

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

DRAFT

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 8, 2026  
2:00 p.m.  
Via Microsoft TEAMS

## Commissioners Present

Edward Mambruno, Secretary  
Lisa Giliberto  
Alex Harris  
Edith Pestana  
Joseph Suggs  
Tamara Titre

## Commissioners Absent

Andrew Norton

## Staff Present

Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director  
Michelle Dumas Keuler, Legal Managing Director  
Shawn Burns, Regional Manager  
Jonathan Sykes, HRO Attorney  
Robin Trepanier, HRO Attorney  
Gary Madison, HRO Representative  
Darian Pitts, Executive Secretary

Cheryl A. Sharp, Deputy Executive Director  
Kimberly Jacobsen, Legal Managing Director  
Darcy Strand, Legislative Liaison  
Spencer Hill, HRO Attorney  
Johnette Tolliver, State Program Manager  
Kellye Hudson, Executive Secretary  
Laura Thurston, Assistant Attorney General

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

**Commissioner Pestana motioned to elect Commissioner Giliberto as Acting Chair. Commissioner Harris seconded the motion.**

#### **Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Harris, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

Commissioner Lisa Giliberto called the meeting to order in place of Secretary Mambruno at 2:03 pm.

### **II. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT & ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**

Acting Chair, Giliberto, noted that a quorum had been established with 5 Commissioners present. She also noted that she did not have any items to report.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Acting Chair Giliberto asked for a motion to elect Commissioner Harris as Acting Secretary.**

Motion: E. Pestana

Second: J. Suggs

**Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Giliberto, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Harris)

**The motion carried.**

Acting Chair Harris asked for a motion to approve the Minutes. Prior to the vote there was discussion on amending the March 11, 2026, Minutes to include information that identified who made and seconded the motions for vote.

**To Approve the March 11, 2026, Regular Commission Meeting Minutes as Amended to Include the Names of the Commissioners making and seconding the Motion:**

Motion: J. Suggs

Second: T. Titre

**Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Harris, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

**IV. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS – VOTE REQUIRED**

Presented by Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp

**Office of the State Treasurer**

Staff representing Office of the State Treasurer were Chief of Staff Andrea Comer, Deputy General Counsel Ginny Kim, Deputy Assistant Treasurer for Management Services Holly Freitas, and Equal Employment Opportunity Officer Nicole Brown.

This plan was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: 46a-68-102(a) the plan contains all elements required by Sections 46a-68-78 through 46a-94, inclusive and 46a-68-102(b)(3), the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve goals, and despite these efforts has been unable to do so, and 46a-68-102(b)(4), the agency has substantially addressed deficiencies noted by the Commission in prior plan reviews.

The Goal Achievement is as follows:

- Hiring Goal Achievement: 1 out of 5 possible goals were met or 20%
- Promotional Goal Achievement: 1 out of 1 possible goal was met or 100%

- Program Goal Achievement: 1 out of 1 possible goal was met or 100%

The five-year approval history is as follows: 2025 Approved; 2024 Disapproved; 2022 Approved; 2020 Approved; 2018 Approved.

**To Approve the Affirmative Action Plan for Office of the State Treasurer and to retain its Annual Filing Status:**

Motion: A. Harris  
Second: J. Suggs

**Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Harris, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

**Department of Revenue Services**

Staff representing the Department of Revenue Services were Commissioner Mark D. Boughton, Deputy Commissioner John Biello, and Equal Employment Opportunity Manager Penny Potter.

This plan was recommended for approval based on compliance with the following: 46a-68-102(a), the plan contains all elements required by Sections 46a-68-78 through 46a-94, inclusive and 46a-68-102(b)(3), the agency has demonstrated every good faith effort to achieve goals, and despite these efforts has been unable to do so, and 46a-68-102(b)(4), the agency had no deficiencies in the prior plan review and therefore, is in compliance with the(b)(4) standard.

The Goal Achievement is as follows:

- Hiring Goal Achievement: 1 out of 3 possible goals were met or 33%
- Promotional Goal Achievement: 5 out of 13 possible goals were met or 38%
- Program Goal Achievement: There were no Program Goals set for the 2026 Affirmative Action Plan.

