



SASKATCHEWAN
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



OUR **VISION**

Saskatchewan is a national leader in advancing and protecting human rights and the dignity of all people.

OUR **MISSION**

We are a truth-seeking organization dedicated to promoting equality, fairness, and inclusion by protecting and educating all people in Saskatchewan about their duty to uphold human rights, ensuring a safe and just society for all.

OUR **COMMITMENT TO CORE VALUES**

We are guided by a steadfast commitment to Accountability, Honesty, Integrity, Respect, Trust, and Transparency. These values are reflected in our actions, decisions, and service to the people of Saskatchewan.

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LETTER OF **TRANSMITTAL**

The Honourable Tim McLeod, K.C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
The Honourable Eric Schmalz
Minister Minister of Government Relations/Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern
Affairs/Minister Responsible for the Provincial Capital Commission
Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Ministers McLeod and Schmalz,

I am pleased to deliver the 2024-2025 annual report of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission as required by section 57 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018*.

This report highlights the activities and successes of the Commission for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2024 and concluding March 31, 2025.

Sincerely,



Treena L. Sikora, B.A. (Hons.), J.D.
Chief Commissioner

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

It is my honour to present the 2024–25 Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

This past year has been a time of meaningful progress as the Commission took significant steps to strengthen our foundation and better serve the people of Saskatchewan. Central to this work was a clear and intentional effort to reaffirm who we are as an organization, what we stand for, and what we are determined to achieve.

Our Board of Commissioners conducted a thoughtful and deliberate review of the Commission's vision, mission, and values. This was more than a symbolic gesture. It was a genuine commitment to doing better.

The goal was to ensure that our work aligns with the rights and needs of everyone in the province and that we carry it out with clarity, purpose, and integrity. As

part of this renewal, we introduced updated vision, mission, and value statements.

The Commission also renewed its focus on public education and stakeholder engagement. This year, we began planning a province-wide tour to connect directly with communities across Saskatchewan. Through presentations, meetings, and public forums, we aim to raise awareness of human rights, strengthen relationships, and respond to local concerns. This outreach is central to our long-term strategy to reduce the growing number of complaints — particularly in employment, which account for about 80% of our accepted complaints each year.

The rising volume of complaints underscores the urgency of our efforts. In 2024–25, the Commission received 609 complaints, the highest number in our 52-year history. Disability-related complaints remain the most common, making up over 60% of accepted cases. Race-based complaints have nearly doubled since 2020–21. And most notably, sex-based complaints — including those involving gender, sexual harassment, and pregnancy — more than doubled in the past year alone.

As the demand for our services grows, so does our resolve to uphold human rights, serve the public interest, and help build a stronger, more inclusive Saskatchewan.

On behalf of the Commission, I extend sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, our Board of Governors, and all those we serve for their continued trust and support.

Sincerely,

Treena L. Sikora, B.A. (Hons.), J.D.
Chief Commissioner

COMPLAINT **RESOLUTION**



INTAKE

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission begins its complaint process with an intake stage, where individuals submit details about an incident of alleged discrimination via an Intake Questionnaire.

The intake process is standardized to ensure that all inquiries are handled fairly, efficiently, and in accordance with *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018*.



WHEN CAN A COMPLAINT BE ACCEPTED?

For a complaint to be accepted, it must: involve a characteristic protected by *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018* (such as race, gender, or disability); relate to negative treatment in a *Code*-protected area (such as employment, housing, or public services); and show that the protected characteristic was a factor in the negative treatment.

Complaints must generally be filed within **one year** of the incident.

The Commission's Intake Consultants are well-placed to make a timely resolution that may not require a complaint to be formalized.

In these situations, the Intake Consultant has the authority to see if a "pre-complaint" resolution is possible.

Cynthia's Story

Cynthia*, a pregnant employee, provided her employer with a medical note restricting her from heavy lifting and exposure to harmful chemicals.

The next day Cynthia felt ill and returned to her doctor, who provided another note recommending a one-week leave. When Cynthia was ready to return to work, she checked the schedule and discovered she had no upcoming shifts.

Cynthia asked her employer about this and they told her they removed from the schedule because she could no longer perform her job duties.

Cynthia filed a human rights complaint, alleging discrimination based on sex. Under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018*, pregnancy-related discrimination is prohibited and considered a form of sex discrimination.

An SHRC Intake Consultant reminded the employer they had offered Cynthia an alternative role, but she declined it because of its physical demands. With no other suitable positions available, the parties agreed Cynthia would start maternity leave early.

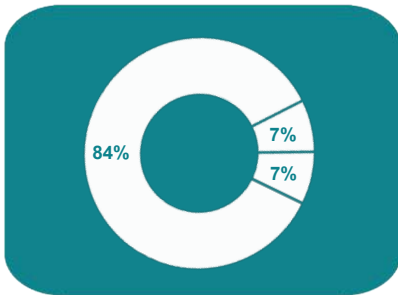
The employer provided the necessary paperwork, Cynthia was satisfied with the outcome, and the case was closed.



MEDIATION

Mediation is a standard part of the resolution process that helps complainants and respondents resolve complaints.

A collaborative, conciliatory approach is used to help the parties understand each other's perspectives. This often leads to more effective communication, allows each party to directly address the concerns raised, and gives them greater control over how the issue is resolved.



DURING THE 2024-25 FISCAL YEAR, 41 COMPLAINTS WERE RESOLVED IN MEDIATION

- **84%** of the complaints were settled
- **7%** were withdrawn
- **7%** were not pursued further

Becky's Story

Becky*, an Indigenous woman, applied for a managerial position with a local business. During the interview, the interviewer mentioned they need an Indigenous woman in their sales department for "diversity" purposes.

