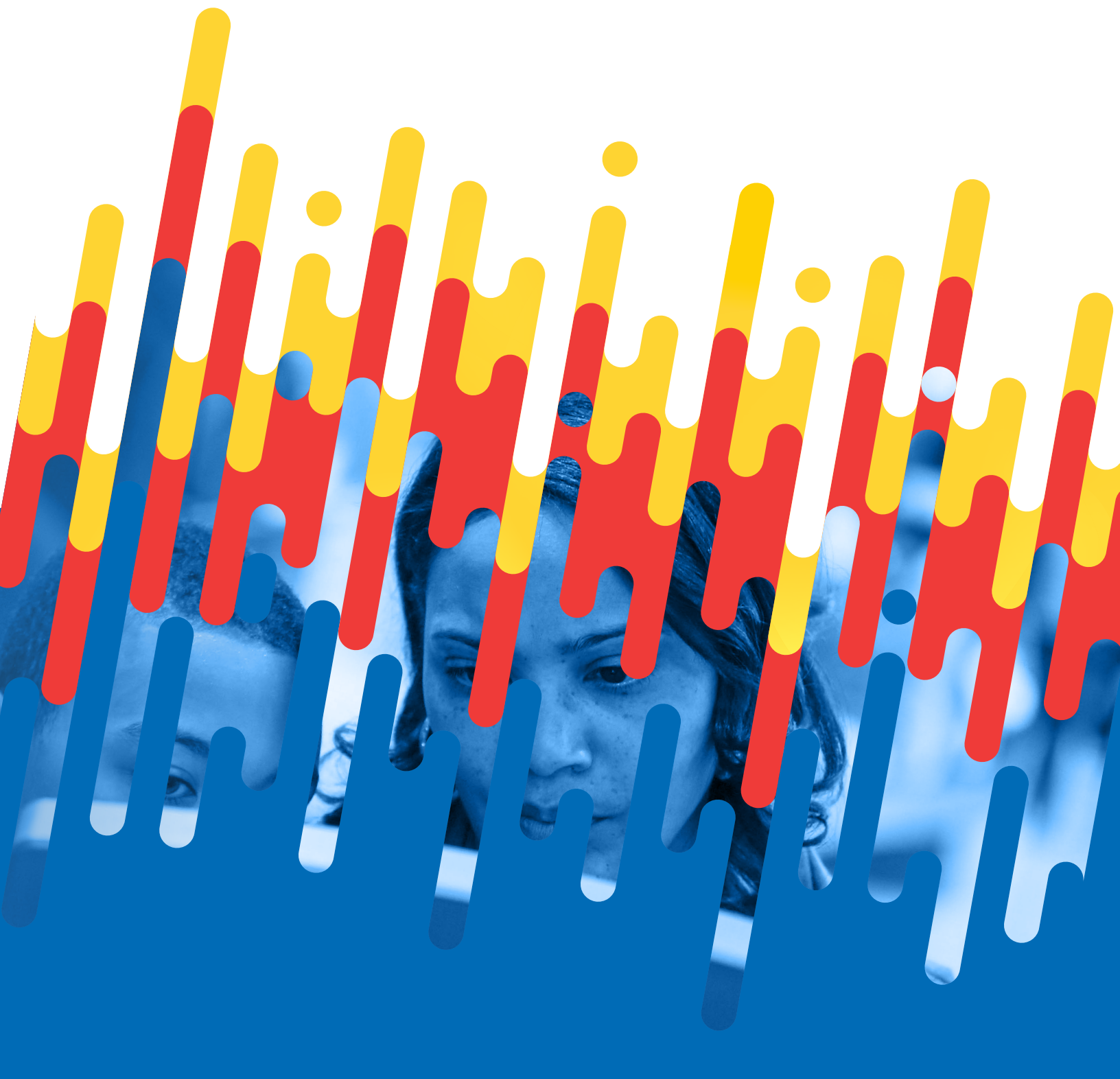




2022-2023 Annual Report





The Commission
is mandated by the
Human Rights Act
to help build inclusive
communities and
protect human rights
in Nova Scotia.





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Mi'kmaw Territorial Acknowledgment



The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (“the Commission”) respectfully acknowledges that it operates in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. This territory is covered by the treaties of peace and friendship signed by the Mi'kmaq and the British Crown between 1725 and 1779.

We encourage all settlers in Mi'kma'ki to learn more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action and to further reconciliation efforts with Indigenous peoples.

It is not enough to simply acknowledge the systematic injustices Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples continue to endure but we must have the full understanding of who has and continues to benefit from those injustices.

Msit No'kmaq





Recognition of the Contributions of People of African Descent

The Commission's existence is a testament to the persistent efforts of African Nova Scotians. Despite facing racial injustices, African Nova Scotians have tirelessly advocated for policies and legislation to safeguard their community's human rights, laying the groundwork for the Commission. This is part of the enduring history and resilience of African Nova Scotians, many of whom can trace their roots back over 400 years.

Despite unfulfilled promises and a discriminatory environment, African Nova Scotians and communities of African descent have made substantial contributions to all aspects of life in Nova Scotia. The Commission acknowledges their trauma, resilience, and significant contributions to the province and country.





Message from the CEO

Dear Minister Johns,

On behalf of the staff and Commissioners of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission I am pleased to present you with the Commission's annual report for the 2022-23 fiscal year. The Commission remains actively invested in advancing equitable and inclusive communities. We do this by protecting human rights through a formalized dispute resolution process, and by advancing human rights understanding through education, awareness building and community engagement.

Throughout fiscal 2022-23 the Commission continued to improve internal processes and build capacity among staff to provide barrier free, restorative, culturally responsive and trauma informed services. All staff participated in Commission-wide professional development on critical human rights experiences, and a new, stream-lined inquiry form and guided pathway explaining the life cycle of a complaint were launched via the Commission's website.

Staff strengthened relationships with key partners while collaborating within community to create new opportunities for engagement on a range of human rights topics. This included the continuation of the successful Human Rights on the Road series of public education sessions and the introduction of a complimentary Community Circles series which invited small groups of community members to gather and share insights and experiences which help to enrich Commission programming and services.

The Commission presented the inaugural Wel-lukwen Award in celebration of the contributions of Indigenous peoples in advancing human rights, and co-hosted an important discussion entitled "Setting the Bar on Human Rights" at the National Black Canadian Summit highlighting the impact of three high-profile human rights cases on the lives of people of African descent.

Through continued engagement with L'nu community organizations, a focus on youth, and intersections among equity deserving communities such as people with disabilities and members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, the Commission continues to highlight the role of human rights as a unifying force during times of instability and uncertainty.

