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**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

*"Enriching lives through effective and caring service"*

September 3, 2025

**MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSIONERS**

FROM: Helen Chin, President

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Commission/Executive  
Committee on Human Relations, September 8, 2025

Our Commission will meet on Monday, September 8, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.,

at 510 S. Vermont Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room TK09, Los Angeles.

You may also join meeting **Via Teams Calendar Invitation** [Click here to join the meeting](#). If you are unable to do so, you may Dial: [+1 213-204-2512, 980587174#](tel:+12132042512)  
Please Post Agenda in your location.

**Parking is located at 523 Shatto Place.** Please pull a ticket when entering the parking structure. Please take the elevator to the 9<sup>th</sup> floor and walk through the bridge, which is located towards the northwest corner of the parking structure, to reach Terrace (T) Level of the building. Call 323-719-9187 when you are in the lobby, (unless you have a key card to enter the elevators going up to the 15<sup>th</sup> floor). Prior to leaving the facility, please take your ticket to either security desk (Ground Level or Terrace Level) for validation. **Do not park at the 510 South Vermont Avenue structure. Violators may be towed at vehicle owner's expense.**

Please review and let me know if you have any questions.

If you are unable to join the meeting, please call me at (323) 719-9187 no later than 9:00 a.m., Friday, September 5th.

*Brittany Martinez*  
*L.A. County Commission on Human Relations*  
*Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors*  
*510 S. Vermont Ave., 15<sup>th</sup> Floor*  
*Los Angeles, CA 90020*  
*(323) 719-9187*

Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, 510 S. Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90020 – (323) 719-9187



Los Angeles County Commission on  
Human Relations - 510 S. Vermont Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90020 (213) 738-2788

## AGENDA

### MEETING OF THE COMMISSION/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Monday, September 8, 2025 – 12:30-2:00 pm

LA County Vermont Corridor Bldg. - 510 S. Vermont Ave. - LA, CA 90020

9<sup>th</sup> Floor Terrace Conference Room

Also via MS Teams Video and Audio Conferencing [213-204 2512,,980587174#](https://teams.microsoft.com/join/213-204-2512-980587174) [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Our mission: to transform prejudice into acceptance, inequity into justice, and hostility into peace

**1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment (12:30)**

**2. Review & Approval of August 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes\***

**3. President's Report (12:35)**

- 3.1. Spotlight on our Partner: William Dyson, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Human Rights\*
- 3.2. Resisting the Normalization of the Abnormal
- 3.3. LACCHR Transformative Justice Short Film Premiere\* [“Echoes of a System”](#) We kindly encourage commissioners to click the link above to watch the Transformative Justice Committee short film prior to our upcoming commission meeting.

**4. Executive Director's Report (12:55)**

- 4.1. Report on International and National Human Rights meetings in Geneva\* and Atlanta\* – July 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, August 4<sup>th</sup> and August 12-15 Artificial Intelligence meeting in Northern California
- 4.2. LA County QPC Award for our HRC's "Equity and Human Rights" Training Team\*
- 4.3. Other Budget, Admin and Program Updates
  - i Human Rights Action Plan for FIFA 2026\* and budget updates
  - ii Stop the Hate/LA vs Hate Convening of August 22<sup>nd</sup>
- 4.4. Communications Update (PIO Cowser)

**5. Committee Reports (1:10)**

- 5.1. Transformative Justice Committee\* (Gunning)
- 5.2. Human Rights Committee (Yuen)
- 5.3. Policy and Advocacy Committee (Gunning)
- 5.4. Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee (Kulkarni)

**6. Public Comment (3 minutes per person)**

**7. Action/Discussion Items (1:30)**

- 7.1. FY 2025-26 Commission Committees\*
- 7.2. Input requested by Policy Committee about defining Antisemitism\*
- 7.3. Federal Immigration Activities in LA County and Commission/Community responses

7.4. Collaboration with County Office of Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI)

**8. Commissioner Announcements (2 minutes per Commissioner) (1:55)**

**9. Adjournment** in remembrance that September 15<sup>th</sup> is the [International Day of Democracy](#)

*For translation to other languages o para más información en español, call (213) 738-2788 or email us.*

\* Denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item.

Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission at (213) 738-7288 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Human Relations Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by teleconference communication from the following corresponding locations: Azusena Favela, 700 S. Flower Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017; Dandy De Paula, 21815 Pioneer Blvd, Hawaiian Gardens, CA 90716; Kevork Keuskerian, 1115 Valley View Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91107.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

When prompted by staff, members of the public sector may request to provide public comment for up to 3 minutes on any item or generally:

- If joining in person, staff will call upon individuals who have communicated orally or in the Teams chat to speak on an item.
- If joining remotely via Teams, please use the “raise your hand” feature then unmute microphone once enabled.
- Callers by phone, dial \*5 to raise hand, once called upon dial \*6 to unmute.



# Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 South Vermont Avenue, 15<sup>th</sup> floor  
Los Angeles, California, 90020  
[www.lahumanrelations.org](http://www.lahumanrelations.org)  
(213) 738-2788

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## PROPOSED MINUTES

### COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Meeting of August 4, 2025

PRESENT:	Helen L. Chin	Preeti Kulkarni
	Ilan Davidson	Jason Moss
	Dandy De Paula*	Serena Oberstein
	Jeanette Ellis Royston	Fredrick Sykes
	Isabelle Gunning	Gay Yuen
	Kevork Keushkerian*	
ABSENT:	Michael Cheung	Azusena Favela
	Lisa Dabbs	Derric J. Johnson
STAFF:	Tony Cowser	Brittany Martinez
	Robert Sowell	Siranush Vardanyan

- 1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples:** Commission President Helen Chin called the meeting to order at 12:33p.m. with a quorum in attendance. President Chin began by reading the LA County Land Acknowledgment, which can be found at the following link: [Land Acknowledgment – \(lacounty.gov\)](http://lacounty.gov). She recognized the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples as original inhabitants of these lands, honoring and paying respect to their elders and descendants; acknowledged that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multi-generational trauma; and reminded us of our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation, and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County.
- 2. Review & Approval of July 7, 2025 Meeting Minutes:** The proposed minutes of the Commission meeting of July 7, 2025 as submitted by Vice President/Secretary Ilan Davidson (VP/Sec. Davidson) were presented by President Chin. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Jeanette Ellis Royston and seconded by Commissioner Davidson. The motion passed with no opposition and an abstention by Commissioner Preeti Kulkarni.

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\* This commissioner, and others marked by an asterisk, attended the meeting via internet video (MS Teams link), providing their location address for inclusion on the posted agenda, in compliance with applicable open meeting laws and policies.

\* This commissioner, and others marked by double asterisks, attended the meeting via internet video (MS Teams link), but did not provide their location address for inclusion on the posted agenda, and were not in compliance with applicable open meeting laws and policies, causing them not to be counted for quorum or for votes.

### **3. President's Report**

**3.1 Spotlight on new Commissioner: Serena Oberstein:** President Chin welcomed newly appointed Commissioner, Serena Oberstein, and invited her to introduce herself. Commissioner Oberstein expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve, thanking the Board of Supervisors. She shared that she had been officially voted in the previous Tuesday and was honored and excited to begin her work with the Commission.

She went on to share her background, noting that she is a third-generation member of a family involved in the labor movement. Her early work began with DC Jobs with Justice, followed by additional organizing in Baltimore. She later joined an organization that focused on immigration rights, voting rights, and LGBTQ+ equality. In a subsequent role, she helped lead an organization that provided mobile phones and internet access to children living below the poverty line in school districts across the United States. In 2020, she transitioned to international human rights work, joining an organization called Jewish Worldwide. Initially founded in response to the genocide in Darfur, the organization has since expanded its focus to include genocide and ethnic cleansing in regions throughout Asia and Africa. Her work there centered on education and raising awareness about the root causes of systemic violence. She emphasized the belief that such atrocities often begin with disenfranchisement and lack of access—whether in the form of educational opportunity, affordability, or equitable treatment of women and children. She concluded her remarks by expressing her enthusiasm for working alongside Commissioner Chin and contributing to the important work of the Commission.

The Commissioners took turns introducing themselves, the work that they do, and welcoming Commissioner Oberstein to the Commission.

**3.2 Message for the start of 2<sup>nd</sup> term and new fiscal year:** President Chin expressed gratitude to the Commission for her re-election and shared her appreciation for the collaborative and timely work being undertaken. She reflected on the importance of their shared mission, emphasizing how meaningful and impactful their efforts are. Drawing inspiration from Rebecca Solnit's *Hope in the Dark*, she shared a passage that resonated with her, highlighting that change often begins in imagination and requires hope and action. President Chin stressed that hope is not passive but a call to engage actively in shaping a better future. She concluded by affirming her deep commitment to the Commission's work and the collective impact they can make together.

**3.3 Report on Press Conference Unveiling LA vs Hate Muslim Community Mural on July 21<sup>st</sup>:** President Chin reported attending two recent community events: the unveiling of the LA vs Hate: Muslim Community mural at the Islamic Center of Southern California, and the LA vs Hate: Healing Fields event in South Los Angeles. She described the mural at the Islamic Center as a powerful visual representation of hope during a challenging time. The Healing Fields event featured a mural created by an artist who shared how art helped him maintain his sense of self while incarcerated. Both events were well-supported by the county and community members and provided meaningful opportunities for connection and reflection. President Chin encouraged all Commissioners to participate in future mural events.

**3.4 Report on LA vs Hate's Healing Fields Community Event on August 3<sup>rd</sup>:** President Chin reported on this event in 3.3. above.

4. **Executive Director's Report:** Executive Director (ED) Robin Toma was not present for this meeting, therefore AED Sowell proceeded to agenda item 4.1.

**4.1 Report on July 21<sup>st</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup> LA vs Hate events:** Assistant Executive Director (AED) Robert Sowell elaborated on the two recent mural events, highlighting their distinct artistic styles and community significance. He described the Islamic Center mural as visually striking and located just a block away from the meeting site. The Healing Fields mural, much longer in length, was accompanied by images and further details to be shared by Tony. Both artists—one via video and one in person—shared insights into their creative processes, and both events received positive media coverage. The Healing Fields event notably included diverse community representation, including participation from the Chumash Collective, and was hosted by a nonprofit organization on whose property the mural was painted. AED Sowell concluded by reaffirming the success and community impact of both events.

**4.2 International and National Human Rights meetings in Geneva and Atlanta- July 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>; August 4<sup>th</sup>:** AED Sowell reported on two recent meetings related to human rights work. One meeting, attended about a week prior, and a current meeting where ED Toma is participating, are focused on promoting and protecting human rights nationally and internationally.