A couple of days later, the organization contacted Becky. They told her the managerial position had been filled but offered her a job in sales.

Becky declined the offer and filed a human rights complaint. She believed the organization had discriminated against her on the basis of race and/or sex.

Under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, it is generally considered discriminatory to make employment decisions based on race, gender or other protected characteristics – unless

a legal exemption applies. Even if the intention is positive (i.e. promoting diversity), explicitly stating a preference for a specific race or gender during an interview can be problematic.

During the hiring process, employers should avoid asking questions or making statements involving *Code*-protected characteristics and, instead, focus only on skills, experience, education, and ability to perform job duties.

Resolution

The employer offered to compensate Becky for damage to dignity and issued a letter of apology for the misunderstanding. Becky accepted the offer and issued a letter of apology for a social media post she made about the employer.



INVESTIGATION

In an investigation, an impartial SHRC investigator interviews witnesses and reviews records to determine what occurred. Once the investigation is complete, the investigator forwards the case to the Chief Commissioner, who decides whether to pursue mediation, dismiss the case, proceed to a hearing, or resolve the matter through alternative means.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO INVESTIGATE A COMPLAINT?

During the 2024-25 fiscal year, the average time from investigator assignment to investigation completion was **7 MONTHS**.



Taylor's Story

Taylor* is a person with a disability. He requested accommodation from his employer. With input from his doctor and insurer, an accommodation agreement was reached that included a lighter workload, increased administrative assistance, and mediated sessions with colleagues regarding workplace harassment.

Over the course of the next year, however, Taylor alleged that his employer neglected to follow the terms of the agreement.

The situation came to a head when the employer assigned Taylor a workload that aggravated his disability-related condition.

Soon after, Taylor was suspended from work without pay.

While suspended, Taylor filed a human rights complaint with the Commission. He had reason to believe his employer had discriminated against him on the basis of disability.

Under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, employers have a duty to reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities unless doing so would cause undue hardship.

The duration of an accommodation agreement depends on the employee's medical condition and the nature of the accommodation, which can range from temporary to long-term.

Resolution

The matter was resolved in Investigation with the employer offering to compensate Taylor for damage to dignity. The employer also agreed to:

- Provide severance pay, a retraining allowance, and a retiring allowance,
- Seal the complainant's personnel file and destroy all of Taylor's medical records in their possession, and
- Provide Taylor with an employment letter.

Taylor accepted the offer and the file was closed.



DIRECTED MEDIATION

In most cases, parties will be instructed to attempt one more mediation before a hearing occurs. During this Directed Mediation, the respondent – often with the assistance of legal counsel – submits a final resolution offer. If the Commission determines this offer is reasonable but the complainant rejects it, the Chief Commissioner can dismiss the complaint. However, if the respondent fails to make a reasonable offer, the Chief Commissioner will direct the matter to proceed to hearing.

Most complaints that are on track for hearing at the Court of King's Bench are usually resolved through Directed Mediation.

DOES THE SHRC PROVIDE A LAWYER FOR THE COMPLAINANT DURING DIRECTED MEDIATION?

While the SHRC'S legal counsel may participate in Directed Mediation, their role is not to represent either party. Instead, they represent the **PUBLIC INTEREST** by providing the Commission's perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the case and the appropriateness of any settlement offers.

Gabriel's Story

Gabriel*, a Black African-Canadian, works at a local restaurant where the majority of managers and employees are not of African-Canadian descent.

Throughout most of his employment, Gabriel alleged that he experienced a pattern of differential treatment. He reported these ongoing concerns to management through formal letters. His concerns included being paid less than colleagues in the same position and being repeatedly passed over for promotions despite having seniority. In some instances, Gabriel was asked to train the promoted employees and to temporarily fill these positions during absences, yet was never promoted himself.

After his concerns were not adequately addressed by management, Gabriel filed a human rights complaint under section 16 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. He alleged discrimination based on race, place of origin, and/or nationality.

The Commission accepted the complaint. The matter was resolved through Directed Mediation.

Resolution

The employer offered to compensate Gabriel for damage to dignity and provide back pay to address the wage disparity. Gabriel accepted this offer and maintained his employment at the restaurant.

**All names in the Complaint Resolution section have been changed.*



LEGAL AND LITIGATION

Litigation is one of the processes by which the Commission addresses complaints of discrimination. The core of the legal department's work is litigation and resolution after the conclusion of the investigation process.

SETTLEMENT

Race/Gender Identity complaint leads to settlement and mandatory training

The complainant – an Indigenous, queer, and femme-presenting individual who uses they/them pronouns – filed a complaint under section 16 of the Code against their former employer and its owner.

Between early 2018 and December 2019, an employee experienced a pattern of racially insensitive and discriminatory treatment from their employer's owner. The discriminatory behavior included derogatory comparisons to a "rez dog," questioning of the employee's identity, and dismissing their concerns when they attempted to address racially charged comments. The owner made disparaging remarks about Indigenous protests, dismissive comments regarding Indigenous youth suicide, and denied the employee's queer identity.

The situation escalated in the winter of 2019, when the employee formally raised discrimination concerns with the owner. Rather than addressing these concerns, the owner dismissed them and subsequently terminated the employee's position.

Following an investigation, the Commission determined there was sufficient evidence to support claims of discrimination based on race, colour, sex, and gender identity.

Under human rights law, an intent to discriminate is not required; rather, the impact of discriminatory behavior is considered.

The employer was held liable for the actions of its owner due to their leadership position within the company, and no credible defense was offered to counter the evidence. The Commission found that the employee's termination was directly linked to their efforts to address the discriminatory behavior, which violated the Code. It was determined that the comments made by the owner significantly impacted the individual's dignity and sense of safety in the workplace.

