

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

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THE AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION'S (AHRC) PURPOSE IS TO STUDY THE EXISTENCE OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE COMMUNITY AND WORK TO MINIMIZE OR ELIMINATE IT, PROMOTE GOODWILL AMONG THE VARIOUS RACIAL, RELIGIOUS, AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE CITY, AND COOPERATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE RACIAL, RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND INTERGROUP TENSIONS.

CITY OF AMES MUNICIPAL CODE, CHAPTER 14:

The purpose of this chapter is to implement the provision of the Iowa Civil Rights Act and to further provide for the general welfare of persons in the City of Ames, Iowa, by prohibiting certain discriminatory practices, and to establish a commission for the investigation of complaints of discrimination; and, to undertake projects of education to prevent discrimination; and, to establish procedures for the conciliation of such complaints; and to enforce the provisions hereof.

At an August 2018 City Council workshop, Council members directed AHRC to not adjudicate cases and instead refer all cases to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC). At this workshop, Council also discussed various methods of gathering additional information to inform an adjusted or revised ordinance and directed AHRC to review data available (including the Campus Climate Survey, Municipal Equality Indexes) and other available data; interact with ISU, ACSD, and any others well-positioned to give input on diversity, inclusion and equity in the community in order to recommend action items and changes to the ordinance.

2021 AHRC COMMISSIONERS:

In addition to new members of AHRC in 2021, diversified efforts in alignment with the strategic plan were pursued. While still navigating the impacts of COVID-19, the AHRC found ways to do the meaningful work set forth by the City Council, specifically around awareness and representation.

- Chunhui Chen (appointed July 2021)
- Jill Crosser, Chair (January 2021-March 2021)
- Wayne Clinton, Vice Chair
- Leslie Ginder (October 2020-June 2021)
- Jahmai Fisher, Chair (appointed April 2021)
- Lynette Plander (appointed June 2021)
- Madesh Samanu
- Deb Schildroth, City of Ames Staff Liaison

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ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS:

JANUARY 2021:

- Chair Jill Crosser presented the Humanitarian award to Charles Grim at the Dr. Martin Luther King Day Celebration at Ames City Auditorium. Vice Chair Wayne Clinton also served as keynote speaker for the celebration.

FEBRUARY 2021:

- Discuss diversifying strategies for “Home for Everyone” Award nominations publicity to increase submission numbers. Commission members commit to advertising award and nomination information on personal social media pages. Members also committed to personally emailing community members who they believe may know someone worthy of nomination.
- 2020 Annual report draft was provided by Chair Jill Crosser for feedback.
- Black History Month Highlights
 - Commissioner Jahmai Fisher partnered with Ames Public Library for Virtual Reading event celebrating black authors and literature. Fisher also presented at Ames High School Black History Month Mini Conference on February 26th.

MARCH 2021:

- Approved “**A Home for Everyone**” Award Recipients Tara Brown as an individual and Wings of Refuge as an organization.
- Ames History Museum Downtown mural unveiling: Vice Chair Wayne Clinton spoke at the event and various commissioners came to show support and solidarity on March 29th.
- Women’s History Month Highlights
 - Chair Jill Crosser collaborated with Ames History Museum to publicize “Women’s Familiar Names around Ames” via social media in honor of women who have contributed positively toward the Ames’ community throughout the years.

APRIL 2021:

- Commissioner Jahmai Fisher presented “Home for Everyone” Awards at Ames City Council virtual meeting on April 13th.
- Commissioner Jahmai Fisher elected as Chair on April 15th.
- AHRC agreed to support a Fair Housing Month Ad in collaboration with Housing Coordinator for the City of Ames, Vanessa Baker-Latimer.

MAY 2021:

- Created partnership with Ames Parks and Recreation’s music event involving The Reminders in Spring 2022.
- Approved FY 2021/2022 AHRC Budget.

JUNE 2021:

- Participation in Ames Chamber of Commerce See Yourself in Ames Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Day on June 8th at Reiman Gardens. Chair Jahmai Fisher participated on a panel about Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Ames. Commissioners Jahmai Fisher, Wayne Clinton and Madesh Samanu participated in a tabling event alongside other local organizations.
- Chair Fisher begins as member of planning committee for Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations 2021
- Welcome new AHRC Member, Lynette Plander at June 28th commission meeting.

JULY 2021:

- 2020 Annual Report Presentation and Joint Meeting with City Council was held on July 13th at 6:00 pm. Valuable feedback was given by City Council. Specifically around displaying data

provided about complaints submitted to Iowa Civil Rights Commission in a more longitudinal way to gain more comprehensive context and note annual fluctuations.

