



**YUKON
HUMAN
RIGHTS**
COMMISSION

**COMMISSION
DES DROITS
DE LA PERSONNE**
DU YUKON

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022

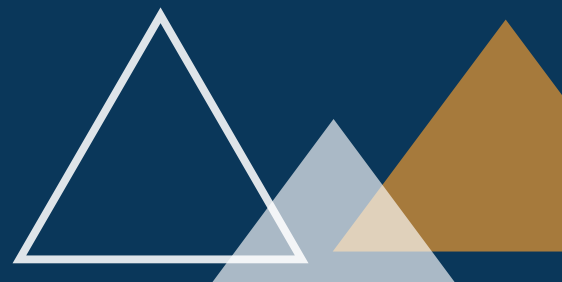




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CO-CHAIR'S MESSAGE

*"Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are **inherent** to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status."*

– The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations

The Yukon Human Rights Commission gratefully acknowledges that we serve all people of the Yukon on the traditional lands of fourteen Yukon First Nations. This annual report is a reflection on the important efforts and achievements of our valued staff and partners during our 2021 - 2022 reporting year.

The preservation, protection and promotion of human rights demands commitment and perseverance. This year was yet another challenging period of turmoil and upheaval. As we entered the second year of the global COVID-19 pandemic, we witnessed the uncovering of unmarked graves of Indigenous children on a number of former residential school sites. This tragedy, long known by the survivors and their communities, triggered important realizations and a continued reckoning for non-Indigenous communities across Canada. The Commission joins with all those who mourn the children who suffered and died at government sponsored, church-run Indian Residential Schools here in Yukon and across Canada. Yukon Human Rights Commissioners Karen Moir and Michael Dougherty had the honour of attending the memorial gathering at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. They affirmed that *"Human rights exist to ensure that every individual is allowed to live free and equal in dignity. We must face the truth in order to ensure that every child, from past and future generations matters."*

September 30th was proclaimed as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The spirit of this important day of commemoration was blunted by the fact that public servants and offices, including schools, were closed while private businesses remained open for business. This imposed a burden on many members of Indigenous and First Nations communities, for whom the day meant. The earnestness of our efforts must be matched with the thoughtfulness and consideration of what reconciliation requires if we are to make real progress towards this goal.

"When the fundamental principles of human rights are not protected, the center of our institution no longer holds. It is they that promote development that is sustainable; peace that is secure; and lives of dignity."

– Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein

The tragic murder of a Muslim family in London Ontario, reminded us of the on-going impact of white supremacy in our society. Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, threats to the LGBTQ community, anti-Semitism and explicit hate speech directed at other vulnerable communities sustain the scourge of violence. These events remind us of the brutal and exacting realities of systemic racism, and the importance of our work to confront it and root it out.

"To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity."

– Nelson Mandela

The rollout of COVID-19 vaccines gave us the potential to protect ourselves, our families and our livelihoods. However, it also highlighted societal inequity. For those members of our communities who must work multiple jobs because of their socio-economic status, who have limited access to transportation and childcare, and must report to work in person because of the essential nature of their employment could have found it difficult to attend vaccine clinics and take other measures to safeguard their health. The data indicated that Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) find themselves most affected with potentially less protection.

Furthermore, we also understand that vaccines are contraindicated for certain people for medical or religious/creed-based reasons. We are reminded that an object of the Yukon Human Rights Act is to ensure that every individual is equal in dignity and rights; the protections of the Act are particularly important when those who require it are few in number and have less power to change their circumstances.

Highlights from the past year include the Commission commemorating International Human Rights Day on Friday, December 10, 2021. This year's theme was "Reducing Inequalities, Advancing Human Rights", and the celebratory event featured several speakers who shared their stories on discrimination in housing, employment, service provision as well as their insights on individual and collective action to address these concerns.

Like many organizations across the territory, the Commission had many obstacles to navigate during the pandemic. The human rights impacts of the pandemic, particularly for those experiences intersecting risk factors, as well as widespread misunderstanding about international

and domestic human rights law, called for continuous and novel educational efforts. To this end, we increased our outreach efforts using social media platforms and the employment of other tools to fulfill the mandate of promoting equality and diversity through research, education and enforcement of the Yukon Human Rights Act.

