



# Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations *Committee & Department Update*



August 7, 2019

# Community Relations Committee (CRC)

For over 50 years, CRC has represented an inclusive community, successfully built relationships and promoted harmony.

CRC is a 45 member team of professionals and volunteers who serve as civil rights and human relations advocates. This committee also provides counsel to Community Relations staff.

CRC works to ensure fairness for all and remove barriers that impede the community from living in harmony.





# CRC Subcommittees

Each committee member participates in at least one of seven subcommittees:

- Commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Communications
- Crisis Response
- Education and Young Leaders
- Intercultural Relations
- Police Community Relations
- Programs/Speakers

Subcommittee updates, events and workshops are summarized in the *Link*, a quarterly newsletter.



Community Relations staff assist each subcommittee in developing informed and appropriate human relations services.

This has included meetings with over 30 local nonprofits, community organizations and city departments.

# Community Relations Department

## New Changes

- In July 2019, Community Relations completed its transition to a standalone department moving out of the City Manager's Office.
- This change reinforces the priority of the work of Community Relations and the services provided to the **Charlotte-Mecklenburg community**.

## Updated Vision & Mission

VISION: Be recognized as a global model in building community harmony by advocating for diversity, equity and access for all.

MISSION: CRC empowers, collaborates, engages and creates opportunities to effect positive outcomes.

# Community Relations Divisions



## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- ADA guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities.
- There are five titles of ADA: Employment, Public Service, Public Accommodation, Telecommunication and Miscellaneous.
- Community Relations serves as the lead agency for city ADA coordination and leads the ADA network team comprised of city and county agencies.
- Individuals can file ADA complaints and grievances (within 60 days of the alleged violation) to the Community Relations ADA program office at [charlotteADA@charlottenc.gov](mailto:charlotteADA@charlottenc.gov).

## Community Affairs

- The Community Affairs team develops, implements and supports programs and initiatives that advance the mission of the department.
- Focus areas include: police-community relations, engagement, diversity and inclusion, strategic planning, community partnerships and social responsibility.
- This team is also involved in review boards, community dialogues, youth programs, peer mediation in schools and conflict resolution training.



# Community Relations Divisions

## Dispute Settlement Program (DSP)



- Community Relations has been providing mediation and conciliation services to Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents since 1983.
- DSP's focus areas include: landlord tenant, private warrant court, juvenile offender, Medicaid, misdemeanor cases, truancy/school issues, Charlotte Housing Authority hearings, worthless check conciliation and 50-C No Contact cases.

## Fair Housing & Public Accommodations



- The Fair Housing team works to ensure that equal access to housing and public accommodation is a right and not a privilege.
- Formal complaints are accepted from anyone who feels discriminated against in a public place or in housing because of their race, color, religion, national origin, gender, familial status or disability.
- Staff documents and investigates complaints and conducts standardize testing of alleged violator's facilities/properties within the city and county.

# Community Relations Trends (FY15 - FY19)

## Dispute Settlement Program

- Cases mediated – 8,045
- Court hours saved – 15,804
- Court dollars saved – \$1,850,400
- Mediation trainings – 365
- People trained – 3,950

## Fair Housing & Public Accommodations

- Fair housing cases investigated – 144
- Education and outreach trainings – 246
- People trained – 4,276
- Case settlement dollars - \$200K+

## Police Community Relations

- Chain of command hearings attended – 344
- Appeals processed – 19
- Complaints processed – 890
- Police community dialogues – 151
- Officers nominated for annual awards – 3,084+
- Private sector dollars raised to cover costs annual awards - \$120,000+

### Additional trends to note:

- Volunteer hours secured: 20,588
- In-kind dollars saved: \$529,216
- Taxpayer dollars saved: \$3,521,278



# Community Initiatives

- Community Relations continues to expand its partnership with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) to develop trust and communication between officers and the community.
- Working with partner agencies including the Community Building Initiative, Race Matters for Juvenile Justice and others, Community Relations helps to build relationships and address difficult topics.

## CMPD/Community Relations Initiatives

**Bridge the Difference:** Bringing the community together for conversations about policing, public safety and community impact

**Break the Cycle:** Community conversations about the rise in violent crimes throughout Charlotte and the ways everyone can come together to address this community issue

**Conflict Resolution:** Expanding trainings and offerings as a component of Break the Cycle

**The Hate U GIVE:** Providing youth with the opportunity to screen the movie, read the book and have dialogue about police community relations





# Training & Education

Community Relations develops and delivers free training to Charlotte-Mecklenburg area neighborhood associations, civic organizations, schools and other groups.

## Trainings include:

**Conflict Resolution** – teaches skills and provides tools to help individuals handle conflict effectively, in a non-violent manner

**Diversity** – focuses on cultural competency, strengths of a diverse community, checking assumptions and accepting differences

*Diversity trainings conducted: 117; Total trained: 3,964*

**Fair Housing** – provides education to realtors, apartment associations, tenants and others on federal, city, county fair housing and public accommodations laws to proactively curb discriminatory practices

**ADA** – provides training on ADA titles, grievance procedure and compliance

*ADA trainings conducted: 103; Total trained: 1,407*



# Celebrations



## Police Community Relations Awards

Annual event honoring officers who have made outstanding contributions to neighborhoods and communities in the area.



## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday

To reach the entire community and in recognition of the dream and vision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Community Relations organizes an annual celebration during Dr. King's holiday.

## MLK Medallion Award

The MLK Medallion Award is a focal point of the Dr. King celebration where individuals from all walks of life in Charlotte-Mecklenburg are presented with the award for exemplifying the ideals of Dr. King.



# Thank You

Thank you for your continued support of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee.

We feel our partnership is vital to a healthy community in *promoting harmony, facilitating resolution* and *celebrating diversity*.

Please contact us for any assistance.

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