

CITY OF DECATUR HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Summary of Cases Processed in 2023

Calendar year 2023 was one of the most active years in recent history, with the Commission processing 16 cases. In the previous four years, the Commission processed an average of 8 cases per year. A summary of cases begins on the following page.

In addition to handling discrimination charges, the Commission began an intensive review of the City's Unlawful Discrimination ordinance (Chapter 28 of the City of Decatur Code). This is being done at the invitation of the City Manager. The Commission expects to conclude its review in 2024 and submit recommendations to clarify and improve the ordinance.

It should be noted that there are currently 3 vacancies on the Human Relations Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fred W. Spannaus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Fred" being the most prominent.

Fred W. Spannaus
Contractual Human Rights Investigator
Human Relations Commission
City of Decatur, Illinois

Charge #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#220201	Disability discrimination in employment (termination)	February 1, 2022	Conducted a full investigation and found probable cause on October 19, 2022. After lengthy negotiations, the case was settled on July 18, 2023.
#220713	Race discrimination and retaliation in employment (termination)	July 13, 2022	I dismissed the case for lack of evidence on August 3, 2022. Complainant appealed the dismissal, and the Commission reversed it on September 22, 2022. I then conducted a full investigation and did not find probable cause of a violation. Complainant again appealed. The Commission heard the appeal and upheld the dismissal on May 9, 2023.
#221017	Gender identity discrimination in public accommodations	October 17, 2022	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. I conducted an investigation and did not find probable cause of a violation. The case was closed on March 13, 2023.
#230224	Race discrimination in employment	February 24, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent and Complainant attempted conciliation before an investigation began. I conducted a mediation session on June 7 which resulted in an agreement in principle. The agreement was finalized and the case closed on July 6, 2023.
#230303	Disability discrimination in housing and employment	March 3, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. I conducted an investigation and did not find probable cause of a violation. The case was closed on September 26, 2023.

Charge #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#230629	Disability discrimination in employment	June 29, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent offered a reasonable accommodation, which the Complainant accepted. The case was closed on September 22, 2023.
#230719	Race discrimination in employment (termination)	July 19, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent submitted its response. The Complainant failed to appear three times for investigation interviews. I dismissed the case for lack of cooperation by the Complainant on November 16, 2023.
#230725A	Unspecified discrimination	July 25, 2023	Conducted initial interview and did not find reasonable suspicion of a violation, as the Complainant did not allege that unfair treatment was due to a protected class or sexual harassment. Case was closed on August 8, 2023.

Charge #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#230725B	Race discrimination in employment		After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent and Complainant agreed to attempt a settlement before an investigation began. I conducted mediation via email which resulted in an agreement in principle on October 26. The settlement was finalized and the case closed on November 22, 2023.
#230824	Unspecified discrimination	August 24, 2023	Conducted initial interview and did not find reasonable suspicion of a violation, as the Complainant did not allege that any adverse action had occurred. Case was closed on August 29, 2023.
#230831	Race discrimination in employment	August 31, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent did not submit a response, but we discovered that the Respondent was not the employer of record. On November 14 I refiled the charge with the correct Respondent. This Respondent also failed to submit a response. As of the end of the year, the Commission is appointing a hearing officer and setting a public hearing.
#230908A	Retaliation	September 8, 2023	I had a conflict of interest and referred the Complainant to the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Case was closed on September 8, 2023.

Charge #	Type	Date Filed	Disposition
#230908B	National origin discrimination in employment	September 8, 2023	Conducted initial interview and discovered that the alleged violation did not occur within the City of Decatur. I referred the Complainant to the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and the case was closed for lack of jurisdiction on September 25, 2023.
#230912	Race discrimination in employment (termination)	September 12, 2023	After initial interview, I found reasonable suspicion of a violation. The Respondent submitted its response. The Complainant did not respond to repeated attempts to schedule an investigation interview. I dismissed the case for lack of cooperation by the Complainant on December 12, 2023.
#231010	Disability discrimination in public accommodations	October 10, 2023	Conducted initial interview and later discovered that this was a case of mistaken identity, not unlawful discrimination. The case was dismissed on November 2, 2023.
#231210	Race discrimination in employment (termination)	December 10, 2023	The alleged violation did not occur within the City of Decatur. I referred the Complainant to the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and the case was closed for lack of jurisdiction on December 6, 2023.