

**WASHINGTON STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 25, 2021 AT 9:30AM
CONFERENCE CALL**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: Deborah Cook, Guadalupe Gamboa, James Mohr, and Jeff Sbaih.

Staff: Sharon Ortiz, Executive Director; Cheryl Strobert, Deputy Director; Matt Kernutt, Assistant Attorney General; Jerry Lee, Operations Manager; Laura Lindstrand, Policy Analyst; Selene Garcia, Customer Service Specialist 2; and Deborah Gonzales, Commission Clerk.

OPENING AND WELCOME

Chair Cook chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order at 9:45A.M.

Chair Cook welcomed new Commissioner Jeff Sbaih to the Commission. Commissioner Sbaih will begin to review the submitted case findings and memorandums beginning next month.

MEETING MINUTES

The January 28, 2021 Minutes were reviewed and approved.

Commissioner Mohr motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Gamboa seconded the motion.

CASE CLOSURES

The following case was pulled prior to the meeting:

Gonzales, Lacy v. Savannah Logistics

Commissioner Mohr motioned to approve the cases for closure. Commissioner Gamboa seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Ortiz provided a written report which was submitted to the Commissioners prior to the meeting.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Policy Analyst Laura Lindstrand provided updates regarding three bills that may impact the agency.

Senate Bill 5027 concerns closed captioning on televisions in places of public accommodation. The bill requires closed captioning on a certain number of television sets in places of public accommodation. The bill passed the Senate and is on its way to the House of Representatives for review. From the language of the bill, it would allow the agency to investigate complaints of failure to provide closed captioning on most televisions. It would also provide a penalty if a

place of public accommodation fails to follow this regulation. An investigator would need to travel to a location and verify the closed captioning.

Senate Bill 5313 is concerning health insurance discrimination. The bill requires insurance plans to cover gender affirming treatment. The enforcement authority would fall on the Office of the Insurance Commission to investigate, and can impose penalties on an insurance company. The bill also requires the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Insurance Commission to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that will prescribe how these cases will be handled.

House Bill 1076 allows whistleblowers to bring actions on behalf of the state for violations of workplace protections. This will primarily be handled by Labor & Industries, however, the bill does include violations under RCW 49.60. The agency can potentially have the option to investigate these alleged violations. The bill contains specific timelines for the investigation of these cases.

COMMISSIONER REPORTING

Commissioner Gamboa participated in a meeting for the Coalition to End Sexual Harassment for Farm Worker Women. A curriculum has already been established, but now the Coalition is trying to gain funding from the legislators to be able to conduct the training.

Chair Cook has been working with Disability Rights Washington to raise awareness about the disparities of inequities in transportation across the state.

2021 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

April 22, 2021:	Via Conference Call
May 27, 2021:	Via Conference Call
June 24, 2021:	Via Conference Call
July 22, 2021:	Via Conference Call

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by,
Deborah Gonzales