The Chief Commissioner directed both parties to participate in mediation, but they were unable to reach a settlement agreement. Given the complaint's merit, the Chief Commissioner ordered the matter to proceed to a formal hearing under Section 34 of the Code.

While an agreement was not reached at the pre-hearing conference, just before the hearing was set to begin, the employer and its owner offered financial compensation for the employee's losses under Section 39(1) of the Code and additional compensation for damage to dignity under section 40. The owner and employer also agreed to training for all employees and managers at the company to prevent and address harassment, leading to the resolution of the complaint.

Complaint settled after reasonable offer

The complainant started working for the respondent in July 2022. Her job required using x-ray equipment. She disclosed to her employer that she might be pregnant and therefore unable to perform certain duties. Shortly after, the employer informed the

complainant that her performance was inadequate. The employer proceeded to terminate her employment without cause approximately two weeks later.

In January of 2023, the complainant filed a human rights complaint alleging she had been discriminated against on the basis of sex. The complaint alleged the employer terminated her because they did not want to invest resources in an employee that would leave shortly after such an investment due to pregnancy and parental responsibilities. The employer denied that pregnancy influenced their decision to terminate the complainant's employment.

The complaint was investigated and proceeded to directed mediation, though no resolution was achieved. The respondent subsequently submitted a settlement offer and a corresponding application under section 33(3) of the Code, which empowers the Chief Commissioner to dismiss a complaint when a reasonable offer of settlement has been provided by a respondent and rejected by a complainant.

The Chief Commissioner received submissions from both parties as to whether the offer was reasonable. The test for determining reasonableness under section 33(3) requires that the settlement amount reasonably approximate what the complainant could obtain at a hearing, assuming the complaint to be true. Since the respondent's offer met this standard, the Chief Commissioner concluded it was reasonable. The parties settled the complaint shortly thereafter when the complainant accepted the offer.

While the complainant wanted a greater damage to dignity award and compensation for legal fees, established jurisprudence placed the offered amount within the reasonable range of damage to dignity awards obtained in comparable situations.

Moreover, in the human rights context, legal fees can generally only be awarded by a court in cases of frivolous or vexatious conduct – elements entirely absent in this case. Accordingly, legal fees are typically inappropriate to consider in evaluating a reasonable offer under section 33(3).

JUDICIAL REVIEW

Court upholds Commission's decision in family status complaint

The complainant alleged that her former employer discriminated against her based on her family status. She claimed they failed to accommodate her to the point of undue hardship and refused to keep her employed as a teacher – in violation of section 16 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018*.

The complainant is a mother of a child with severe disabilities. After her partner got a job in another community, she asked for a leave of absence from her teaching position. She explained that she couldn't work and care for her child on her own. Her employer denied the leave request and ended her employment when she couldn't come to work.

The Commission recognized that family status is protected under the *Code* and that the complainant experienced adverse impact. However, the Commission determined that further investigation would not likely reveal a *Code* violation. The Chief Commissioner found no *prima facie* case of discrimination, reasoning that the decision stemmed from the complainant's career choice rather than her family status.

Additionally, since the complainant had no intention of returning to the community where she was employed, the Chief Commissioner concluded the employer had no duty to accommodate her. As a result, the Chief Commissioner dismissed the complaint under section 30(2)(f) and determined that no hearing was warranted under section 30(2)(g).



The complainant sought judicial review of the Commission's decision, requesting an order of certiorari to quash the decision and an order of mandamus to reinstate her complaint and forward the matter to mediation or a hearing under section 34 of the *Code*.

The Court upheld the Commission's decision. It agreed the complainant's family situation was not the reason for the job loss. Although her child's needs played a role in her choice to move, the main reason for denying her leave was her decision to relocate for a similar job.

The Court ultimately concluded that the dismissal of the complaint under sections 30(2)(f) and 30(2)(g) was reasonable, as there was no evidence of a human rights violation and no further investigation would yield new evidence. The judicial review application was dismissed, with no costs awarded.

Disability complaint resolved before hearing

A senior employee, who had worked for the same organization since 1998, filed a human rights complaint alleging their employer violated section 16 of the *Code* by discriminating against them on the basis of disability.

In November 2015, the complainant began experiencing stress and anxiety-related health issues. On June 11, 2016, the complainant sought medical attention after testing revealed high blood pressure. The complainant promptly informed their employer of their health condition and expressed willingness to discuss accommodation options, despite also considering resignation due to their health concerns.

During a conference call on June 14, 2016, the complainant and employer explored alternatives including disability leave or a transition plan with three months' severance. Two days later, the

employer terminated the complainant without cause and offered only one month's severance pay.

The complainant argued their employer failed to provide reasonable accommodation and interfered with their ability to access short-term disability benefits, causing substantial emotional and financial harm.

In addition to the human rights complaint, the complainant initiated civil action in the Court of King's Bench to address similar claims of wrongful termination involving the same underlying issues of discrimination based on disability.

Both legal avenues were pursued concurrently, with the human rights complaint focusing on the violation of *Code* and the civil action addressing potential breaches of employment law.

The Chief Commissioner reviewed the contents of the Commission's investigation and determined the complaint had sufficient merit to proceed to a hearing. The Chief Commissioner directed the parties to engage in mediation before proceeding to a hearing of the matter. The parties were unsuccessful in reaching an agreement in mediation.

The Chief Commissioner applied to the Court of King's Bench for a hearing of the complaint. However, a settlement was reached just before the hearing was scheduled. The settlement resolved both the human rights complaint and the civil action.

COURT OF KING'S BENCH

Disability/Family Status complaint settled after Court clarifies the Commission's role

In February of 2015, the complainant became the primary caregiver to her newly born grandson. She inquired with her employer about taking parental leave in May 2015 and formally requested it in June 2015, but her employer denied the request.

