

Annual Report on the Award of Attorney Fees



Report Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-86(b)

FY 2025

Introduction

The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) is responsible for the enforcement of the state's civil rights laws. Complaints of discrimination filed with the agency are first processed administratively. Complaints that are certified after an investigation as having reasonable cause to have a bona fide belief that the material issues of fact are such that a person of ordinary caution, prudence and judgment could believe the facts alleged in the complaint are sent to the Office of Public Hearings for a *de novo* hearing on the merits. Complaints may also be sent to the Office of Public Hearings following a determination made through the Early Legal Intervention process as outlined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-83(e).

If, upon all the evidence presented at a hearing before the Office of Public Hearings, the presiding officer finds that a respondent has engaged in any discriminatory practice, the presiding officer shall issue an order requiring the respondent to cease and desist from the discriminatory practice and take such other actions as is necessary. Such further action may include the payment of damages suffered by the complainant as well as reasonable attorney's fees and costs. The amount of attorney fees is not contingent upon the amount of damages requested by or awarded to the complainant.

Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 46a-86(b), the Commission is required to report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary on the Commission's award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs. The report shall include but not be limited to: (1) the awards of reasonable attorney's fees and a comparison of such awards to awards of damages; (2) the category of complaint for which damages and attorney's fees are awarded; (3) the Commission's methodology for calculating awards of reasonable attorney's fees and costs; (4) data on the number of employees employed by respondents who were subject to awards of reasonable attorney's fees and costs; and (5) the percentage of complainants and respondents represented by counsel in matters in which awards of reasonable attorney's fees and costs are made.

During fiscal year 24/25, there were no OPH decisions that awarded attorney fees.