The five-year approval history is as follows: 2025 Approved; 2024 Approved; 2023 Approved; 2022 Approved; 2021 Approved.

**To Approve the Affirmative Action Plan for the Department of Revenue Services and to retain its Annual Filing Status:**

Motion: J. Suggs  
Second: E. Pestana

**Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Harris, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

**V. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*This requires a two-thirds vote of Commissioners present and voting; staff and guests invited to attend must be noted.*

1. CHRO v. Revival Homes, LLC  
Contract Compliance Enforcement Action  
Presented by HRO Attorneys Spencer Hill and Jonathan Sykes
  
2. CHRO ex rel. Diptee v. Tar Real Solutions, Inc. et al  
CHRO Case Nos. 2450102 and 2450103  
Presented by HRO Attorney Robin Trepanier

**To enter Executive Session and to invite into the Executive Session the following individuals: Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Managing Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler, Managing Attorney Kimberly Jacobsen, Attorney Spencer Hill, Attorney Jonathan Sykes, Attorney Robin Trepanier, and Assistant Attorney General Laura Thurston:**

Motion: E. Pestana

Second: J. Suggs

**Vote:**

Yes: 4 (Harris, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

The Executive Session began at 2:33 pm

\*\*\*Commissioner Mambruno joined the meeting at 2:35 pm\*\*\*

Commissioners Giliberto, Harris, Mambruno, Pestana, Suggs and Titre returned after Executive Session at 2:55 pm.

**Exit Executive Session and Return to Public Meeting Session:**

Motion: A. Harris

Second: E. Pestana

**Vote:**

Yes:5 (Harris, Pestana, Mambruno, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried.**

Acting Chair Giliberto reconvened the Commission Meeting to public session and noted that no actions or votes were taken during the Executive Session.

**VI. VOTE ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS**

**1. CHRO v. Revival Homes, LLC.**

**To file the case CHRO v. Revival Homes, LLC in Superior Court:**

Motion: T. Titre

Second: A. Harris

Discussion: None

Vote:

Yes: 5 (Harris, Mambruno, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: (0)

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**VII. DIVISION REPORTS**

**Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Hughes first corrected the report to reflect that identifying information regarding motions for the minutes was originally included and that there were only two motions that omitted the maker of the motions. She confirmed that these corrections would be noted and reconciled with the acting chair's notes. She then announced that Legislative Liaison Darcy Strand had resigned her position at the CHRO and would be moving on to the State Library in a promotional role. She noted the excellent work that Attorney Strand had performed for the agency and wished her well as she transitions to her new position.

She went on to report that the agency continues to meet with various state departments including DOL, EEO, HR, OLR, OAG, BITS, and SDE. She reported that there would be a meeting held with Labor Management on April 8, rescheduled from February 23.

She noted, as evidenced by the Executive Director' Production Report, the high intake levels taking place throughout the agency, specifically in West Central/Waterbury Region. Director Hughes went on to report that the agency's recruitment efforts were significantly completed in most areas of the agency to include clerical staff, HRO Regional trainees, the Executive Division, the Legal Department, and Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance. She further noted that the RFI for EEOC had been completed for FY 27 and the agency is still awaiting guidance from HUD regarding the completed contract from FY 25. She also mentioned that there would be several trainings and presentations coming up over the next several months to include the Fair Housing Webinar, the Education Symposium on 4/29 to be held at the LOB, the agency wide retreat scheduled for June 25, and the Community Access Fair on Saturday, September 19 to be held at the Artist Collective.

**Outreach Report**

Deputy Executive Director Sharp reported that the agency continues to provide training, as well as Education and Outreach events throughout the state. All the regions, agency unit personnel, and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell are working hard to provide the services/trainings.

She further stated that the agency continues its work on the Disparity Study and is working to complete some of the informational sessions across the state before the end of the fiscal year. Attorney Spencer Hill is finalizing the materials for those sessions. There are also some sessions planned to educate the public about changes to the process and procedures as it relates to contract compliance.

