

Questions for Nominee to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

By: Kristen Miller, Senior Legislative Attorney
March 25, 2026 | 2026-R-0032

Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) ([CGS § 46a-52](#))

- The commission consists of nine members. The governor appoints five and legislative leaders appoint four. (The Senate president pro tempore and minority leader and the House speaker and minority leader each appoint one.)
- The governor's appointees serve five-year terms; other members serve three-year terms.
- The commission oversees the state agency that enforces anti-discrimination laws in various areas, such as employment, housing, public accommodations, credit practices, and state services and programs.

Questions

1. What is CHRO's primary mission? As a commission reappointee, what have you found to be the greatest challenges to fulfilling the commission's responsibilities?
2. In light of the national conversation on social justice, what role should CHRO play in addressing discrimination, not just in individual complaints, but on a broader, societal level?
3. According to CHRO's [annual reports](#), employment discrimination is the most common issue raised in discrimination complaints. For example, in [FY 25](#), employment discrimination was the predominant allegation in about 80% of filed complaints, followed by public accommodations (12%) and housing (7%). Why do you think that is the case? What feedback has CHRO received from employers or employees about this issue?

4. CHRO's [annual reports](#) show that the number of complaints it received has increased each year since [FY 22](#) (2,018) and the complaints it received in [FY 25](#) (2,494) is the highest number of complaints since [FY 19](#) (2,625). Given this increase, is there a backlog of CHRO cases awaiting settlement negotiations or hearings? If so, what can be done to eliminate it?
5. What can a commissioner do to ensure the complaint investigation process is not only fair and unbiased but is perceived that way by complainants and respondents alike?
6. By law, CHRO members must complete at least 10 hours of introductory training and five hours of annual training afterwards covering discrimination laws, affirmative action, and CHRO procedures. In your opinion, is the amount and content of training adequate to prepare commission members for their work? Are there additional topics that would be helpful to be included in the training?
7. What is the commission's process when reviewing state agencies' affirmative action plans? According to CHRO's [annual reports on affirmative action compliance](#), the vast majority of agency plans are approved (for example, the approval rate has ranged from 90% to 97% over the last three years). What happens if the commission disapproves a plan or approves it with conditions?
8. CHRO conducts or participates in various [educational and outreach events](#) to bring attention to civil rights and related issues. For example, it offers [trainings](#) to housing providers and the public on fair housing laws and co-sponsors the [CT Kids Court Academy](#), a program for students to develop interest in civil and human rights law. What role do individual commissioners play in selecting topics for and participating in these events? Are there particular topics that you think would be good candidates for future events?
9. Over the years, the legislature has expanded the list of protected classes under the state's anti-discrimination laws. Most recently, the legislature prohibited discrimination in various contexts based on someone's status as a domestic violence victim ([PA 22-82](#)), age ([PA 23-145](#)), or status as a victim of sexual assault or trafficking in persons ([PA 25-139](#)). With these expansions, has there been a corresponding increase in the complaints CHRO receives? What do you think about further expanding or narrowing the classes of people protected under anti-discrimination laws?

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