Joseph Fraser, *Director and CEO*



Commissioners and Commission Meetings

The Commission is legislated under the *Human Rights Act* to have no less than three (3) and no more than twelve (12) Commissioners. Within the 2022-23 fiscal year, there were eleven (11) Commissioners:

Cheryl Knockwood (*Chair*)

Joseph Fraser (*Director & CEO, non-voting member*)

Deepak Prasad

Jenifer Tsang

Cynthia Dorrington

Robin Thompson

Sharon Ross

Fola Adeleke

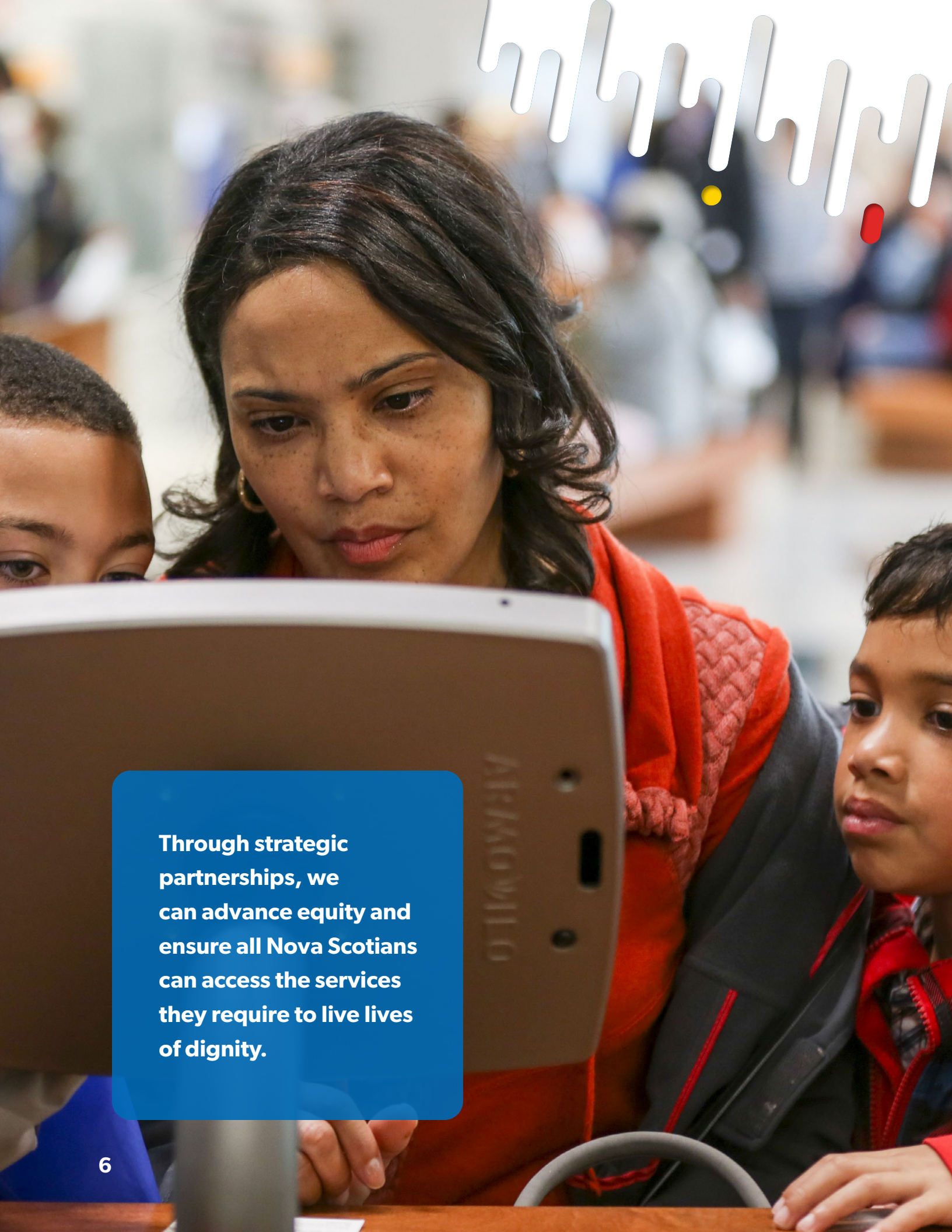
Julien Matte

Savannah DeWolfe

Diana Brothers

Commissioners come from diverse backgrounds, representing various communities of Nova Scotia. They are appointed by an Executive Order of Executive Council. Commissioner responsibilities are described within the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act* (the “Act”), and include responsibility for the strategic direction of the Commission as well as for making decisions on human rights issues, including referrals of complaints to Boards of Inquiry.

Normally, Commissioners meet six times annually. Often these meetings take place virtually or at the Halifax office of the Commission. However, Commissioners also meet in communities outside of the Halifax Regional Municipality. Regular bi-monthly meetings were held in 2022-23. The purpose of these meetings is to review and decide on human rights cases, to discuss emerging human rights issues in Nova Scotia, and to promote human rights awareness.



Through strategic partnerships, we can advance equity and ensure all Nova Scotians can access the services they require to live lives of dignity.



Mandate and Vision

Mandate

The Commission has a unique role within Nova Scotia. It is an independent government agency charged with administering the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act (the “Act”), a provincial statute created in 1969 and most recently amended in 2012. The Commission is mandated by the Act to help build inclusive communities and protect human rights in Nova Scotia.

The Act also sets out the specific duties of the Commission, mainly administering and enforcing the provisions of the Act. In addition, it develops public information and education programs in the field of human rights to advance the principle that every person is free and equal in dignity and rights without regard to age, race, colour, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease, ethnic, national or Aboriginal origin, family status, marital status, source of income, political belief, affiliation or activity, association with protected groups or individuals, sexual harassment, harassment of protected groups or individuals, or retaliation.

The Commission is also mandated to conduct and encourage research by universities and other bodies in the general field of human rights, to provide advice to government and its departments and agencies with respect to human rights issues, and to assist individuals and private organizations concerned with human rights matters and provide recommendations on increasing awareness within and outside the province.

Pursuant to the Act, the Commission reports to the Minister of Justice on its activities, and considers, investigates, or administers any matter or activity referred to it by the Minister or the Governor-in-Council.

There is an inherent tension created by the duality of the Commission’s mandate to protect human rights through administration of the Act, and advance human rights through education, community outreach and engagement.

The scope of this work ranges from the very personal, one-on-one discussions with people who have been mistreated, to public dialogues like the Human Rights on the Road series, education sessions and special events. It is the Commission’s responsibility to ensure people know their rights, and that they are aware of and have confidence in the process that exists to protect their rights.

The Commission and its staff cannot advocate on behalf of individuals, groups, or organizations, but through strategic partnerships can advance equity and ensure all Nova Scotians can access the services they require to live lives of dignity.



Our Vision

A Nova Scotia where every individual is afforded an equal opportunity to enjoy a full and productive life.