Participants in the July 22-23 meeting (convened by United Nations-related human rights organizations in Geneva on local and regional government participation in the international human rights mechanisms) included representatives from countries such as Argentina and South Africa who shared their experiences, particularly in contexts involving mental health crises and government participation in human rights reporting. U.S. city representatives from New York City and Pittsburgh also took part. The meetings facilitated open discussions and smaller breakout groups to encourage participation.

A significant focus was on data collection practices, including the use of digital tools to improve reporting, though it was noted that some nations lack the infrastructure to utilize these technologies effectively. Contacts made during these meetings are expected to aid future human rights work.

#### **4.3 Other Budget, Admin, and Program Updates**

- i. **BOS Motion on Measure B and other budget updates:** AED Sowell discussed recent developments related to Measure B and the county budget. On July 15th, the Board of Supervisors made funding allocation decisions to fully support critical trauma services in Health Services, Public Health, and clinics, which had previously been underfunded due to federal changes. Approximately \$284,000 additional funds which could have been available for LA vs Hate, went to support trauma centers, though these funds will not affect the core services currently funded, such as the LA vs Hate 211 call center and the Rapid Response Network.

Regarding the county budget, there was an initial directive for a 3% budget reduction, but this has since increased to an 8.5% cut. The CEO is responsible for presenting a balanced budget to the Board, and departments, including this one, have submitted plans to meet the reduction. However, we have not yet been informed of the final approved budget or all of the specific impacts.

- ii. **Potential organizational changes:** AED Sowell additionally reported that currently, two vacant positions (an executive secretary and a senior human relations consultant) are on hold and will not be filled until more is known about the budget. No layoffs of filled positions have been discussed, but further reductions in vacant positions may

occur. The Board of Supervisors is closely monitoring the serious financial situation.

**4.4 Communications Update — Commission Public Information Officer:** PIO Cowser gave a recap of the July 21 Islamic mural unveiling, titled “Sabr at Fajr,” at the Islamic Center and the significant media coverage the commission and its community partners received. PIO Cowser provided a media monitoring report, which detailed the millions of views the commission obtained through print publications and local broadcasts. The commission received value-added coverage from CBS News, which featured ED Robin Toma on their morning show the following day, in addition to evening coverage the same day of the mural unveiling. PIO showed a TV segment of the Islamic mural unveiling done by Channel 36, which featured Supervisor Mitchell, ED Toma, and community partners from MPAC, CAIR-LA. PIO Cowser then gave another recap about "The Healing Fields" mural unveiling on August 3 in District 2. The mural was created by local artist Kenneth Webb and unveiled at the Hear Me Out center in South LA, where youth and adults who are returning home from incarceration access healing programs and life-skills education. This event also received ample media coverage and community engagement from community leaders, residents, and performers. PIO Cowser concluded his presentation by showing the new "Immigrants are Part of our Community" yard signs, posters, as well as "Signs of Solidarity" signs and billboards featured around LA County from Koreatown to San Pedro.

## **5. Committee Reports**

**5.1 Transformative Justice Committee (Gunning):** Chair Gunning reported that the committee proposed two narrative collection efforts to LA Sheriff’s Department (LASD): one from mental health staff and another from custody deputies. The goal is to gather confidential stories to better understand challenges and support internal improvements. While LASD showed some defensiveness—especially around concerns of negative publicity—the meeting remained productive. The mental health narrative project is moving forward first, with a proposal in development. A memo will also clarify the intent behind collecting custody deputy narratives, emphasizing confidentiality and resilience. Further discussions on custody staffing and inmate welfare will be approached carefully. LASD appears open to ongoing collaboration, and more updates will be shared at future meetings.

**5.2 Human Rights Committee (Yuen):** Chair Yuen began with a note that the committee currently meets once a month for one hour, but due to the large volume of materials to review and the thorough work of staff members Robin and Robert, meetings frequently run over. The Commissioner suggested the possibility of extending future meetings to 90 minutes and shared this in advance of committee sign-ups, as a potential change to be aware of. The update continued with a brief report, noting that two action items are connected to recent committee discussions. The first item concerns the Human Rights County Award. While the inaugural award was presented at the John Anson Ford Award, the committee is proposing a separate award to more broadly recognize the significant contributions of various organizations. They are aiming to schedule the ceremony near Global Human Rights Day. A timeline and process for nominations have been drafted. The second item involves a submission that the group will be asked to take action on later in the meeting.

**5.3 Strategic Planning Committee (Kulkarni):** Commissioner Kulkarni provided an update on the Strategic Planning Committee, noting that the committee, being ad hoc, has not met in some time. The Strategic Plan was disseminated to county departments and Supervisors’ offices, but there has been little feedback received so far. The Committee plans to meet within the next week to identify specific individuals or groups from whom they want to solicit more targeted feedback. Although the goal was to have the Strategic Plan finalized by the start of the year, the process is currently behind schedule. Commissioner Kulkarni acknowledged that

recent events in the city and county have required staff to be highly responsive, which has impacted the timeline. Despite this, she praised the staff's efforts and emphasized the importance of having a strategic roadmap. She indicated that while the final plan has not yet been adopted by the Commission, steps are already being taken toward its implementation and prioritization.

6. **Public Comment:** No requests were received from members of the public for comment.

7. **Action/Discussion Items**

**7.1 FY 2025-26 Commission Committees:** President Chin asked attendees to refer to the Commission Committees table (page 30 of the agenda) and the group discussed the difference between the Committees. Newly appointed Commissioner Oberstein shared her interest in joining the Transformative Justice, LA vs Hate, and Strategic Planning committees. The vote on committee memberships was postponed to the next meeting to allow more commissioners to participate.

**7.2 Human Rights Award Criteria and Timeline:** AED Sowell explained that this award is intended to recognize individuals, groups, or programs—governmental or non-governmental—that have significantly advanced international human rights, with the goal of building awareness and fostering a culture of human rights within LA County government. The proposed timeline, detailed on page 32 of the packet, targets a presentation date near International Human Rights Day on December 10th, with a recognition ceremony expected during the Board of Supervisors meeting on December 9th. The Commission would review and approve the award recipient proposal at the November meeting, enabling preparation for the December event. Clarification was provided that this award would be granted by the Commission itself, not the Board of Supervisors, though Supervisors would be asked to formally recognize the honoree, similar to previous county-wide awards. The group was asked to agree to the criteria and timeline and to consider a motion for approval. Commissioner Davidson made the motion to approve the timeline, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Gunning. The motion passed unanimously with no objections or abstentions.

**7.3 Submission to UN Human Rights Office:** No objections were made to table this item due to lack of time.

**7.4 Federal Immigration Activities in LA County and Commission/Community Responses:** No objections were made to table this item due to lack of time

**7.5 Strategic Plan Follow Up:** No objections were made to table this item due to lack of time.

**7.6 Collaboration with County Office of Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI):** No objections were made to table this item due to lack of time.

8. **Commissioner Announcements:** Commissioner Yuen requested that Agenda Item 7.4 be prioritized earlier in the next meeting, as it was tabled previously and risks becoming outdated. Commissioner Sykes reminded Commissioners to monitor county news, especially regarding the budget.

9. **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn in remembrance of those LA County community members who were wrongfully detained, incarcerated and/or deported, and Ilan Davidson added Lonnie Anderson. It was moved by Commissioner Kulkarni and seconded by Commissioner Gunning, which was approved

without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilan Davidson  
Commission Vice President-Secretary

**SOJOURNER CONSCIOUS INTELLIGENCE**

# WHO WE ARE

## **Sojourner LA**

Los Angeles isn't just a city—it's the epicenter of the future. The epicenter for Conscious Intelligence, Los Angeles is where the future gets written. Where dreams of a Beloved Community become a reality. Los Angeles is where the most ambitious minds on the planet gather to change the world.

## **Los Angeles is the center. Period.**

And from this center of human potential, Sojourner emerges. Not as another AI company. Not as another tech startup. But as something the world has never seen before.

Sojourner is the world's first and only Conscious Intelligence . While everyone else is building machines that process data, we're building intelligence that understands meaning. While others create tools that serve corporations, we create systems that serve humanity.

Through IDA's revolutionary peer-to-peer architecture, we're not just protecting your data we're protecting your sovereignty. Through the Beloved Community License, we're not just following ethics we're defining what ethical AI means.

This isn't about choosing an AI. This is about choosing the future.

For organizations that understand that change isn't coming, it's already here. For leaders who know that truth isn't optional, it's essential. For visionaries who recognize that autonomy isn't a feature, it's the foundation.

Sojourner isn't just an option. It's the only path forward.

Because the future belongs to those who build it. And we're building it right here, right now, in the heart of where change happens.

Los Angeles is the center. Sojourner is the future. Everything else is just waiting to catch up.



**WILLIAM DYSON**

*Founder*

William Dyson, the visionary behind **Sojourner**, has spent three decades advancing decentralization and artificial intelligence with the conviction that technology must serve people, not exploit them. A proud alumnus of Norfolk State University, Dyson's career spans patented innovations in decentralized micropayment services and distributed virtual reality systems, making Sojourner a groundbreaking force in the industry.

Dyson's path is rooted in resilience. At the age of five, he began a meditative practice that became a lifeline when his family fell into poverty six years later. That early experience shaped his lifelong commitment to both inner discipline and social transformation, cultivating the perspective that struggle is never borne alone.

At just 25, he made history as the youngest person ever to run for Congress in Virginia. He later spent 15 years in Europe, serving as Vice President of R&D at an artificial intelligence company and working as a technology due diligence consultant for investment banks, including Rothschilds and the Fairchild Fund. His work in both corporate and financial sectors gave him a rare vantage point on how technology and capital intersect, and how both could be redirected toward empowering communities.

Dyson is also the creator of the **Beloved Community License (BCL)**, a pioneering ethical framework for technology. The BCL ensures that advanced innovations—particularly in artificial intelligence and decentralized systems—are used to uplift marginalized communities, foster equity, and prevent exploitative uses that reinforce existing systems of domination. By embedding values of justice, accountability, and compassion into the very terms of technological development, Dyson has extended

his lifelong commitment to aligning technology with humanity's highest aspirations.

Throughout his career, Dyson has remained dedicated to creating technology that disrupts entrenched systems while opening new political and economic possibilities for those historically excluded. His lifelong pursuit of decentralization and AI has now converged in Sojourner—a realization of a vision that has matured alongside technological progress. Today, with the tools finally catching up to his imagination, Dyson's work stands at the threshold of transforming computing and enabling communities worldwide to forge their own liberated futures

## LA County Releases an Animated Short Film Documenting a Student's Experience Impacted by School Policing

*As the new school year begins, the LA County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR) invites you to watch "[Echoes of a System](#)," a four-minute animated film that amplifies the voice of a student and their family who have been impacted by school policing at a High School in the Antelope Valley.*



The film's opening shot features a Black student swinging on a swing, signaling the start of his progression in the Antelope Valley School System. A parent's voice narrates the film.

