

2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

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LCR | **LAWYERS FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS**
BOSTON

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Mission & History

Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR) fosters equal opportunity and fights discrimination on behalf of people of color and immigrants. We engage in creative and courageous legal action, education, and advocacy in collaboration with law firms and community partners. Our organization is a leading hub for litigation, advocacy, and resistance to discrimination.

Our organization was founded in 1968 in the midst of riots, the aftermath of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the findings of the Kerner Commission report concluding that the nation was “moving toward two societies. One black, one white – separate and unequal.”

With funding and *pro bono* legal services contributed by Boston law firms, the organization became the first of eight independently funded and governed local affiliates of the Washington, D.C.-based Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a national organization formed at the request of President John F. Kennedy to enlist the private bar in providing free legal representation to address racial discrimination. In 1973, we became the first *pro bono* project of the Boston Bar Association (BBA) and the only Lawyers’ Committee in the country directly connected with a major bar association. Although the organization is now separately incorporated with its own 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, we continue to maintain strong ties to the BBA and the private bar in Boston.

Membership by private law firms still forms the working foundation of our organization. Member law firms fund a significant part of our annual operating expenses and provide millions of dollars in *pro bono* legal services by working closely with the organization. In this way, for decades, we have harnessed the resources and talent of Boston’s leading law firms to secure and protect the civil rights of Massachusetts residents.

Over the years, our organization has also grown, adding new projects and initiatives to respond to the changing face of discrimination. While working closely with an ever-increasing number of diverse community partners, we remain true to our core mission to challenge and eradicate all forms of discrimination.

In 2018, we celebrated our 50th anniversary and we also rebranded. The U.S. Congress marked this landmark occasion with a Congressional Resolution honoring our organization and 50 years of impactful work. The Boston City Council also issued a resolution declaring October 18 as Civil Rights and Economic Justice Day in Boston.

The struggle continues, but the future is bright. Lawyers for Civil Rights will continue advancing justice and equality for decades to come.



Message from the Executive Director

At Lawyers for Civil Rights, we are legal first responders. When Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and his conspirators preyed on the vulnerability of migrants and deceived them into flying to Martha's Vineyard, our legal warriors were on the ground within hours. Our clients were illegally stripped of their rights and used as political pawns. That's why we filed a landmark federal class action lawsuit – the first of its kind in the country – to protect our clients and to make sure that other vulnerable migrants are not subjected to this same inhumane treatment. This is just one example of the life-changing work that we champion every day.

Even as we fight for the Martha's Vineyard migrants, we are not skipping a beat on other vital work. On parallel tracks our legal warriors are:

- Protecting our democracy through voting rights cases; advocating for fair and inclusive redistricting maps; and coordinating Election Protection across New England.
- Promoting wealth-building in low-income communities through LCR | BizGrow, supporting small businesses owned by people of color, immigrants, and women.
- Championing health equity through LCR | HealthJustice.
- Providing free legal support to Black men and women who have experienced police violence.
- Defending diversity in education and equitable educational opportunities, most recently in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Looking to 2023, we will continue our law-changing work bending the arc of the moral universe towards justice for all our families and communities. Now more than ever, we will fight for the rights of those in need.

Here's to moving forward—without fail and without fear.

Iván Espinoza-Madrigal, Esq.
Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR)

Who We Serve

Lawyers for Civil Rights works with communities of color and immigrants to fight discrimination and foster equity through creative and courageous legal advocacy, education, and economic empowerment. In partnership with law firms and community allies, we provide free, life-changing legal support to individuals, families, and small businesses.

We focus on impact areas that represent the front lines in today's battle for equality and justice. LCR is headquartered in Boston. We represent clients across Massachusetts and surrounding communities—and the impact of our life-changing work ripples across the country.

As discrimination has evolved—from the lunch counter battles of the 1960s to today's struggles against deeply entrenched inequality—we have consistently worked to redefine what it means to live and participate equally in our society regardless of race, national origin, or ZIP code.

We recognize that discrimination takes many forms—and that factors such as race, national origin, ethnicity, sex, religion, immigration status, gender identity, and sexual orientation can overlap and intersect with one another. We organize our work according to impact areas that represent critical battlegrounds for civil rights today, and that address the many ways our clients experience discrimination.



- Through **LCR | BizGrow**, we contribute to the economic growth of communities of color and provide free legal support to entrepreneurs with big dreams and limited resources.
- Through **LCR | HealthJustice**, we coordinate with community-based health centers to improve the well-being of struggling, low-income patients.
- Through litigation and policy advocacy, we ensure all students have equal access to a high-quality education.
- We take legal action against fair housing violations and promote policies that encourage equal housing opportunities for families and children.
- We protect and expand voting rights for traditionally disenfranchised populations.
- We advocate for the constitutional rights of immigrant families and children.
- We promote community policing and hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct.

As new issues arise, we move quickly to establish innovative practice areas—ensuring we remain on the front lines of justice for our clients. We are legal first responders in the heart of minority, immigrant, and low-income communities.

At LCR, we are proud to represent the hard-working communities we serve with the same resilience, grit, and pride that they demonstrate every day.

Pandemic Response

The COVID-19 pandemic and its ripple effects continue to dictate our clients' lives in 2022. Our work has expanded and evolved significantly due to COVID-19 in direct response to the needs of our communities, particularly as the pandemic continues to disproportionately impact communities of color and immigrant communities.

Low-income Black and Latinx communities have faced the harshest consequences of the pandemic, battling everything from unemployment and housing instability, to a lack of vaccine access and reduced educational opportunities. LCR's community-focused pandemic response has prioritized the needs of those populations that continue to be hit hardest by this ongoing public health crisis. In close collaboration with our pro bono partners and community organizations, LCR remains at the forefront of the fight for health and economic equity.

LCR has become a leader in vaccine equity, ensuring that access to vaccines and proper COVID-19 education reaches all corners of the Commonwealth, especially Black and Latinx populations. Working hand-in-hand with community health centers, our vaccine sites offered bilingual registration, culturally sensitive education, and on-site vaccinations and boosters throughout 2022. We also coupled vaccination clinics with free legal clinics to expand access to know-your-rights information and resources.



In partnership with the **Veronica Robles Cultural Center**, **Hyde Square Task Force**, the **City of Boston**, the **Whittier Street Health Center**, and **Boston Medical Center**, LCR continues to make vaccinations available and accessible in neighborhoods struggling with low vaccination rates. As the vaccine has become available for children and young teens, LCR has made it a priority to educate and administer vaccines for local youth. For example, in collaboration with the **Greater Boston Latinx Network**, LCR hosted a back-to-school themed event that offered backpacks stuffed with school supplies to kids who participated in the vaccination clinic.

In 2022, we continued our groundbreaking work to keep families housed despite the ravages of the pandemic. Due to unemployment, reduced hours, and business closures, many families have had to face the threat of eviction, or even foreclosure, due to a lack of stable income. LCR responded by launching and developing a pro bono initiative connecting low-income households struggling with rent payments and facing mounting housing expenses with volunteers to secure emergency assistance through RAFT (Residential Assistance for Families in Transition). Working with our partner law firms and community allies, LCR trained volunteers to help support hundreds of households in Massachusetts.

As we close the third year of the pandemic, far too many families remain vulnerable to the consequences of COVID-19.



Police Accountability

Eight years after the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, the explosion of advocacy targeting police reform and police accountability persists. LCR remains steadfast in its commitment to champion this work throughout Massachusetts, responding to the ever-growing demand for legal support from victims of police misconduct and serving as a key stakeholder in policy discussions on police reform.

Individual clients continue to view LCR as a legal resource for courageous police litigation that highlights the longstanding challenges of law enforcement in communities of color. LCR recently filed a complaint against the Medford Police Department (MPD) on behalf of Jeremiah Mamousette and Hibaq Warsame, two Black college students who were illegally stopped, removed from their vehicle, searched, handcuffed and held at gunpoint in their hometown by nearly a dozen officers in full view of the public road because of an alleged anonymous tip. The matter is currently under internal review, and we plan to champion this case until we secure justice for these two courageous young people.