Our Mission

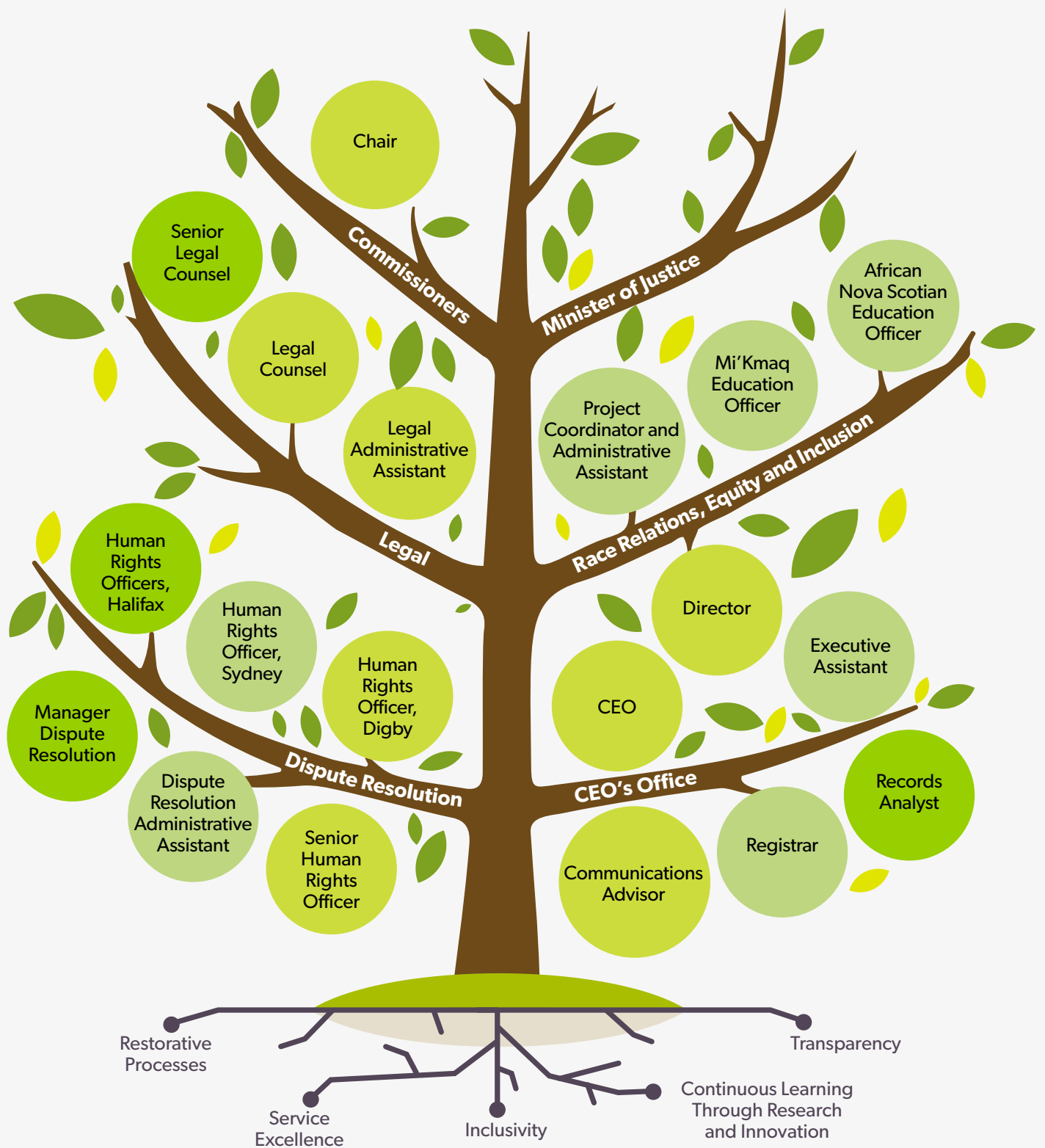
To protect and promote a common standard of human rights for all Nova Scotians based on the inherent dignity, equality, and inalienable rights of every individual.



Our Values

The Human Rights Commission is committed to Accessibility, Accountability, Cultural Competency, Diversity, Fairness, Integrity, Public Good, Respect, Restorative Approaches, and Trauma-informed Practices.

Organizational Structure





Inquiries and Dispute Resolution

Inquiries from the public made to the Commission range from general questions about the Act and requests for information, to more substantive concerns about possible human rights violations, discrimination, and harassment relating to protected characteristics. Some inquiries will be accepted as complaints and proceed to a resolution conference or investigation.

Once the Commission's jurisdiction is confirmed and a complaint is accepted, it will be investigated, and parties can work together to resolve the matter. The restorative processes used by the Commission focus on restoring and repairing relationships and building understanding amongst the parties to repair harm and help those involved move forward in a positive way.

As information is gathered through an investigation, it may become clear that a claim of discrimination under the Act is not supported by evidence. If this happens, or if the complaint is settled or withdrawn, it may be dismissed by the Director and CEO under section 29(4) of the Act.

You can read more about the Commission's dispute resolution process on our website: [**humanrights.novascotia.ca/process**](https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/process)

The following table provides the number of human rights inquiries received during fiscal 2022-23, the number of inquiries that proceeded to the complaint stage, and the average time for a complaint to move through the process. Some human rights disputes can be quite complex and take longer to resolve.

The restorative processes used by the Commission focus on restoring and repairing relationships and building understanding amongst the parties to repair harm and help those involved move forward in a positive way.

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

Inquiries Received (all incoming calls/emails/visits)	1,765
Complaints Accepted	98
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(a) - Best Interests Not Served	17
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(b) - Complaint is Without Merit	8
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(c) - No Significant Issue	22
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(d) - Previous Alternate Process	9
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(e) - Bad Faith/Improper Motives	0
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(f) - No Reasonable Likelihood	5
Complaints Closed by s.29(4)(g) - Exemption Order Granted	0
Complaints Closed by Non-Jurisdictional	0
Complaints Closed by Settlement Reached	12
Total No. of Complaints Closed	73
Average Days from Initial Contact to Complaint Signed	237
Average Days from Initial Contact to Conclusion	775

Complaints by Area

The Commission accepts complaints when it is demonstrated that the treatment experienced is based on a prohibited area, and a protected characteristic as defined under the Act. An individual may present a complaint that involves more than one area or characteristic.

