



2025 Annual Report

Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights

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Message from

Interim Director Kaela McConnon Diarra

Dear Minneapolis community,

Welcome to the Civil Rights Department's 2025 Annual Report. I am excited for you to see in these pages, the work of our dedicated staff and the meaningful impact the Department made in 2025.

We set out early in the year to renew the Department's foundational statements, including crafting the following vision statement, "As the people's investigator, we strive to eliminate civil rights violations in the City of Minneapolis by rooting ourselves in service, justice and community and working to remove systemic and institutional barriers that cause harm." As the people's investigator, we commit to listen, to investigate, and to enforce your civil right protections, spurring necessary change that protects and uplifts all.

While civil rights protections are seemingly shrinking around us, Minneapolis has expanded those protections in 2025. In partnership with the City's policy makers, we worked to strengthen each of the civil rights related ordinances we enforce, including expanding our Civil Right Ordinance to include three new protected classes, barring discrimination based on housing status, justice-impacted status, and height/weight; revising our Sick and Safe Ordinance to align with state law, expanding protections for workers and simplifying compliance for employers; and strengthening our Small and Underutilized Business Ordinance to ensure equity in city contracting that aligns with the rich diversity of our city.

Across the Department, our staff fielded more than 1,000 complaints and inquiries, completed hundreds of investigations and facilitated close to \$1 million in monetary relief for those who experienced rights violations. Our Office of Police Conduct Review staff completed all investigative work on a historical backlog of 234 police misconduct complaints, making great strides toward compliance with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights settlement agreement.

We participated on the national stage at the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies conference and the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement conference. Civil Rights staff continued to support our vital boards and commissions, the Community Commission on Police Oversight, the Civil Rights Commission and the Workplace Advisory Committee. We prioritized being in community, participating in more than 200 community engagements.

While I am immensely proud of this year's accomplishments, there is still so much to do. The Department continues to prioritize leadership in civil rights at the state and national level; presence in and feedback from community; and professional, timely and impactful investigative work. While having written civil rights laws is essential and important, those laws only truly come alive when they are vigorously enforced. The Civil Rights Department is committed to that vigorous enforcement. I am grateful to lead this Department and grateful for your engagement with our work.

In partnership,

Kaela McConnon Diarra

Our Mission

The Minneapolis Civil Rights Department protects and advances human rights through enforcing civil rights protections with accountability and impartial investigations to empower community.

Vision

As the people's investigator, we strive to eliminate civil rights violations in the City of Minneapolis by rooting ourselves in service, justice and community and working to remove systemic and institutional barriers that cause harm.

Principles & standards

The Department operates with fairness, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that investigations, enforcement, and outreach uphold high professional and ethical standards while centering community needs.