LCR and *pro bono counsel* from **Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP** are seeking similar accountability in a major federal civil rights lawsuit we filed this year on behalf of Donovan Johnson. Mr. Johnson is a 20-year-old Black man who was racially profiled, illegally stopped, and forcefully arrested within view of his Somerville home by officers of the Arlington Police Department (APD). APD officers were in pursuit of a known white male offender, and had no evidence that Mr. Johnson was doing anything other than simply walking home, yet they nonetheless unlawfully apprehended him.

In addition, LCR continues to fight for justice:

- Alongside *pro bono counsel* from **WilmerHale** for Mr. Marvin Henry, a Black father of four who was racially profiled, handcuffed, arrested and detained in Needham on false suspicion of shoplifting. This lawsuit seeks damages and injunctive relief and is currently pending in federal court.
- Together with *pro bono counsel* from **Fick & Marx LLP** for the family of Terrence Coleman, a 31-year-old Black man with schizophrenia, who was shot and killed by a Boston police officer in October 2016 in response to a call for medical assistance. This case raises critical issues concerning how police officers interact with those living with mental illness.
- On behalf of victims of hate crimes, such as Ms. Vazquez and her daughter who were violently attacked for speaking Spanish in public by two white women in East Boston. Without LCR's advocacy, the victims and their experiences would have gone uncounted and unaddressed.

Finally, transparency remains a mantra as LCR pushes for more openness in City government, particularly in the Boston Police Department, where public records – if they are brought to light – can illuminate inequities in employment and other problematic police practices. LCR and our *pro bono* partner from **Birnbaum & Godkin** are continuing to litigate a state court lawsuit that demands the Boston Police Department's compliance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law as a blueprint for other municipalities to follow.

Lawsuit claims Arlington, Massachusetts, police chasing white suspect wrongly arrest Black man

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This photo provided by Irina Danilova shows Donovan Johnson at Boston Common in Boston, Nov. 17, 2019. A civil rights lawsuit filed Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, says Johnson was minutes away from his home after leaving his job at a hospital in February 2021 when an officer who was chasing a white suspect ran up to Johnson, drew his gun and threw him to the snow-covered ground face first. (Irina Danilova via AP) SOURCE: Irina Danilova via AP

Legal First Responders: LCR on Martha's Vineyard

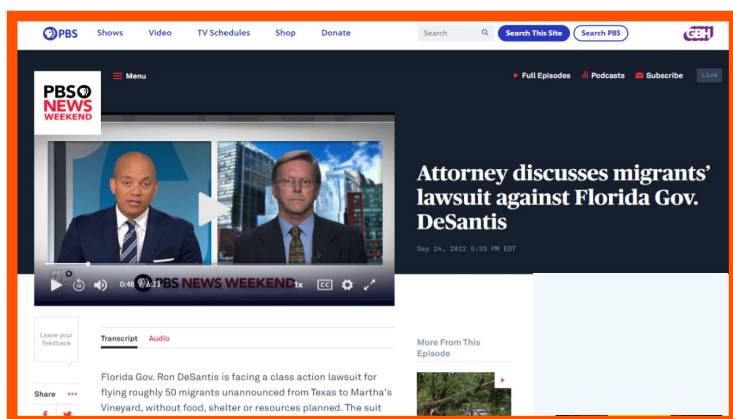
In September, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and his accomplices executed a scheme to transport nearly 50 Venezuelan immigrants to Martha's Vineyard under false pretenses. Lawyers for Civil Rights is proud to have served as legal first responders, providing immediate legal assistance to the immigrants within hours of their arrival and then filing a federal class action lawsuit to bring the perpetrators of this political stunt to justice.

Using People As Political Props: Inhumane And Illegal

The Governor and his accomplices, including the spy known as “Perla,” approached the immigrants outside the Migrant Resource Center in San Antonio, Texas, recruited them for privately chartered flights with promises of jobs, housing, and immigration assistance upon arrival, and then abandoned them on Martha's Vineyard without any of those things having been secured. Alone on an unfamiliar island, the migrants quickly realized they had been duped, and panic set in. The Governor wasted no time claiming credit, showing that he had used these human beings as nothing more than political pawns in furtherance of his own ambitions.

The Governor's scheme was sickeningly callous and inhumane. Before arriving in San Antonio, many of the migrants had endured long, perilous journeys to the United States. Not only had they trekked thousands of miles in search of a better life, but, along the way, many experienced cruelty, exploitation, and violence. One of our clients was kidnapped and tortured in Mexico by cartel members. Horrifically, his assailants pulled his teeth out with pliers before throwing him out on the street and leaving him for dead. Once this group of migrants arrived in the United States, their circumstances improved little. They bounced around various churches and shelters before arriving at the Migrant Resource Center where they were only able to secure beds for a few nights.

For the perpetrators, our clients' extreme vulnerability made them easy targets. Perla and others preyed upon our clients by offering them \$10 McDonald's gift cards, shoes, clothes, and hotel stays to build trust in furtherance of their fraudulent scheme. These perpetrators also examined the migrants' immigration paperwork before putting them on the flights. The whole point was to single out our clients out based on their race, national origin, and immigration status, to send a political message. To say this scheme was unethical doesn't do it justice—it was unlawful, unconstitutional, and discriminatory.





Legal First Responders: LCR on Martha's Vineyard

LCR: Legal First Responders

As soon as news of the migrants' plight broke, LCR and our allies sprang into rapid response mode. LCR swiftly mobilized to deploy attorneys and staff to Martha's Vineyard immediately after the migrants' arrival as the humanitarian situation unfolded.

In herculean fashion, LCR's legal warriors joined an army of *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers offering to help however they could. Other folks leading the charge on this front included: **Emily Leung** of the **Justice Center of Southeast Massachusetts (South Coastal Counties Legal Services)**, **Susan Church** of **Demissie & Church**, **Rachel Self** of **Rachel M. Self, P.C.**, and **Julio Henriquez** of **Law Offices of Julio Henriquez**. Within 24 hours of the migrants' arrival, LCR had interviewed dozens of impacted individuals and families, some of whom had arrived with children as young as 2 years old. LCR, along with the robust network of *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers, helped coordinate free legal support for all the migrants, to ensure their immigration cases were not prejudiced by the stunt that had been perpetrated on them.

Our work continued in the ensuing days as the LCR team escorted the migrants from Martha's Vineyard to Joint Base Cape Cod. Along with other friends, allies, and community partners, LCR worked around the clock to make sure the migrants were comfortable and safe during their stay at the base. To achieve that goal, LCR's team maintained a continuous presence at the base until the migrants were fully resettled in communities across Massachusetts.

On a parallel track, LCR filed a groundbreaking class action lawsuit, *Alianza Americas v. DeSantis*, in federal court in Boston. We filed the class action in record time – and as we simultaneously helped to coordinate legal and community support for the migrants. The case was filed on behalf of the migrants and an organizational plaintiff, **Alianza Americas**. The complaint asserts that the Governor's scheme constitutes an illegal deprivation of liberty and a conspiracy to violate civil rights. With *pro bono* support from **Foley Hoag LLP**, we are currently litigating that case to hold the perpetrators of this unlawful scheme accountable.

Our efforts have already had a tremendous impact. By uplifting the voices and experiences of our clients, we have countered the narrative that the Governor sought to create. As our case made national headlines, we were able to show the outpouring of support for our clients from local residents in Martha's Vineyard and throughout the Commonwealth. People throughout the country and across the political spectrum voiced objection to the idea of using people as political props. The backlash had immediate practical effects as well: a second set of flights with migrants, that the Governor and his conspirators had planned, was scuttled.