- Mayor Haila attended commission meeting on July 22nd to discuss more about annual report. Discussion highlighted the commission's role in educating the larger Ames community about the diverse populations within Ames and opportunities for the larger community to be involved and interact.
- Approved FY 2021-22 Cooperative Agreement with Iowa Civil Rights Commission at July 22nd commission meeting.

AUGUST 2021:

- Commissioners attend National Night Out on August 3rd to connect with Ames community members and educate them about the role the commission plays within Ames.
- Commissioners attend Welcome Fest at Iowa State University on August 25th to connect with students and educate them about the role the commission plays in the larger Ames community.
- Created banner layout and other marketing materials in order to enhance the visibility for the commission as well as the AHRC mission.
- On August 24th 2021, AHRC Commissioners assisted with the repainting of the inclusive crosswalk at Fifth Street and Douglas Avenue.
- Develop plan to recognize upcoming heritage months.
- Finalized plans to to recognize Latinx/Hispanic Heritage month.

SEPTEMBER 2021:

- Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month Recognition (September 15- October 15): In honor of this month, the commission collaborated with 6 Latinx/Hispanic members of the Ames community. Photos of them were posted on The City of Ames social media over the span of 4 weeks. Each person shared what they love most about their culture.

OCTOBER 2021:

- Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month Recognition (September 15-October 15): In honor of this month, the commission collaborated with 6 Latinx/Hispanic members of the Ames community. Photos of them were posted on The City of Ames social media over the span of 4 weeks. Each person shared what they love most about their culture.
- On October 16, 2021 AHRC extended Happy Homecoming to Iowa State University community in continued efforts to encourage ISU (students especially) awareness of commission.
- On October 22, 2021, the commission urged City of Ames community members to "Consider The Costume" through an infographic that was posted on The City of Ames Social Media. This infographic and post encouraged community members to consider the concept of cultural appropriation and how/why certain costumes can be harmful to specific cultural groups. The post also included ways to appreciate a particular culture without appropriating it.
- Collaborated with Ames YWCA to promote the International Friendship Fair.
- Began collaborating with Martin Luther King Jr. 2022 Celebration Event planning committee to promote the essay contest and Humanitarian Award.
- Acknowledge Native American Heritage Month and provide education and resources for Hunger and Homelessness Awareness week in November.

NOVEMBER 2021:

- Commissioners attend 2021 Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations on November 10th.
- On November 15th a post was made on City of Ames social media platforms acknowledging Native American heritage month.
- On November 19th a post was made on City of Ames social media platforms regarding Homelessness and Hunger Awareness, along with providing resources for members of the community who may be experiencing or know someone who is experiencing homelessness and/or hunger.

DECEMBER 2021:

- The 2022 “**Humanitarian**” Award Recipients were selected: Anneke Mundel as an individual and The COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Story County immigrants as an organization.
- Commissioner Dr. Chen discussed preliminary plans to recognize the 2022 Chinese New Year.