Values



INTEGRITY



EQUITY



ACCOUNTABILITY

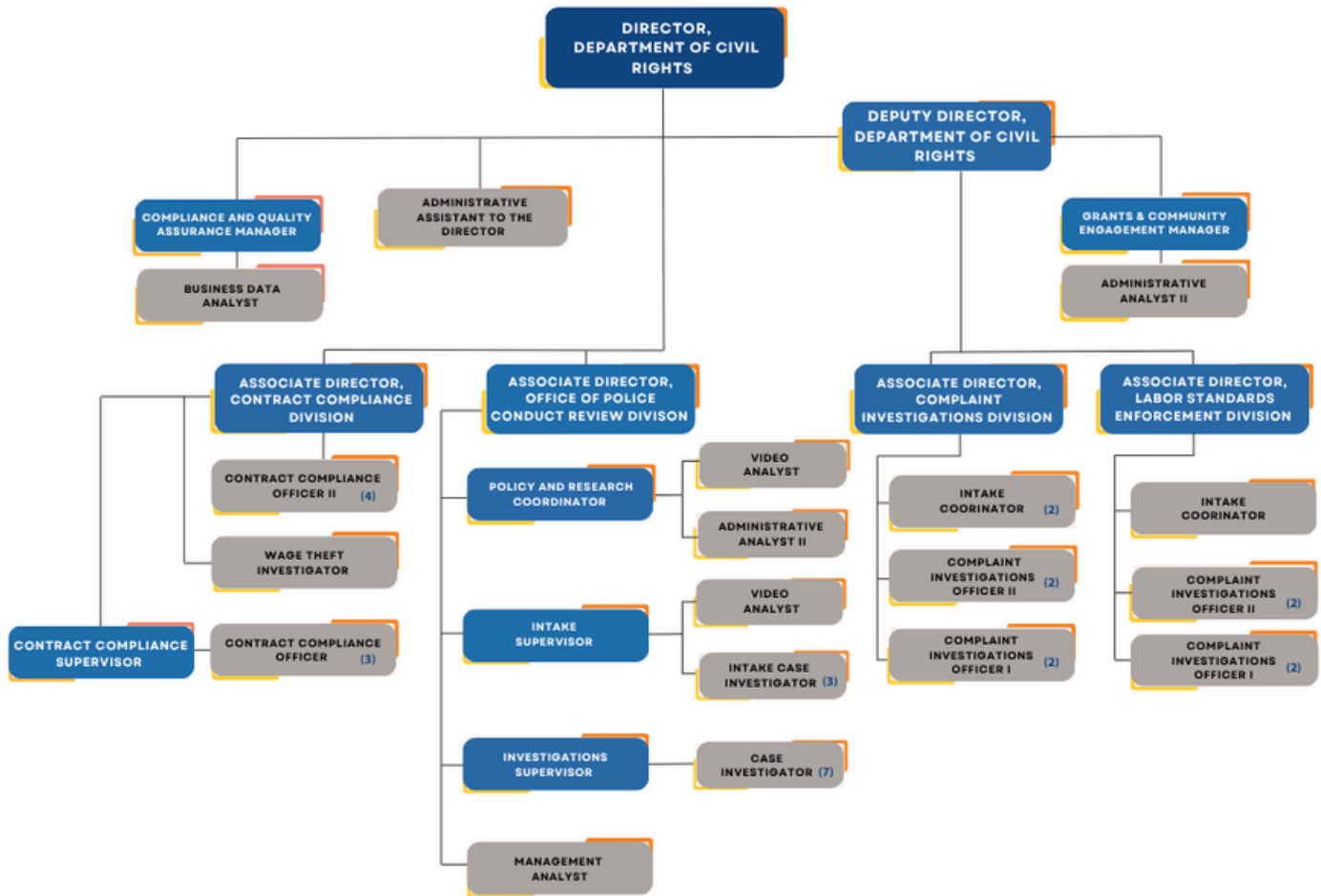


JUSTICE



TRUST

Civil Rights Department Overview



Strengthening department capacity

In 2025, the Civil Rights Department strengthened its organizational capacity and long-term effectiveness through the creation of two new leadership positions:

Manager, Grants and Community Engagement

This position strategically expands the Department’s community engagement efforts and strengthens partnerships with community organizations, stakeholders, and residents. The role also provides leadership over external contracts and grant opportunities, helping to secure and manage resources that support the Department’s mission, programs, and equitable outcomes across the City of Minneapolis.

Manager, Compliance and Quality Assurance

This position provides centralized leadership and coordination for compliance and quality assurance across the Department. The role supports implementation and ongoing compliance with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights settlement agreement, while also leading the development, standardization, and monitoring of policies, procedures, and best practices across all divisions to promote consistency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Department Priorities and Achievements 2025

Strategic priorities

- Shorten case timelines
- Increase community engagement
- Standardize operating procedures across divisions within department
- Support strengthening the ordinances the department enforces

Major achievements

- Completed organizational restructure
- Increased hiring and improved employee retention
- Strengthened all ordinances the department enforces
- Completed investigative work on Police Misconduct backlog
- Progress towards MDHR (Minnesota Department of Human Rights) Settlement Agreement compliance

Civil Rights Department Work

The Department's work is organized into four primary service areas:



Police misconduct: Review and investigate complaints of misconduct by Minneapolis police officers.