Fact-Finding Mission To San Antonio And The Border

In October 2022, LCR conducted a fact-finding trip to Texas and the Mexican border to explore the conditions and dynamics on the ground as experienced by our immigrant clients.

In San Antonio, LCR visited the Migrant Resource Center, where “Perla” and others first approached our clients, and the La Quinta hotel where migrants were sequestered pending their fraudulent relocation to Martha’s Vineyard. LCR also met with community leaders.

In El Paso, LCR visited the migrant shelter, Sin Fronteras Coalition for the Homeless, and Migrant Welcome Centers run by the City of El Paso and the County of El Paso. LCR learned about the current border dynamics from community leaders and advocacy groups including binational organizations: **Border Network for Human Rights** (“BNHR”), **Hope Border Institute**, and **Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center**.

In Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, LCR observed first-hand how the federal government’s latest Venezuela policy is exacerbating the pain and suffering at the border. LCR also participated in “**Hugs Not Walls**,” a powerful event organized by the BNHR, which brings together families from the U.S. and Mexico who are separated due to our broken immigration system.

LCR attorneys will continue to aggressively litigate LCR’s class action on behalf of the Martha’s Vineyard migrants. LCR will also closely monitor the departure and arrival of buses and planes with migrants from the U.S. border.



Immigrant Rights

LCR maintained its longstanding commitment to immigrants' rights in 2022. Our forceful advocacy on behalf of the Martha's Vineyard migrants – in court as well as in the media – is just one example of our multi-faceted effort on this front.

We also continue to litigate Trump-era cases, either settling them as the Biden Administration repeals challenged policies, or persisting with cases where the new administration has not done so. For example, with *pro bono* support from **Choate Hall & Stewart LLP**, we continue to defend Haitian, Salvadoran and Honduran immigrants and their right to Temporary Protected Status (TPS), a vital life-saving humanitarian program.

We also continue to litigate *Lawyers for Civil Rights v. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services*, a FOIA lawsuit challenging the federal government's refusal to produce records relating to a draft public charge regulation, which was leaked in 2019 and caused widespread fear and panic in immigrant communities. LCR and *pro bono* counsel from **Hinshaw and Culbertson** have now already received hundreds of pages of documents from the agency, and await a ruling on our summary judgment motion, wherein we argued for the release of additional documents.

We are also scoring major victories on behalf of immigrant communities. In a nation-wide class action lawsuit, *Juarez v. SOFI*, LCR joined forces with *pro bono* counsel from **Outten & Golden** to help secure equal access to lending products for DACA recipients. Today, the discriminatory policy has been rescinded.

We are also developing new critical cases to support people of color and immigrants.

LCR is working with the **Boston College Law School Civil Rights Clinic** to represent the plaintiffs in *Ortega v. Customs and Border Protection*. There, we represent Ms. Ortega, a long-term permanent resident, and her daughter. We filed this important case because Ms. Ortega was repeatedly subjected to unlawful detentions and body cavity searches at Logan Airport. LCR's advocacy on this front is critical because non-citizens like Ms. Ortega are entitled to constitutional protections, including equal protection under the law.

In *Russo v. Cummings*, in partnership with **Rights Behind Bars** and the **Cape Cod Coalition for Safe Communities**, we are challenging the legality of the Barnstable County Sheriff's agreement with ICE, to undertake immigration enforcement (known as a "287(g) agreement"). The agreement purports to give local law enforcement the authority to enforce federal immigration law, improperly entangling local law enforcement with federal immigration at the costs of taxpayer dollars. These agreements also harm public safety by creating a chilling effect in the community making it less likely that victims and witnesses come forward to law enforcement. The case is currently pending in Barnstable Superior Court.

Fact-Finding Mission to Central America

LCR embarked on a week-long fact-finding mission to Central America in August 2022. The LCR team subsequently released a groundbreaking report contextualizing the root causes of forced and internal displacement and migration that push so many migrants to travel north, including a toxic and fatal combination of violence, political persecution, extreme poverty, and most recently, the devastating effects of the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.



Immigrant Rights

Language Access

We joined forces with the **Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice** to pursue a complaint under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), alleging the widespread failure of the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families to provide language access to the Limited English Proficient (LEP) families they serve. This failure directly results in the wrongful separation of families. When the state agency fails to prioritize language access, parents are unable to comprehend or meaningfully participate in critical processes and face an increased likelihood of separation compared to their English-speaking counterparts. The complaint was filed on behalf of the **Greater Boston Latino Network, Haitian-Americans United**, and an LEP mother who was not provided with an interpreter or documents translated into Spanish during the course of an investigation.



LCR | BizGrow

LCR | BizGrow provides minority, immigrant, and low-income entrepreneurs and small business owners with free legal assistance, technical support, and education. BizGrow furthers our mission of economic empowerment in traditionally disenfranchised communities by assisting entrepreneurs in developing sustainable businesses and achieving economic self-sufficiency. Through free legal clinics, business workshops, and individual representations we bridge the opportunity gap, making the connections that allow our entrepreneurs to achieve their dreams.

Virtual Programming

BizGrow has continued to expand our virtual programming, ensuring that entrepreneurs have the resources they need to thrive at every stage of their growth. From entity formation to winding down a business, our virtual workshops provide the necessary legal and technical assistance to successfully own and operate a small business. Led by community leaders and experts in their field, BizGrow's programming offers both education and networking opportunities for entrepreneurs. BizGrow receives powerful *pro bono* support from law firms, including **Goodwin, WilmerHale, Mintz Levin, Ropes & Gray, McCarter & English,** and **Nixon Peabody**.

This year, in partnership with Goodwin, Roxbury Community College, and Bunker Hill Community College, we debuted our first BizGrow Launch Series. This innovative series combines the accessibility of on-demand workshops with one-on-one support. Aspiring entrepreneurs can watch the programming at a time and location that fits their schedules, while also being able to contact and have virtual appointments with the speakers to get their questions answered.

In addition to our expert-led classroom style workshops, we provide one-on-one support for entrepreneurs during our biweekly legal clinics. Our clients have the opportunity to meet with specialized attorneys who can provide advice and guidance on how to move forward. Through partnerships with pro bono firms such as **Goodwin, Morgan Lewis,** and **Nutter McClennen & Fish** and community partners such as the **Kierstein Business Library & Innovation Center** at the Boston Public Library, our clients are able to speak with experts on issues such as intellectual property, contracts, employment, real estate, and taxes. These important connections and resources allow our clients to have support in a timely manner in order to accomplish their goals.

Free Individual Representation

As pandemic recovery continues, resilient entrepreneurs are opening and expanding their small businesses. Through the *pro bono* support of our partner law firms, we match small business owners with attorneys who provide them with free transactional legal assistance. Common small business legal issues include entity formation, contracts, intellectual property, and tax issues. Many of our law firm partners provide one-on-one legal service to our clients, including **Goodwin, Brown Rudnick, Morgan Lewis, Foley Hoag, Kirkland & Ellis, Ropes & Gray, Nixon Peabody**, and **Anderson & Kreiger**.

An example of our rapid-response work in support of small businesses is our representation of small businesses owned by Ethiopian and Somali women who are being displaced from their shops in Nubian Square. These small businesses are critical to the community, but they are being threatened with eviction and displacement. Through our advocacy, in *pro bono* partnership with **Anderson & Kreiger**, the businesses have the support they need to remain as pillars of the community.



The BizGrow Conference

On July 21, 2022, we held our annual small business conference: **The BizGrow Conference**. The BizGrow Conference is a full-day event geared specifically towards minority, immigrant, and women entrepreneurs and small business owners. To maintain social distancing, in partnership with the **Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy**, we took our innovative conference outside this year! The BizGrow Conference was made possible with the generous support of our sponsors and over 150 *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers. At the conference, attendees had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with attorneys at outdoor tables along the Greenway. In the month leading up to the event, we also held a series of virtual workshops.