Shortly thereafter, the complainant began medical leave related to her mental health. At the employer's request, the complainant underwent several independent medical assessments and a substance abuse assessment in order to validate the need for employment leave.

Based on the results of these assessments, the employer concluded the complainant was unfit to work and required her to attend an in-patient treatment program.

Since the complainant served as her grandson's sole primary caregiver, she could not simultaneously attend an in-patient treatment program and care for her grandson. She suggested alternative treatment options, but her employer rejected these alternatives and insisted that in-patient treatment was the only viable option.

On March 1, 2016, the complainant's employment was terminated for failing to complete or participate in an approved treatment program. The employer concluded they had reached the threshold of undue hardship and fulfilled their duty to accommodate.

The complainant filed a complaint against her employer alleging the termination was discriminatory on the basis of disability and family status.

The complaint failed to resolve through a variety of mediation and settlement attempts, and ultimately the matter proceeded to a hearing at the Court of King's Bench. In the course of questioning the complainant, who represented herself at the time, counsel for the Commission objected to a question asked of the complainant by employer counsel.

Employer and Commission counsel disagreed as to whether the SHRC could object to questions asked of a complainant. The issue created an impasse, the questioning was aborted, and the Commission brought an application to the Court of King's Bench

to determine, among other things, whether the Commission has standing to object during the questioning of a complainant.

The application resulted in *Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission v. Crowe*, 2023 SKKB 71. Therein, Justice Crooks clarified the role of the SHRC after a complaint is referred to a hearing:

34 *The key issue here is what it means for the Commission to have "carriage" of the complaint once it is referred to the Court for a hearing.*

...

47 *With respect to the role of the Commission and despite the importance of their work, the Commission is not an advocate for an individual complainant and their private interests. In this case, the complainant has a significant private financial interest in the outcome of the proceeding. The Commission's focus and responsibility lie in advocating for the public interest, and counsel's loyalty is to the Commission and the objectives under the Code. While there will inevitably be overlap between the plight of a complainant and the interests of the public, counsel for the Commission cannot slip into advocating for the private interests of the complainant.*

[Emphasis added]

...

64 *To be clear, a complainant may rely on the Commission to advance the complaint procedurally, but they cannot look to them for advice on their substantive rights. Counsel for the Commission does not have the mandate to contemporaneously act as counsel for both parties.*



With the SHRC's role clarified, the complainant obtained independent legal counsel and the matter proceeded in the normal course.

On April 15, 2024, the complaint was settled and the application for hearing discontinued.

Three complaints resolved during pre-hearing conference

A former long-service municipal employee filed a number of human rights complaints against his employer, alleging discrimination on the basis of disability.

He had experienced a significant traumatic event during the period of his employment, which resulted in a serious mental health decline.

Initially, the employer responded supportively – granting extended leave and accommodating the employee in a less demanding role without reducing his salary.

However, the employee was later permanently reassigned to a seasonal position involving reduced pay and status (complaint #1). This decision further exacerbated the employee's mental health, ultimately leading to a period of disability leave.

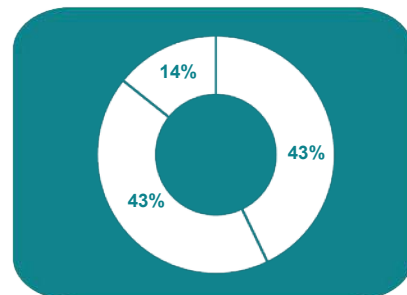
During this leave, the municipality implemented a new policy limiting long-term disability benefits (complaint #2). The situation worsened when, approximately one week before the employee was scheduled to return to work, his employment was terminated. The complainant was provided only the minimum statutory notice, despite a significant period of service and clean employment record (complaint #3).

The matter was resolved at pre-hearing conference through a comprehensive settlement covering all three human rights complaints.

This case highlights the value of pre-hearing resolution processes in achieving tailored settlements and obtaining substantive justice for human rights complainants.

DURING THE 2024-25 FISCAL YEAR, 21 COMPLAINTS WERE RESOLVED IN LEGAL + LITIGATION

- **43%** of the complaints were settled
- **43%** were dismissed
- **14%** were dismissed by the Court



SYSTEMIC INITIATIVES

EQUITABLE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH READING DISABILITIES REPORT

In 2020, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission received a group complaint on behalf of 29 families, all with children who have been professionally diagnosed with dyslexia. The families alleged that eight school divisions across Saskatchewan discriminated against their children on the basis of disability (dyslexia and other disabilities).

In agreement with the parents, the Commission pursued the matter using our systemic approach, which allows for a broader view of the issues and a wider range of options for resolution. This process consisted of interviews, surveys, public and professional feedback, formal research and report writing.

In September 2023, the Commission released *Equitable Education for Students with Reading Disabilities in Saskatchewan's K to 12 Schools: A Systemic Investigation Report*. The report emphasizes the need for an early universal screening strategy; individualized reading interventions; professional assessments; accommodation for all students; and, curriculum and reading instruction pedagogy in line with the latest scientific research.

In 2024, the Commission organized an Equitable Education Working Group to build consensus around ways to address the issues raised in the report. The Working Group included participants from a wide variety of stakeholders, including representatives from school divisions, teachers, the Ministry of Education, parents, advocacy groups and others. This work continues.

Next Steps

The Commission will continue to promote the report and build awareness around the challenges facing students with reading disabilities.

PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT

During the 2024–25 fiscal year, the Commission's Systemic Initiatives department laid the groundwork for a substantial outreach effort to strengthen human rights across Saskatchewan. The team designed a strategy to bring the Commission's work directly into communities in 2025–26 through a series of in-person engagements with residents, stakeholders, organizations, and businesses.