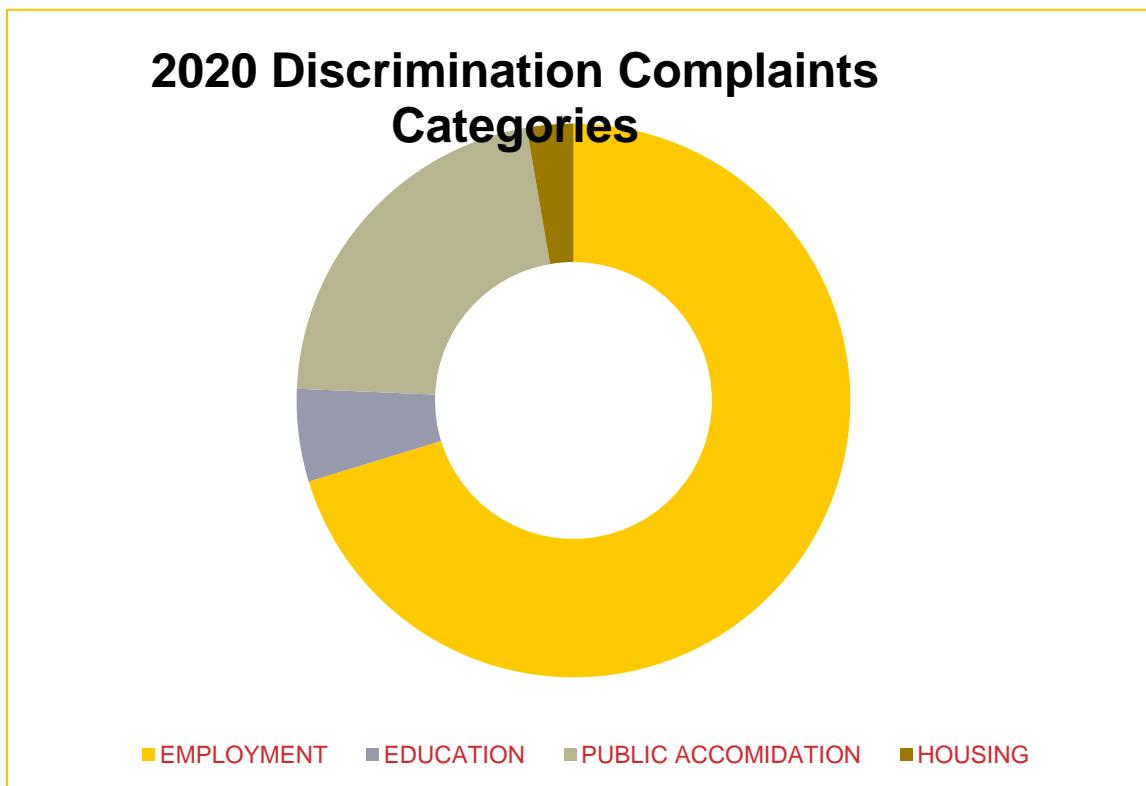
AMES CIVIL RIGHT COMPLAINTS TO THE IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION 2021:

Citizens are able to initiate complaints to the City via the City Manager’s Office or make them directly to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC). As a matter of procedure, reports made to the City are sent to the ICRC for investigation and are tracked by the ICRC. Reports have been made to ICRC involving Ames of which the Ames Human Relations Commission is not notified. The Commission requested aggregate summaries of the Ames complaints made to the ICRC for the purpose of understanding the areas of complaints and concerns identified. Results of this request are provided below.

Figures 1 &2. Discrimination Complaint Categories

There was a total of thirty-six (36) complaints in 2020 to the ICRC which are grouped in the following four (4) categories: **Employment, Education, Public Accommodation, Housing.**

As indicated on the chart below, the main areas of complaint included Employment (26 complaints), Public Accommodation (7 complaints), Education (2 complaints), and Housing (1 complaint).

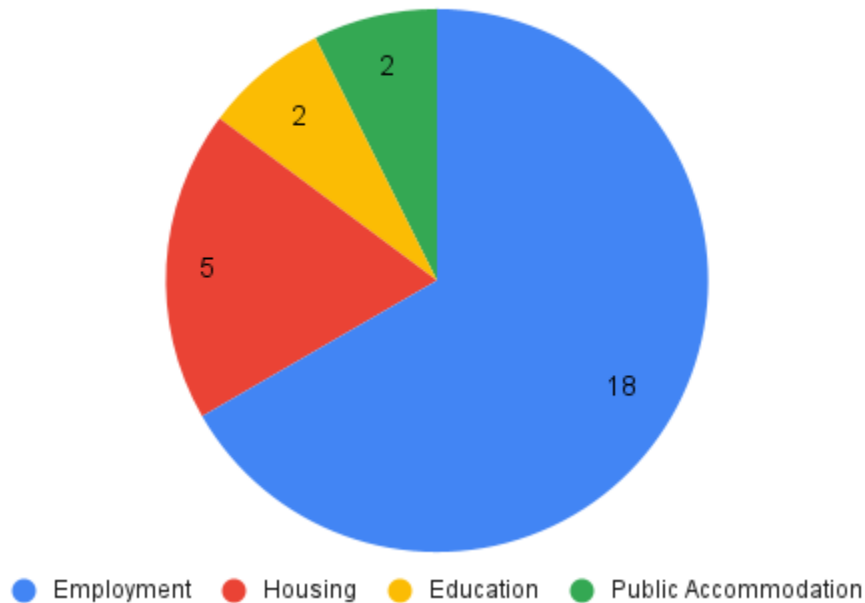


There was a total of twenty-seven complaints in 2021 to the ICRC which are grouped in the following four (4) areas: **Employment, Education, Public Accommodation, Housing.**

As indicated on the chart below, the main areas of complaint included Employment (18 complaints), Public Accommodation (2 complaints), Education (2 complaints), and Housing (5 complaints).