Thank you to all our participating law firms: **Goodwin, Cooley, WilmerHale, Anderson & Kreiger, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo P.C., Morrison & Foerster, Brown Rudnick, Nixon Peabody, Ropes & Gray, Foley Hoag, Goulston & Storrs, Morgan Lewis, Kirkland & Ellis**, and **Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati**.

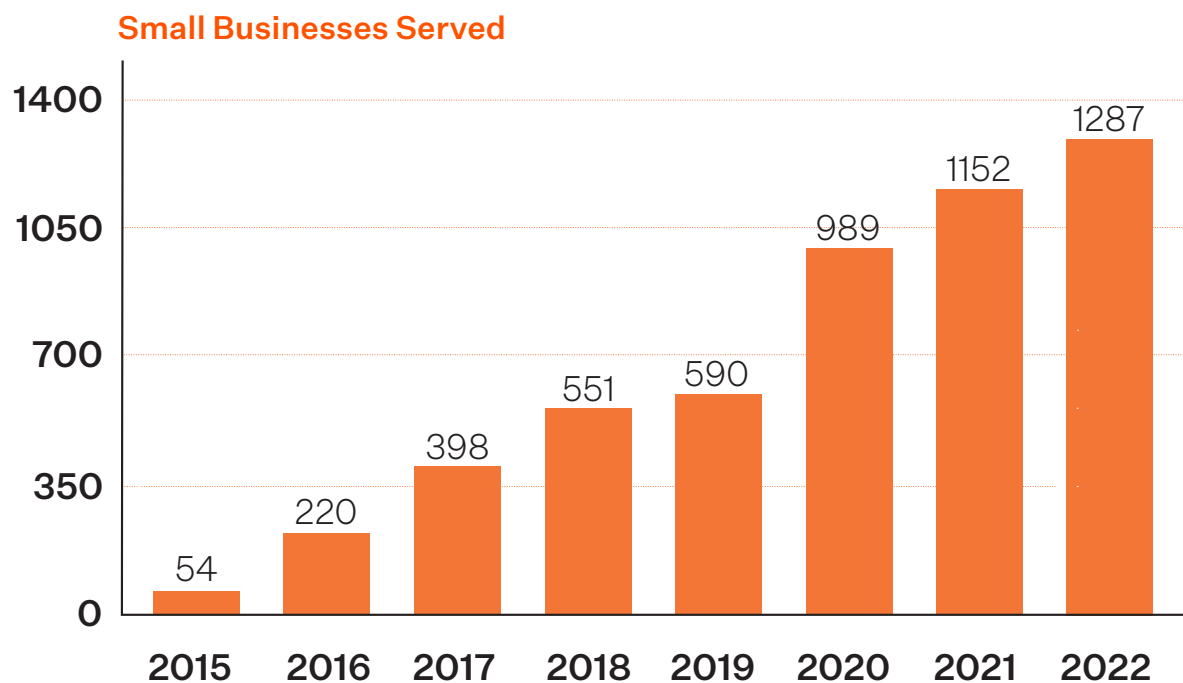
New Partnerships

This year BizGrow continued to expand our partnerships building our reach to help small businesses throughout the Commonwealth. Working with Mass Inc., we released a groundbreaking report on municipal procurement practices in Massachusetts. The report revealed large racial and ethnic disparities in public contracting, and advocated for changes to state law that will empower cities to implement effective supplier diversity policies.

We also continued outreach to under-served communities, working in partnership with the **Massachusetts LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce**, **Black & Pink**, and the **Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA)** to provide intensive one-on-one small business support to small businesses in western Massachusetts. This innovative project provided hundreds of participants with individualized business coaching and free legal services.

Through a generous grant from **Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation**, we also launched a similar project in partnership with **Boston Impact Initiative**, providing individualized financial counseling, business technical support, and free legal services to small businesses owned by people of color, immigrants, and women.

Through the pandemic, we continue to expand our work fighting for an equitable contracting system in the City of Boston for businesses of color, joining forces with BECMA, Amplify Latinx, and the Greater Boston Latino Network to file a landmark Title VI Complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice challenging the City's anemic rates of contracting with minority-owned businesses.



BizGrow in Action: Pure Spark

Nieisha Deed's personal experiences with depression and losing her "spark" inspired her journey to create Massachusetts' first Black wellness directory: PureSpark. Born out of her desire to instill hope in those who have struggled with their mental health, PureSpark offers both traditional and non-traditional mental health therapy options, including talk therapy and dance therapy. LCR | BizGrow and pro bono attorneys from Goodwin have provided PureSpark with free legal assistance. We are proud to support Nieisha Deed, a pioneer in helping others find their "spark".



Employment Discrimination

Nearly 60 years since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that addressed unlawful practices in employment, the road to equal opportunity continues. In Massachusetts, discriminatory barriers in the workplace persist in private and public spaces alike. LCR remains a critical resource for communities of color facing those barriers. When we fight in concert with our courageous clients, community partners and pro bono attorneys, we win.

LCR and *pro bono* counsel from **Nixon Peabody** secured a successful settlement in *Doe v. Austin*, our federal civil rights lawsuit challenging the U.S. military's discriminatory policies against people living with HIV. This settlement ensures that a young first-generation Latino college student living with HIV will have the opportunity to commission as an officer in the military.

In another successful case, LCR and *pro bono* partners from **Zalkind, Duncan & Bernstein LLP**, secured the resolution of two lawsuits against the Boston Police Department (BPD) on behalf of women of color who had long served the City as civilian employees, but who were repeatedly passed over for promotions in favor of less-qualified white candidates. Today, both our clients have been offered promoted positions. Our litigation secured damages for lost earnings. We also ensured that BPD takes a holistic approach to diversity and inclusion in its workforce.

In our long-running case of *Jones v. City of Boston* that we are continuing to litigate with *pro bono* support from **WilmerHale**, the City of Boston finally abandoned the scientifically unreliable "hair drug test" that it used for years to identify drug use among employees. As numerous courts have now held, the test suffers from numerous flaws and disparately impacts Black individuals. We are still in federal court seeking justice for a number of such individuals who were wrongfully terminated.



Voting Rights

LCR added to its long and storied history of protecting voting rights in 2022.

In September and October, LCR played a key advisory role to community organizations focused on building minority voting power during the City of Boston's redistricting process. Our attorneys provided legal support to the Drawing Democracy Coalition – and other community groups – as they developed map proposals. Once our partner organizations, including the **NAACP Boston Branch**, the **Drawing Democracy Coalition**, the **Chinese Progressive Association**, and the **Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts** coalesced around a “Unity Map,” LCR issued an open letter in support of the map. LCR remains steadfast in its support of a local political process that provides communities of color with an equal opportunity to elect their representatives of choice.

In the Fall, LCR coordinated with our *pro bono* partners at **WilmerHale** to organize and run an Election Protection Hotline call center covering New England for Election Day 2022. The Election Protection Hotline (866-OUR-VOTE) is a free, non-partisan service that provides direct assistance to voters who call with election-related problems or questions. The hotline ensures that all voters have an equal opportunity to participate in the election and cast a meaningful ballot.

LCR recruited and trained volunteers, created legal materials for Election Protection, and spearheaded the call center on Election Day. Under the guidance of LCR staff, call center volunteers responded to over two hundred inquiries from Election Day voters in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. Our legal warriors also identified problems being raised by voters in real-time and coordinated with both community partners and state officials to remove obstacles to voting. LCR's efforts not only prompted greater election law compliance, but helped get eligible voters to the polls.

In 2022, we continued to serve as Massachusetts' leading voting rights advocates, ensuring equal voting opportunities for communities of color.

In Worcester, we successfully settled our voting rights litigation challenging the City's all at-large method of electing their School Committee. Despite the fact that Worcester is a majority-minority city – with a school district that is even more diverse – at the time we filed suit, there had been almost no representation from communities of color on Worcester's School Committee. Issues ranging from closing the achievement gap to the over-discipline of students of color had gone unaddressed for years.