Discrimination: Review and investigate complaints of discrimination based on protected class (i.e. race, sex, religion).



Labor standards: Ensure fair workplace practices, including wages and sick leave.



Contract compliance: Monitor City contracts to ensure fairness, equity, and economic inclusion.



Department Supported Boards and Commissions



**Civil Rights
Commission**



**Community Commission
on Police Oversight**



**Workforce Advisory
Committee**

Civil Rights Commission

The Civil Rights Commission promotes and protects the civil rights of the people of Minneapolis. Established in 1975, it implements the City's civil rights policies through public information, education, and adjudication.

In 2025, it supported work to **strengthen the Minneapolis' civil rights protections** and celebrated its **50 year anniversary**.

Community Commission on Police Oversight

The Community Commission on Police Oversight (CCPO) is an independent body in the City of Minneapolis that allows the public to participate in police oversight. It serves as a platform for citizens to engage in discussions about police policies, practices, and accountability measures and it plays a crucial role in ensuring community involvement in the police accountability process.

In 2025, members participated on review panels that **reviewed 105 cases and issued recommendations** on police conduct and executed **three resolutions** recommending policy changes and improved processes.



Workplace Advisory Committee

The Workforce Advisory Committee supports the city's commitment to ensuring fair and safe workplaces for all. It includes a diverse cross-section of stakeholders, such as business associations, employees, organized labor, and public employees. The committee provides advice and suggestions on workplace policies and initiatives, ensuring that the voices of both businesses and workers are heard in shaping the city's workforce policies.

In 2025, the committee supported **amendments to the sick and safe time ordinance** and advocated to policymakers for even more **training to empower workers**.

Office of Police Conduct Review (OPCR)

OPCR receives and investigates complaints of police misconduct involving Minneapolis Police Department officers. The Office functions as civilian oversight of law enforcement, promoting accountability and building trust with community.

Common misconduct complaints:

- Unprofessional or rude behavior.
- Unsafe driving.
- Excessive use of force.
- Other actions undermining community trust.

OPCR investigates complaints from any point in time, including older incidents where evidence may be limited. Staff include investigators, researchers and analysts. Its work is vital to the City's progress toward compliance with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights settlement agreement.

The Division also supports the Community Commission on Police Oversight, whose members provide vital community input on police policy and participate on review panels for misconduct cases.

2025 division updates:

- Supported ordinance updates to reduce case timelines and increase transparency.
- Completed investigative work on 234-case historical backlog.
- Drafted and recommended a sexual misconduct policy, partnering with the Community Commission on Police Oversight.
- Provided input and feedback on Police Department policies.
- Conducted research on emerging law enforcement trends and issues.

Labor Standards Enforcement Division (LSED)

LSED enforces the City's sick and safe time, minimum wage, and wage theft laws.

Violations include not paying overtime or failing to pay for all hours worked.

Sick and safe time

- Employees earn 1 hour for every 30 hours worked.
- Can be used for illness, caring for family, or safety needs related to domestic abuse.

Minimum wage

- Effective January 1, 2026, the minimum wage has been increased to \$16.37 in Minneapolis.

Wage theft

- Violations include failing to pay overtime for all hours worked.

The Division recovers owed wages and promotes compliance through outreach and education, ensuring fairness in the workplace.

2025 division updates:

- Supported passage of new Sick and Safe Time Ordinance amendments to align with state law and strengthen protections.
- Reached milestone of collecting over \$2 million in lost wages for workers since the division's founding.
- Renewed contract and continued work with co-enforcement partner Centro De Trabajadores Unidos En La Lucha (CTUL).
- Wage theft referral to the Hennepin County Attorney's Office that resulted in first wage theft criminal conviction in the state.



Contract Compliance Division (CCD)

CCD ensures City contracts reflect fairness, equity, and economic inclusion through active contract monitoring, construction project site visits and investigations.

Affirmative action and business inclusion:

- Supports small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses.
- Certifies eligible businesses and sets utilization goals within City contracts.