A central goal of the strategy is to ensure human rights protections reflect the voices and lived experiences of people across the province. To support this, the team developed a framework for meaningful, community-and-stakeholder-based dialogue focused on listening, collaboration, and empowerment.

The strategy will begin with visits to communities such as Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, and Humboldt early in the next fiscal year, with plans to expand to northern and southern regions later on. These visits are designed to establish collaborative relationships with stakeholders and create space for people to share concerns, identify barriers, and propose solutions to strengthen inclusion and equity in Saskatchewan.

This province-wide approach supports the Commission's mandate to provide human rights education and promote systemic change in Saskatchewan. By directly engaging with communities, the Commission seeks to shape initiatives and policies grounded in real-world needs and perspectives.

Addressing Workplace Discrimination

Another key focus of the Commission's engagement strategy is addressing discrimination in employment. During 2024–25, the Commission reviewed complaint trends and used that data to shape a targeted outreach approach for the upcoming year.

Employment remains the most common area of complaint. In 2024–25, of the 120 complaints accepted by the Commission, 82.5% occurred in the workplace while 10% occurred in the *Code*-protected area of public services. The most frequently cited ground was disability, which accounted for 60% of all accepted complaints. Other significant grounds included sex (41%), age (11%), and race-related grounds (30%).

In response, the Systemic Initiatives team developed a strategy that prioritizes outreach to Saskatchewan's business community for 2025–26. This is a proactive approach that aims to prevent discrimination before it occurs by providing employers with information they need to foster inclusive, *Code*-compliant workplaces. It also encourages employers to understand not only their own rights and responsibilities under the *Code*, but those of their employees – encouraging a more informed and respectful work environment.

SYSTEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Several multi-stakeholder systemic initiatives continued during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Disability Services Alliance

The Commission continues to support the efforts of the Disability Service Alliance (DSA) in its efforts to address the needs of people with disabilities living in Northern Saskatchewan.

DSA members include the Canadian Mental Health Association Saskatchewan, Canadian National

Institute for the Blind, Diabetes Canada, Inclusion Saskatchewan, Métis National of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities, the Commission, Spinal Cord Injury of Saskatchewan, and Vision Loss Rehabilitation Saskatchewan.

The DSA continues to engage in research that captures the lived experiences of people with disabilities. Based on this research, as well as input from key stakeholders, the DSA has created a proposal requesting resources from the Government of Saskatchewan that would help provide better supports for people with disabilities in Northern Saskatchewan.

Healthy Campus Saskatchewan

Since 2021, the Commission has been a community partner with Healthy Campus Saskatchewan – a cooperative effort among 19 post-secondary institutions in the province focused on improving the student experience.

Healthy Campus Saskatchewan supports the well-being and mental health of students through information sharing, research, and implementing practices that enhance and expand on well-established equity and accommodation services.

The stakeholder institutions and community partners work together to create new tools, resources, and learning opportunities for students. This includes awareness and prevention strategies that respond to suicide, sexual violence, and substance use.

Healthy Campus Saskatchewan's vision is healthy and resilient campus communities where students have the knowledge, tools, and resources they need for mental health and wellness and academic/career success.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018 sets out the Commission's responsibilities for education and engagement, which include:

- Promoting the principle that every person is free and equal in dignity and rights;
- Fostering understanding and acceptance of, and compliance with, the Code;
- Developing and delivering educational initiatives to help eliminate discrimination;
- Providing information and educational programs about the legal rights of all Saskatchewan residents;
- Advancing equality of opportunity and the legal rights for all people, regardless of their status;
- Supporting and encouraging research by individuals and organizations working to promote human rights; and
- Championing cultural diversity as a basic human right and fundamental human value.

To meet our obligations under the *Code*, the Commission delivers a range of educational and collaborative initiatives, including presentations, workshops, awareness campaigns, and conferences.

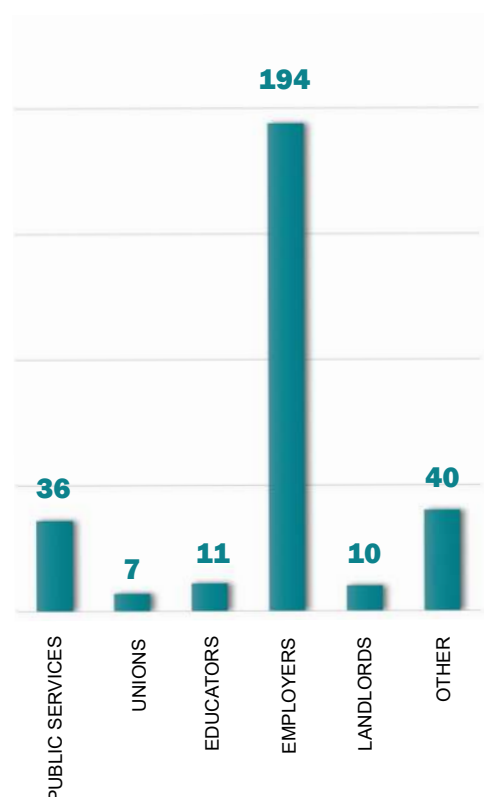
We also established a Business Help Line to support Saskatchewan businesses to better understand their rights and responsibilities under the *Code*.

BUSINESS HELP LINE

In an effort to be proactive, and to assist businesses in avoiding mistakes that result in human rights complaints, the Commission established a Business Help Line in 2014.

Businesses and organizations in Saskatchewan can call for human rights advice – free of charge. Every year, the Commission receives hundreds of calls from businesses, service providers, and other employers seeking this type of advice. Calls can take as little as 10 minutes or can last up to an hour. This past year our Business Help Line received **298** calls.