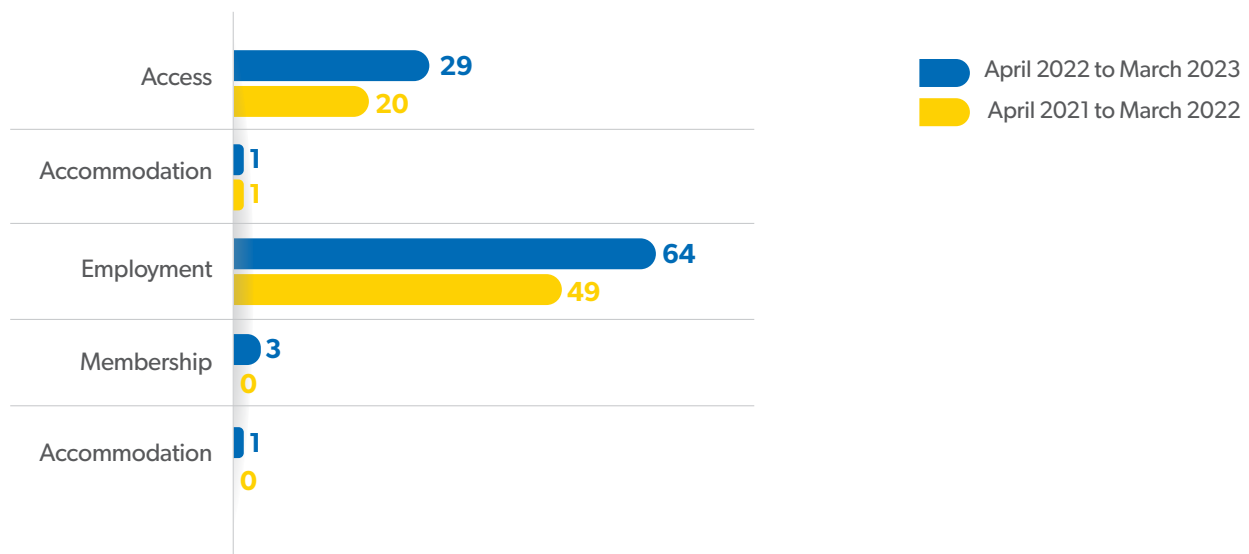
Employment related complaints are the most common year over year, with 64 complaints from April 2022 to March 2023 and 49 complaints from April 2021 to March 2022. This indicates an increase in employment-related complaints over the year.

Access related complaints are the second most common, with 29 complaints from April 2022 to March 2023 and 20 complaints from April 2021 to March 2022. This also shows an increase over the year.

The number of complaints related to Accommodation remained constant at 1 complaint per year.

There were no Membership related complaints from April 2021 to March 2022, but there were 3 complaints from April 2022 to March 2023. Similarly, there were no Volunteer related complaints from April 2021 to March 2022, but there was 1 complaint from April 2022 to March 2023.

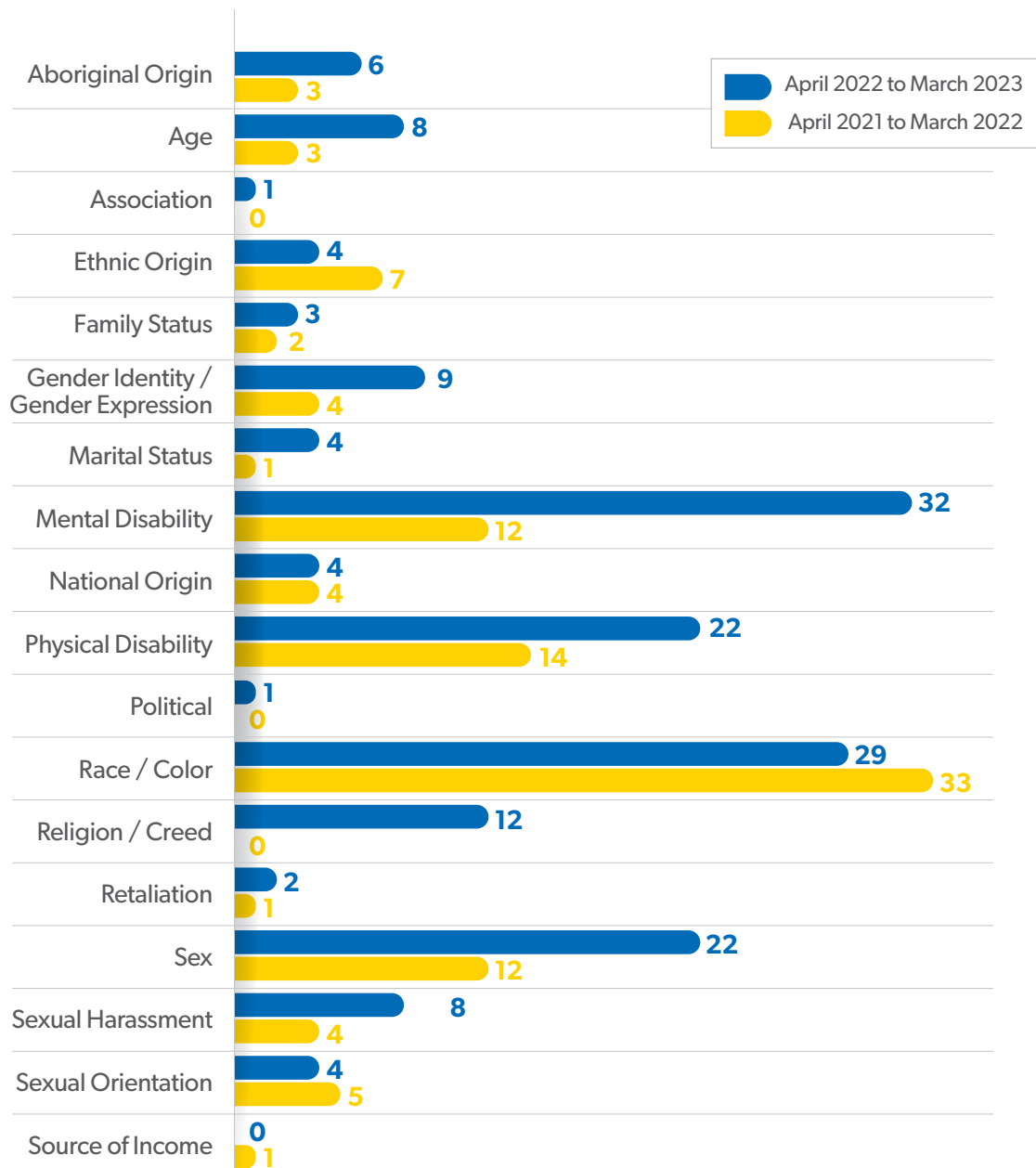
These observations demonstrate an overall increase in the number of complaints across most categories from April 2021 to March 2023.



Complaints by Characteristic

In terms of protected characteristics, the chart below indicates that Mental Disability (32) and Race/Color (29) had the most complaints annually. In contrast, the previous year saw 12 and 33 complaints related to Mental Disability and Race/Color, respectively.

The number of complaints related to Mental Disability, Physical Disability, Religion/Creed, and Sex have seen a significant increase. The number of complaints related to Aboriginal Origin, Age, and Gender Identity/Gender Expression have doubled. The number of cases related to Ethnic Origin decreased from 7 to 4.