Prevailing wage monitoring:

- Ensures workers on City-funded projects are paid correct trade wages, exceeding the minimum wage.

Contract oversight:

- Actively monitors contracts for compliance with small and underutilized business goals.

2025 division updates:

- Increased capacity for wage theft investigations, resulting in 55 completed investigations and recovery of over \$172,720.32 in unpaid wages for workers.
- Approved new Small Underutilized Business Program (SUBP) disparity study and worked with elected officials to update SUBP ordinance.
- Began transition of the certification of Small and Underutilized Businesses from a federal to a local program for better equity in city contracting.



Complaint Investigations Division (CID) – Anti-Discrimination Work

CID investigates discrimination complaints across many areas of life in Minneapolis. Complaints must be filed within 1 year of a discriminatory incident and are not limited to those within City government.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is negative treatment based on a person’s protected class—core aspects of identity that individuals cannot be expected to change.

Discrimination is prohibited in:

Employment, housing, education, public services, public accommodations (i.e. businesses), and more.

Protected classes in Minneapolis:

Age, disability, familial status, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, status regarding public assistance.

Newly added - Housing status, height and weight, justice impacted and more.

*Individuals are also protected from **retaliation** for reporting discrimination.*

The Division also supports the Civil Rights Commission, whose members engage on civil rights issues and review appeals of decisions in discrimination cases.

2025 division updates:

- Supported passage of amendments to the Civil Rights Ordinance including adding new protected classes.
- Conducted outreach and engagement to promote new protections.
- Collaborated on the Civil Rights Commission 50th Anniversary events.



2025 Spotlight: New Civil Rights Protections



As of August 1st, 2025, the Civil Rights Ordinance now includes:

New protected classes of:

- **Housing status:** *Protects individuals experiencing homelessness.*
- **Height and weight:** *Addresses appearance-based discrimination.*
- **Justice impacted:** *Ensures fair consideration of individuals with a criminal history.*

Additionally, The City bolstered existing protections by:

- **Expanding the definition of race**
- **Requiring accommodation for religious observances**
- **And more**

Division Key Outcomes

Office of Police Conduct Review

234 Backlog cases reviewed and necessary investigative steps completed.

105 Case review panels conducted.

Labor Standards & Enforcement

188 Cases completed in 2025.

\$550,000 Recovered in lost wages and damages for workers.

297 Technical assistance consultations.

Contract Compliance

79% City contracts met or exceeded goals for Minority Owned Business inclusion.

73% City contracts met or exceeded goals for Women Owned Business inclusion.

\$172,720.32 In recovered wages from 55 completed investigations.

Complaint Investigations

65 Cases completed in 2025.

21 Cases resolved through mediation.

\$170,000 In monetary settlements to victims of discrimination.

Accessing Civil Rights Services

Community members and City employees can report concerns or file complaints:

Online

Complaints can be submitted online 24/7 at minneapolismn.gov/civilrights. Forms are available in multiple languages.

By phone - Call 311:

Staff complete forms over the phone. Translation services available.

In-person (by appointment only)

You may schedule an appointment by calling (612) 673-3012. Appointments take place at the Civil Rights Office in City Hall.

How can community support our work?

- Refer individuals who may be experiencing rights violations to the Civil Rights Department.
- Share concerns, patterns, or systemic issues related to Civil Rights.
- Invite the Department to community events where our services could be helpful.
- Join one of the Department-supported boards and commissions.

Community Engagement

In 2025, the City of Minneapolis Civil Rights Department advanced a dynamic, citywide community engagement strategy grounded in education, accessibility, accountability, and relationship-building. Throughout the year, the Department participated in 243 engagement events, connecting with residents, workers, employers, advocates, community leaders, and partner organizations in every ward of Minneapolis.

Civil Rights staff met people where they were, at neighborhood meetings, large public events, trainings, media outreach efforts, canvassing activities, tabling opportunities, and commission-related work. These engagements increased awareness of civil rights protections, complaint investigation processes, labor standards enforcement, contract compliance, police oversight, immigrant and refugee inclusion, and updates to protected classes under the Civil Rights Ordinance. Through consistent presence and collaboration, the Department strengthened trust and reaffirmed its role as an accessible, responsive department serving Minneapolis's diverse communities.