CALLS TO THE BUSINESS HELP LINE 2024-2025 (BY CATEGORY)





LUNCH AND LEARN

In June 2022, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission launched its Employment Equity Partner Lunch and Learns. Held online, these sessions feature experts from around the province speaking about equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.

This year, our Lunch and Learns covered intellectual disabilities and hiring practices using a human rights lens.

The first session featured Brittany Action (Director of Initiatives – Inclusion SK) and Nicole Bangs (Inclusive Employment Facilitator – Inclusion SK). They talked about hiring and supporting employees with intellectual disabilities.

They touched on barriers to employment faced by people with intellectual disabilities, as well as how Inclusion SK has found a path to continuous improvement in the organization's recruitment and retention strategies.

Brittany and Nicole also discussed the benefits of inclusive hiring practices and shared how employers can find support to ensure success.

The other Lunch and Learn session – featuring the SHRC's Director of Systemic Initiatives, Robin Mowat – was titled: *Human Rights and Hiring Interviews*.

In this session, the requirements for employers to avoid discrimination in their hiring processes was discussed, including application forms and interviews. The session also included practical information for employers seeking to do preferential hiring in accordance with an equity plan.

PUBLIC EDUCATION SESSIONS

The Commission provides educational sessions to employers, unions, professional associations, community organizations and other groups in the province. These sessions, conducted both online and in-person, provide human rights information to the public and help develop a culture in which rights, as well as responsibilities, are understood and respected.

During the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Commission engaged in the following public education events:

1. Saskatchewan School Board Association Spring General Assembly – April 12, 2024
2. Environmental Health Association of Quebec – April 25, 2024
3. City of Saskatoon – May 1, 2, and 4, 2024
4. Law Society of Saskatchewan – May 3, 2024
5. Ukrainian Congress of Canada – May 16, June 18, November 7, December 5, February 6 (2024-2025)
6. Plannera – August 15, 2024
7. Vanier Collegiate – January 14, 2025
8. Truly Alive Youth and Family Foundation 2nd Annual Afrocentric Symposium – February 5, 2024
9. Saskatchewan Accessibility Advisory Committee – February 24, 202
10. Canadian Condominium Institute – February 25, 2025

IN THE COMMUNITY

USSU PRIDE FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

The Commission attended the USSU Pride Flag Raising Ceremony on May 31. The event marked the beginning of Pride Month with a flag-raising ceremony at the University of Saskatchewan. Both the Two-Spirit Pride flag and Inclusive Pride flag were raised as symbols of the university's commitment to creating an inclusive environment for everyone, including 2SLGBTQIA+ community members. The gathering provided an opportunity for staff, students, and faculty to demonstrate support, while also offering a chance to hear perspectives from USask community members in a spirit of learning and listening together.

ROCK YOUR ROOTS

On National Indigenous Peoples Day 2024, we spent the morning with thousands of others in Saskatoon on Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation. The annual walk honours residential school survivors and invites the community to show up and demonstrate their commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

2024 PRIDE PARADE

To commemorate Pride Month 2024, the Commission participated in the Saskatoon Pride Parade on June 22, 2024. The event drew thousands of attendees who gathered to honor, appreciate, celebrate, and show support for LGBTQ2S+ individuals and their families.

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission celebrated Human Rights Day 2024 (December 10) by partnering with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to host a Canadian Citizenship Ceremony at TCU Place in Saskatoon.

The event – officiated by Dr. Jim Miller – welcomed 87 candidates from 24 countries into the Canadian family.

Remarks were given by Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan Russell Mirasty, City of Saskatoon Mayor Cynthia Block, and SHRC Chief Commissioner Treena Sikora.

After congratulating the candidates and talking about the rights and freedoms they have as new citizens, Chief Commissioner Sikora reminded everyone that with rights come responsibilities.

“As Canadian citizens, it is your responsibility to respect and uphold the rights of others, to stand up against injustice, and to ensure that no one is left behind,” she said.

“It is also your responsibility to learn the truths about our shared history and to engage in the process of reconciliation with the First Peoples of this continent. Becoming a Canadian citizen is more than just a passport or the right to vote ... it is a commitment to our shared values. It is a pledge to contribute to the fabric of this country, and to embrace both its opportunities as well as its responsibilities.”



BY THE NUMBERS

Summary of Accepted Complaints April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 by Grounds and Category

**TOTAL NUMBER OF
COMPLAINTS SUBMITTED**

609

**TOTAL NUMBER OF
COMPLAINTS ACCEPTED**

120

CATEGORIES	Age	Indigenous Ancestry	Other Ancestry ²	Family Status	Religion	Sexual Harassment	Sex/Gender/Other	Sex/Pregnancy	Disability	Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity	Retaliation	Receipt of Public Assist.	TOTAL GROUNDS	% GROUNDS CITED
Education	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	6	3.1%
Employment	13	0	25	5	6	10	26	13	57	1	1	2	1	160	82.5%
Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	2.1%
Public Services	0	2	9	0	0	0	1	0	7	1	2	0	0	22	11.3%
Occupations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5%
Trade Unions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.5%
TOTAL GROUNDS	14	2	34	6	6	10	27	13	73	2	4	2	1	194 ¹	100%
% Grounds Cited	7.2%	1.0%	17.5%	3.1%	3.1%	5.2%	13.9%	6.7%	37.6%	1.0%	2.1%	1.0%	0.5%		
% Total Complaints	11.6%	1.7%	28.3%	5.0%	5.0%	8.3%	22.5%	10.8%	60.8%	1.7%	3.3%	1.7%	0.8%		

Notes:

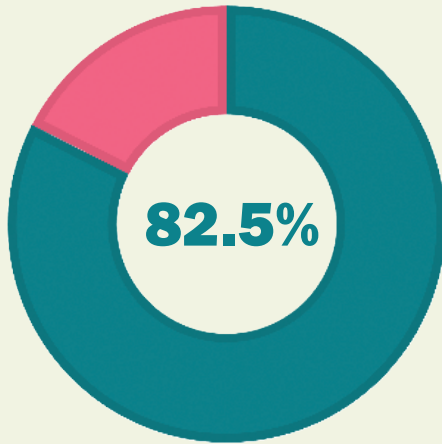
¹ Some complaints allege several grounds of discrimination. Some complaints can occur in more than one protected area. For these reasons, the total number of grounds cited (194) exceeds the total number of complaints accepted (120).