2021 Figure Below:

Discrimination Complaints Categories



Notable Changes between 2020 and 2021

25% decrease in complaints overall.

Employment remains the largest area with 18 complaints.

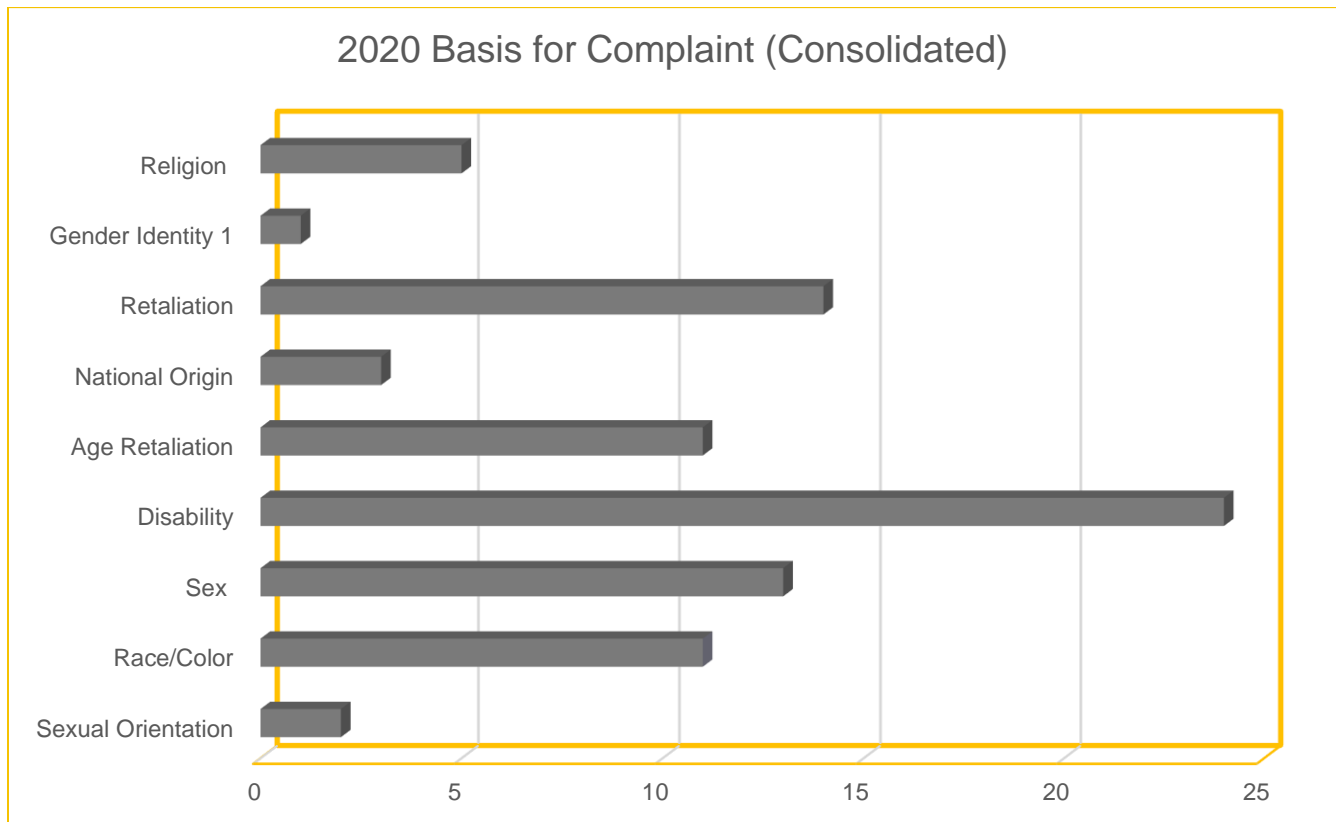
Public Accommodation complaints decreased from 7 to 2 complaints.

Housing complaints increased from 1 to 6 complaints.

Figures 3&4. Basis for Complaint (Consolidated)

This graph illustrates the basis for the complaint areas on Figure 1. **The categories are: Religion, Gender Identity, Retaliation, National Origin, Age, Disability, Sex, Race/Color, Sexual Orientation.**

Please note that individuals may file complaints in more than one area simultaneously. There was an increase in following categories from 2019's data: **Disability, Age, Retaliation.** As indicated on the chart below, twenty-four (24) or 67% of the complaints were based on disability factors and fourteen (14) or 39% retaliation.