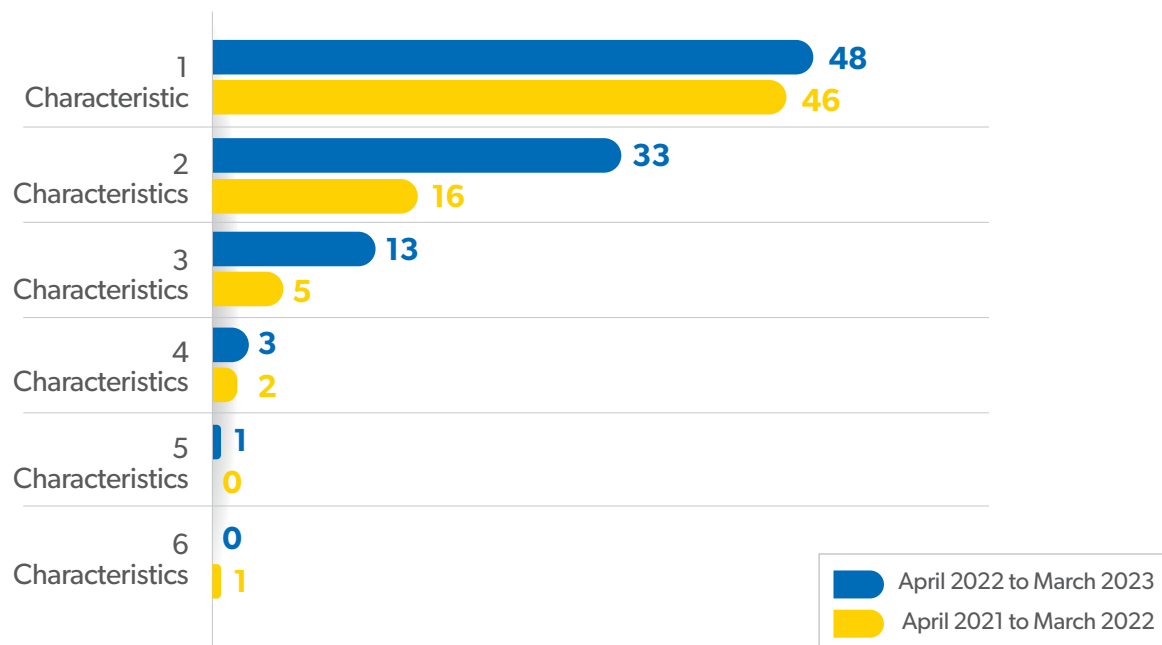
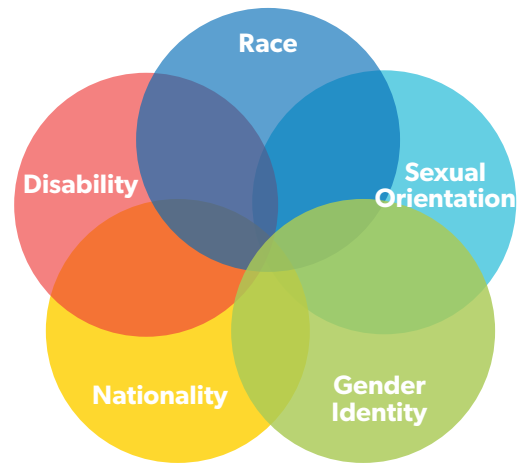


Complaints having Multiple Characteristics

No single characteristic defines an individual. In 2022-23, most complaints filed with the Commission were based on one protected characteristic. However, there were also complaints filed with multiple characteristics identified. The intersection of protected characteristics such as race, gender, and disability are not separate but rather interact and intersect in ways that shape the experiences of privilege or oppression.

“Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It’s not simply that there’s a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there.”

Kimberlé Crenshaw, professor, Columbia University
<https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality-more-two-decades-later>





Board of Inquiry Hearings

When a complaint cannot be resolved among the parties involved, an investigation report into the matter may be presented to the Commissioners of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission for review. The Commissioners may dismiss a complaint or refer it to a Board of Inquiry (BOI). A BOI is an independent administrative tribunal overseen by a chair appointed by the Chief Judge of the Nova Scotia Provincial Court.

After a BOI has been appointed, there is still an opportunity for the matter to be settled before the hearing begins. During the period April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, six (6) BOIs were settled by the parties before the start of their hearings.

The table below provides an overview of the status of Boards of Inquiry during this reporting period.

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

BOI Referrals	12
Ongoing BOIs (including referrals from 2015 to 2022)	24
Settled BOIs	6
BOI Decisions	2
Judicial Reviews Ongoing	2
Judicial Reviews Decisions	1
Appeals Ongoing	1
Appeals Decisions	1



Board of Inquiry Decisions

The full text of board of inquiry decisions can be found online at [humanrights.novascotia.ca](https://www.humanrights.novascotia.ca) as well as by searching the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLii) website at [canlii.org](https://www.canlii.org).



A.B. vs C.D. Law Office Inc. o/a CD Law

A.B. is a paralegal that was hired to work at CD Law Office Inc. A.B. became pregnant and informed her employer of her status. A.B. had medical concerns that required accommodation resulting in additional time away from her employment. A.B. felt targeted at her workplace because of her pregnancy. Through the Board of Inquiry, it was found that discrimination occurred.



Deborah Carleton vs Halifax Regional Municipality (Halifax Regional Police) and/or Halifax Regional Police Association

Detective Constable Deborah Carleton filed a human rights complaint against the Halifax Regional Police Service, claiming that she was treated differently than police officers with physical injuries after acquiring PTSD while serving with the police service in Halifax. The employment relationship between Det. Cst. Carleton and Halifax is governed by a collective agreement.

The Board of Inquiry (BOI) dismissed Det. Cst. Carleton's complaint for want of jurisdiction, relying on the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in Northern Regional Health Authority v. Horrocks, 2021 SCC 42.

In October 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) issued a decision in the matter of Northern Regional Health Authority v. Horrocks. The decision concerned a human rights complaint filed in Manitoba, but the SCC decision had implications across the country. The decision was about filing a grievance involving human rights (discrimination) issues and/or filing a human rights complaint.

The Horrocks case stood for the position that all human rights claims from unionized employees must be addressed by a grievance (including the human rights/ discrimination issues) through their union and cannot be filed as a human rights claim with the human rights commission. This meant that the unions have exclusive jurisdiction over any human rights claims in the workplace.

The Commission appealed the Carleton decision, and the matter was heard in March 2023. This was the first appellate review in the country of the Horrocks reasoning. On September 20, 2023, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal granted the Commission's appeal finding the Act/statutory scheme favours concurrent jurisdiction. In addition, although not part of its substantive finding, the Court commented that the legislative history of the Act pointed towards concurrent jurisdiction.

The successful appeal means that unionized workers in Nova Scotia have a choice of forum to address their allegations of discrimination: grievance/arbitration and/or the Human Rights Commission.



We promote racial harmony, equity, and inclusion while addressing and preventing systemic discrimination.

Promoting Human Rights

The Commission delivers its services to Nova Scotia through a commitment to its dual mandate of protecting and promoting human rights. While this mandate is reflected in the work of every unit of the Commission, the Race Relations Equity and Inclusion unit, carries the special responsibility of proactively promoting human rights.