² Other Ancestry includes colour, nationality, place of origin, race, and perceived race.

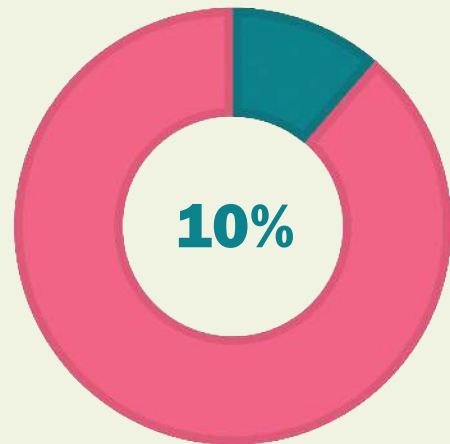
** The chart provides a breakdown of accepted complaints only.

MOST CITED AREAS IN ACCEPTED COMPLAINTS IN 2024-25

EMPLOYMENT

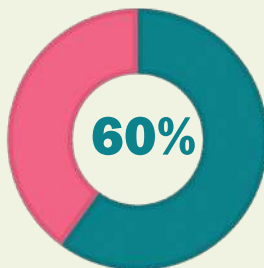


PUBLIC SERVICES

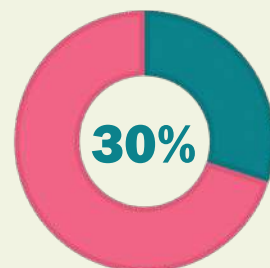


MOST CITED GROUNDS IN ACCEPTED COMPLAINTS IN 2024-25

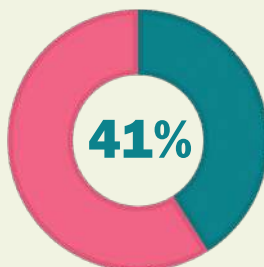
DISABILITY



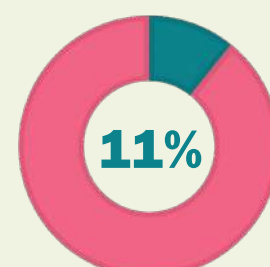
ANCESTRY



SEX



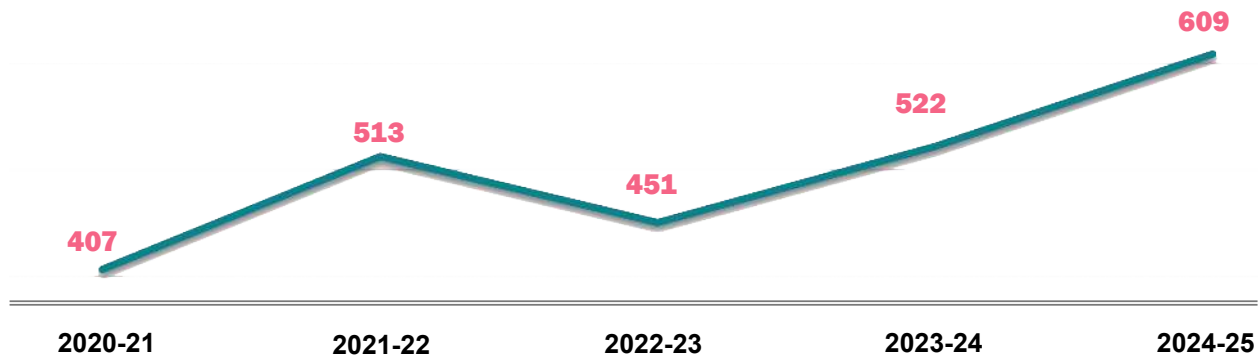
AGE





NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS

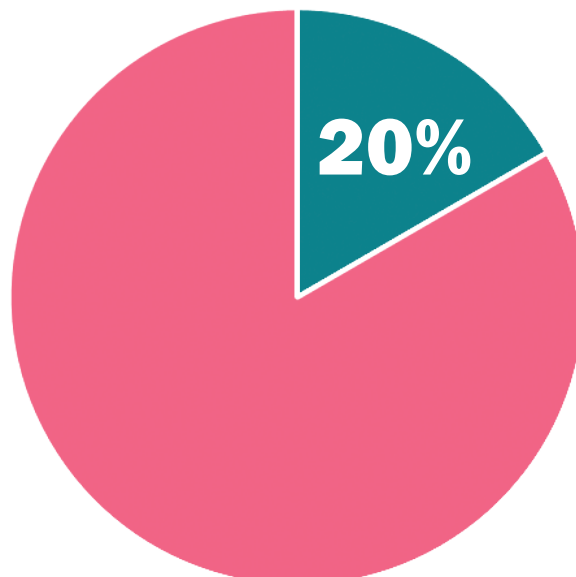
This year, the Commission received 609 complaints. This represents approximately a 17% increase in complaints from last year and an approximate 49% increase compared to the 2020-21 fiscal year.