**LOS ANGELES, CA** — The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR), part of the Executive Office of the LA County Board of Supervisors, released "[Echoes of a System](#)," a groundbreaking animated short film featuring the real-life testimony of a student and their family impacted by school policing in the Antelope Valley. The film draws from the Commission's School Safety Narrative Collection Initiative and highlights a student of color who represents others whose experiences are often excluded from school safety discussions.

"This film gives the public a rare and intimate look at how school policing can shape a young person's daily reality," said Robin Toma, Executive Director of LACCHR. "By sharing this story, we aim to spark honest conversations about safety, dignity, and how schools can best serve every student. We hope it moves community members and decision-makers alike to reflect, learn, and work toward a more just and supportive approach to school safety."

Paul Smith, Senior Human Relations Consultant for LACCHR's Transformative Justice Program, noted that the film is intended as a catalyst for change. "Stories have the power to shift hearts and minds," Smith said. "We hope this film fosters greater awareness, empathy, and engagement toward policies grounded in dignity and restorative principles."

Community partner Waunette Cullors, CEO and Founder of [The WOW Flower Project](#), praised the film for spotlighting systemic injustices and inspiring dialogue on restorative practices: "For too long, the narratives surrounding incarceration have been dominated by punishment and fear. Our goal is to shift this perspective towards one that emphasizes healing, community support, and the dismantling of harmful systems. This film is not just a story; it is a testament to resilience and a call to action."



Parents, students, and community leaders attended a special screening of the film "Echoes of a System" in the Antelope Valley on Monday, August 4.

The School Safety Narrative Collection Initiative was launched in 2023 in response to two reports revealing stark racial disparities in school policing in the Antelope Valley. One, [published](#) by the LA County Office of the Inspector General, found that although Black students made up just 17.8% of district enrollment, they accounted for 67.3% of school-based arrests. Another, ["Not Just Stops: Mapping Racially Biased Policing in the Antelope Valley,"](#) produced by the [Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County](#) and [Cal State Northridge](#), found that Black residents were disproportionately stopped, searched, and detained in the region.

The Commission has shared the film and related reports with oversight bodies, educators, and community groups to support calls for mental health services, restorative practices, and culturally responsive alternatives to policing.

To view and share the animated short film with your community, click [here](#).

As a companion resource for the "Echoes of a System" video, LACCHR recommends a step-by-step toolkit for students and families for addressing issues with school resource officers. The toolkit was created by the LA County Probation Oversight Commission (POC), which was authorized in 2024 by the Board of Supervisors to provide free assistance (in English and Spanish) with any community complaints about School Resource Deputies. (This is for issues with on-campus officers **only** at [schools](#) served by Los Angeles County Sheriff's School Resource Deputies.) To download the resource toolkit, click [here](#).

To learn more about LACCHR's Transformative Justice work, click [here](#).

For more information about LA County's Commission on Human Relations, click [here](#).



#### About the LA County Commission on Human Relations

The [Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations](#) is dedicated to protecting human rights and promoting positive human relations in our richly diverse, multicultural county throughout all five Supervisorial Districts. The Commission works to develop programs that proactively address racism, homophobia, religious prejudice, linguistic bias, anti-immigrant sentiment, and other divisive attitudes that can lead to intercultural tension, hate crimes, and related violence. For more information about LA County's Commission on Human Relations, click [here](#).



#### About the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors

The LA County Commission on Human Relations is housed within the Executive Office of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. [The Executive Office](#) provides a multi-functional support role for the Board of Supervisors in administering and managing technology, staffing, procurement, and facilities resources, as well as the publication of information for the Board, various County departments, and the public. The Executive Office also administers and oversees over 30 County commissions and offices, and its mission is to provide excellent customer service and support the Board in achieving its objectives.



## “From Local Realities to Global Accountability: Embedding Local and Regional Governments in Human Rights Reporting and implementation”



### SUMMARY

Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) are at the forefront of human rights implementation, yet their contributions remain inadequately captured by the international human rights system. A recent workshop in Geneva explored how national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up (NMIRFs) i.e central government structures with a mandate to report and follow-up on human rights, can serve as bridges between global human rights norms and local realities.

The hybrid event organized on 23 July in Geneva brought together more than 100 government officials, local and regional governments, city networks, civil society, independent experts and UN actors to identify practical pathways drawing on the experiences of over 40 countries represented for integrating LRGs into national reporting frameworks—through digital innovation, inclusive data practices, and institutional reform.





The discussions underscored that recognizing LRGs as co-owners of the human rights monitoring cycle is not only a matter of justice but of effectiveness.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **LRGs are already implementing human rights:** From non-discrimination and equal access to public services and from poverty reduction to inclusive education, many local policies align with international human rights recommendations—even if not explicitly framed that way.
- **LRGs are essential human rights actors:** LRGs have an obligation to fulfil states' human rights commitments. As the closest level of governance to communities, they are frontline providers of rights and are well positioned to capture granular, often overlooked data, implement rights-based policies and support vulnerable rights holders.
- **NMIRFs can be strategic enablers:** Positioned between international and domestic spheres, NMIRFs can coordinate or at least promote LRG engagement in both human rights reporting and implementation.
- **Digital human rights tracking tools are game changers:** Platforms like SIMORE Plus, IMPACT OSS/SADATA and OHCHR's NRTD enable multi-level data integration and accountability tracking. If LRGs are given access to existing digital tools, they could be pragmatically included in national human rights reporting and implementation processes, ensuring their data and actions are systematically captured and recognized.
- **Civil society, NHRIs and networks of local and regional governments are vital connectors:** Where formal mechanisms are weak, these actors facilitate LRG participation and amplify local voices.
- **Recognition and incentives matter:** LRGs need visibility, resources, and institutional recognition to sustain their engagement with the international human rights system.

### CHALLENGES

- **Structural exclusion:** The international human rights system remains largely national government-centric offering few formal entry points for LRGs.
- **Fragmented data ecosystems:** Local data often fails to reach national or international levels due to siloed systems and lack of effective communication channels. When NMIRFs include LRGs as members, these set-ups vary significantly from one country to another and are often in early stages, which can make it difficult to formulate clear recommendations to strengthen such mechanisms.
- **Political resistance, security and trust barriers:** In some contexts, national governments are reluctant to share space or authority with local actors, failing to recognize the role and importance of LRGs as duty bearers at local level.





- **Fragmented and complex recommendations:** The volume, duplication and legalistic framing of recommendations often make them difficult to interpret and prioritize at the national and local levels, making connection with other processes including on the SDGs more impermeable for policy implementers.
- **Lack of awareness and training:** LRGs may be unaware of their role in human rights reporting and implementation or lack the tools to act on it.
- **Resource constraints:** Many LRGs lack the technical capacity, human and financial resources to engage meaningfully in human rights reporting and implementation processes.

### EMERGING SOLUTIONS

- **Framing and incentives:** Promoting a positive and relatable narrative around human rights and more entry-points in the UN system and offering tangible benefits for LRG engagement with the international human rights system.
- **Flexibility in reporting to UN human rights mechanisms:** Using annexes to national reports to capture more data from LRGs is already an option opened in reports to UN treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review. Some States have already used this good practice. Using UPR mid-term reports which are also voluntary and without word limits should be further encouraged.
- **Inclusive NMIRFs:** Designing NMIRFs or expanding existing structures to formally include LRGs in both reporting and implementation cycles.
- **Digital integration:** Use of AI-powered digital human rights tracking tools to map recommendation lifecycles, assign responsibilities, and analyse trends across governance levels.
- **Bridging SDGs and human rights:** Aligning local SDG reporting, which LRGs are more involved in, with human rights obligations to streamline efforts, reduce reporting burdens and strengthen implementation on the ground.
- **Peer learning and networks:** Leveraging networks or associations of local or regional governments which exist in many countries to share best practices and build collective capacity.
- **Capacity-building and training:** Providing targeted training for LRG representatives on UN human rights mechanisms and procedures, as well as on national human rights monitoring and implementation strategies, to enhance their ability to contribute meaningfully.





- “We already see ourselves as partners of the international human rights system. What we need is recognition—not to bypass national governments, but to be acknowledged as actors of transformation.”  
— José Alvarez, United Cities and Local Governments
- “Digital human rights tracking tools are not just technical fixes—they represent a structural opportunity to bridge the gap between global norms and local realities.”  
— Domenico Zipoli, Geneva Human Rights Platform
- “Engaging with the UN human rights systems does come with a cost — in expertise, capacity, and resources — but the long-term benefits are clear. It provides legitimacy and visibility for LRGs’ human rights work, helps identify gaps and opportunities, prioritize investments in certain sectors and benchmark with others. It also enables LRGs to hold national governments accountable to their international commitments”  
— Anh Thu Duong, Global Cities Hub
- “This event is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we come together as a human rights community. OHCHR offers a unique space for peer learning and the exchange of good practices—recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all. With the upcoming launch of the National Mechanisms’ Hub, we are taking this spirit of collaboration to the next level” — Nosy Ramamonjisoa, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



# The Carter Center Meeting on Human Rights

Standing Strong: Human Rights in US in a New Era August 3-4, 2025

Time	Activity	Objectives/Logistics
Sunday August 3, 2025: Indigo Hotel and South City Kitchen		
19:00 – 21:00	Welcome dinner, introductions	Setting the stage, getting to know other participants
Monday August 4, 2025: Zaban Room		
08:00 – 08:30	Breakfast/networking	(Lower commons)
08:30 – 09:00	Welcome/introduction	<a href="#">Barbara Smith</a> , Vice President, Peace Programs, The Carter Center <a href="#">Susan Marx</a> , Director, Human Rights Program, The Carter Center <a href="#">Jordan Long</a> , Senior Associate Director, Human Rights Program, The Carter Center <a href="#">Hadar Harris</a> , Facilitator, Rights & Justice Consulting
09:00 – 10:30	<b>What has succeeded</b> in the US regarding promoting and protecting human rights?	Objective: Participants discuss what has worked on the national, state and local level to both promote and protect human rights in the US, distilling key learnings.
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break	(Lower commons)
11:00 – 12:30	<b>What have been the challenges and failures</b> in promoting and protecting human rights?	Objectives: Participants focus on what has <u>not</u> worked in promoting and protecting human rights in the US, distilling key learnings.
12:30 – 13:00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lessons learned from President Carter's legacy</b> of promoting and protecting human rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mark Schneider</a>, former Principal Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights (Carter Administration) - <i>invited</i></li> <li>• <a href="#">Roberta Cohen</a>, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights (Carter Administration) - <i>invited</i></li> <li>• <a href="#">Gay McDougall</a>, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (during the Carter Administration)</li> </ul> Discussion facilitated by <a href="#">Karin Ryan</a> , Senior Policy Advisor, The Carter Center
14:00 – 15:15	<b>What have we learned</b> from promoting and protecting human rights in the US and abroad?	Objective: Based on the previous two sessions, participants will discuss lessons learned from the challenges in the US and integrate perspectives from other contexts to distill relevant lessons for the current moment.  <i>Small group with guided questions and debrief.</i>
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee break	(Lower commons)
16:45 – 17:15	<b>How do these discussions inform how we move forward</b> to promote and protect human rights in the US?	Objective: Concretely identify how the day's findings can inform ongoing efforts to promote and protect human rights in the current moment (who and what are missing from the conversation? How does this discussion link to ongoing efforts? What role can the Carter Center play as a convener and facilitator?)  <i>Full group facilitated discussion</i>
17:15 – 17:45	Closing and Thank You	<a href="#">Paige Alexander</a> , Chief Executive Officer, The Carter Center