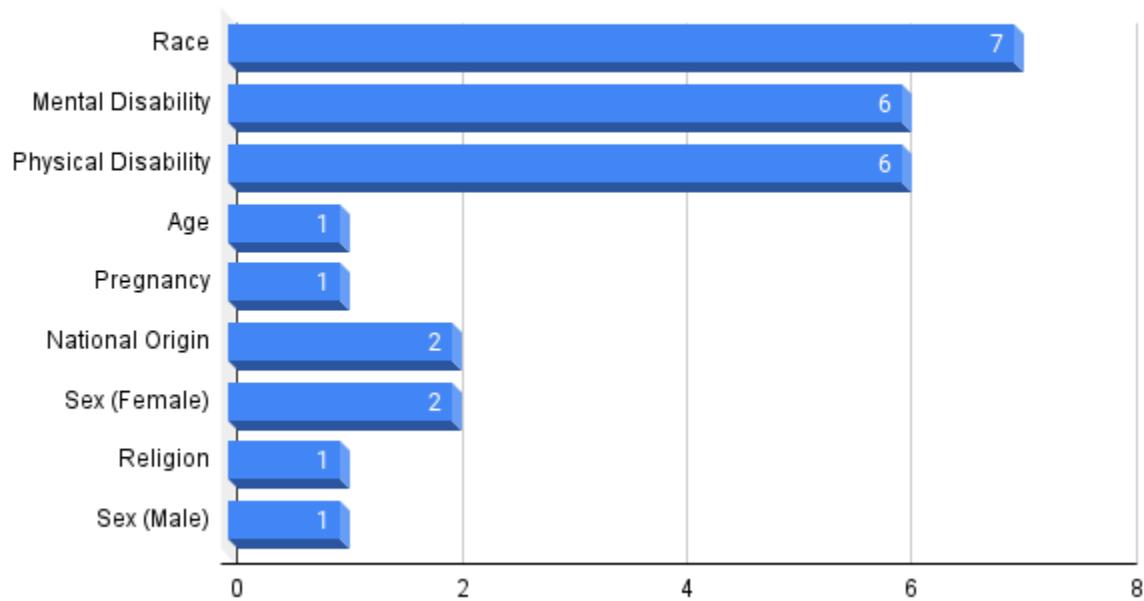


This graph illustrates the basis for the complaint areas on Figure 2. **The categories are: Religion, Gender Identity, Retaliation, National Origin, Age, Disability, Sex, Race/Color, Sexual Orientation.**

Please note that individuals may file complaints in more than one area simultaneously.

2021 Figure Below:

Basis for Complaint (Consolidated)



Notable Changes between 2020 and 2021

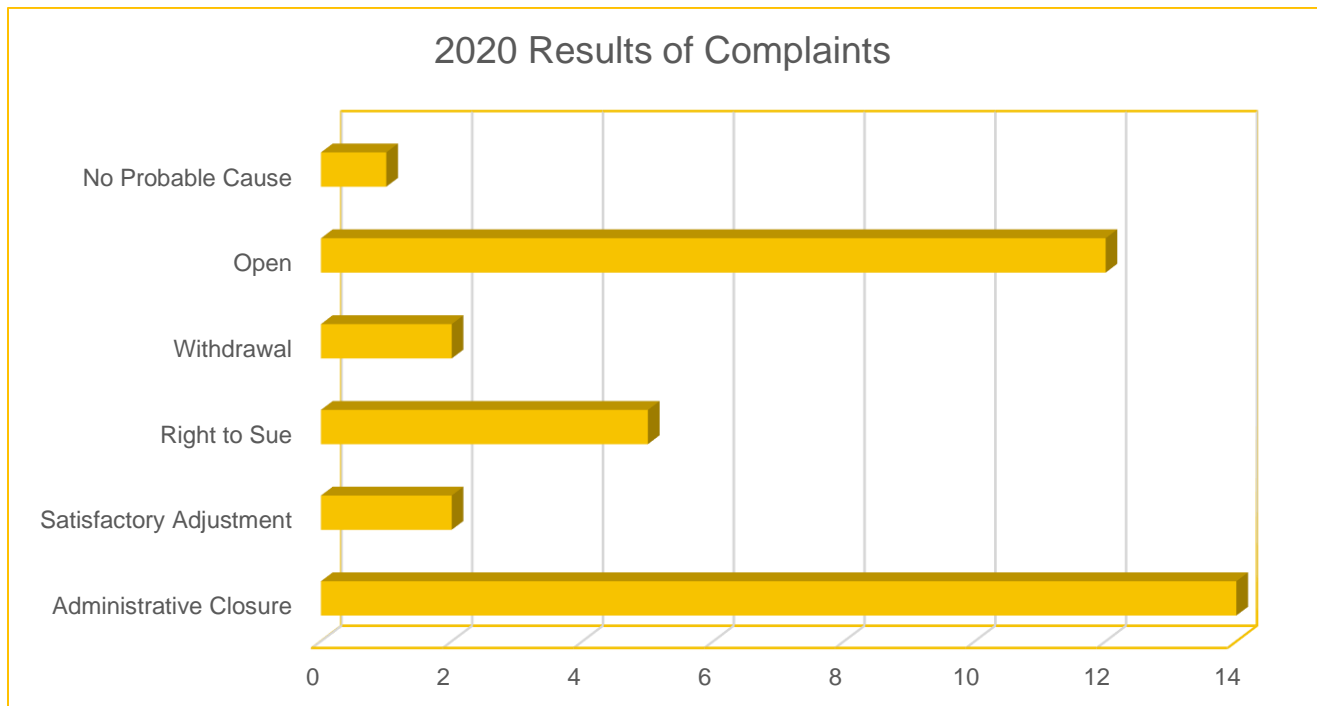
Disability is now separated into mental disability and physical disability.