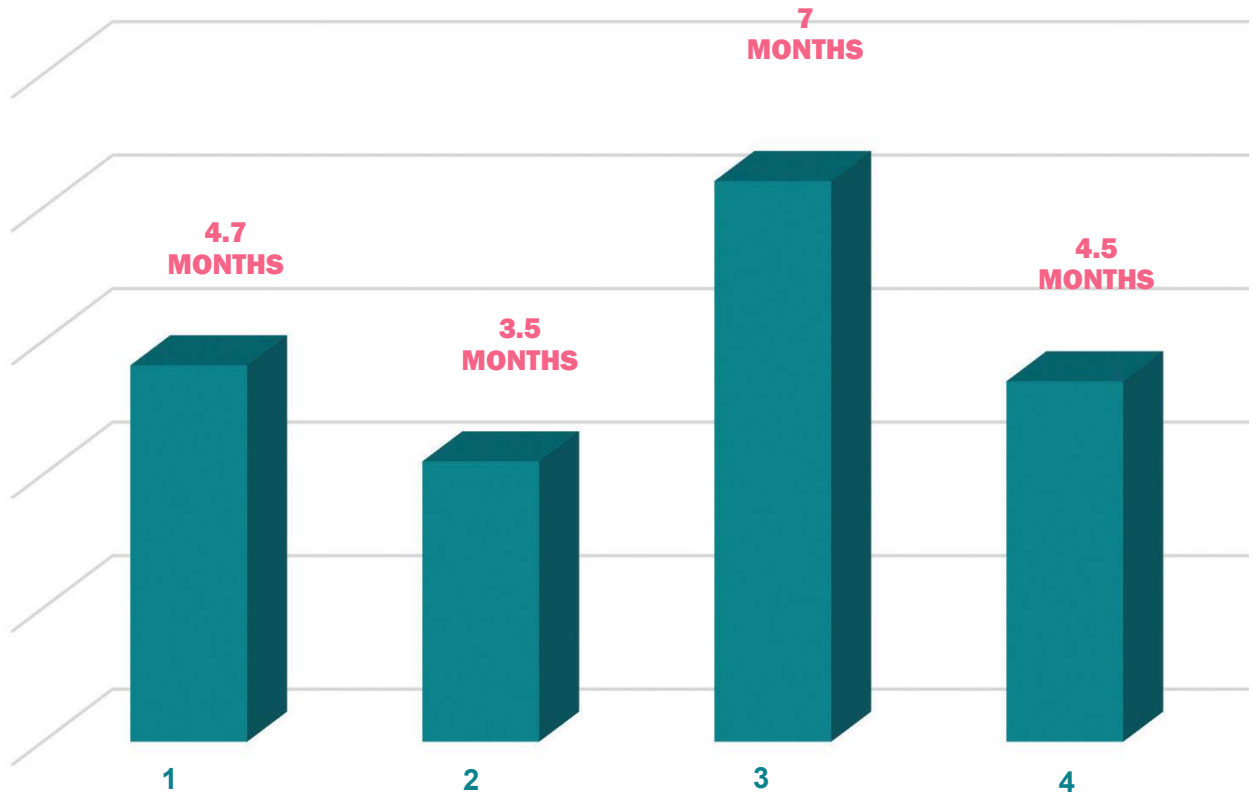


COMPLAINTS INVOLVING MORE THAN ONE GROUND

No single characteristic defines a person. In 2024-25, most complaints filed with the Commission involved a single protected ground. However, some complaints identified multiple grounds. Protected characteristics – such as race, gender, and disability – do not exist in isolation. Instead, they interact in complex ways that influence and shape individual experiences.

In 2024-25, one fifth of all complaints accepted by the Commission were based on more than one protected ground.



2024-25 TIMELINES

1. Of the **120 complaints accepted**, the average time from receipt of the Intake Questionnaire to receipt of the signed Complaint Form was **4.7 months**. The median time was 4 months.
2. Of the **74 mediations** completed, the average time from mediator assignment to mediation completion was **3.5 months**. The median time was 3 months.
3. Of the **32 investigations** completed, the average time from investigator assignment to investigation completion was **7 months**. The median time was 6 months.
4. Of the **12 Directed Mediations**, the average time from case conference to the directed mediation was **4.5 months**. The median time was 3.5 months.



72

complaints accepted
by the Commission
involved disability

550

files were closed by the
Commission in 2024-25

61

settlements were reached in
2024-25

30

investigated complaints were
dismissed in 2024-25

136K

page views on the Commission's
website during the 2024-25 fiscal
year

24

complaints that were accepted
involved more than one protected
characteristic

127%

increase in the number of individual complaints involving sex discrimination compared to the previous fiscal year

65%

of calls to the Business Help Line were made by Employers

The Commission received

87

more individual complaints in 2024-25 than in the previous fiscal year

8,511

views of The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code on the Commission's website

19.7%

of individual complaints received by the Commission in 2024-25 were accepted

The Commission's operating budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was

\$2,606,000



APRIL 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2025

Number of individual complaints received	609
Number of individual complaints accepted	120
Total number of inquiries	2,469
Number of complaints received per day	1.67
Number of files closed per day	1.51
Race-related individual complaints accepted	36
Number of individual complaints referred to Mediation	123
Number of individual complaints referred to Investigation	64
Number of individual complaints referred to Directed Mediation	8
Number of Pre-Complaint Resolutions	6
Number of individual complaints settled at Mediation	38
Number of individual complaints settled at Investigation	3
Number of individual complaints resolved at Directed Mediation	9
Number of Pre-Hearing Conferences	2
Number of Business Help Line inquiries	298
Number of media statements	12

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018

Section 24(a)

The Commission shall forward the principle that every person is free and equal in dignity and rights without regard to religion, creed, marital status, family status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, colour, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, race or perceived race, or receipt of public assistance.