Race Relations, Equity, and Inclusion (RREI) was established in 1991 following the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Donald Marshall Jr. prosecution. It operates in close partnership and collaboration with community organizations, government departments, and the private sector. RREI aims to promote racial harmony, equity, and inclusion while addressing and preventing systemic discrimination. By fostering a more inclusive Nova Scotia, RREI plays a crucial role in advancing social justice and understanding among diverse communities.

In leading the Commission's efforts to promote human rights across Nova Scotia, RREI uses a five-prong approach as outlined below:

RREI Service Delivery Framework



Human Rights Education and Public Awareness:

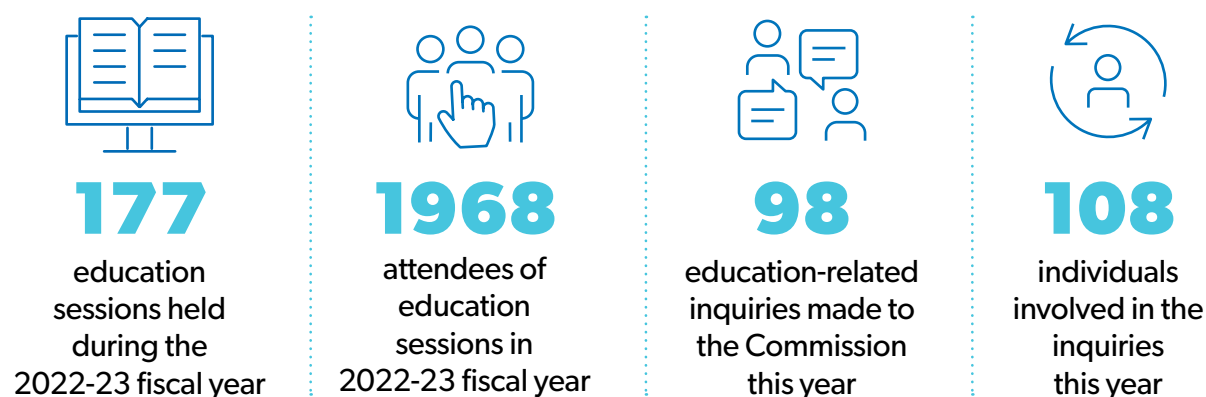
The Commission’s RREI team delivers human rights education and creates public awareness around human rights topics throughout Nova Scotia using key adult education principles from a culturally relevant and decolonized perspective. Training may be mandated under the terms of a settlement agreement or through a Board of Inquiry (BOI) decision. It may also occur as a proactive request by organizations.

Some examples of human rights education provided by RREI include:

Workshop	Duration	Description
Human Rights 101	1 Day In person 3-Day Virtual	Participants gain a general overview of the <i>Human Rights Act</i> , the mandate of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, discrimination, protected characteristics, prohibited areas, privilege, employment equity, and workplace accommodation.
Working Together Better	2 day In person	This session is designed to help participants better engage with others within their organization/ community/ company to promote a more diverse and inclusive workplace reflective of the communities they serve.
Serving All Customers Better	1 Day In person	This session is designed to enhance awareness regarding consumer racial profiling including the underlying attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate this issue.
Disrupting Anti-Black Racism	1 Day In person	This session is designed to help build workplace culture and community where African Nova Scotians, all people of African descent and others can fully belong, grow, and develop. It will equip participants with knowledge that can help them lead by positive example in their workplace and the communities they serve.
Supporting Trans and Gender Variant Employees	½ day In person or virtual	This session provides a deeper understanding of gender, terms related to Transgender and non-binary communities and gender identity, how to be more trans inclusive in the workplace and understanding gender expression as a protected characteristic of the <i>Human Rights Act</i> .

In addition to the outlined training, RREI also provided customized education e.g. *Unconscious Bias/Diversity in the Workplace*, *Belonging from an Afrocentric Perspective*, *Supporting Clients' Self Advocacy Efforts*, *Getting to the Roots: Me and White Supremacy* etc. and participated in public awareness (guest speaking opportunities) efforts around key human rights issues with government entities, schools, non-for-profits, community organizations, businesses, and private establishments.

Human Rights Education Statistics



Description	No. of Sessions		No. of Attendees	
	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22
Human Rights Education Workshop	32	3	460	44
Information Session/Requested Education	6	7	104	136
Mandated Education	4	12	33	179
Presentations/Conferences	17	2	1008	26
Guest Speakers	20	5	255	140
Inquiries	98	84	108	98
TOTAL	177	113	1968	623



Free Online Training

The Commission's suite of free, self-directed online training modules continues to be a valuable learning resource for individuals and organizations looking to increase their awareness of several important human rights topics.

Safe Spaces Make Great Workplaces Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

Safe Spaces Make Great Workplaces is a free online course designed to address and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. The aim of the course is to help employers understand the importance of having a clear sexual harassment policy, educating staff, and enforcing the policy.

352
Courses completed

Serving All Customers Better Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

Serving All Customers Better is a free online course designed to help frontline service staff address and prevent consumer racial profiling. The aim of the course is to help businesses create inclusive and welcoming environments for all customers.

321
Courses completed

Working With Abilities Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

Working With Abilities is a free online course designed to give practical information and advice to support employers' accommodation of persons with disabilities, building inclusion and respect for them in all workplaces in Nova Scotia.

696
Courses completed

Total online training courses completed: **1,369**



Initiatives, Partnerships and Events

The Commission strengthened its established relationship with key community partners while continuing to widen its reach to create new partnerships. Through the process of partnership building and development, several opportunities emerged during the fiscal year for collaboration on various initiatives.

Key Partnerships

Aboriginal People’s Television Network (APTN)

African Nova Scotian Affairs

African Nova Scotian Justice Institute

Association of Black Social Workers

Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

Black Deaf Canada

Black Loyalist Heritage Centre

Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia

Canadian Human Rights Commission

Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Cape Breton Regional Police Services

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission, Quebec)

Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq

Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP)

Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council

Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute

Department of Education and Early

Childhood Development

FIN Atlantic International Film Festival

Halifax Regional Municipality

Hear Rights Nova Scotia

Immigrant Services Association of NS (ISANS)

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning

Membertou Heritage Park

Michaëlle Jean Foundation

Mi’kmaq Native Friendship Centre

No one is Illegal

NS Decade for People of African Descent Coalition

Nova Scotia Health

Nova Scotian League for Equal

Opportunities

Portal Youth Outreach Association

Speech and Hearing Nova Scotia

Teamwork Co-operative

United African Canadian Women’s Association

United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)

Ummah Society

Ward One Community Centre, New Glasgow

York University

Human Rights on the Road

Human Rights on the Road is a community information session initiative that provides opportunities for Nova Scotians to learn more about the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission – its mandate, and processes. The session is designed to foster a two-way conversation between the Commission’s staff and members of the community. The Commission partnered with various community associations and groups to facilitate each session of Human Rights on the road in 2022-23. The inaugural virtual session was done in collaboration with the Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute. In addition to the inaugural session, two other sessions took place in Birchtown and New Glasgow in partnership with the Black Loyalist Heritage Centre and Ward One Centre respectively. The Commission will be expanding the Human Rights on The Road sessions to engage various diverse communities within Nova Scotia.

