



## MINUTES

### OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR THE LOUISIANA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

**Date:** August 12, 2025

**Time:** 11:00 A.M.

**Facilitator:** Tamara Jacobson, Chairwoman

#### *Commissioners in Attendance*

Present

- ✓ Commissioner Terry Jackson
- ✓ Commissioner Angela Faulk
- ✓ Commissioner Louis Garrett
- ✓ Commissioner Tamara Jacobson
- ✓ Commissioner Rikki David

#### *Staff in Attendance*

- ✓ Exec. Dir. Dr. Leah Raby
- ✓ Christa Davis
- ✓ LeTricia L. Burns

#### ➤ *Call to Order*

A commission meeting of the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights was held on Tues., Aug. 12, 2025, in person, in the Louisiana Workforce Commission - 1st floor conference room. The meeting was called to order at 11:22 a.m. by Tamara Jacobson, Chairwoman.

It was determined that a quorum had been established.

Chairwoman Tamara Jacobson requested roll call and roll call was conducted by LeTricia Burns. Chairwoman Tamara Jacobson requested a motion for the acceptance of the minutes of the Dec. 18, 2024 meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Angela Faulk and seconded by Commissioner Terry Jackson. The motion carried.

➤ *Exec. Dir. Leah Raby - Executive Director's report*

The Executive Director reported that the submission deadline for the current contract cycle was adjusted to the end of the week in alignment with the September 30, 2025, reporting requirement. Due to the EEOC's internal reporting timeline of September 12, a portion of the contract funding will not be received, requiring a downward modification. Although the office had previously increased its case closure projection from 73 to 100, system transitions and technical challenges stemming from migration to the state's tenant impacted progress. As of this report, the office has completed the four intake threshold and submitted 71 investigative cases for credit. Substantial weight reviews continue, as required under FEPA certification, with 10% of cases subject to EEOC review.

### **Personnel and Staffing**

- Intern Asialay Thomas was introduced and has been extended a contract with the office. Jemeriah Bargeman was also recognized in her absence, and Jovan Berry has replaced a departing investigator.

### **Community Engagement and Representation**

- The Executive Director participated in multiple speaking engagements and panels, including:
  - The Education, Workforce, and Health Leaders Panel at the Renaissance Hotel, addressing youth engagement strategies.
  - The ACAP Conference in Lake Charles, conducting sexual harassment training.
  - The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Conference alongside Marvis Hicks (EEOC), presenting on joint agency collaboration.
  - The Pay Equity Summit hosted by the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, discussing the ongoing challenge of passing pay equity legislation in Louisiana.
  - The EEOC Virtual Summit on Psychological Safety in the Workplace (July 30, 2025).
- Staff participated in various community initiatives, including the DECA student competition, Halloween community outreach with the Sheriff's Office, and Match Day with the Big Buddy Program. Recruitment efforts at the Southern University Law Center yielded several intern candidates currently under review.

### **Legislative and Administrative Updates**

- The office monitored several key legislative items during the session:
  - HB 421/HB 685 (DEI-related) – Initially posed an impact to LCHR programs but was ultimately withdrawn after review and consultation with the Governor’s Office.
  - HB 429 (Employment Discrimination – Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation) – Reintroduced but did not pass, maintaining the lack of state-level protections.
  - SB 205 (Wage History and Disclosure) – Did not advance.
  - SB 66 → Act 100 (Military Status Discrimination) – Passed and signed into law, adding military status as a protected class in education, employment, public accommodations, and housing.
- A transition in the Governor’s Office resulted in reporting changes; the Executive Director now reports to Ryan Roberts, Deputy Chief of Staff, providing biweekly forecasting updates.

### **Training and Collaboration**

- Staff completed ADA interview training and participated in sessions on recognizing and responding to elder abuse in tribal communities.

### **EEOC and Federal Relations**

- A Technical Assistance Review conducted virtually by EEOC headquarters on February 18, 2025, yielded a 95% compliance rating, with only one case cited.

### **National and Strategic Engagement**

- The International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) annual conference, originally scheduled for Philadelphia, was relocated to Anchorage, Alaska (October 5–9, 2025). The Commission will present its proposal to host the 2026 conference in Louisiana, marking the state’s first opportunity to host since 2012.
- Additionally, the Executive Director was contacted by the Chief of Staff for ICE’s Office of Civil Rights Compliance regarding potential collaboration as a strategist to assist in developing their human rights division.

### **Technology and Public Access**

- The Commission’s website redesign is complete and ADA-compliant, now accessible through the Governor’s Office webpage. The site includes online filing capabilities and will soon reflect statutory updates related to the CROWN Act and military status protections. *(SHARED THE WEBSITE WITH THE COMMISSIONERS)*

- Question asked by Chairwoman Jacobson – inquiry regarding impact if we do not meet the contractual obligation for the next fiscal year.

Dr. Raby indicated she will caucus with Ms. Burns and Ms. Davis to determine if we can meet the goal or submit what is called a downward modification.

### *Executive Director's report concluded*

- Commissioner Terry Jackson made a motion to accept the Executive Director's report. Commissioner Angela Faulk seconded. The motion carried.

### ➤ *Unfinished Business*

None

### ➤ *New Business*

None

- Chairwoman announced James Carter was elected as the National President of the American Bar Association. Commissioner Angela Faulk recommended sending him a congratulatory letter.
  - Commissioner Angela Faulk made a motion at 12:15 p.m. to move into Executive Session. Commissioner Rikki David seconded. The motion carried.
  - Commissioner Angela Faulk made a motion at 12:37 p.m. to move into Executive Session. Commissioner Terry Jackson seconded. The motion carried.
  - Chairwoman Jacobson suggested the poll would be sent to determine the October and December meeting dates.
  - Dr. Raby advised October will be a Zoom meeting. She will get with the governor's office to see how we handle Zoom meetings due to the open meeting notices. Dr. Raby also reminded all of sexual harassment training.
  - Commissioner replacements will be evaluated.
  - Commissioner Terry Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Rikki David seconded. The motion carried.
- Meeting Adjourned – 12:41 p.m.

Minutes submitted by LeTricia L. Burns