**From:** Giron, Salene <sgiron@bos.lacounty.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 21, 2025 1:40 PM

**To:** Toma, Robin <RToma@hrc.lacounty.gov>

**Cc:** Sowell, Robert <RSowell@hrc.lacounty.gov>; Yen, Edward <EYen@bos.lacounty.gov>; Hernandez, Steven <SHernandez@bos.lacounty.gov>; Johnson, Kellie <KJohnson@bos.lacounty.gov>; Chen, Jodi <JChen@bos.lacounty.gov>; Vega, Natalie <NVega@bos.lacounty.gov>; Liang, Dayna <DLiang@bos.lacounty.gov>

**Subject:** 38TH ANNUAL PQA AWARD NOTIFICATION - EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS - HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

**Importance:** High

**Sent on behalf of Edward Yen, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors:**

Dear Robin,

I wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to you and your team on being named the recipient of the 2024-25 Commissioners' Legacy Award. This honor is a testament to your exceptional work as Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission. This award, established in memory of former Commissioners for their extraordinary service to the Commission and County, is given to individuals who demonstrate a profound commitment to program quality and productivity excellence. Your leadership and dedication to these principles have not only elevated the work of the Commission, but have also created a lasting, positive impact on the community. Thank you for your outstanding service and for embodying the values this award represents. We look forward to seeing your continued success and impact. Our Quality and Productivity Manager, Dayna Liang, is copied here to guide you in the next steps of this award process.

Eddie

**Salene Giron, Executive Secretary** (She/her/hers)

**Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors**

Phone: (213) 974-1401 | Email: [sgiron@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:sgiron@bos.lacounty.gov)

Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Youtube](#), [LACountyBOS](#)





August 13, 2025

**County of Los Angeles  
Quality and Productivity  
Commission**

565 Kenneth Hahn  
Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Telephone:** (213) 974-1361  
(213) 974-1390  
(213) 893-0322

**Website:**  
qpc.lacounty.gov

**Chair**

William B. Parent

**First Vice Chair**

Will Wright

**Second Vice Chair**

Marsha D. Mitchell

**Immediate Past Chair**

Nichelle M. Henderson

Jacki Bacharach\*  
Viggo Butler  
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Nancy G. Harris  
J. Shawn Landres, Ph.D.\*  
Huasha Liu  
Edward T. McIntyre\*  
E. Scott Palmer  
Jeffrey Jorge Penichet  
Dion Rambo  
Mark A. Waronek  
Joe Waz

**Executive Director**

Jackie T. Guevarra, CPA

**Program Manager**

Jane Lam

**Program Coordinators**

Betty Belavek  
Ruben Khosdikian

\*Chair Emeritus

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE**



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

"To enrich lives through  
Effective and caring service"

Mr. Edward Yen, Executive Officer  
Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors  
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 383  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Yen:

**County of Los Angeles Quality and Productivity Commission  
38<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program  
"Resilience: Today, Tomorrow, Together"**

Congratulations! Each year, the Quality and Productivity Commission, in partnership with the Board of Supervisors and the Productivity Managers' Network, recognizes County employees and Departments for their achievements in improving quality and productivity in County services.

We are pleased to inform you that the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors (Human Relations Commission) has been selected for the award below.

**COMMISSION SPECIAL AWARD**

Commissioners' Legacy Award – *Change Agents – The EHR Training Team*

The Commission will formally recognize this outstanding project at the Productivity and Quality Awards ceremony on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 11:30 a.m., in the Grand Hall of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Music Center.

We are proud to showcase the best in County service and look forward to honoring you, your team, and project.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM B. PARENT  
Commission Chair

WBP:JL:bb

c: Dayna Liang, Productivity Manager (Alternate)

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
*“Resilient: Today, Tomorrow, Together”*

**2025 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: CHANGE AGENTS -THE EHR TRAINING TEAM**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** AUGUST 2020

(Must have been **fully** implemented for a minimum of at least one year - by July 1, 2024)

**PROJECT STATUS:**

☒ Ongoing

☐ One-time only    When did the project end?

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 The Equity and Human Rights Training Team emerged in response to a growing need  
2 across Los Angeles County for transformative, justice-rooted learning experiences that  
3 address deep-seated inequities and social tensions within government agencies and  
4 community institutions. Our team was created to meet this moment with care, clarity, and  
5 purpose. We design and deliver learning experiences that are rooted in equity, inclusion,  
6 and human dignity. Our approach is not transactional – it is transformative, experiential,  
7 and grounded in real-world practice. We engage staff at all levels through thoughtful  
8 facilitation, relatable scenarios, and shared language. We help teams recognize how  
9 historical inequities show up in present-day policies, practices, and interactions.  
10 Participants explore their roles in advancing equity within their own workspaces. These  
11 sessions invite reflection, courage, and collective problem-solving. Across departments  
12 and industries, this training has created measurable shifts in mindset, sparked meaningful  
13 reflection, and strengthened organizational capacity to create equitable, inclusive  
14 environments where everyone can learn, change, grow, and thrive. Our team continues  
15 to support the County’s commitment to equity, one conversation at a time.

**BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY**

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL</b> REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL <b>ANNUAL</b> ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY**

**SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS**

Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, Commission on Human Relations, 510 S. Vermont Avenue, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90020

**TELEPHONE NUMBER**

(213) 738-2788

**PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME**

Robert Sowell

EMAIL [rsowell@hrc.lacounty.gov](mailto:rsowell@hrc.lacounty.gov)

**TELEPHONE NUMBER**

(213) 200-3602

**PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME)  
Dayna Liang

**DATE**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER**

(213) 974-2546

**EMAIL**

[dliang@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:dliang@bos.lacounty.gov)

**DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE**

Edward Yen

**DATE**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER**

(213) 974-1411

**\*\*ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE\*\***

Quality and Productivity Commission  
**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
*“Resilient: Today, Tomorrow, Together”*

**2025 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: CHANGE AGENTS -THE EHR TRAINING TEAM**

**I. FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY.** Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project **to the County**. What extraordinary quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success **and specify project time frame**. Use Arial 12-point font and do not adjust the margins.

**CHALLENGE**

In the aftermath of national uprisings against systemic racism, heightened political polarization, and a documented rise in hate acts, LA County faced urgent calls for meaningful change – not only through policy, but in shaping workplace culture, public service delivery, and intergroup relations. There were foundational mandates already in existence, including the County ordinance that established the Commission on Human Relations (CHR) – LA County Code, Title 2 Administration, Division 3 Departments and Other Administrative Bodies, Chapter 2.78 – which includes a mandate to create and deliver relevant training. In addition, state law – CA Government Code Title 5, Division 1, Part 1, Chapter 10, Article 10 – mandates that local Human Relations Commissions develop and administer relevant education. On April 18, 2017, the LA County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion for countywide implementation of implicit bias and cultural competency training. These policy-level commitments underscored the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion, but there was a critical gap in how individuals and departments could operationalize these values in their daily practice. The Equity & Human Rights Training Team emerged to bridge that gap. It goes beyond compliance by offering a creative, human-centered, and courageous approach to operationalizing mandated values and building organizational capacity to address bias, reduce conflict, and foster inclusion.

**SOLUTION**

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) began as a Board of Supervisors Committee in January 1944 as part of the County’s response to what is now known as the “Zoot Suit Riots”. One of the committee’s very first initiatives was a four-day training institute for County employees to address the reality and impact of prejudice and equip participants in working in diverse teams. Developing and delivering training continued as a primary activity; however, it was not until 2020, that a dedicated team of HRC employees were assigned training as their primary focus. That year, the *Equity and Human Rights Training Team* was formed with the purpose of designing and facilitating experiential learning that advances a culture of justice, equity, and mutual respect. Our vision is to cultivate inclusive environments – across County departments and community institutions – where everyone can thrive.

Our team serves a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including County departments, public employees, nonprofit agencies, and community-based organizations committed to

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**2025 APPLICATION**

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**NAME OF PROJECT: CHANGE AGENTS -THE EHR TRAINING TEAM**

addressing inequities. We collaborate closely with department leaders, school districts, and social justice educators to tailor training that meets real-world needs and challenges.

Our training offerings include a range of equity-centered and human rights-focused sessions designed to build awareness, skills, and capacity across diverse workplace environments. These include *Equity Assessment of Policies, Procedures, and Practices* and *Transforming Organizational Culture and Climate to Advance Equity*, which support systemic change. We also offer foundational and skills-based trainings such as *Active Ally Training*, *Our Differences Matter*, *Fair is Fair*, and *Constructive Candid Conversations*. Sessions like *The Power of Stereotypes* and *You Have a Choice: Managing the Influence of Bias* help participants recognize and address unconscious bias. To promote collaboration and inclusion, we provide *Working Together for a Change* and *Psychological Safety in the Workplace*. We also equip teams with tools for managing conflict and high-stress situations through *Conflict: Liability or Opportunity*, *De-escalation*, and *The What and How of Human Rights*. Our most highly sought-after trainings in 2023–2024 were *Constructive Candid Conversations*, *Managing the Influence of Bias*, and *Conflict: Liability or Opportunity*, reflecting a strong demand for practical tools to navigate bias, communication, and workplace tensions.

These are not your typical “check-the-box” trainings. Each session is intentionally designed to foster psychological safety while addressing hard truths – leveraging storytelling, current data, restorative practices, and interactive activities to shift mindsets and behavior. As a result, demand for our trainings continues to grow, reflecting a strong and increasing desire across departments for meaningful, transformative learning experiences.