With *pro bono* support from **Brown Rudnick**, we filed suit in federal court on behalf of **Worcester Interfaith**, the **NAACP Branch-Worcester**, and individual Black and Latino/a voters. The City quickly settled. In 2022, we worked with community groups and an independent expert to draw new district lines that will govern election of Worcester's School Committee beginning in 2023.

Our litigation against Worcester—and earlier against Lowell—has had far-reaching effects even beyond these particular cities. Through sustained advocacy, we have been able to leverage our successful litigation to convince other cities and towns to change to more fair electoral systems voluntarily. In 2022, working with **Haverhill Latino Coalition**, we successfully convinced the City of Haverhill to change its method of electing both City Council and School Committee from all at-large to avoid minority vote dilution. Other cities, including Everett and Revere, made similar changes.

Our voting rights work is having a dramatic effect!

In Lowell, the first elections under the new electoral system brought about by our federal lawsuit ushered in the most diverse group of City Council and School Committee members ever. When we filed suit, both bodies were all white. After the change in electoral system, now over one-third of those bodies are people of color. And the newly-diversified public bodies are now pushing for change in many areas that were previously ignored.

We are grateful to our *pro bono* partners from **Ropes & Gray** for spearheading the ground-breaking lawsuit in Lowell.

In Worcester, **Brown Rudnick** not only brought about lasting change through the voting rights lawsuit they litigated with us, they also generously donated the attorneys' fees awarded from the case to LCR to create the **Brown Rudnick Civil Rights Summer Fellowship**. Housed at LCR, the fellowship is designed for law students who want to pursue public interest work, but are unable to do so without financial assistance. The fellowship provides a stipend to allow students to do so. Our first fellow, Berlindyne Elie, worked on a broad range of civil rights projects during the Summer of 2022.

Congratulations to LCR's Board Member Rebecca MacDowell Lecaroz from **Brown Rudnick**! The Supreme Judicial Court awarded Rebecca the prestigious Adams Pro Bono Award for her work on the Worcester voting rights case.



Discrimination in Housing, Contracting, and Public Accommodations

Discrimination unfortunately occurs in many different contexts. In addition to our work on education and employment, LCR also tackles discrimination in health, housing, public contracting, and public accommodations.

In 2022, we worked with **Centro Presente** to formally request that the Massachusetts Attorney General and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health jointly investigate the medical care provided by the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC), based on complaints of discriminatory medical treatment of immigrants, particularly women and patients on MassHealth insurance. The request included detailed reports of substandard care and calls for State officials to investigate EBNHC's compliance with civil rights and public health laws.

Throughout the spring of 2022, **Centro Presente** arranged for community forums and interviews of affected individuals by the Attorney General's office. Currently, the matter continues under active investigation. Our Board Member **Jeffrey Catalano** of **Keches Law** is providing invaluable legal assistance in this important effort.

In the realm of public contracting, we continue to pursue our civil rights complaint against the City of Boston for its atrocious track record of funneling taxpayer dollars into a contracting system that excludes minority-owned businesses. At the same time, we are also presenting solutions and policy guidance statewide, for jurisdictions that want to create more inclusive public contracting systems. More details are available in the **BizGrow** section of this report.

Since the days of Rosa Parks, transportation equity has long been a key part of the civil rights struggle. Our client communities disproportionately depend on public transportation to access employment, education, and healthcare – and yet are often ignored by those in charge. For example, in August 2022, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) announced it was shutting down the Orange Line for three weeks. Yet in doing so, it failed to analyze the impact of the shut-down on communities of color, or seek ways to mitigate that impact. We called attention to these failings – particularly the failure to provide language assistance to those seeking alternate routes – through a demand letter to the MBTA and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Meanwhile, in housing discrimination, the nationwide injunction we secured against the planned Trump-era rollbacks of disparate impact regulations remains in place. The Biden Administration is currently seeking to permanently restore those protections. Our *pro bono* partner on this matter is **Anderson & Kreiger**.

Finally, working with *pro bono* counsel from **Morgan, Lewis & Bockius**, we drew attention to significant racial disparities in the foster care system in an *amicus* brief urging the Supreme Judicial Court to require that the Department of Children and Families take more substantial steps to reunify families. Our brief was highlighted in a Boston Globe editorial on the case, and featured prominently in the oral argument. Ultimately, the Court ended up ruling as we had urged, requiring that the State take more vigorous steps to reunify families.

Education

A Once in a Generation Victory for Low-Income Students and Students of Color

Following the Boston Public Schools' (BPS) creation of interim admissions criteria that accounted for equity and diversity for seating students in the City's highly selective public schools in 2021-2022, a coalition of parents sued the district in February 2021, challenging the interim plan. LCR, which has spent years advocating for reforms to the admissions policy, moved swiftly to intervene in *Boston Parent Coalition v. Boston School Committee* on behalf of the **NAACP Boston Branch**, the **Greater Boston Latino Network**, the **Asian-American Resource Workshop**, the **Asian Pacific-Islander Civic Action Network**, and two students, arguing that the interim plan was not only constitutionally sound, but also necessary to remediate decades of discrimination by BPS in admitting students to its highly selective schools. We successfully upheld the equitable policy in federal court. The appeal is currently pending in the First Circuit. **Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.**, the **Asian Outreach Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services**, and **Sidley Austin** are our *pro bono* partners.

Preserving Affirmative Action In Higher Education

LCR continues to fight to preserve the victory in *SFFA v. Harvard*, a case that successfully upheld the right to use race as one of many factors in creating a diverse, highly-talented student body in colleges and universities such as Harvard. We represent students and alumni of color as *amicus*. Our clients testified at trial in federal court about the importance of their racial and ethnic identity and about how being part of a diverse student body enriched their educational experience. We also presented oral argument in the First Circuit, where we received a favorable ruling preserving our victory. The fight continues, however, as the U.S. Supreme Court has taken up the case. Oral argument was held in October 2022, and a decision from the Court is expected in 2023.

Following our voting rights advocacy in Revere in 2021, LCR's legal warriors have continued to work with community groups experiencing issues in the Revere Public Schools (RPS). Our community partners, including **Women Encouraging Empowerment (WEE)** and **Revere Youth in Action (RiYA)**, have focused our attention on a host of ongoing language access problems for limited English proficient (LEP) students and families in the district. Those problems include: failing to provide qualified interpreters for LEP parents during parent teacher conferences, and neglecting to translate school communications. In June, LCR ran a well-attended know-your-rights training to familiarize Revere's LEP population with their legal rights. LCR continues to explore potential legal options for LEP students and families affected by language access failures.

On a parallel track, LCR is championing equity in school admissions in career vocational technical education ("CVTE") schools on behalf of students of color, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities. These students are currently disproportionately and systematically excluded because CVTE schools rely on exclusionary admissions criteria such as grades, attendance, discipline, guidance counselor recommendations, interviews and ranking students for admissions. LCR will continue to advocate and stand against unjustifiable admissions policies that disproportionately exclude traditionally marginalized student populations.



LCR+HealthJustice

In 2022, LCR's Medical-Legal Partnership, housed at the Massachusetts General Chelsea Healthcare Center, was relaunched as HealthJustice. Particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, meaningful partnerships like HealthJustice support the most vulnerable and are more important than ever.

HealthJustice has expanded to serve clients in Revere, Everett and Charlestown, amplifying the effects of our critical life-saving advocacy. In 2022, we also expanded our staff to include paralegal support and began offering *pro bono* opportunities to partner law firms. This expansion allows us to tackle legal issues for even more clients.

HealthJustice offers free and vital legal support on housing, public benefits, family law and immigration. By serving low-income people of color who desperately need housing and income stability, HealthJustice directly advances health equity.

HealthJustice has also been involved in the organization of COVID-19 vaccination clinics in low-income communities of color. Through the creation of these clinics and the provision of free legal advice at these clinics, HealthJustice continues to work towards our ultimate goal: health equity.

