



Civil Rights Department Civil Rights Council

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CIVIL RIGHTS COUNCIL

Minutes from Council Meeting on June 23, 2026, 11:00 a.m.

Civil Rights Department – Oakland Office
Lake Merritt Conference Room
555 12th St, Suite 2050
Oakland, CA

Members of the public may also join remotely using the following information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84659743236>

or 1-669-900-6833 and Webinar ID: 846 5974 3236

Councilmembers Present

Candice Cho, Chair
Christian Acevedo, Councilmember
Indira Cameron-Banks, Councilmember
Denny Chan, Councilmember
Jonathan Glater, Councilmember
Ivette Peña, Councilmember
Vasudha Talla, Councilmember

Civil Rights Department Staff Present

Kevin Kish, CRD Director
Julia Parish, CRD Deputy Director
Rachael Langston, Assistant Chief Counsel
Mariel Block, CRD Senior Legislative and Regulatory Counsel
Alexandria Sadler, CRD Senior Legislative and Regulatory Counsel
Suge Lee, CRD Senior Legislative and Regulatory Counsel

Others Present

Two members of the public were present in person. An estimated 36 members of the public participated virtually.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Deputy Director Julia Parish

Deputy Director Parish called the meeting to order and apologized for the technical issues and delay. CRD Senior Counsel Alexandria Sadler conducted the roll call.

II. Welcome and Introduction of New Chair and Councilmembers

Director Kevin Kish

Director Kish welcomed the new Councilmembers. Chair Cho and new Councilmembers Talla, Acevedo, and Peña introduced themselves.

III. **Information on Meeting Participation**

Chair Candice Cho

Director Cho acknowledged Civil Rights Department staff, welcomed members of the public, and informed attendees how to submit public comment.

IV. **Review of the Agenda**

Deputy Director Julia Parish

Deputy Director Julia Parish reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

V. **Approval of Minutes**

Deputy Director Julia Parish and Councilmembers

Deputy Director Julia Parish reviewed the minutes from the October 6, 2025 meeting and asked for edits, amendments and public comments on the minutes.

The Council unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

VI. **Message from the Chair**

Chair Candice Cho

Chair Cho extended gratitude and a welcome to Councilmembers and shared her vision and goals for the Council.

Public Comment

Eric Devezin, DR. of Public Administration Student and County Commissioner: Welcomed the new chair and councilmembers. Expressed concern about the delay and technical issues.

VII. **Presentation: Workplace Job-Protected Leave Entitlements**

Liz Morris, Co-Director of the Center for WorkLife Law at University of California Law San Francisco

Liz Morris, the Co-Director of the Center for WorkLife Law at UCSF Law School, gave a presentation on workplace job-protected leave entitlements.

The presentation covered:

- Legal rights to take time off work for pregnancy, childbirth, and baby bonding
- Legal rights to take time off work for serious medical conditions, to take care of their own health, and to take care of a family member with a serious medical condition
- Reproductive loss and bereavement leave
- Workplace discrimination and retaliation for using job-protected leave
- Reasonable accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions

Following the presentation, Liz Morris conducted a question-and-answer session with Council members and members of the public.

Director Kish highlighted the New Parents Rights Guide, an interactive tool, and the job-protected leave toolkit for employees, both on the CRD website. He then acknowledged there are no regulations on bereavement and reproductive loss leave.

Public Comment

- **Lacey Friedman, Parent Advocate:** Acknowledged the importance of protected workplace leave entitlements. Friedman then suggested speaking with genetic counselors as a way of getting the leave information out.
- **Rainisha Hubbard, Caregiver, Advocate, Founder of Coalition of Parents Nationwide:** Hubbard spoke about how government services should be accessible, transparent, accountable, and responsive to the people they serve.
- **Devon Woodfine, IHS Provider:** Woodfine expressed concerns with the Civil Rights Department's handling of his particular complaints.
- **L. Rose, Professor:** Rose highlighted the need to educate the public about these leave entitlements and stated that many people do not know about the Civil Rights Department or how to file a complaint. Rose suggested having someone placed in the courts to help people and let them know about the Civil Rights Department.
- **Dial-in Attendee, no name given:** This individual stated their rights are being violated, and they have sent in reports.
- **Kai On:** On expressed concerns with the Civil Rights Department's handling of a particular complaint. He then spoke about political power controlling the State Bar of California.

VIII. Councilmembers' Reports and Council Acknowledgements

Councilmembers and Director Kevin Kish

No Councilmember reports.

Public Comment

- **Lacey Friedman, Parent Advocate:** Friedman asked if the Council has a subcommittee on people-first language vs. identity-first language.
- **Raj [LNU]:** Expressed hope that the Council's report states that people with disabilities are being left behind because these systems are hard to navigate.

IX. Civil Rights Department Report

Deputy Director Julia Parish and Assistant Chief Council Rachael Langston

Deputy Director Julia Parish highlighted the California Civil Rights Summit organized by CA vs. Hate, the Commission on the State of Hate, and a wide variety of groups and organizations.