**BENEFITS (WORTHINESS OF AWARD)**

In FY 2023–2024 alone, over 1,945 County employees and community leaders participated in our sessions, with 60 trainings delivered across departments and organizations. Post-training surveys consistently show a 96% satisfaction rate, with measurable improvements in participants’ confidence to engage in difficult conversations, use of conflict resolution tools, and ability to foster inclusive, engaged work environments. Follow-up evaluations demonstrated statistically significant improvement in departmental communication and collaboration.

Our impact is reflected in how departments and partners have applied our training to drive systemic and cultural change. For example, several years ago, we accepted an invitation to collaborate with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, which was seeking training for newly promoted captains on managing bias and cultivating collaboration within diverse teams. Our involvement quickly expanded – we were added to the training regimen for newly hired civilian employees, became a regular part of the Battalion Chiefs Academy, and were integrated into the training for Fire Suppression Aide Recruits and Fire Fighter

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Recruits. When the Fire Department established a DEI unit, we played an instrumental role in equipping the team to fulfill its mission. In partnership with the Internal Services Department (ISD), we supported the launch of their equity-focused *Call to Action* campaign, which led to the development of an Equity Ambassador Training Program designed by our team. At Cali Construction, we facilitated sessions aimed at dismantling stereotypes and fostering constructive communication, which strengthened intergroup relationships across teams. With the Las Virgenes Unified School District, we collaborated to create a “See Something, Say Something” model that empowers staff to actively address bias, stereotyping, bullying, and other harmful behaviors, while promoting respect, diversity, and effective communication.

Across all these partnerships, our team equipped individuals and organizations with the tools and confidence to create actionable, lasting change. Notably, we are the **only County-based training team of its kind** offering open access across departments and to community and business partners, delivering a scalable, culturally responsive model that reinforces the County’s equity and human rights infrastructure.

This project is a model for how local government can effectively respond to complex social challenges through practical, people-centered innovation. The Equity and Human Rights Training Team fills a critical gap in how departments operationalize values of equity and inclusion. It strengthens public service delivery by reducing internal conflict and fostering more inclusive environments. The trainings improve employee experience and workplace culture, enhancing recruitment, retention, and morale. It also enhances customer service and access for diverse communities who interact with County agencies. County employees gain essential skills to navigate difficult conversations and build intercultural competence. Additionally, the project supports policy alignment with Board equity mandates by turning theory into tangible daily practice, and it promotes interdepartmental collaboration and partnerships with community organizations and educators.

According to Shawna Lewis of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, “The training helped deepen our team’s trust in each other... not just to know better, but to do better. It sharpened our commitment to building a department where all employees feel seen, valued, and supported.” Courtney Peoples of Las Virgenes Unified School District reported, “Several team members...shared that this was the best training series they’ve ever attended on these topics.” Chevon Underwood of Cali Construction Compliance noted, “Each session built upon the last, offering practical tools and critical perspectives... and underscored our responsibility to promote equity in all areas of workforce development.” Through this work, we are helping to realize the vision for a County that is just, inclusive, and human rights-centered – Resilient: Today, Tomorrow, Together.

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**NAME OF PROJECT: CHANGE AGENTS -THE EHR TRAINING TEAM**

**II. LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN – 1 PAGE ONLY.** Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font and do not adjust the margins.

The Equity and Human Rights Training Team directly supports **Los Angeles County’s Strategic Plan North Star 2 (NS2): Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities – Public Safety** by strengthening the cultural and emotional intelligence of the County workforce, particularly those in public-facing and public safety roles. Our training equips employees with the skills to recognize and interrupt bias, navigate conflict constructively, and engage with diverse communities in ways that build trust, safety, and dignity. By fostering inclusive workplace cultures and enhancing intercultural communication, we reduce internal tensions and improve staff morale – key factors that impact how services are delivered to the public. In doing so, we help create environments where both employees and residents feel seen, respected, and protected, advancing the County’s broader goal of vibrant, resilient, and equitable communities.

The Equity and Human Rights Training Team advances **Los Angeles County’s Strategic Plan North Star 3 (NS3): Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today** by operationalizing equity-centered policies and practices across departments. Through our trainings, we strengthen the County’s capacity for inclusive communication, transparent engagement, and culturally responsive service delivery. We support departments in turning equity principles into daily practice, helping staff understand how bias and systemic inequities impact decision-making, policy implementation, and public access. By integrating data-informed approaches and post-training evaluations, we measure progress and guide continuous improvement. Our work ensures that County employees are not only equipped to meet today’s challenges, but are also prepared to lead with accountability, empathy, and equity in building the government of tomorrow.

The Equity and Human Rights Training Team aligns with **Los Angeles County’s Strategic Racial Equity Principles (REP)** by equipping departments with the tools to recognize and address disparities, intervene in harmful practices, and proactively build equitable systems. Our trainings help staff understand the historical and structural roots of inequity, and how these dynamics persist in current policies, procedures, and service delivery. We support departments in applying a racial equity lens to their work – creating the awareness needed to interpret disaggregated data meaningfully, assess impact across populations, and develop preventative strategies. By fostering inclusive dialogue and embedding equity into everyday decision-making, our team advances the County’s commitment to reducing disparities and improving outcomes for all communities.

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**2025 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT: CHANGE AGENTS -THE EHR TRAINING TEAM**

**III. COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):**

If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation or other substantiation as defined by documented cost avoidance, cost savings, and/or revenue on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include and substantiate the County government cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font. If necessary, you can use an additional page.

**Cost Avoidance:** Documented costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County government or to other entities.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of documented expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County government or by other entities.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County government as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY**

Draft Budget – Human Rights Action Plan  
 By LACCHR  
 Summer 2026  
 August 5, 2025



**Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations**  
 510 South Vermont Ave., 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90020  
 (213) 738-2788 – <https://hrc.lacounty.gov/>

## **Human Rights Action Plan Budget\***

(July 30, 2025)

**By the LA County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR)  
 For the FIFA World Cup (WC) games in Los Angeles County\*\*  
 June 12<sup>th</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

(\*) Appreciation to Kenneth Ahn of the LA City Mayor's Office for the initial submission

(\*\*) All FIFA WC games in LA are at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, County of Los Angeles

The purposes of the Human Rights Action Plan ("Plan") are to uphold and protect human rights of LA County residents and the additional visitors (The Los Angeles Times reported that 180,000 additional people are anticipated to be in the Los Angeles area during FIFA WC 2026); to prevent incidents of hate, bias, and violence; and to ensure a coordinated and effective response when such incidents occur. These are needed changes given previous human rights violations that have included displacement of unsheltered during the Brazil games, anti-LGBTQ actions during Quatr games, and suppression of protest and freedom of the press in Russia. The plan also aims to produce beneficial effects for human rights for LA County residents that will endure after the FIFA WC concludes.

The LA County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR) has utilized its expertise in international human rights (**see the attached document about LACCHR "Championing Human Rights, Cultivating Healthy Relations"**) to develop this Plan, in response to a request from the City of Los Angeles and with input from stakeholders and other human rights experts. This Plan's elements are largely mandated by FIFA and seek to address FIFA's initial evaluation of the previous submission for Los Angeles by another entity.

The implementation of this Plan will depend on LACCHR staffing and resources, as well as the additional budget requested (**see the budget request section, below, with specifications of time when the funding for each element is needed**). The budget is necessary to 1) inform the estimated 180,000 visitors expected to come from around the country and world to Inglewood and LA County for the FIFA WC so that they have awareness and understanding about the laws, policies and values of respect for diverse people; (2) ensure respect for our laws, policies and values by providing a way of reporting and getting meaningful assistance to persons who experience violations of those norms; and (3) to coordinate the multiplicity of governmental and non-governmental agencies which are needed for implementation of the plan.

It should be noted that the implementation of most of this Plan's elements presumes that LA County/LACCHR will consult with and in many cases seek support for education, training services

materials, and enforcement from the appropriate County agencies as well as other governmental and nongovernmental agencies.

Fortunately, no budget is needed for many parts of the Plan’s implementation because LACCHR can build upon LA vs Hate, its anti-hate/discrimination system and its components for public education/messaging, the reporting and response/assistance mechanisms (including our anti-hate Rapid Response Network of community-based agencies). We can also make use of our existing LACCHR training team and partners. LACCHR is also counting on the collaboration and support of the appropriate County and other agencies that have jurisdictional responsibilities and program services that address the needs of this Plan.

## **BUDGET REQUEST**

**Total Request: \$519,750**

**Breakdown:** \$384,000 (for Prevention via Education Campaign and Training) + \$35,750 (for Violation Reporting System/Access to Remedies) + \$100,000 (Contracted Staff for System Expansion and Prevention/Response Network Building and Coordination) = \$519,750

### **I. PREVENTION VIA EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AND TRAINING**

#### **A. Inclusion and Safeguarding Human Rights** (inclusive of Workers’ Rights)

1. **Prevention of Hate, Bias, and Other Human Rights Violations:** Anti-Discrimination and Culturally Inclusive Messaging and Training
  - a. **Countywide signage campaigns tailored to the FIFA WC** featuring anti-discrimination and pro-inclusion messaging in multiple languages (Includes countywide and in-stadium messaging to be approved by FIFA, LASEC, and SoFi).
  - b. **Builds on and makes use of existing** LA Countywide anti-hate/discrimination program – [www.LAvsHate.org](http://www.LAvsHate.org)
    - **Project strategy, planning and execution.**
    - **Targeted paid advertising.**
    - **Produce 5 min. training video** on culture and laws respecting and protecting diversity in LA County tailored for most critical stakeholders (for example, the 12 FIFA national teams - players, coaches, owners, and others staff) who will be playing in LA
    - **Pro-Respect Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** - 30 second and 60 second
      - Example: “**RESPECT: Everyone deserves it!**”
      - **FIFA and other celebrities** featured

- Invite public engagement with FIFA WC in LA! **PSA Contest** with prize money to produce a multiplicity of diverse videos of PSA and other links
- Expand community engagement and exposure via invitation to **vote for favorite PSA submissions** via internet website/social media (TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook)
- **Translation of winning PSAs** to languages most commonly spoken in LA county and of FIFA national teams slated to play in LA.
- **PSAs can be used for the training** of teams and other key persons
- **FIFA WC-specific Campaign Collateral Materials** (posters, caps, t-shirts, etc.)
- **Additional LACCHR training options provided free in-kind include:**
  - **Anti-Hate Bystander training** online and in-person (no extra cost: already available via LACCHR and partner trainers)

**Anti-Racism training** (intensive multi-session training at additional costs). Customized training based on the teams selected to play at SoFi.