Community Circles

The Commission held a community circle in North Preston and at the Mi’kmaq Friendship Centre. The Human Rights Community Circle is a non-structured, casual human rights focused conversation with community members. The goal of the circle is to begin to get community members to “think” human rights in everything they do. The circle also functions as an opportunity to explore the potential for a future Human Rights on the Road information session.

National Black Canadian Summit

The Commission partnered with the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to host a Human Rights Panel discussion at the third installment of the Michaelle Jean Foundation led National Black Canadian Summit held in Halifax in July 2022. The panel discussion entitled *Setting the Bar on Human Rights: Key Cases in African Nova Scotian Communities* discussed three key human rights cases that have addressed the issue of racial discrimination. The initiative included the creation of a video featuring panelists connected to these cases.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

In commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, a panel event titled “When Communities Unite, They Will Tie Up Racism” was hosted by the Commission, Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. The event, inspired by the African proverb “when spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion”, emphasized the power of community mobilization for societal change and dignity. It showcased the ongoing anti-racism efforts of racialized communities across the province. The discussion underscored the efforts of four individuals from the Black, Indigenous, Chinese and Newcomer communities. These individuals are using their platforms to advocate, provide resources, and create spaces for dialogue to improve race relations.

African Heritage Month

In partnership with the Sierra Leone Canadian Association, the Commission organized a community conversation *Sharing Our Stories from Shore to Shore* in alignment with the theme of 2023 African Heritage Month. The virtual discussion provided an opportunity to explore the history, challenges and connections between African Nova Scotians and the people of Sierra Leone.

250th Anniversary of the Black Loyalist Departure from Nova Scotia

As part of the 1792 Project, the Commission participated in events commemorating the 250-year anniversary of the departure of the Black Loyalists from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone.

Journey Back to Birchtown

The Commission set up an information booth at the annual Journey Back to Birchtown event which celebrates the legacies of the Black Loyalists.

Access Awareness Week

The Commission participated in the organizing of events for the 2022 Access Awareness Week. The week brings attention to the important work being done to remove barriers to inclusion for people with disabilities. This 35th commemoration of the week was celebrated by the theme *Reflection & Renewal: 35 Years of Access Awareness - The Promise of Progress*. The Commission facilitated a panel discussion around accessibility and intersectionality.

Rhythm and Rights

In partnership with the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning, the Commission initiated a 10-week *Rhythm and Rights* program for youth ages 12 to 19. *Rhythm and Rights* brings attention to Human Rights issues using creative means such as music and poetry. There were multiple intakes of the program during the fiscal year.

Emancipation Day

In partnership with the Halifax Regional Municipality, Commission staff sat on the HRM organizing committee that supported the planning of activities to commemorate 2022 Emancipation Day in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

2022 Human Rights Award Recipients

Four individual Nova Scotians and three groups received Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards in honour of their work creating a more equitable, inclusive, and respectful province at an event held December 9, 2022, in Halifax. The awards included a new honour, the Wel-lukwen Award, in recognition and appreciation of L'nu people whose work advances human rights, raises awareness, and brings attention to issues affecting Indigenous people in Nova Scotia.

Elder Dr. Daniel N. Paul, *Wel-lukwen Award*



Daniel Paul is a respected Mi'kmaq elder, author, columnist, and human rights activist whose life's work, while covering a wide range professionally, held steadfastly to his intrinsic belief that his Mi'kmaq culture, and the history and traditions of his people – were not inferior in any way to those proffered by colonialist historians. Elder Daniel published *We Were Not the Savages* almost 30 years ago. It is widely accepted to be the first book about our shared history written from an Indigenous perspective. The fourth edition of this ground-breaking work was published earlier this year.

Michael Tutton, *Individual Award*



Michael Tutton was selected to receive an Individual Award in recognition of his commitment to advancing dignity, equity, and justice through his reporting over more than 14 years on issues including human rights violations related to the institutionalization of persons with disabilities. Michael's reporting on these under-told stories has raised awareness of issues impacting the lives of generations of Nova Scotians. His work has turned these issues into stories about lives. These stories have challenged how we do things in Nova Scotia, pushing us to disrupt the status quo in pursuit of greater equity and justice.



Grandmother Water Protectors, *Wel-lukwen* Award

The Grandmother Water Protectors are a grassroots, purpose-oriented group composed at its core of Mi'kmaq women, encompassing members who are difficult to count, and impossible to describe without words like dedication, devotion, essential, peaceful and fearless. Despite intimidation, coercion, and criminalization by governments, companies, and community members, these Mi'kmaq grandmothers hold strong to Indigenous self-determination and the concept and practice of caring for M'sit No'kmaq ("all of my relations"). Through knowledge and strategy, they have been grassroots leaders for Indigenous and

Karma Closet, *Youth* Award



The Karma Closet is a project run by a group of students from Northumberland Regional High School in Alma, Pictou County. These youth received this year's Nova Scotia Human Rights Youth Award for their work to provide free, equitable access to essential items such as food, clothing, and school supplies throughout their school community.

Terena Francis, *Individual Award*

Terena Francis received a Nova Scotia Human Rights Award for her work empowering individuals and communities through education and advocacy on issues of importance to Mi'kmaq culture. Terena has been supporting Indigenous students for over 20 years. Her career began with the Paqtnkek Day Care and she is now the Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs at Saint Francis Xavier University. Terena earned her Master's of Education with a focus on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in 2020 and her goal is to use this education alongside the teachings gifted to her by her Elders and family to change settler society's deficit narrative of Indigenous students' and communities.



Stepping Stone, *Group or Organization Award*



Stepping Stone's motto is "Rights Not Rescue." It is a feminist, charitable, non-profit organization that provides support, services, and outreach to people who are currently or were formerly involved in sex work and those who are at risk of being trafficked or identify as being trafficked. Stepping Stone supports women, men, gender diverse people, and transgender people using a rights-based and harm reduction model that aims to make sex work as safe and as positive as possible for all individuals involved. It is the only registered non-profit organization of its kind in the Maritimes and marked its 30th anniversary in 2019.

Carolann Wright, *Dr. Burnley Allan "Rocky" Jones Award*



Carolann Wright received this year's Dr. Burnley Allan "Rocky" Jones Award in recognition of her leadership and commitment to social justice and economic prosperity for people of African descent. She has worked in community and community economic development for more than 40 years in Toronto, South Africa, Ghana and Nova Scotia. Among many things, she is Chair of the Social Action Committee for the African United Baptist Association, a mother, and grandmother.



Timeline of Statements and Events



May 27, 2022

**Celebrating 35 Years of Access Awareness
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Nova Scotians celebrate Access Awareness Week to bring attention to the important work being done to remove barriers to inclusion for people with disabilities. Access Awareness Week ran May 29 – June 4 under the banner Reflection & Renewal: 35 Years of Access Awareness - The Promise of Progress.