To date this year, HealthJustice has assisted over 300 new clients. Nearly 50% of our clients are Latinx. More than 25% are Black. All our clients are low-income.

Client Stories

Through fierce advocacy and support, HealthJustice saved a young autistic child and her mother from losing their public benefits. Working directly with the clients and relevant agencies, HealthJustice ensured that the family was able to continue receiving the care they needed.

HealthJustice also worked directly with a survivor of domestic violence to ensure that she would not face the consequence of eviction because of her abuser's control over their lease. By offering her free legal counsel and helping her navigate the housing system, our client today lives in a safe and healthy home.

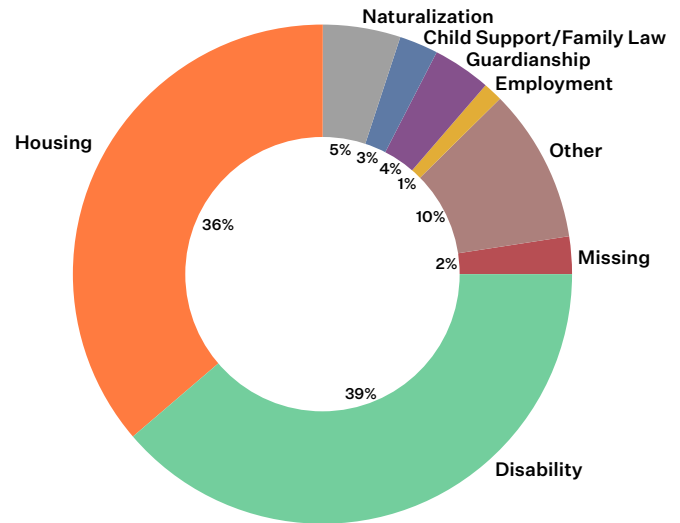
Clients served at MGH Chelsea, Revere, Everett, and Charlestown

Disability
214 claims

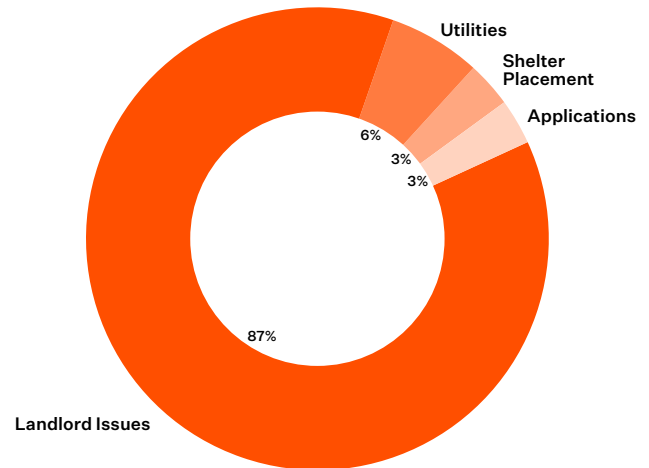
Housing
70 matters

Naturalization
24 petitions

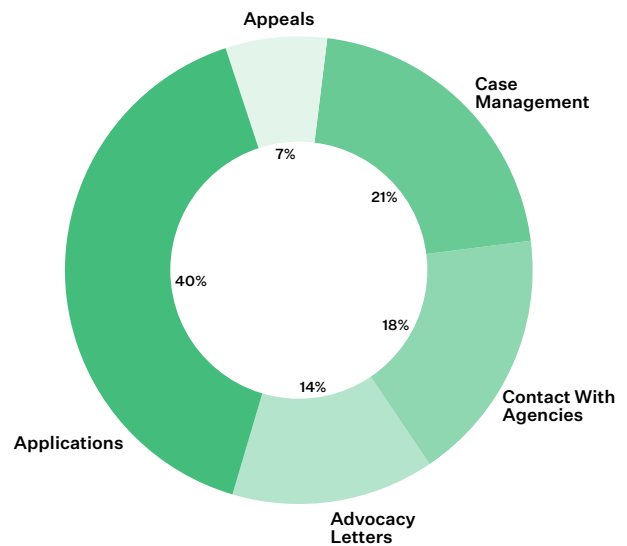
Guardianship/Other
16 matters



Specific Activities Related to Housing



Specific Activities Related to Disability



LCR CASE HISTORY

2022

Doe v. Austin

Federal lawsuit filed on behalf of a young Latinx man who was separated from the Vermont National Guard and ROTC as a result of being HIV positive. Case challenges the constitutionality of military regulations as to HIV positive recruits and enlistees.

Russo v. Cummings

Taxpayer action filed directly with the Supreme Judicial Court to invalidate Barnstable County's "287g agreement" with ICE, which purports to authorize the sheriff to perform federal immigration enforcement.

In re 1127 Harrison Avenue

Working with our community partner ACEDONE, LCR is challenging the displacement of Roxbury-based small businesses owned by immigrant women of color from Ethiopia and Somalia.

In re East Boston Neighborhood Health Center

Filed complaint with the AG, alleging discrimination against low-income, non-English speaking patients.

Momousette v. Medford

Complaint filed with the Medford Police Department on behalf of two Black teenagers who were wrongfully stopped, detained, and threatened with firearms.

2021

HAU v. Department of Children and Families

Title VI complaint filed challenging DCF's persistent failures to provide language access to parents involved in Massachusetts' child welfare system.

In re Martha's Vineyard Community Center

Represented the family of an 8-year old Black child who was subjected to bullying and racial discrimination at a Martha's Vineyard summer camp, culminating in other campers wrapping a tent strap around the boy's neck. We sought reforms to camp policy, anti-bias training, and damages for the victim.

Appia v. Lowell Regional Transit Authority

Title VI complaint on behalf of a Black woman experiencing ongoing discriminatory remarks and treatment by a series of Lowell Regional Transit Authority bus drivers. LRTA conducted an investigation, and we successfully negotiated a resolution of this matter.

20 Years of BizGrow

BizGrow celebrates 20 years of building wealth in low-income communities, serving over 1000 small businesses a year.

Vaccine Equity & Justice

Collaborating with medical providers and community organizations to address racial disparities in COVID-19 vaccine access.

BECMA v. City of Boston

Title VI Complaint filed with DOJ to address racial disparities in Boston's public contracts on behalf of BECMA, Amplify Latinx, and the Greater Boston Latino Network.

Boston Parents Coalition v. BPS

Successful intervention with NAACP Boston Branch, Greater Boston Latino Network, Asian American Resource Workshop, and Asian-Pacific Islander Civic Action Network in lawsuit concerning the admissions policy for Boston's exam schools. Policy upheld.

Greenroots v. EPA

Lawsuit filed with Greenroots and Conservation Law Foundation challenging EPA's interpretation of Title VI.

Pandemic Relief for Tenants and Workers

In response to housing instability, launched a pro bono initiative to connect hundreds of families with emergency rental assistance (RAFT) and unemployment benefits.

Worcester Interfaith v. City of Worcester

Federal Voting Rights Act lawsuit on behalf of Black and Latinx voters in Worcester, successfully challenging an all "at large" method of electing school committee members as illegally diluting the vote of communities of color.

Redistricting

Launched Democratizing Redistricting to ensure that the redistricting process is fair, equitable, transparent, and community driven. Coordinated efforts with the Drawing Democracy Coalition.

Henry v. Needham

Filed federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of a Black father of four, who was handcuffed in broad daylight on a main street because police falsely believed he was a shoplifter.

2020

Pandemic Relief for Small Businesses

Co-led the creation of the Covid Relief Coalition, the Coalition for an Equitable Economy, and Small Business Strong to provide free legal assistance to hundreds of struggling small businesses during the pandemic.

George Floyd

In response to George Floyd's murder, filed complaints on behalf of Black men and women racially profiled by local and state police.

Cofield v. McDonald

Taxpayer lawsuit challenging entanglement and 287(g) contracts between local sheriffs and immigration officials. Case led to termination of agreement.