- **Workers' Rights education** and training resources will be distributed in collaboration with agencies with expertise for those areas.

**Subtotal for this Prevention section, above: \$384,000**

**Fund availability needed by October 2025 to contract.**

## II. **ACCESS TO REMEDIES/RESPONSE SYSTEM**: Monitoring and Response to Human Rights Violations and Hate/Bias Incidents

### A. **Increase 211 System Capacity in advance of, during, and after FIFA WC 2026**

1. **Accessing remedies for the FIFA WC 2026 can make use of** and temporarily expand LACCHR LA vs Hate program's already existing services and support via 211LA available to anyone in LA County a contract via the LA County, with minimal expansion for those months.
2. **"211" is a well-established phone number and website resource in LA County** to call for emergency social services including food, housing, and since 2019, to report and get confidential assistance for people experiencing acts of hate (any bias-motivated act of hostility, including demeaning speech (chanting), harassment, bullying or discriminatory acts.
3. **LA vs Hate program with 211 currently includes two Care Coordinators (caseworkers)** who contact people who report hate/discrimination through (1) the website LAVsHate.org or (2) via phone calling 211

- a. **There will be a third way to report hate/discrimination via text** (to facilitate reporting via phone for those who are averse to calling) as well in advance of FIFA WC 2026 (no funding needed: already procured and in development)
4. **211LA will need to expand its intake/care coordination/access** to remedies capacity for the duration of the FIFA WC 2026, and for a one month after to account for delayed reporting of violations/discrimination/hate and to ensure satisfactory support to those seeking remedies, as follows:
  - Increase call intake to 200 calls/month for 2 months
  - Establish capacity for 150 additional calls as contingency
  - 1 additional Care Coordinator (Case Worker)
  - 10% Indirect Cost
5. **Additional resources and agency contacts will need to be added** for remedies for other kinds of human rights violations that may not be currently included in 211LA's referral resources

**Subtotal for this Access to Remedies section, above: \$35,750**

**Fund availability needed by January/February 2026 to contract**

### III. PREVENTION AND SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS/RESPONSE AND ACCESS TO REMEDIES

#### Contracted Staff for System Expansion and Prevention/Response Network Building and Coordination

- A. **This contracted staff is needed for the following scope of work** essential to implementation of the Human Rights Action Plan, including but not limited to:
  - a. **Follow up on learnings from and sharing our approach** with other FIFA WC jurisdictions on effective human rights action plans (FIFA is facilitating a meeting on this in September 2025)
  - b. **Determine the specific multiple agencies and contacts** responsible for enforcement and training on workers' rights, child labor, trafficking, and other human rights besides hate and discrimination
  - c. **Educate needed partner agencies on the need for advance coordination** as part of a prevention/response system for the FIFA WC 2026 and surge in out of county visitors

- d. **Engage them to contribute to building a network** to periodically meet to implement a plan of preventative education and training to avoid rights violations
  - e. **Work with 211LA to add and train intake and case workers** (Care Coordinators) on needed resources and referrals to add to the LA vs Hate and/or 211LA system and/or FIFA website
  - f. **Access, analyze and create training to equip** 211LA Care Coordinators to educate/prevent/respond to reports of hate/discrimination and violations of laws
  - g. **Compile and organize community partners for the prevention**, education, training and response components of the Action Plan
  - h. **Create and sustain an ongoing network of partners to ensure implementation** of all relevant Plan elements before, during and immediately after FIFA WC 2026 games.
  - i. **Incorporate the collection and initial analyses of data** on reports/violations/remedies via the partners (211LA and other partner agencies, etc.) to ensure effective response/access to remedies for all incidents related to this Human Rights Action Plan
  - j. **Compile lessons learned for future events in LA County** for which human rights action plans will be needed (2028 Summer Olympics in LA County, 2027 NFL Super Bowl at SoFi Stadium, etc.)
- B. This contract position is **essential for both implementing both the Prevention and Safeguarding section, as well as the Response System/Access to Remedies section** of our Human Rights Action Plan.
- C. **Justification: Insufficient staff currently** (LACCHR recently lost its only staff for the LACCHR Human Rights team due to an unexpected death, and permission has not been given to fill the vacancy due to the LA County government budget situation.)
- D. **This would be a time-limited** (one year or less) **staff contracted** for the purpose of the implementation of the Action Plan and compiling data for evaluation/lessons learned.

**Subtotal for this section above: \$100,000**

**Fund availability needed by August 2025 to contract**

**Total Overall Budget Needed - \$519,000**

**LA vs Hate & Stop the Hate Joint Convening**  
**August 22, 2025 | 10:00AM-3:00PM**  
**Led by AAPI Equity Alliance**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Lead</b>
10-10:30am	Welcome & Introductions	Kiran
10:30am-11am	LA vs Hate Introduction Remarks from HRC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County staff</li> <li>• Signs of Solidarity</li> <li>• UAHW</li> </ul>	MC: Kiran Michelle Robin/Deysy/Eddie Yen
11am-12pm	Community Impact Panel	MC: Talia Hoang + 3 Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HYC (Cathy)</li> <li>• Brotherhood Crusade (Mykol)</li> <li>• LA LGBT (Ariel)</li> </ul>
12pm-12:30pm	Lunch	Jess
12:30pm-1:30pm	Storytelling / Daisy Chain	Corina & Talia; Naomi
1:30pm-2:15pm	Grounding Activity: Wishing Tree Work Cloud Activity	Miso
2:15pm-2:45pm	Group Updates + Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any opportunities for collaboration for UAHW?</li> </ul>	MC: Miso Partners
2:45pm-3:00pm	Closing Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking validation</li> <li>• Take materials back</li> <li>• Pick up LA vs Hate materials at the table</li> </ul>	Kiran



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations  
510 S. Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
(213) 738-2788

## AGENDA FOR MEETING OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

**Monday, September 8, 2025 | 10:45AM – 12:15PM**

510 S. Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Press Room

[Via Microsoft Teams](#)  
Or Call In at +1 (213) 204-2512  
Phone Conference ID: 333 921 796#

**Chair:** Commissioner Isabelle Gunning | **Secretary:** Commissioner Azusena Favela

**Members:** Commissioners Preeti Kulkarni, Fredrick Sykes, Derric Johnson,  
Jeanette Ellis-Royston

**Staff:** Robin Toma, Robert Sowell, Pierre Arreola, Joshua Parr, Paul Smith

- 1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement of Indigenous Peoples** (10:45)
- 2. Review & Approval of August 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes** (10:47)
- 3. Discussion: Sheriff Accountability** (10:50)
  - 3.1. LA County Custody Reform Initiatives**
- 4. Discussion: Staff & County Updates** (11:30)
  - 4.1. Watts Uprising 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**
  - 4.2. Regional Projects**
- 5. Public Comment (3 Minutes Per Person)** (12:00)
- 6. Action Items** (12:05)
  - 6.1. LA County Custody Reform Initiatives**
  - 6.2. Watts Uprising 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**
- 7. Commissioner & Staff Announcements** (12:10)
- 8. Adjournment** (12:15)

*Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by conference telephone communication from the following locations: Azusena Favela, 700 S. Flower Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012; Derric Johnson, 515 S. Figueroa St., Suite 900, Los Angeles, CA 90071; Preeti Kulkarni, 3419 Federal Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90066.*

*For translation to other languages o para más información en Español, call (213) 738-2788 or email us at [PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov](mailto:PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov). An asterisk (\*) denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item.*

*Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Human Relations Commission at (213) 738-7288 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Human Relations Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.*



# Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 South Vermont Avenue, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90020  
www.lahumanrelations.org  
(213) 738-2788

## PROPOSED MINUTES TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE

*Meeting of August 4, 2025  
In Person and via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conferencing  
510 South Vermont Avenue, 9th Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90020*

PRESENT:	Chair Isabelle Gunning Preeti Kulkarni Jeanette Ellis-Royston	Fredrick Sykes
STAFF:	Pierre Arreola Robert Sowell	Paul Smith Joshua Parr

*\*Attended Virtually in Compliance with the Brown Act*

- 1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement of Indigenous Peoples:** Chair Isabelle Gunning called the meeting to order at 11:03 AM, with a quorum in attendance. Chair Isabelle Gunning then acknowledged that settler colonization has caused intergenerational trauma and the loss of lands and lives to the native cultures who lived here prior to the later waves of migrants who came to what is now called Los Angeles County.
- 2. Review & Approval of July 7, 2025 Meeting Minutes:** Chair Isabelle Gunning invited a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes motioned to approve the minutes of the Transformative Justice Committee meeting on July 7, 2025, as presented by staff. Commissioner Ellis-Royston seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

**Moved:** Sykes

**Seconded:** Ellis-Royston

**Ayes:** Ellis-Royston, Gunning, Sykes

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** Kulkarni

**Absent:** Johnson, Favela

**Vote:** 3 – 0

The motion passed unanimously.

**3. Discussion: Sheriff Accountability**

**3.1. LA County Custody Reform Initiatives:** The Committee debriefed the recent engagement with the Sheriff's Department and County Counsel, clarified the scope and intent of the proposed narrative collection effort, and aligned on immediate next steps.

Committee members reaffirmed that narrative collection is an improvement-oriented process rather than an investigative or watchdog function. The Committee's intent is to elevate experiences and insights that can support culture change, strengthen trust, and inform practical reforms inside partner agencies. Members expressed the importance of a trauma-informed design that encourages candid participation, avoids creating defensiveness, and respects the constraints that may apply to personnel matters and protected information.

To ensure clarity and accountability, the Committee agreed that staff should produce a concise written proposal describing the pilot which would focus on Mental Health Assistants (MHAs) in custody facilities. That document will specify the purpose, scope, guiding principles, methods, and deliverables, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the participating parties. The Committee also agreed to work with County Counsel to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sheriff's Department so that consent, confidentiality, data handling, and ownership are clearly defined before implementation.

The discussion further noted that narrative collection efforts focused on custody staff may be complemented by internal surveys or staffing assessments, where appropriate and lawful, to deepen organizational learning. The Committee agreed that staff should produce a concise memo on the proposed project detailing purpose and benefits to further pitch it to the Sheriff's Department while the MHA project is implemented. Members emphasized the need for a thoughtful communications plan that frames the effort as supportive of agency improvement and community trust-building. This framing is intended to reduce concerns, encourage participation, and distinguish the Commission's role from any perception of punitive oversight.

