



Audit of the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights' Complaint Process

March 6, 2020

Mark S. Swann, City Auditor

Mayor

Eric Johnson

Mayor Pro Tem

Adam Medrano

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

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Jaime Resendez

Casey Thomas, II

Chad West



Executive Summary

Objective and Scope

The audit objective was to evaluate the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights' complaint process, including intake, investigation, and timeliness of the complaint resolution.

The audit scope was October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019.

What We Recommend

No recommendations were identified.

Methodology

To accomplish our audit objectives, we interviewed key personnel, and reviewed applicable documentation. The risk of fraud, waste, and abuse was also considered.

This performance audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based upon our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

Background

The City of Dallas Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights investigates complaints of housing discrimination on behalf of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The collaborative effort involves funding and regular on-site performance assessments by the Federal government resulting in low risk to the City's complaint operations.

Since April 24, 1995, when the Dallas City Code was certified as substantially equivalent to the Federal Fair Housing Act, the Federal government periodically determines if the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights, enforces a law that is substantially equivalent to the Federal Fair Housing Act. Upon successful completion of this review, the certification is renewed.

Approximately, 61 percent (\$818,905) of the approximately \$1.3 million Fiscal Year 2020 operating budget of the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights is funded by Federal grants. Between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2019; 134 complaints were closed: 25 percent were conciliated; 59 percent were "no cause;" monetary settlements of \$92,400 were received; and, 14 complaints received non-monetary relief.

What We Found

The City of Dallas Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights is processing complaints effectively. Federal regulators' on-site performance assessment in March 2019 identified minimal findings which are scheduled for follow-up in 2020. As a result, the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights was recommended for continuing certification.

Major Contributors to the Report

Kimberly Bernsen – Project Manager
Rory Galter, CPA – Audit Manager

Appendix A: Management's Response

Memorandum



DATE: March 4, 2020
TO: Mark S. Swann, City Auditor
SUBJECT: Response to Audit of the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights' Complaint Process

This letter acknowledges the City Manager's Office received the *Audit of the Office of Fair Housing and Human Rights' Complaint Process*.

We were pleased, but not surprised, that the audit determined the City of Dallas processes housing discrimination complaints effectively. We appreciate the professionalism and quality of work demonstrated by your staff throughout this engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T.C. Broadnax".

T.C. Broadnax
City Manager

C: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Chief of Staff
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Liz Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion
Beverly Davis, Director

"Our Product is Service"
Empathy | Ethics | Excellence | Equity