"What is lack of prevention but denial that there is anything to be prevented?"

— Louise F. Fitzgerald

Lastly, we continued our efforts to address Workplace Sexual Harassment (WSH) as part of our five-year project with funding from Justice Canada. The Yukon Human Rights Commission's initiative, *A Yukon Without Workplace Sexual Harassment*, aims to raise awareness, improve knowledge, skills and capacity for Yukoners to address and take action on sexual harassment in the workplace. To achieve our goals for the year a number of radio ads were broadcast across the territory informing the public of the services offered by the Commission. We also continued to provide high-quality training workshops and policy reviews for government departments, businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is our hope to continue to offer these services with the same consistency and capability once our funding from Justice Canada comes to an end.

Members of the Yukon Human Rights Commission would like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated staff of the Commission, our inspiring community partners and Kim Derkatch who finished her term as a Commissioner.

Michael Dougherty
Co-Chair

Karen Moir
Co-Chair



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am honoured to have entered my second year of service as Director of Human Rights. As noted by in the message of the co-chairs, this year was marked by a number of events and challenges that impacted many communities in the territory.

This year saw the mass rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations together with the implementation of heightened public health measures, notably proof-of-vaccination requirements (vaccine mandates) in the spheres of employment and service provision. Consequently, the Commission received an increased number of inquiries and complaints; we also experienced a higher demand for our training and policy review services from sectors wanting to ensure compliance with the Act when implementing the above-mentioned measures. I am pleased to say that the Commission was able to meet these increased demands without compromising the high level of service delivery that we endeavour to provide. Commission staff worked harder on the frontlines to ensure that our services met the expectations of the public; for this I offer my highest praise.

September 30th was proclaimed as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The Commission heard concerns from our partners, stakeholders and communities about the increased burdens of restricting the public observance of this day to the public sector, thereby increasing burdens on those for whom this day was intended. We were proud to lend

our voices and platforms to call upon government to remedy this in subsequent years.

We entered year three of our five-year initiative A Yukon Without Workplace Sexual Harassment. The Commission witnessed an increased demand for our rights promotion services, including training, workshops and policy-reviews. In order to meet these demands, the Commission has explored innovative tools to access broader and larger audiences; these include the development of online Learning Management Systems which we hope will allow us to increase our capacities at a reduced cost to the taxpayer.

Finally, the Commission continued its engagement with the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA), of which we are a member. We have been meeting regularly with our counterparts across the country to exchange knowledge, ideas and expertise in order to live up to our mandate in a way that is innovative and consistent with practices across Canada.

It has been a privilege for myself and Commission-staff to serve the public in these interesting and challenging times. We aspire to maintain the confidence of the public in our undertakings and we look forward, as always, of honouring the trust reposed in us by the people of Yukon.

Humbly and with gratitude,

Birju Dattani
Director of Human Rights





Yukon Human Rights Commission **News**

Commission Members

The Commission Members for 2021/2022 were:

Michael Dougherty (2018-Present)

Russel Knutson (2018-2021)

Kim Derkatch (2018-2021)

Keely Bass (2021-Present)

Karen Moir (2016-2022)

Samantha Dawson (2021-Present)

Rosemary Rowlands (2021-Present)

McGill International Human Rights Interns

The International Human Rights Internship Program allows students to work with Non-Governmental Organizations, courts and public institutions for a three-month period and to earn credits towards the completion of their Bachelor of Common Law (BCL)/Juris Doctor (JD). In 2021-2022, the Yukon Human Rights Commission was fortunate enough to have two student interns, one working online and one working with us in the office. The students both supported the Commission and familiarized themselves with the scope of human rights issues by assisting in the taking of inquiries and working with Human Rights Officers on investigations of accepted complaints.



Rights Promotion



Rights Promotion Training

It was a busy year for rights promotion training at the Commission. In 2021-2022, we provided 7 unique training sessions to many different Yukon organizations, ranging from students to correctional officers. The team at the Commission also had a number of policy reviews to ensure that human rights best-practices are being upheld in local organizational policies and procedures.