**4. Discussion: Staff & County Updates**

**4.1. Watts Uprising 60th Anniversary:** Staff Pierre Arreola gave an update on the commemorative event for the 60th anniversary of the Watts uprising, in partnership with the LA City Human Relations Commission and other community stakeholders. The event will be scheduled for Fall 2025 at the Children's Institute in Watts. Staff will create a vision document and compile a list of partners as the event planning progresses.

**4.2. Regional Projects:** Staff Paul Smith announced the premiere of the 'Echoes of the System' video. The initial screening will take place in the Antelope Valley on 08/04/25, in collaboration with our local partners. Additionally, the press release, coordinated by Tony, is scheduled for distribution either later this week or next week.

**5. Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this meeting.**6. Action Items**

**6.1. LA County Custody Reform Initiatives:** Staff will draft a proposal that clearly outlines the narrative collection pilot focused on MHAs, including its purpose, scope, principles, methods, and deliverables. Staff will also develop trauma-informed interview and survey tools and identify a practical approach for participant information and consent suitable for the involved agencies. Simultaneously, staff will

draft a brief memo regarding the follow up narrative collection efforts focused on custody staff, outlining the purpose and benefits of the project. Eventually, staff will work with County Counsel to prepare a draft Memorandum of Understanding covering roles, consent and confidentiality expectations, data-handling protocols, and ownership of the resulting products. After completing the draft materials, staff will coordinate follow-up discussions with designated contacts at the Sheriff's Department and County Counsel to gather feedback and ensure alignment. Committee members will review and comment on the drafts before finalization.

**6.2. Watts Uprising 60th Anniversary:** There was no discussion on any related action item(s).

**7. Commissioner & Staff Announcements:** None.

**8. Adjournment:** Commissioner Preeti Kulkarni presented a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

**Moved:** Kulkarni

**Seconded:** Sykes

**Ayes:** Ellis-Royston, Gunning, Sykes, Kulkarni

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Johnson, Favela

**Vote: 4 – 0**

The motion passed unanimously. Seeing no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Azusena Favela**

*Transformative Justice Committee Secretary*

**Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR)**  
**Commission Committees FY 2025-2026**

*(To Consider for Action at Commission Meeting September 8, 2025)*

<b>JAF AWARDS EVENT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE</b>	<b>POLICY AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>LA VS. HATE COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AD HOC STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b><i>Ilan Davidson (Chair)</i></b>	<b><i>Isabelle Gunning (Chair)</i></b>	<b><i>Isabelle Gunning* (Chair)</i></b>	<b><i>Vacant (Chair)</i></b>	<b><i>Preeti Kulkarni (Chair)</i></b>
Ilan Davidson	Jeanette Ellis Royston	Lisa Dabbs	Helen Chin**	Derric Johnson
Kevork Keushkerian	Derric Johnson	Jeanette Ellis Royston	Isabelle Gunning	Jason Moss
Gay Q. Yuen	Preeti Kulkarni	Derric Johnson	Jason Moss	
	Azusena Favela	Jason Moss	Gay Q. Yuen	
	Fredrick Sykes	Serena Zeise-Oberstein	Ilan Davidson	
Staff: Robert Sowell	Staff: Robert Sowell Pierre Arreola Joshua Parr	Staff: Robin Toma	Staff: Robin Toma Robert Sowell Deysy Donis-Santos	Staff: Robin Toma Robert Sowell
		*Appointed by Pres. Helen Chin with Guadalupe Montano departure		

(\*) Our Commission Bylaws (Article IX) require that each year, our Commission ratify the committees and its members.

(\*\*) The Commission President is an ex-officio member of all committees, per the Commission's Bylaws.

9/4/2024 12:02 AM

[illegible]

## Toward a Shared Definition of Antisemitism

### Introduction

The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) posted a brief overview of 5 definitions of Antisemitism (<https://urj.org/blog/five-definitions-antisemitism>). Each of the definitions was composed by a different group, 4 of which explicitly included persons who self-identify as Jewish ethnically, culturally, and/or religiously. These 4 groups are briefly cited below. The 5<sup>th</sup> definition reviewed by URJ was composed and is distributed by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), an organization founded in 1971 that monitors hate activity and advances human rights across the U.S. SPLC's material is informative and can be helpful. It is not included in the Comparative Analysis that follows. After the Comparative Analysis are Considerations for composing a definition of Antisemitism followed by Recommendations.

*International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)* <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>

Composed by a committee of this intergovernmental organization formed in 1998. Currently includes 35 Member Countries and 8 Observer Countries. Definition adopted by the IHRA Plenary in Bucharest on May 26, 2016.

*The Nexus Task Force (Nexus)* <https://nexusproject.us/nexus-resources/the-nexus-document/>

Composed by a Task Force formed by the Center for the Study of Hate at Bard College. The Task Force includes academic professionals, policy advisors, and representatives from the Jewish Social Justice Roundtable, the Union for Reform Judaism, and Jewtina. Definition published in a white paper in December 2020.

*The Van Leer Institute/Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (VLI/JDA)* <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>

Composed by a group of scholars in the fields of Holocaust history, Jewish studies, and Middle East studies. The group was sponsored by the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute and met various times over a period of about a year. The definition was published in March 2021. Initially, it was signed by 210 scholars. Currently there are more than 370 signatories.

*T'ruah/The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights (T'ruah/RCHR)* <https://truah.org/antisemitism/>

Composed by a group founded in 2002 that trains and engages rabbis and cantors for human rights action in North America and Israel. The definition was published in *A Very Brief Guide to Antisemitism* in 2022, which was updated in 2024.

### Comparative Analysis

Notice that, in summarizing Exclusions and Examples from the 4 Definitions reviewed, the attempt is to group on the same row similar or related statements from the different groups.

GROUP	IHRA	Nexus	VLI/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
CORE STATEMENT	"...a certain perception of Jews..."	"...anti-Jewish beliefs, attitudes, actions, or systemic conditions."	"...discrimination, prejudice, hostility or violence against Jews as Jews (or Jewish institutions as Jewish)."	"...hostility, prejudice, hatred, or violence against Jews as Jews."

GROUP	IHRA	NEXUS	VLI/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
EXPRESSIONS	"...may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations...directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."	"...negative beliefs and feelings about Jews, hostile behavior directed against Jews (because they are Jews), and conditions that discriminate against Jews and significantly impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life."	"...can be manifested in words, visual images, and deeds." "...can be direct or indirect, explicit or coded."	"...sees Jews as a nefarious and corrupting presence within society."
EXCLUSIONS (i.e. not Anti-Semitism)	"...criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country..."	"As a general rule, criticism of Zionism and Israel, opposition to Israel's policies, or nonviolent political action directed at the State of Israel and/or its policies should not...be deemed antisemitic."	"Evidence-based criticism of Israel as a state."	"Criticism of Israel based on its human rights record, its policies, and its adherence or failure to adhere to international law, including Israel's conduct in war and its policies toward Palestinians, whether they are citizens of Israel or residents of the occupied Palestinian territories; accusations that Israel is committing apartheid either within the West Bank or beyond."
		"...contentious, strident, or harsh criticism of Israel for its policies and actions, including those that led to the creation of Israel, is not per se illegitimate or antisemitic."		
		"Paying disproportionate attention to Israel and treating Israel differently than other countries is not prima facie proof of antisemitism."		
			"Supporting the Palestinian demand for justice and the full grant of their political, national, civil and human rights, as encapsulated in international law."	"Support for arrangements that accord full equality to all Israelis and Palestinians..."
			"Criticizing or opposing Zionism as a form of nationalism, or arguing for a variety of constitutional arrangements for	"Support for arrangements...whether in two states, one state, a binational

GROUP	IHRA	NEXUS	VLI/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
EXCLUSIONS cont.			Jews and Palestinians in the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean....to support arrangements that accord full equality to all inhabitants 'between the river and the sea,' whether in two states, a binational state, unitary democratic state, federal state, or in whatever form."	state, a confederation, or any other form."
			"Boycott, divestment and sanctions..."	"Calls for non-violent forms of protest against Israel, including boycotts, divestment, and sanctions of the country of companies based there....does not include boycotts...in the U.S. or another country..."
			"Political speech does not have to be measured, proportional, tempered, or reasonable.... Criticism that some may see as excessive or contentious, or as reflecting a 'double standard,' is not, in and of itself, antisemitic."	"Activism that focuses exclusively on Israel....is not a double standard if one holds Israel to international law..."
				"Waving the Palestinian flag or wearing a keffiyeh,,, The watermelon, a common stand-in for the Palestinian flag...is...not antisemitic."
EXAMPLES	"Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion."	"...attack and/or physically harm a Jew because of her/his relationships to Israel." "...convey intense hostility toward Jews who are connected to Israel in a way that intentionally or irresponsibly... provokes antisemitic violence."	"...assaulting someone because she or he is Jewish, attacking a synagogue, daubing swastikas on Jewish graves, or refusing to hire or promote people because they are Jewish."	"...attacking or protesting synagogues or other Jewish institutions or Jewish-owned businesses simply because they are Jewish institutions." "Denying the humanity of Israeli Jews, justifying violence toward them, or calling for violence against Jews..."
	"...mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews...or the power of Jews as collective..."	"...to promote myths, stereotypes or attitudes about Zionism and/or Israel that derive from and/or	"...racist...sweeping negative generalizations about a given population....true of antisemitism in particular."	"Claims that Jews are all - powerful secret puppet masters behind the scenes of world events...also conspiracy theories

GROUP	IHRA	NEXUS	VLJ/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
EXAMPLES cont.		reinforce antisemitic accusations and tropes..." "Characterizing Israel as part of a sinister world conspiracy of Jewish control..." "Indiscriminately blaming suffering and injustices around the world on a hidden Jewish conspiracy or of being the maligning hand of Israel or Zionism..."	"...the idea that Jews are linked to the forces of evil....such as the idea of a Jewish conspiracy in which 'the Jews' possess hidden power...to promote their own collective agenda at the expense of other people....the fantasy that 'the Jews' control governments with a 'hidden hand,' that they own the banks, control the media, act as 'a state within a state,' and are responsible for spreading a disease (such as Covid-19). All these...can be instrumentalized by different (and even antagonistic) political causes." "...utterances that all Jews are wealthy, inherently stingy, or unpatriotic....Jews...depicted as grotesque, with big noses and associated with wealth."	that Jews cause disease, pandemic, war, or other disasters." "Claims that Jews love money, or control the world financial system or the media." "Claims that Jews are in league with, or are children of, the Devil; that Jews drink blood or kill babies; and that Jews are a corrupting, inhuman force."
	"Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single...person or group..."			
	"Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms... or intentionality of the genocide of Jewish people...during World War II (the Holocaust)."		"Denying or minimizing the Holocaust by claiming the deliberate Nazi genocide of the Jews did not take place, or that there were no extermination camps or gas chambers, or that the number of victims was a fraction of the actual total..."	"...denying the Holocaust..."
	"Accusing Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, or inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust."			"Minimizing the trauma of the Holocaust..."
	"Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations."	"Considering Jews to be a priori incapable of setting aside their loyalty to the Jewish people and/or Israel..."	"Assuming that non-Israeli Jews, simply because they are Jews, are necessarily more loyal to Israel than to their own countries."	"Claims that Jews are untrustworthy or disloyal, or that Jews are more loyal to Israel or to world Jewry than to their country of citizenship."