Assistant Chief Counsel, Rachael Langston provided an update on recently passed legislation related to job-protected leaves of absence:

- **AB 2499 (2024):** provides workplace leave protections for survivors of violent crimes and their families
- **SB 848 (2023):** provides protected workplace leave up to 5 days following a miscarriage, stillbirth, failed adoption, failed surrogacy, or failed assisted reproduction
- **AB 1041 (2022):** Adds "designated person" to the list of people for whom an employee can take CFRA leave
- **AB 1949 (2022):** provides employees up to 5 days of job-protected leave following the death of a child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling to be taken within 3 months of the death

Councilmember Comments

- **Councilmember Talla:** Asked if there were any plans for future civil rights summits, and if any of the recently enacted legislation needs regulatory work that isn't already assigned to a subcommittee.

Public Comment

- **Raj [LNU]:** Thanked the Council for their work and then highlighted the mistreatment they experienced in a county building as a person with a disability.

X. Presentation: Subcommittee Responsibilities and Time Commitments

Civil Rights Department Executives

Senior Counsel Suge Lee gave a presentation about the responsibilities and time commitments required of the Council subcommittees.

Councilmember Comments

- **Councilmember Chan:** Highlighted that the CRD staff are a great resource.

Public Comment

- **Raj [LNU]:** Shared that they went to school for Administrative Criminal Law and Justice.

XI. Subcommittee Updates, Assignments, and Creations

Councilmembers and Civil Rights Department Staff

A. Discussion by the Council

Assistant Chief Counsel, Rachael Langston gave an overview of the current subcommittees and then presented the Civil Rights Department's ideas for new subcommittees which are as follows:

- Subcommittee on implementing new regulations under Government Code Section 12945.8
- Subcommittee on automated decision-making systems and housing
- Subcommittee to consider federal policy changes

Councilmembers sought clarity on the existing subcommittees and potential new subcommittees. They sought clarity on purpose of the different existing subcommittees, subcommittee staffing, and the creation and staffing of new subcommittees.

The updated subcommittees are as follows:

- Subcommittee on 11135 Guidance: Councilmember Glater and Councilmember Peña
- Subcommittee on Protected Employment Leaves and Reasonable Accommodations: Councilmember Chan and Councilmember Indira Cameron Banks
- Subcommittee on Public Civil Rights Hearings: Councilmember Acevedo and Councilmember Chan
- Subcommittee on Contractor Nondiscrimination and Compliance: Disbanded
- Subcommittee on Pay Data Regulations: Councilmember Chan and Councilmember Cameron Banks
- Subcommittee on Leave to Attend Court; Leave and Accommodations for Victims of Violence and their Families: Councilmember Tala and Councilmember Acevedo
- Subcommittee on Hearing for Automated Decision-Making Systems and Housing: Chair Cho and Councilmember Glater
- Subcommittee to Consider Federal Policy Changes: Councilmember Talla and Councilmember Peña

The councilmembers discussed potential topic ideas for the Subcommittee on Public Civil Rights Hearings including hate crimes, trafficking, immigration and the limits of California authority, and speaking with local human relations commissions about further topic ideas.

B. Public Comment

- **Eric Devezin, DR. of Public Administration Student and County Commissioner:** Urged the Council to move past broad and safe definitions of equity and let lived experiences help inform the work.
- **Devon Woodfine, IHSS Provider:** Expressed hope in the opportunity for the public to participate, submit public comments and help influence any of the discussion by the subcommittees.
- **L. Rose, Professor:** Urged CRD to study the feasibility of specialized employment discrimination and the overburdening in the court system.
- **Raj [LNU]:** Notified the Council that there are no trials in dependency court in Monterey Park.
- **Lacey Friedman, Parent Advocate:** Explained that courts don't see certain cases through an ADA lens and suggested a subcommittee focused on accessibility for people with disabilities in the courtroom.

C. Action by Council

Councilmember Peña moved to create the new subcommittees discussed and make the suggested updates to pre-existing subcommittees. Councilmember Glater seconded. The Council unanimously voted to approve the motion.

XII. Further Public Comment

Chair Candice Cho

- **Lacey Friedman, Parent Advocate:** Friedman explained her work on AB 2397 and its background. She then explained the law is not working and shared that protecting adults with disabilities in statutes, including how they can be protected in court, needs to be considered.
- **Devon Woodfine, IHS Provider:** Raised concerns about a housing discrimination case he has filed.
- **Raj [LNU]:** Raised concerns that complaints with evidence are being thrown out and that there is no adequate ADA support in the court system.
- **L. Rose, Professor:** Encouraged the Council to keep in mind if the new legislation they are writing will be enforceable.
- **Zella Knight, Lived Experience Activist:** Expressed concerns about the current collection, tracking and reporting of tenant residential complaints, particularly those regarding fair housing violations and discriminatory housing practices. Knight suggested discussing standardized data collection, improved responsiveness and accountability, public transparency, equitable access to the complaint process, independent oversight, and continued improvement.
- **Ana Raquel Pines:** Spoke about her civil rights being violated by her HOA.

XIII. Adjournment

Chair Candice Cho adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:44 PM.