International Human Rights Day (IHRD)

On December 10th, 2021 the Commission hosted a series of videos that are available on our YouTube channel, focused on employment, services, and housing. Eliminating inequality was the theme of these videos and this year's IHRD, with an emphasis that eliminating inequality is the outcome: equity is how we get there.



Pride 2021

In collaboration with Queer Yukon Society, the Commission hosted a Pride panel discussion on "Policing in Canada" with esteemed panelists Chief Doris Bill, Duane Gastant Aucoin, and Rachel Bromburg. The panel discussion explored issues with the traditional model of policing and suggested alternatives to the traditional models which address issues faced by segments of the LGBTQIA2S+ community.



COVID-19 Advancements

The development of COVID-19 FAQs on the Commission website helped the public to navigate the relationship between the Act and public health orders such as masking and vaccination mandates. The detailed resources available on our website were developed to promote the importance of the duty to accommodate those with characteristics protected under the Act.



**A Yukon without
workplace sexual harassment**

**Un Yukon sans harcèlement
sexuel au travail**

The Workplace Sexual Harassment Initiative had a busy year in 2021/2022, characterized by developments in technology and media, events and networking, and education and audits.



TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA

The project welcomed a new client management system (CMS). This system helps the Commission build consistent relationships, implement content, track events, and report statistics.

SPOT, the Commission's online reporting tool, had 330 views, 10 private reports created, and 1 report submitted to the Commission between 2021 and 2022.

In terms of social media, the Commission reached over 15,000 people on Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, with a series of "*Did You Know?*" posts, posts related to current events, and a 16-day campaign focused on gender-based violence and sexual harassment for the United Nations' *16 Days of Advocacy Campaign*.

Hundreds of people were also reached by ads on Yukon radio stations, public service

announcements in the Whitehorse Star and Yukon News, and flyers focused on WSH.

Finally, the Commission developed and disseminated three new bilingual educational posters and three new handouts on information relating to WSH.



EVENTS AND NETWORKING

To start, the Commission presented a webinar in French hosted by the Association Franco-Yukonnaise (AFY) titled "*Prévenir le harcèlement*". We presented on ways to identify, prevent and address workplace sexual harassment. We collaborated with l'AFY and the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (WCHSB) on the development and implementation of the webinar.

Working together with various private companies in the Yukon, the Commission helped co-develop training and policies on human rights and workplace sexual harassment with the goal of arriving at a shared understanding, including territory-wide consistency of language, on workplace sexual harassment.

On the creative side, the Gwaandak Theatre Society and Commission partnered to develop, produce, and perform a theatre piece aimed at creating awareness of the nuanced and complex aspects of workplace sexual harassment in a Yukon-wide high school tour. We have recently finalized the script for a play *The Crows*, by Indigenous playwright Frances Koncan.

The Commission has initiated engagement with Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon, an organization that functions as a hub for all Yukon NGOs (+ 600). The Commission is assessing levels of interest and capacity of Yukon NGOs to work collaboratively with the Commission to identify industry specific ways to recognize and address WSH experienced by staff and volunteers of Yukon non-profits.

Finally, Commission staff distributed over 40 letters to various Yukon organizations, providing them with information about our project, our available resources (training, posters, policy reviews, etc.) and assessing their interest in partnering on WSH-related initiatives.



EDUCATION AND AUDITS

In terms of public education, over 200 people were reached through the development and delivery of WSH presentations. More than 30 hours of presentations were delivered to various organizations in Yukon including NGOs, government departments, and private businesses.

The Commission participated with a youth program for First Nations youth, creating and sharing content to develop essential competencies and learn about rights in the workplace. This included a new format for presentations.

Commission staff wrote a blog post about the Commission's five-year project to address workplace sexual harassment in Yukon, shared by Government of Yukon's Organizational Development Branch on their Learning and Development blog-post site, which is available and advertised to all Government of Yukon employees.

