diversity Officer is reviewing the current Local Law and recommending changes to the County Legislature.

JCOC members prepared to welcome incoming Onondaga County Sheriff Toby Shelley and his administrative team, and internally our Human Rights Specialist took on the sole responsibility of answering phone calls, emails, letters, and walk-ins from detainees at the (Patrick J. Corbett) Justice Center and their loved ones.

The JCOC saw a change from within, with one resignation and one death. Both groups gained new members. The JCOC continued its work investigating complaints from incarcerated individuals at the Justice Center. More than 80 percent of the calls to our office were from the Justice Center and about 15 percent, or 187 calls, were to the Human Rights Commission.

Both the HRC and JCOC will continue to remain vigilant to create spaces and opportunities for justice and peace in our community.

Human Rights Commissioners 2022

Rasheada Caldwell- Chair
Al-Amin Muhammad
Barbara Johnson
Lanessa Chaplin, Esq.
Mbonimpa Banabas
Chris Gilkes
Agnes McCray

Leonardo Sanchez
Mia Wade
Liban Mohammed
Rev. Roosevelt Baums
John Rushing III
Nodesia Hernandez

Human Rights Commission: Mission

The Onondaga County/Syracuse Human Rights Commission exists to foster the growth and development within Onondaga County in the field of human rights and to examine how various groups of persons within the community relate to each other. The mission is to facilitate communication among such groups, creating a climate in which citizens can understand and respect each other, and resulting in the elimination of conditions leading to discrimination against members of any such groups.

Human Rights Commission: 2022 Highlights

- Calls to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) 187, plus eight (8) calls from other correctional facilities in NYS
- HRC celebrated International Human Rights Day with a proclamation.
- Added new members: Liam O'Connor, Bishop H. Bernard Alex, Lauren Rosenstein
- Resignations: Lanessa Chaplin, Esq.
- Commissioner Alex spoke at Mt. Carmel Seventh-Day Adventist Church about the work of the HRC
- Human Rights Commission attended the April monthly meeting of the Congolese community

Human Rights Commission Intakes (187 entries)

- Landlord/Tenant -22
- (SPD) Police matter/issue-12
- ADA complaints-25
- Title VI complaints- 13
- Heap assistance/inquiries -2
- Civil matter (seeking attorney)-9
- Medical transport -1
- Local Hospital complaints -3
- Shelter inquires-3
- Social Services assistance-2
- Employment discrimination/termination-56
- Local School complaints -3
- Language assistance -2
- LGBTQIA+ bias -1
- Public access/accomadation-1
- Covid-1
- Healthcare-5
- Sexual Harassment Complaints -1
- Probation Officer Complaints-1
- Other -24

Calls from other jails (8 entries)

Clinton Correctional Facility-1

Great Meadow Facility-1

Elmira Correctional Facility-6

Justice Center Oversight Committee 2022

Marissa Mims- Chair
Jeff Marier- Vice Chair
Christine TenEyck
Tricia Wittkowski

Greg Scammell
John Falge
Cassandra Jones-Ingram

Justice Center Commission: 2022 Highlights

- ❖ Calls to the JCOC-1,014
- ❖ New members Nicole Stroud Godfrey and JoAnne Spoto-Decker
- ❖ Resignation: Christine TenEyck
- ❖ Death: Greg Scammell
- ❖ The JCOC did not initiate any recommendations in 2022

Justice Center Intake: 1,014

- Jail Conditions - 120
- Medical - 240
- Discipline - 30
- Grievances - 75
- Force - 34
- COVID - 32
- Attorney/Lawyer - 93
- Religious Accommodations- 15
- FOIL requests - 3
- Property - 6
- Recreation time -10
- Bail complaints - 12
- Staff Bias/Harassment - 43
- Food complaints - 9
- Info/logistics - 2
- Mental Health - 1
- Syracuse Police Department - 2
- Multiple - 20
- Unspecified - 9
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)- 2
- Visitation Complaints - 1
- Follow-up inquiries - 78
- Other - 177

Jamesville Correctional Facility (38 entries)

- Discipline – 3
- Medical – 4
- FOIL inquiry – 1
- Bail – 1
- Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) report – 1
- Unspecified – 1
- Follow-up inquiry – 1
- Food accommodation (dietary) – 1
- Other – 12
- Grievances – 1
- Attorney/Lawyer complaints – 1
- Property – 1
- Use of Force complaint – 1
- Staff Bias/Harassment – 2
- Conditions - 7

Key:

Info/logistics: Complaints about not receiving the correct mail count from loved ones and friends; individuals questioning the number of towels, shoes or uniforms that detainees can have.

Use of Force: Complainants report of unfair or uncomfortable use of force practices.

Property: Complaints that items are missing from their property; questions on how to allow family members to pick up property at the jail.

Multiple: Usually involves the detainee having more than one complaint during a call.

Discipline: Incarcerated individuals will disagree or complain about the decision to discipline concerning an incident and the fairness of discipline.

Grievances: Complaints about the grievance process at the Justice Center or Jamesville.

Conditions: Incarcerated individuals will complain about the lack of AC or heat in a cell at their facility; mold in the cells or showers; uncleansed feces or urine inside a cell; and uncooked food on meal trays.

Follow up Inquiry: Detainees will call to follow up on a complaint or condition that was lodged against a facility.

Other: Calls for requests of complaint forms, calls to their attorneys or loved ones or friends; will call to inquire of phone numbers and addresses of local agencies and the Courts in our community and state.



Greg Scammell

Sept. 5, 1947-May 28, 2022