Disability (in general, when combined) remains the largest basis for complaint factors (~45% of complaints).

Race is the second largest basis for complaint factors.

Figures 5&6. Results of Complaints

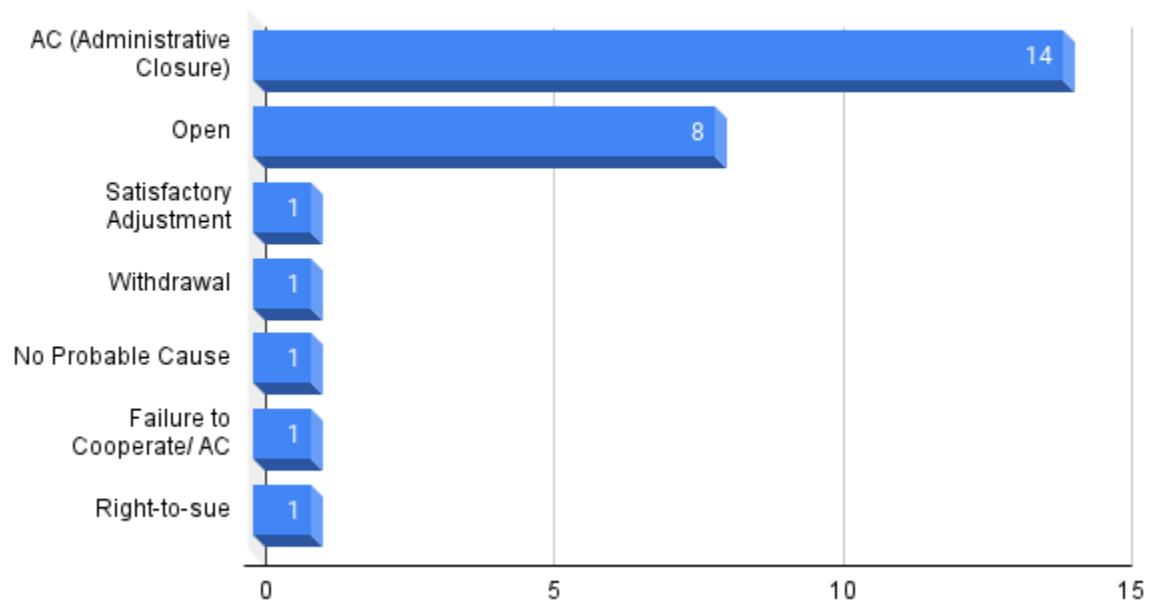
The following chart reviews the results of the complaints in 2020 given by the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. Fourteen (14) of these complaints received administrative closure, one (1) was deemed “No Probable Cause”, twelve (12) are Under Open Investigation, five (5) issued a Right-to-Sue letter, two (2) Satisfactory Adjustment and two (2) were Withdrawn.



The following chart reviews the results of the complaints in 2021 given by the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. Fourteen (14) of these complaints received administrative closure, one (1) was deemed “No Probable Cause”, eight (8) are Under Open Investigation, one (1) issued a Right-to-Sue letter, one (1) Satisfactory Adjustment, one (1) was Withdrawn and one (1) was deemed Failure to Cooperate/Administrative Closure.

