



Executive Director's Report for April 2025

Summary

A major goal of the Equal Rights Commission during April was to make progress in finding a full-time executive director and to complete the draft management comments for the internal audit report. Our staff completed several outstanding outreach presentations, and we continue to make progress with the status of investigations. Staff recently completed training with the Office Director for the EEOC's Seattle Field Office.

Case Status

Inquiries and New Complaints

The agency received 34 inquiries and perfected 8 new complaints in April 2025.

Inquiries and New Complaints

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Inquiries	498	516	408	385	363	333	324	122
New Complaints	119	130	82	72	73	55	48	21

Pending Cases

The agency has 33 open cases.

Case Closures

Two cases was closed during April by settlement between the parties, one case was closed via Conciliation, and one case was closed for no cause finding.

Case Closures

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Closures	126	108	83	97	71	85	79	9

Cases over 240 days

AMC 5.50.010 requires the AERC to “promptly and impartially” investigate complaints and conduct fact finding procedures. The AERC shall, unless good cause is shown, issue its determination of whether the allegations are supported by substantial evidence within 240 days after the filing of the complaint. The agency currently has **three** cases that exceed 240 days for good cause.

- In one case, both sides are represented by counsel. The attorneys requested numerous continuances while they attempted to negotiate a settlement.
- In one case the investigator was unable to reach the complainant for several months but has re-established communication and is investigating the case.
- One case was transferred from a previous investigator before the investigator left the agency. The new investigator has been actively investigating the case.

Letters explaining good cause are being drafted and will be sent to the parties in each case going forward where investigations exceed 240 days.

Budget Status

2025 Budget vs Actuals

	Current Budget	Encumbrance	Actuals	Difference	Utilization
Labor	\$ 641,830.00	\$	\$ 153,819.31	\$ 488,010.69	23.97%
Non-labor	\$ 13,175.00	\$ 58.00	\$ 4,897.68	\$ 8,219.32	37.61%
Travel	\$ 8,500.00	\$	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,700.00	56.47%
IG Charges	\$ 224,775.00	\$	\$ 344.04	\$ 224,430.96	0.15%
Revenue	\$ (49,800.00)	\$	\$ (0.00)	\$ (49,800.00)	0.00%
Total	\$ 838,480.00	\$ 58.00	\$163,861.03	\$ 674,560.97	9.08%

Purchases During April:

Posting Date	Amount	Text
4/14	40.00	Apr 2025 Inv 98901 Pinnacle EE Background Checks
4/14	18.00	Apr 2025 Inv 98901 Pinnacle EE Background Checks
4/15	733.90	APR 2025 ATT Bill Acct 287318972111
4/30	7.44	Hand Soap Purchase - Amazon transaction split
4/30	300.00	EEOC Training for Lanette Harley
4/30	22.33	Office Supplies - 3 Ring Binders
4/30	815.30	6 Counts of toner and 4 rolls of label tape. Order
4/30	107.47	Kleenex and Classification Folders. Ordered in Jan

Administration

The Mayor's office requested information on whether staff would be able to provide support for the ADA Advisory Commission. The ADA Advisory Commission is a municipal board that needs administrative support to function. Support would include hosting commission meetings in the AERC conference room, providing public notice of the commission's meeting times and agendas, and other general administrative support. Maya and Harley agreed to provide assistance and hosted the ADA Advisory Commission's meeting on April 30. This was a success in that we are raising awareness of the agency and helping another commission in areas of mutual interest. The next ADA Advisory Commission meeting is May 22nd in the AERC conference room.

Outreach

Harley met with DVR-Division of Rehabilitation on April 10, 2025, to discuss outreach opportunities. Harley and Cade attended the Anchorage Community Police Relations Task Force meeting on April 11, 2025.

As the commission and future executive director work to develop a new long-term outreach strategy, I want to share some feedback that we recently received after Harley gave a presentation on equal rights to the students at Clark Middle School:

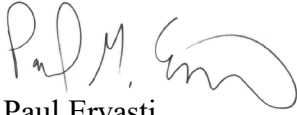
Lead Investigator Harley was kind enough to take several hours out of her day this past week to meet with 70 students at Clark Middle School to tell her story, explain why speaking up and out is important, and how one person, one voice, can be, and often is, an agent of change. My middle school students were fascinated to hear L.I. Harley's story. I was professionally jealous of how well she held the attention and interest of my students, and the way the students talked about her and her story to other students. Her story and presentation is so profound that I invited the Anchorage School of the Deaf, housed at Clark Middle School, to attend L.I. Harley's final presentation on 16 May.

Many of the students at Clark are challenged with numerous obstacles and events that are currently preventing them from moving forward and succeeding at higher levels, with some students developing learned helplessness. L.I. Harley's story and message, especially detailing the hardships and obstacles in her life, and how she fought to overcome them, resonated with the Clark students. We have numerous students that are unhoused, in foster care, are neurodivergent, and facing a variety of other challenges. Learning and meeting someone who has soared despite having many of these same challenges was inspiring and motivational for them and was a powerful reason not to quit or give up.

I cannot thank Lead Investigator Harley enough for coming to speak to my students. I will be reaching out to L.I. Harley to speak with my students next year so her story can continue to inspire and teach others the fight is worth fighting. I'm sure you're aware of what an amazing employee you have as a lead investigator, but I wanted to remind you just how fantastic and effective she is at what she does.

This feedback was an important reminder of the important work that staff are continuing to do during this period of transition. We are very lucky to have a quality team that works hard and is dedicated to the mission of the AERC. Thank you to Harley, James, Cade, and Maya for the amazing work they have been doing.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Ervasti", with a stylized, flowing script.

Paul Ervasti
Acting Executive Director
Anchorage Equal Rights Commission