Juarez v. SoFi

Class action challenging discriminatory policy of denying DACA recipients access to loans.

Savino v. Souza

First-of-its-kind class action filed on behalf of immigration detainees held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions at the Bristol County House of Correction during COVID-19 pandemic. Within a year of filing, the facility population dropped from a capacity of over 200 individuals to less than 10, and the facility subsequently closed. Lawsuit served as a blueprint for COVID-19 litigation across the country.

Bertin v. Galvin

Filed a landmark emergency SJC petition on behalf of Black, Latinx, and Asian-American voters, as well as Common Cause and MassVOTE, to compel the Commonwealth to send applications for mail-in ballots to all registered voters, as specified in an emergency elections law passed at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commonwealth v. Long

Amicus resulting in major state criminal law reform providing victims of racial profiling with opportunities to challenge the legality of race-based traffic stops.

Morgan v. Boston Police Department

Successful case on behalf of a Black man improperly bypassed by BPD. Client is now in the police academy.

Suffolk Downs

Successful Title VI complaint on behalf of GreenRoots and City Life/Vida Urbana with HUD alleging national origin discrimination in zoning and planning processes in Boston. The complaint resulted in a landmark agreement between the City and HUD promoting language access and community engagement in future planning and development.

Cruz v. C&W Facilities Services

Successful race and religion discrimination case on behalf of an immigrant janitorial worker at Logan Airport.

NSTAR Title VI Complaint

Filed Title VI complaint on behalf of GreenRoots with Conservation Law Foundation regarding the state's refusal to provide meaningful language access. EPA launched a probe of the MA Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to assess their compliance with federal civil rights law.

LCR CASE HISTORY

Haitian-Americans United v. Trump

Lawsuit filed on behalf of Haitian-Americans United, Centro Presente, the Chelsea Collaborative, and the Brazilian Worker Center challenging President Trump's exclusion of undocumented residents from the congressional apportionment base following Census 2020. The memorandum was rescinded by President Biden in January 2021.

New York v. Trump

Supreme Court amicus brief in support of enjoining President Trump's memorandum excluding undocumented people from the congressional apportionment base following Census 2020. The memorandum was rescinded by President Biden in January 2021.

Martin v. Rollins

Amicus brief on the importance of filming police officers. This right was upheld by the First Circuit.

Hernandez v. Strega

Favorable settlement on behalf of Latina who was sexually harassed while working in upscale restaurant.

Health Disparities

Expanded Medical-Legal Partnership to MGH health centers in Chelsea, Everett, Revere and Charlestown.

MFHC v. HUD

Secured nationwide injunction against HUD preserving disparate impact protections of the Fair Housing Act on behalf of the MA Fair Housing Center and Housing Works.

Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard

Represented multi-racial group of students in landmark trial to support Harvard's use of race-conscious admissions. Federal court ruled in our favor, upholding Harvard's admissions process, and the ruling was affirmed by the First Circuit.

2019

LCR | BizGrow

Rebranded our Economic Justice Project as LCR | BizGrow

Baker v. MA Trial Court

MCAD complaint filed on behalf of a Black female court officer who was improperly disciplined at work after reporting a colleague for calling her the N-word.

Mussotte v. Peyser

In response to major lawsuit brought on behalf of low-income students and students of color challenging discriminatory and unequal Massachusetts school funding formula, state enacted landmark Student Opportunity Act providing the largest investment in public education in decades. The Act resulted in millions of dollars flowing to low-income school districts.

Washington v. DHS

Amicus brief filed on behalf of healthcare providers across the country challenging the Trump Administration's "public charge" rule. Favorable decision extensively cited the amicus. The Biden Administration subsequently announced that it will not enforce the "public charge" rule.

Huot v. City of Lowell

Successfully settled landmark federal voting rights lawsuit filed on behalf of Asian-American and Latinx residents of Lowell, which charged that city's at-large electoral system illegally diluted the votes of people of color. Settlement requires city to change to a more fair and equitable system, accompanied by a robust public education campaign in English, Spanish and Khmer, allowing all residents to participate in selecting the new electoral system.

Gregory v. Commonwealth

Class action complaint challenging overly-stringent background regulations by the MA Department of Early Education and Care, which impose a lifetime ban on child-care work for juvenile offenses, many decades-old, and have a disparate impact on employees of color.

IIIC v. Cuccinelli

Lawsuit filed to stop the rescission of medical deferred action program which allows immigrants being treated for life-threatening conditions to be protected from removal. Administration backed down and reversed the rescission after lawsuit filed.

Centro Presente v. McAleenan

Federal litigation filed in Washington, DC., to stop the Trump Administration's dramatic expansion of "expedited removal," which eliminates due process for immigrants facing deportation.

Ryan v. ICE

Groundbreaking federal lawsuit filed on behalf of prosecutors, public defenders, and community groups including the Chelsea Collaborative to block civil immigration arrests in and around Massachusetts courthouses. Lawsuit served as a blueprint for similar cases nationally.

African Communities Together v. Trump

Case on behalf of Liberian nationals who are the beneficiaries of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), a humanitarian program which the Trump Administration sought to terminate in violation of Equal Protection. Hours before our preliminary injunction motion was set to be heard in federal court, the Trump Administration backed down and extended the program.

Figueroa v. Boston Police Dep't

Race discrimination case filed by civilian women of color against BPD, identifying a pattern and practice of failing to promote candidates of color and a discriminatory distribution of overtime hours.

Commonwealth v. Espinal

Amicus brief filed in the Supreme Judicial Court successfully arguing that jurors should be asked about bias against non-English speakers during voir dire.

Dep't of Commerce

v. New York

Amicus brief filed in U.S. Supreme Court arguing against inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. Brief focused on the importance of the Administrative Procedure Act to communities of color and low-income communities as a check on illegal agency action.

Census Advocacy

Launched multi-pronged campaign to ensure a full and accurate Census count, including a multilingual Census Hotline.

Amazon Class Action

Nationwide class action filed on behalf of Black and Latinx former Amazon drivers who were suddenly terminated based on an overly stringent background check policy, which included old and minor offenses, and disproportionately affected people of color.

2018

50th Anniversary & Name Change to Lawyers for Civil Rights

Celebrated our 50th anniversary and rebranded as Lawyers for Civil Rights. The U.S. Congress marked this landmark occasion with a Congressional Resolution honoring our 50 years of impactful work. The Boston City Council issued a resolution honoring Lawyers for Civil Rights and declaring October 18 as Civil Rights and Economic Justice Day in Boston. At our 50th Anniversary Gala, Anita Hill called for national and legal solutions to sexual harassment and violence.

Finley v. Lexington

Successfully settled a discrimination lawsuit on behalf of a Black female METCO social worker who was unlawfully terminated after advocating for the students of color in the school district.

LCR CASE HISTORY

Centro Presente v. Trump

First lawsuit filed in the country to save Temporary Protected Status (TPS), humanitarian protection for Salvadoran, Honduran and Haitian immigrants. Affected individuals and community groups allege that TPS termination was racially motivated and discriminatory.

Coleman v. City of Boston

In response to #BlackLivesMatter, lawsuit filed on behalf of a mother whose son—an unarmed Black young man with a disability—was fatally shot by the Boston Police Department.

K.O. v. Sessions

Emergency petitions filed in response to family separation crisis to secure the release and reunification of children torn apart from their families at the border. Filed the first national class action seeking damages on behalf of separated children. Suit seeks creation of designated fund to address the mental health consequences of separation.

Pilot v. Brookline

Successfully settled discrimination lawsuit filed by two Black police officers in the Brookline Police Department.

Rivas v. Bristol County Sheriff

Damages action against the Bristol County Sheriff filed on behalf of immigrant father who was unlawful detained and denied bail based solely on his immigration status.

Sexual Harassment Settlement

Successfully settled sexual harassment charge at MCAD brought by Latina immigrant against wholesale food preparation company in Everett.