2021 Figure Below:

Results of Complaints



Summary:

There was an overall decrease in complaints between 2020 to 2021. In 2021, of the twenty-seven (27) complaints, the majority were in the areas of employment and housing. Of all the complaints filed, the basis for complaints were primarily mental disability, physical disability, and/or race.

AMES COMPLAINTS – (JANUARY 2021 – DECEMBER 2021)

(Full 2021 Information shared by Iowa Civil Rights Commission)

Area	Basis	Cause of Action	Result
Employment	Race (Black), Color, Sex (Male), Age (<40), Retaliation	Harassment, Constructive Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Housing	Mental Disability	Reasonable Accommodation, Terms and conditions, Harassment, Eviction	Open
Employment	Race (Black), Sex (Female), Color, Age (<40), Gender Identity	Harassment	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Mental Disability	Denied Accommodation, Discipline, Harassment, Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Sex (Female), Physical Disability, Retaliation	Discipline, Training, Harassment, Reduced Hours, Sexual Harassment, Suspension	AC (Administrative Closure)
Housing	Mental Disability	Harassment	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Age (>40)	Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Housing	Physical Disability, Religion	Harassment, Terms and Conditions	Satisfactory Adjustment (Mediation)
Employment	Sex (Female), Pregnancy, Race (Other)	Discipline, Harassment, Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Physical Disability, Retaliation	Benefits, Denied Accommodation, Harassment, Reduced Hours, Reduced Pay, Sexual Harassment	Withdrawal w/Satisfactory Adjustment
Employment & Education	Mental Disability	Harassment, Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Housing	Race (Black)	Harassment, Constructive Eviction	No Probable Cause
Employment	Race (White), Sex (Female), National Origin (Other), Age (<40), Mental Disability, Retaliation	Failure to Promote, Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Race (White), National Origin (Other), Age (<40), Retaliation	Discipline, Harassment	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	National Origin (Other), Mental Disability, Retaliation	Denied Accommodation, Discharge, Hiring	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment & Education	Sex (Female), Age (<40), Retaliation	Assignment, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Reduced Hours	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Race (Black), Color, Retaliation	Suspension, Discharge	Open
Employment	Race (Black), Color, Age (>40)	Failure to Promote, Discharge	AC (Administrative Closure)
Public Accommodation	Physical Disability, Religion (Other)	Service	Failure to Cooperate/ AC

Employment	Sex (Female)	Pay Comparability	Right-to-sue
Employment	Mental Disability, Age (<40)	Denied Accommodation, Suspension	Open
Employment	Religion (Other), Retaliation	Denied Accommodation, Discharge	Open
Housing	Physical Disability, Mental Disability	Discriminatory Lending	Open
Employment	Race (Other), National Origin (Mexican), Retaliation	Discharge, Harassment	AC (Administrative Closure)
Employment	Physical Disability, Mental Disability	Assignment, Denied Accommodation, Discipline, Harassment	Open
Employment	Sex (Male, Sexual Orientation (Heterosexual), Retaliation	Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Constructive Discharge	Open
Public Accommodation	Race (Black), Color	Service	Open

AMES HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION 2020-22 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Goal A – Advocacy

The Ames Human Relations Commission (AHRC) values a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community and will function as an advocacy group for the citizens of the City of Ames. The Commission will undertake activities to discover, conduct analysis on, and circumvent instances that may lead to prohibited discrimination so that the community can be warned and assisted in preventing it. Commission members will be active participants in the City, will develop and follow a protocol to handle discriminatory incidents in the community, and will report and make recommendations directly to the City Council to ensure all voices are heard.

Strategic Goal B – Information & Analysis

The Ames Human Relations Commission (AHRC) will study the existence, character, causes and extent of discriminatory practices in the community while using resources to gain information and work with community partners, leaders, and report directly to the City Council.

OBJECTIVE 1: AHRC will maintain objective knowledge related to claims of discrimination.

- AHRC will work directly with the Iowa Civil Right Commission and will collaborate annually with a representative to better understand the complaint process.
- AHRC will obtain and review reports from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission on claims of discrimination in relation to types and probable cause.
- AHRC will obtain and review reports from the ICRC on types of claims made locally in writing, or on the website and report of Discriminatory Claims to the City, and any concerns expressed to HumanRelations@cityofames.org.
- AHRC will obtain and review formal and informal reports that will be used to determine priority areas of focus and will share with City Council and community leaders as needed.