The Commission has acquired *LearnDash*, a Learning Management System (LMS) on which Commission staff are building online courses specific to workplace sexual harassment. The two courses being developed are on the

subjects of Human Rights in the Yukon and Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Yukon.

Commission staff obtained the following professional development opportunities: Bystander Training, Social Marketing Training, and Trauma-Informed Practice Training.

Finally, the Commission fulfilled multiple requests from Yukon organizations to review policies on harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Project funded by



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
Canada

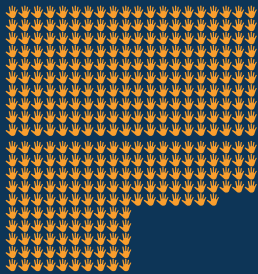


BY THE NUMBERS

2021/2022

347

TOTAL NUMBER
OF INQUIRIES



40

TOTAL NUMBER OF
NEW COMPLAINTS

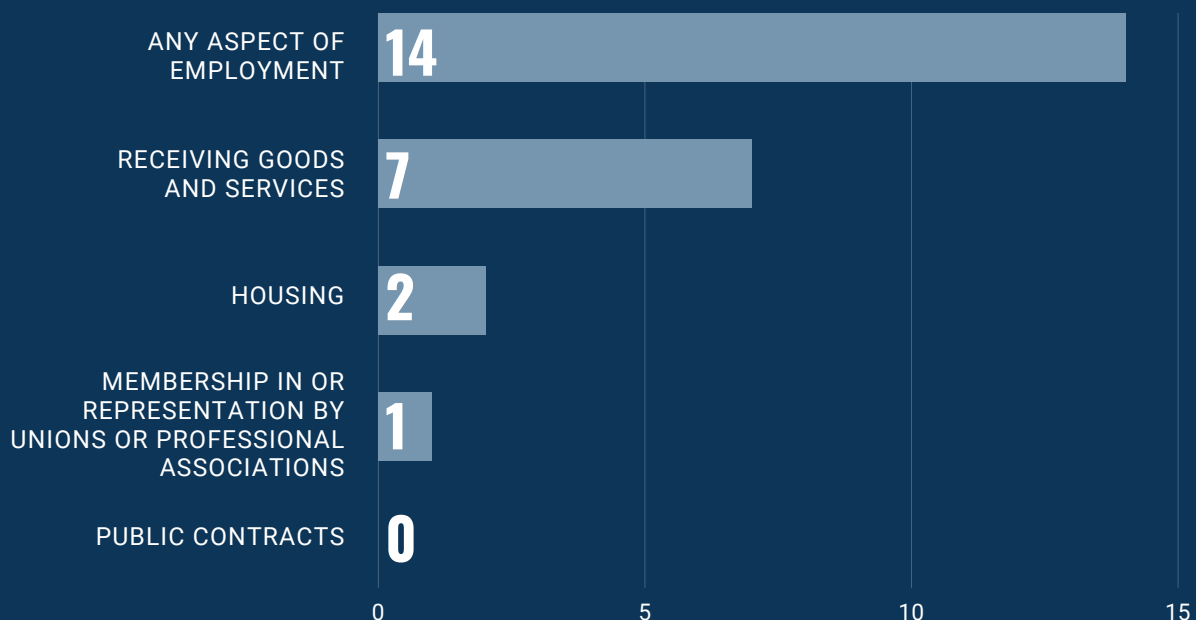


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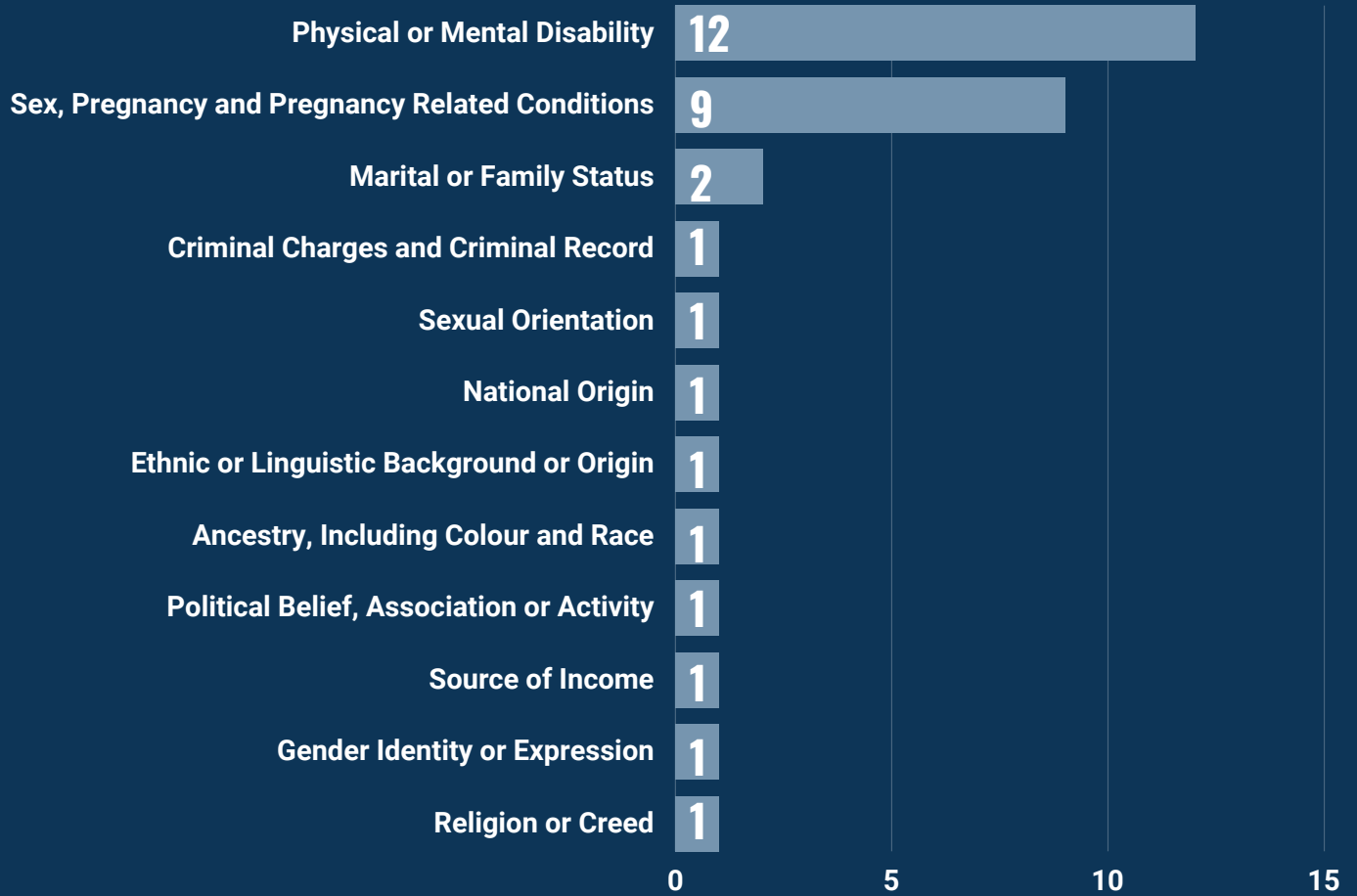
TOTAL NUMBER OF
COMPLAINTS ACCEPTED



Accepted Complaints Filed by Area



COMPLAINTS FILED BY GROUND



3



Complaints Withdrawn

1



Complaints Stopped by the Director

7



Dismissed by the Commission

2



Early Settlement

3



Referred to Settlement

16



Complaints Not Accepted

Budget

2021/2022

REVENUE	2021	2022
Yukon Government Department of Justice Grant	\$732,293	\$708,800
Other Grants and Contribution Agreements	\$583,412	\$509,309
Expense Recovery and Other Income	\$2,304	\$21
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,318,009	\$1,217,330
EXPENSES		
Administration and Operations	\$259,556	\$284,342
Staff	\$760,419	\$717,953
Commission Members	\$16,602	\$16,789
Public Education	\$101,361	\$84,234
Complaints Management	\$95,455	\$32,598
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,233,393	\$1,135,916





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