Community voice remained central to the Department's work. Input gathered through surveys, public meetings, community events, and advisory bodies directly informed policy and practice, including the expansion of protected classes reflecting lived community experiences. Cross-divisional collaboration further improved access to services, allowing complaints spanning multiple civil rights areas to be addressed more efficiently.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Civil Rights Department will continue expanding engagement, improving timelines, increasing transparency, and strengthening responsiveness, ensuring civil rights enforcement remains equitable, accessible, and community-driven.



Key Engagement Highlights

Key community engagement highlights

In 2025, the City of Minneapolis Civil Rights Department deepened its community presence through targeted, inclusive, and high-impact engagement across Minneapolis. These efforts strengthened trust, expanded participation, and increased access to civil rights information and services.

Department staff supported robust public participation through the Community Commission on Police Oversight, Civil Right Commission, and Workforce Advisory Committee hosting regular and special meetings, public hearings, and forums while conducting broad recruitment to ensure representation across wards and lived experiences. Labor Standards staff partnered with worker advocates, unions, and employers to deliver education, pilot industry-specific programs, and host Workplace Rights Week events that highlighted enforcement and accountability.

Engagement with immigrant, refugee, and New American communities was advanced through collaboration with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, outreach at consulates, cultural events, and faith-based spaces, and participation in citizenship workshops and resource fairs. The Department also led citywide trainings and public education on Civil Rights Ordinance updates, ensuring new protected classes were clearly understood.

Neighborhood outreach included festivals, Open Streets events, food distribution, and culturally specific gatherings, meeting residents directly to share resources and hear concerns. Media engagement through Hmong Radio, La Raza Radio, Native Roots Radio, and Somali TV further expanded the Department's reach.

Together, these efforts increased awareness of civil rights, police accountability, labor protections and equity in city contracting, strengthened partnerships, reaffirming the Civil Rights Department's commitment to equity, transparency, and meaningful community collaboration.

Outreach events spotlight

- Juneteenth Celebrations
- Twin Cities Pride Festival
- Community Connections Conference
- Open Streets
- NE Park Fest
- Black & Latino Business Weeks
- NorthPoint Free Food Fridays
- Ecuadorian Consulate Resource Fair
- Trans Equity Summit
- Willie Burton's All-Star Thanksgiving Giveback



2025 In Pictures



Department Impact and Outcomes

Enforcement achievements

- 1000+ complaints and inquiries received annually.
- \$900,000+ recovered through settlements, back wages, or damages.

Restoring justice examples

- Back pay for workers paid less than minimum wage.
- Compensation for tenants evicted in retaliation for reporting discrimination.
- Discipline for police officers who engaged in misconduct.

Preventing future harm

- Policy changes and training for employers, workers, landlords and business owners.
- Policing policy improvements.
- Fair contracting practices.



Building capacity and community impact

- Delivered trainings and presentations to City employees, departments, advisory bodies, and community groups.
- Strengthened equity-focused engagement and coordination citywide.
- Raised public awareness and understanding of civil rights protections.
- Expanded participation in commissions, trainings, and public meetings.
- Built trusted partnerships with community members and City departments.

As we conclude this 2025 Annual Report, we are reminded of the enduring wisdom of Maya Angelou, who so beautifully said: “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

The Minneapolis Civil Rights Department protects and advances human rights through enforcing civil rights protections with accountability and impartial investigations to empower community.

As the people’s investigator, we strive to eliminate civil rights violations in the City of Minneapolis by rooting ourselves in service, justice and community and working to remove systemic and institutional barriers that cause harm.

Closing Message

Civil rights in Minneapolis is not an abstract concept. There are vital city laws in place that affect the daily lives, dignity, and safety of real people. The Civil Rights Department is committed to vigorous enforcement of rights, restoring fairness, and promoting justice so that everyone in Minneapolis can thrive.



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Civil Rights Team 2025



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