Jun 02, 2022

**June is Pride Month
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

June is #Pride Month, a time to celebrate Nova Scotians from the two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities and reflect on the important work of activists and advocates who champion and fight for equity, dignity and respect for all.



June 03, 2022

**The Intersection of Disability
Virtual Speakers Panel - YouTube**

The panel explored the experiences of people with disabilities who identify as belonging to other equity-seeking communities such as Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, Two Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other sexual identities. The panel was a first voice discussion on the issue of diversity within the disabled community.



June 08, 2022

**National Indigenous History Month
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

June is National Indigenous History Month in Canada, and an invitation for us to educate ourselves on the lives, teachings, and culture of the first people of Mi'kma'ki, and Indigenous communities across the country.



July 16, 2022

Commission staff participated in the return of the Halifax Pride Parade.
Commission staff enthusiastically joined the vibrant procession, celebrating diversity and unity during the Halifax Pride Parade.



July 28, 2022

**Marking Emancipation Day
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

#EmancipationDay is an important opportunity for all Nova Scotians to reflect on the legacy of anti-Black racism and the psychological, social, and cultural impacts on people of African descent caused by the horrors of slavery.

July 29, 2022

**Setting the Bar on Human Rights: Key Cases in African Nova Scotian Communities
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Setting the Bar on Human Rights: Key Cases in African Nova Scotian Communities was a panel discussion that was hosted in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation / Fondation canadienne des relations raciales at the National Black Canadian Summit #NBCS2022.

August 03, 2022

**Chair, Commissioner Reappointments
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Cheryl Knockwood, Sydney, was reappointed as Chair of the NSHRC's Board of Commissioners, and Cynthia Dorrington, Halifax, returned as Commissioner. Both appointments are for three-year terms.

August 11, 2022

**National Acadian Day
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Acadians have celebrated National Acadian Day on August 15 since 1881. It is a celebration of the cultural vitality and enduring heritage of the Acadian people.

September 09, 2022


**Community Partnership: Rhythm & Rights Program for Youth
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

The Commission launched the Rhythm & Rights program for youth aged 12-19 in partnership with the Dartmouth-based MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning.

September 29, 2022

**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation & Orange Shirt Day
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

On September 30th, the Commission recognized the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour the lost children and Survivors of residential schools, their families and communities. Commemorating that tragic and painful history is an essential part of reconciliation.



October 01, 2022

**Statement from the Chair: Mi'kmaq History Month
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Each year, Mi'kmaq history and culture are celebrated across Nova Scotia throughout the month of October. Beginning with Treaty Day on October 1, we look back at early steps taken by our ancestors toward peace and friendship, and look ahead to our continuing journey towards understanding, change, and reconciliation.

October 18, 2022

**Five Nova Scotians Appointed to Human Rights Commission
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Five Nova Scotians have been appointed to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. Commissioners meet six times a year and are responsible for the strategic direction of the commission and making decisions on human rights issues, including referrals of complaints to boards of inquiry.

November 17, 2022

**Transgender Day of Remembrance
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Transgender Day of Remembrance is a day for individual and collective reflection on the transgender people who have lost their lives to acts of anti-transgender violence. #TDOR

December 9, 2022

**New Wel-lukwen Award, other Nova Scotia Human Rights Honours Presented
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

Four individual Nova Scotians and three groups received Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards in honour of their work creating a more equitable, inclusive, and respectful province at an event held December 9, 2022, in Halifax. The awards included a new honour, the Wel-lukwen Award, in recognition and appreciation of L'nu people whose work advances human rights, raises awareness, and brings attention to issues affecting Indigenous people in Nova Scotia.

January 29, 2023

Commissions staff celebrated the start of African Heritage Month at Membertou Trade and Convention Centre.

At the African Heritage Month annual gala, those in attendance enjoyed an evening of great cultural entertainment and artistic engagement.

February 18, 2023

**2023 Honouree: Rita Joe
Nova Scotia Heritage Day**

This year's Heritage Day honouree was Rita Joe, known to many as the poet laureate of the Mi'kmaq people.



March 07, 2023

**International Women’s Day
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

International Women’s Day is a day to recognize and celebrate the achievements of women and girls and raise awareness of the progress made towards achieving gender equality and the work that still needs to be done.



March 11, 2023

**Sharing Our Stories from Shore to Shore
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

“Sharing Our Stories from Shore to Shore” was an intimate discussion focused on connections between Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone with Charlie Haffner and Wayn Hamilton.



March 20, 2023

**International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

The Commission hosted a free panel discussion in-person and online. March 21st is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, an essential time to reflect on the need to act against racism in all its forms.



March 24, 2023

**International Day for Remembrance of the Victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

On the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, it is important to reflect on the lasting effects of slavery and the ways in which it and the beliefs that permitted it to occur have shaped our society. This day serves as a reminder that the horrors of slavery have left a deep scar on our world, and that we must continue to work towards a future where racism and inequality are no longer tolerated.



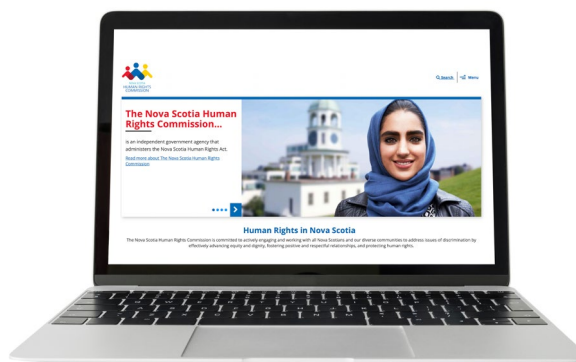
March 29, 2023

**International Transgender Day of Visibility
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission**

March 31st is the International Transgender Day of Visibility, a day to celebrate and honor transgender people and increase visibility and awareness of the transgender community’s struggles and triumphs.

NSHRC Website Statistics

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023



Page	Unique Page Views
Home	40,533
Contact Us	22,189
FAQ	3,404
Complaint Self-Assessment Tool	2,533
Know Your Rights for Individuals	7,276
Know Your Rights for Employers	3,359
Online Training	2,773
Inquiry Form	1,586

Contact Us

Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
<http://humanrights.novascotia.ca>
HRCinquiries@novascotia.ca

Halifax Office

Park Lane Terrace, 3rd Fl.
 5657 Spring Garden Road
 Halifax, NS B3J 3R4

Mailing Address:
 PO Box 2221
 Halifax, NS B3J 3C4

Tel: 902-424-4111
 Toll Free in NS: 1-877-269-7699
 Fax: 902-424-0596

Sydney Office

Provincial Building
 360 Prince Street
 Sydney, NS B1P 5L1

Tel. 902-563-2142
 Fax 902-563-5613

Digby Office

Provincial Building
 84 Warwick St.

Mailing address:
 PO Box 1029
 Digby, NS B0V 1A0

Tel. 902-245-4791

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