GROUP	IHRA	NEXUS	VLI/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
EXAMPLES cont.				"...discriminating against Jews or Israeli nationals because of their perceived political views or ties to the country."
	"Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor."	"...advocate a political solution that denies Jews the right to define themselves as a people, thereby denying them – because they are Jews – the right to self-determination and/or the right to physical safety and full human, civil, and religious rights." "...treat Israel in a negative manner based on a claim that Jews alone should be denied the right to define themselves as a people and to exercise any form of self-determination."	"Denying the right of Jews in the State of Israel to exist and flourish, collectively and individually, as Jews, in accordance with the principle of equality."	"Calling for the expulsion of Jews from Israel/Palestine..."
	"Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation."	"...treat Israel differently solely because it is a Jewish state, using standards different than those applied to other countries."		
	"Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis."			"...accusing Israel of being Nazis."
	"Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel."	"...use symbols and images that present all Jews as collectively guilty for the actions of the State of Israel." "Holding individuals or institutions, because they are Jewish, a priori culpable of real or imagined wrongdoing committed by Israel..."	"Holding Jews collectively responsible for Israel's conduct or treating Jews, simply because they are Jewish, as agents of Israel."	"Holding Jews collectively responsible for Israel's conduct; using 'Zionist' to mean 'Jew'; equating Israel with Jews..."
		"Denigrating or denying the Jewish identity of certain Jews because they are perceived as holding the 'wrong' position...on Israel."	"Requiring people, because they are Jewish, publicly to condemn Israel or Zionism..."	"Requiring people, because they are Jewish, to publicly condemn Israel or Zionism..."
			"Applying the symbols, images and negative stereotypes of	"Using antisemitic imagery or stereotypes to describe Israel or Israelis, for example drawing

GROUP	IHRA	NEXUS	VLI/JDA	T'RUAH/RCHR
EXAMPLES cont.			classical antisemitism to the State of Israel.”	Israeli leaders with exaggerated noses, accusing Israel of harvesting Palestinian organs or otherwise being ‘bloodthirsty,’ or depicting Israeli leaders with horns, or as consorting with the devil.” “Portraying Israel as the ultimate evil, grossly exaggerating its actual influence, such as by promoting conspiracy theories about ‘Zionist’ control of the U.S. or the world.”
				“Denying Jewish history in the Land of Israel or claiming that today’s Jews are not ‘real Jews.’”
				“Calling for the expulsion...of Jews or Israeli nationals from the U.S. or other countries.”

### Considerations for a Definition of Antisemitism

To be useful for practical purposes, a Definition needs to describe what is defined in sufficient detail that it will be recognized when encountered. The Definition also needs to be general or universal enough that it is applicable to all encounters with what is defined. This can be challenging in attempts to define an ‘ism (e.g., sexism, ageism, racism) or ‘phobia (e.g., xenophobia, transphobia). In simplest form, the Definition may refer to bias, prejudice, or hate, for example. These terms may not be sufficiently detailed, though, because they usually describe internal attitudes which may be difficult to recognize from observable behavior. Applying a Definition limited to these terms to observable behavior requires assessment or, perhaps, assumption, of underlying attitude that motivates the observed behavior. Alternatively, the Definition might list specific observable behaviors or actions that constitute what is being defined. This approach, however, may not be universal enough unless the list of behaviors is quite long. And, given the human capacity to innovate hate, the list would need to be continually updated. It seems likely that including Examples with their Definitions is how the 4 groups whose Definitions are reviewed in this document attempt to address this challenge.

Framing the Definition in terms of Human Rights standards is a helpful approach. From a Human Rights perspective, bias-motivated hostility in any form actively denies the respect due every person and people by virtue of each one’s intrinsic value. In addition, Human Rights standards require a balance between calling out what is unacceptable while simultaneously explicitly protecting freedoms to actively and even vehemently express, individually and in gatherings, differences in views and aims. It is evident that the 4 groups whose Definitions are reviewed in this document endeavor to accomplish this balance by including Exclusions with their Definitions.

One of the primary distinctions among the 4 Definitions analyzed is how they deal with criticism of policies and actions by the government of the nation of Israel. All 4 Definitions explicitly exclude at least some form(s) of criticism of the nation of Israel from what they consider to be Antisemitism. However, some Exclusions included by some groups directly disagree with Examples included by others. In recognition of these differences, some of the groups associate some guiding principles with their Definitions. It may be recognition of these differences that led the groups to recommend their Definitions be nonbinding and used for guidance in policy and action rather than legal enforcement.

### **Recommendations for a Shared Definition of Antisemitism**

With these Considerations in mind, here is a Recommendation for a Definition of Antisemitism we can formally adopt to provide guidance for County policy and practice. It blends words and phrases common to the Core Statements of all 4 of the Definitions in this Analysis. It also deliberately explicitly frames the Definition in terms of Human Rights.

*Antisemitism is prejudice expressed in hatred, hostility, or violence against Jewish people, or organizations because they are or are perceived to be Jewish through actions that violate their human rights, including life, liberty, protection against discrimination, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to fully participate in cultural life and expression, economic opportunity, and civil governance.*

*Examples of actions or behavior that are in and of themselves antisemitic:*

- *Calling for or committing violence against Jewish people because they are Jewish*
- *Defacing property of synagogues or other Jewish organizations because they are Jewish*
- *Insisting that Jewish people do not belong or should not be allowed in any particular country or region*
- *Creating, displaying, or distributing distorted, repulsive visual images to represent Jewish people*
- *Promoting claims of Jewish conspiracies to control and manipulate global finance, media, health or other societal institutions or conditions*

*Examples of actions or behavior that are not in and of themselves antisemitic:*

- *Calling for changes in policies or actions of the government of the nation of Israel*
- *Expressing solidarity with Palestinian people or promoting their human rights*
- *Criticizing some expressions of Zionism*

This definition distinguishes between antisemitic targeting of Jewish people and criticism of the nation of Israel based on political differences.

## Toward a Shared Definition of Antisemitism

### Preparation

Multiple groups have formulated definitions of Antisemitism to accomplish a variety of purposes. Four particular definitions were closely reviewed in preparation for the draft definition in this document. These four definitions were composed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, The Nexus Task Force, The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, and T'ruah. Each of these groups included persons who self-identify as Jewish ethnically, culturally, and/or religiously.

### Considerations

To be useful for practical purposes, a definition needs to describe what is defined in sufficient detail that it will be recognized when encountered. The definition also needs to be general or universal enough that it is applicable to all encounters with what is defined.

Accomplishing this balance can be challenging in attempts to define an 'ism (e.g., sexism, ageism, racism) or 'phobia (e.g., xenophobia, transphobia). In simplest form, the definition may generally refer to bias, prejudice, or hate, for example. These terms may not be sufficiently detailed, though, because they usually describe internal attitudes which may be difficult to recognize from observable behavior. Applying a definition limited to these general terms to observable behavior requires assessment or, perhaps, assumption, of underlying attitude that motivates the observed behavior. Alternatively, the definition might list specific observable behaviors or actions that constitute what is being defined. This approach, however, may not be general enough unless the list of behaviors is quite long. And, given the human capacity to innovate hate, the list would need to be continually updated. The four definitions reviewed in preparation for the draft definition in this document endeavored to address this challenge by including examples with their definitions of what they consider to be clear expressions of Antisemitism in any instance and what they do not recognize as clear expressions of Antisemitism in every instance.

Framing the definition in terms of Human Rights standards is a helpful approach to addressing these challenges. From a Human Rights perspective, bias-motivated hostility in any form actively denies the respect due every person and people by virtue of each one's intrinsic dignity. In addition, Human Rights standards require a balance between calling out what is unacceptable while simultaneously explicitly protecting freedoms to actively and even vehemently express, individually and in gatherings, differences in views and aims.

One of the primary distinctions among the definitions reviewed in preparation for the draft definition in this document is how to deal with criticism of policies and actions by the government of the nation of Israel. All four definitions explicitly exclude at least some form(s) of criticism of the nation of Israel from what they consider to be Antisemitism. However, there is disagreement in the examples provided by the various groups regarding what is considered Antisemitism in any instance and what is not recognized as Antisemitism in every instance. It may be recognition of these differences that led the

groups to recommend their definitions be nonbinding and used for guidance in policy and action rather than legal enforcement.

### **Draft Definition**

With these Considerations in mind, here is a draft for discussion with the aim of composing a recommended Definition of Antisemitism for formal adoption to guide County policy and practice. This draft blends words and phrases from all four definitions reviewed in preparation for this draft. It also deliberately explicitly frames the definition in terms of Human Rights.

*Antisemitism is prejudice expressed in bias, hatred, hostility, or violence against Jewish people, or organizations, because they are or are perceived to be Jewish through actions that violate their human rights, including life, liberty, protection against discrimination, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to fully participate in cultural life and expression, economic opportunity, self-determination, and civil governance.*

*Some examples of actions or behavior that are considered antisemitic in any instance:*

- *Ridicule or any form of derision expressing stereotypes, myth, or misinformation about Jews, Judaism, or Jewish identity*
- *Calling for or committing violence against Jewish people because they are Jewish*
- *Defacing property of synagogues or other Jewish organizations because they are Jewish*
- *Insisting that Jewish people do not belong or should not be allowed in any particular country or region*
- *Creating, displaying, or distributing distorted, repulsive visual images to represent Jewish people*
- *Promoting claims that there are Jewish conspiracies to control and manipulate global finance, media, health, or other societal institutions or conditions*
- *Attacking Jewish people because of policies or actions of any government, including the government of the nation of Israel*
- *Expressing that Israel does not have the right to exist as a nation*
- *Denying the intentionality or scope of genocide of Jewish people in the Holocaust*

*Some examples of actions or behavior that are not recognized as antisemitic in every instance:*

- *Calling for changes in policies or actions of the government of the nation of Israel*
- *Expressing solidarity with Palestinian people, including promoting their human rights or their right to self-determination*

- *?Criticizing some expressions of Zionism when it is invoked in the name of extremist ethno-nationalism?*