OBJECTIVE 2: AHRC will partner with City and Community members to learn about discrimination and how to decrease the risk.

- AHRC will partner with community employers and human resource specialists to identify concerns and opportunities for non-discriminatory workplace cultures as needed.
- AHRC will summarize and share qualitative and quantitative findings with City Council relating to claims of discrimination.
- AHRC will work with the City to identify public reporting related to inclusion and anti-discriminatory practices.

OBJECTIVE 3: AHRC will identify opportunities for obtaining information related to community member perceptions and experiences in relation to housing, employment, public accommodation, race and ethnic minority, gender identify, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or familial status.

- AHRC will reach out to community partners or populations to identify concerns or successes in the areas mentioned above.
- AHRC will collect and summarize findings to be used for future planning, i.e. Community Demographics, CyRide or City Surveys.

OBJECTIVE 4: AHRC will be an active presence in providing community education and deterring discrimination.

- AHRC will increase engagement and community interactions.
- AHRC will monitor and report contacts or participation in relation to social media and public engagement activities.

Strategic Goal C – Public Awareness & Effective Communication

The Ames Human Relations Commission strives to be a central location for the citizens of the City of Ames to advocate for, build awareness of, and communicate with. Commission members will connect with their community through public awareness and effective communication members.

Objective 1: AHRC will work to improve effectiveness in communicating with the general public through media outlets

- AHRC will increase engagement, community interactions and raise public awareness of the Commission’s work by expanding media outreach.
- AHRC will provide educational press releases on topics related to housing, employment, education/training, public accommodations or services, credit, and other topics to the city of Ames Facebook page, and other media outlets regularly.
- AHRC will administer communication with the press following discriminatory incidents in the Ames community as determined by the commission.
- AHRC will monitor and report contacts or participation in relation to social media and public engagement activities.

Objective 2: AHRC will maintain an active presence in the Ames community

- AHRC will be active in the community and have commissioners attend events listed in the Commission’s annual calendar with visible identification (t-shirt, name tag).
- AHRC will co-sponsor community events with aligned organizations and individuals throughout the city.
- AHRC will provide and update the annual calendar of events online.
- AHRC will raise public awareness of community organizations, activities, and individuals that exemplify inclusivity and a nondiscriminatory approach. Members will be present at annual awarding the Humanitarian award (January-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday) and Fair Housing Award (April at City Council).

Objective 3: AHRC will keep all documentation related to its mission current, easy to navigate, assessable, and with person first language

- AHRC will create link to educational pieces and resolutions, Iowa Civil Rights Commission documents, etc. from the website to improve access to publications and dissemination of information for all persons.
- AHRC will provide translated bolded/large print directions (in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Korean) on (a) how to translate the web contents on the City site; (b) how to file a complaint; (c) how to access interpretation for other City services.
- AHRC will provide translated bolded/large print directions (in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Korean) on how to obtain interpretive services for assistance in understanding discrimination laws and filing complaints on all AHRC Documents.
- AHRC will provide a link to Iowa Civil Rights Commission Complaint Form directions in Spanish and Chinese. AHRC will also provide information on how to obtain it in other languages and formats.

- AHRC will improve communication with transgender, gender-nonconforming, and gender questioning persons within the Ames community and will assist in the revision of all City website and brochures to include gender neutral language by removing his/her language from AHRC-specific literature.

Strategic Goal D – Management Excellence

The Ames Human Relations Commission will ethically work towards this strategic plan for the betterment of our community in an ethical and fiscally responsible way.

Objective 1: AHRC will strive to keep this strategic plan at the forefront of all its decisions and activities and within our areas of focus and expertise

- AHRC’s monthly meeting agenda will reflect the strategic plan by indicating a section for each strategic goal and all the council’s priorities will feed each section.
- AHRC Commission Members will work with community partners who specialize in areas of expertise.
- AHRC Commission members will represent the AHRC with respect, recognize and celebrate the strength of the City of Ames’ greatest asset, the value of all people, via diversity and inclusion. They will be respectful of opinions, customs, and individual preferences to help build strong relationships.

Objective 2: AHRC will manage the annual budget in a fiscally responsible manner

- AHRC will strive to effectively spend the budgeted monies from the Ames City Council responsibly. Monies allocated for the Commission should only be used in ways what advance these strategic goals.
- AHRC will describe the ways in which its monies were used and in what ways its use advanced the goals described above in the annual report.