Deputy Executive Director Sharp also reminded the group about the agency-wide retreat taking place in June and promised to send reminders to everyone to save the date. The spring interns will be participating in the Education Symposium scheduled for April 29 along with a very diverse group of panelists. The Kids Court Academy is flourishing with students hailing from all areas of the state. She entreated everyone, who knows students interested in social justice to encourage them to get involved with the program. She added that this year a student initiative campaign was created to provide a minimal amount of funding for students who create their own social justice projects. She went on to note some of the students who have already created social justice projects and noted the recognition that is being given to the KCA students reaching honors, high honors, and honors with distinction in school.

She informed the group on some of the outreach activities that are taking place in the regions and highlighted the work of the Capital Regional Manager and his work with suicide prevention, the Southwest/Bridgeport Regional Manager and his staff are providing outreach to all the towns in their jurisdiction, The West Central/Waterbury Regional Manager and his staff are providing reading sessions on civil rights to the youth in their community at the local YMCA, and the Eastern/Norwich Region Manager and staff are working with some of the tribal nations and offering education outreach.

In conclusion Executive Director Sharp acknowledged the transformative connections that Legislative Liaison Strand made for the CHRO, noted that she would be missed, and wished her well.

### **Legislative Update**

Legislative Liaison Darcy Strand thanked everyone for their kind words, noted that she would miss working for the agency, offered her help when needed, and promised to stay in touch.

She went on to report that the Appropriations Committee's version of the State Budget was released last week. There are still funds included to let the CHRO set up its own business office apart from DOL. There are also funds to accommodate the increase in cost for translation services. She added that the Governor's version of the Budget allotted \$5,000, which was great, but didn't quite cover the needs of the agency. After speaking with the Appropriations Committee, the amount has been bumped up to \$23, 000. The hope is that none of it gets eliminated during the budget negotiations with the Governor's office.

She added that bills are moving today in the Legislator, but none of them are related to the CHRO. She also noted that the request to create segregated gyms for females to work out that had been tacked onto the CHRO's Bill was removed by the Judiciary Committee. She added how pleased she was that it had been removed due to its complexity and the agency wants/needs to get all their procedural issues completed without additional complications. She added that next week the House would not be in session and most likely the CHRO's Bill wouldn't be considered/discussed until the week after.

### **Legal Update**

Managing Legal Attorney Dumas Keuler reported on a Supreme Court case that she began litigating in 2018 that concerned an animal support case involving two dogs. The complainant had two emotional support animals and had been granted reasonable accommodation. However, there was a misunderstanding of whether she had one or two dogs. The complainant had two dogs of the same breed. The CHRO prevailed in Superior Court, but the housing provider appealed through the Appellate Court and the CHRO did not prevail. The CHRO appealed against that decision. The Appellate Court had a very interesting interpretation of reasonable accommodation and the necessary prong of getting reasonable accommodation or being granted reasonable accommodation. As a result, the Supreme Court vacated the appellate Courts's decision as it related to the necessary prong and what that interpretation means. It was also discovered that the complainant was not disabled under the definition in the agency's statutes for the purposes of being able to get a reasonable accommodation. She added that the agency's definitions need work and should be addressed during the next session. In the end, the complainant did not prevail.

The second case came out of the Office of Public Hearing and is like the first case except the complainant was granted reasonable accommodation for her emotional support animal. However, there were lease restrictions that were particular to the fact that there was an emotional support animal living in the home. The restriction was that the complainant would not be able to get another emotional support dog if that one died, and that higher exit fees could be imposed if there was damage to the unit caused by the dog. Attorney Dumas Keuler concluded that the complainant is still residing in the unit and the support dog is still alive.

**VIII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Acting Chair Giliberto announced the next Commission Meeting will be on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 2:00 pm. This meeting will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Acting Chair Giliberto asked for a motion to adjourn

**To Adjourn:**

Motion: E. Pestana

Second: T. Titre

**Vote:**

Yes: 5 (Harris, Mambruno, Pestana, Suggs, Titre)

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Did not vote: 1 (Giliberto)

**The motion carried**

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 pm.