Finklea v. City of Boston

Secured favorable Suffolk Superior Court decision addressing the practice of police departments using overly stringent background checks to bar qualified minority candidates from employment opportunities.

2017

Romero et al. v. McCormick & Schmick's

In response to #MeToo, filed sexual harassment lawsuit on behalf of five low-wage Latina workers against a national restaurant chain, alleging a hostile work environment filled with lewd behavior and unwanted touching.

City of Chelsea v. Trump

Federal lawsuit filed on behalf of Chelsea and Lawrence, challenging the constitutionality of President Trump's Executive Order targeting sanctuary cities. The suit helped to preserve federal funding and to protect local control over law enforcement priorities.

BizGrow Conference

Launched signature event, connecting more than 200 entrepreneurs with free legal and business support.

Cook v. Mystic Valley Regional Charter School

Represented Black students in successful challenge to school's discriminatory hair policy, which banned hair extensions and other hairstyles worn disproportionately by students of color.

Lawyers' Committee v. Hodgson

Successful lawsuit to compel disclosure of records related to Bristol County sheriff's enforcement of federal immigration law. Within hours of filing the complaint, the sheriff apologized and released records.

Lawyers' Committee v. Spence

Public records lawsuit filed with the SJC to compel the Massachusetts Trial Court to release information on its employment practices.

2016

Boston Latin School Complaint

Federal civil rights complaint requesting that the U.S. Attorney investigate racial harassment at Boston Latin School. U.S. Attorney found that BLS violated federal law by failing to adequately respond to racial harassment, and the City of Boston agreed to take steps to improve the racial climate at BLS.

Fisher v. Univ. of Texas at Austin

Amicus brief filed on behalf of prominent national empirical scholars in a case concerning the use of a race-based admissions policy at the Univ. of Texas at Austin, arguing that the “mismatch” theory espoused by affirmative action opponents is flawed. The Court upheld the policy, affirming use of race as one of many factors in college admissions.

Lawyers’ Committee v. Evans

Successful lawsuit to compel the Boston Police to release records concerning the racial impact of its employment practices. At a time of growing tension between police and communities of color, the data was the subject of intense public scrutiny concerning the lack of diversity in the police force.

Airbnb

Urged HUD to investigate Airbnb’s compliance with civil rights laws, citing research showing that Airbnb renters with distinctively Black names are 16% less likely to be accepted by hosts than other renters. In response, Airbnb took immediate steps to eliminate discrimination by hosts against minority renters.

School Discipline Toolkit

Released toolkit to educate teachers, administrators, students and parents about school disciplinary policies and alternatives to suspensions, in order to improve school discipline and combat race and disability related disparities in suspension rates.

Doe v. Peyser

Intervention filed on behalf of students of color, students with disabilities, and English language learners in support of retaining Massachusetts’ charter school cap. The SJC upheld the constitutionality of the charter cap, preserving vital resources for traditional public schools.

2015

Defay v. Boston Police

MCAD found that Boston Police discriminated against Black recruits in its Training Academy. MCAD ordered Boston Police to “cease and desist” from discriminatory conduct and to reinstate and compensate affected individual.

2014

Not Measuring Up – School Discipline Report

Published groundbreaking report analyzing Massachusetts school discipline data and finding that students of color, students with disabilities, and charter school students are disproportionately suspended, particularly for minor misbehavior, bringing national attention to disparities in school discipline rates.

City of Brockton v. Energy Facilities Siting Board

Filed an environmental justice amicus brief challenging decision to locate a power plant in a minority community.

2013

Pulido v. National Grid

Successfully represented Filipino electrical worker in employment discrimination matter against National Grid.

2012

NAACP v. Galvin

Challenge to the Commonwealth’s failure to offer voter registration opportunities to public assistance recipients, in violation of the National Voter Registration Act. Commonwealth agreed to policy changes and ongoing monitoring, enfranchising thousands of low-income individuals.

LCR CASE HISTORY

Ortiz v. Boston Children's Hospital

Employment discrimination case challenging wrongful termination of Latina health care workers. Case resulted in favorable settlement, including a bilingual public apology.

2010

Bonds v. Boston School Committee

Successful employment discrimination case on behalf of a Black teacher at Boston Latin School who received less desirable teaching assignments than less-qualified White teachers.

EEOC v. Autozone

Successfully represented a Sikh employee, who faced religious discrimination.

2008

Amara v. Fairmont Copley Plaza

Successfully represented seven Moroccan and Muslim employees of the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel who faced religious and national origin discrimination.

2006

Bradley v. City of Lynn

Intervened on behalf of the NAACP and the Boston Society of Vulcans to challenge discriminatory civil service exams for police and firefighter jobs in twenty communities. In a settlement, the state agreed to offer back pay and jobs to 66 minority candidates who took the discriminatory exams.

EEOC v. Home Depot

Successfully represented a Black employee who experienced a racially hostile work environment and was wrongfully terminated.

2005

Arise for Social Justice v. City of Springfield

Successfully challenged Springfield's "at-large" election system, which diluted minority voting power in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

2004

Alshrafi v. American Airlines

Federal court ruled that the Airline Deregulation Act did not preempt a discrimination claim by an Arab-American passenger who was barred from a flight after 9/11.

Black Political Task Force v. Galvin

Federal court struck down the 2001 State House redistricting plan for 17 districts serving Boston, and enjoined the Commonwealth from holding elections for those seats until the court approved a new plan. Court found that the state plan violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, resulted in "extreme" packing of the 6th Suffolk district, and improperly stripped minority voters out of the 11th and 12th Suffolk districts.

2003

Grutter Amicus Brief

Co-authored amicus brief filed by the Boston Bar Ass'n. and leading Boston law firms in the U.S. Supreme Court in support of affirmative action in admissions to the Univ. of Michigan Law School.

Comfort v. Lynn School Committee

Filed amicus brief, along with the NAACP, successfully defending Lynn's voluntary school desegregation plan against a constitutional attack.

Jones v. City of Boston

Landmark legal challenge to a discriminatory and unreliable hair test used by the City of Boston to determine drug use. In 2014, the First Circuit ruled that the hair test disproportionately affects Black officers. In a companion case, the MA Civil Service Commission found in 2013 that the hair test is scientifically unreliable and required Boston Police to reinstate six officers.

Health Disparities Project

Established Health Disparities Project centered on Medical-Legal Partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital in Chelsea.

2002

South Boston Betterment Trust Corporation v. Boston Redevelopment Authority

Filed amicus brief to ensure that community benefits derived from Seaport District development were equitably distributed to minority neighborhoods.

Mayor of Cambridge v. Secretary of the Commonwealth

Filed amicus brief with the SJC to protect several majority African- American State House districts.

2001

Established Economic Justice Project

In its first year, the project provided free legal support to over 250 small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Morris v. City of Lawrence

Federal court enjoined the City of Lawrence from implementing a voter ID policy that would have discouraged Latinos from voting.

2000

Mendes v. Sullivan

Successfully represented a Cape Verdean couple who were assaulted and had their property vandalized by White neighbors.

1999

Jane Doe

v. Boston Housing Authority

Class action lawsuit against the Boston Housing Authority for failing to protect minority tenants from chronic, racially-motivated violence and harassment at historically White housing developments. Case resulted in HUD's first-ever finding of "systemic discrimination," and the Housing Authority agreed to a \$1.5 million settlement, including adoption of a "zero-tolerance policy" for racial harassment.

1998

Lawyers' Committee participated in the formation of the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston.

Thornton v. Amtrak

Employment discrimination class action lawsuit on behalf of minority track workers resulting in a \$16 million settlement and systemic changes in hiring, training, promotion, and discipline.

1997

Julks v. Neptune Towers

Successful lawsuit against federally -subsidized housing development that maintained a pattern and practice of discrimination.

1996

Barrett v. Danca Realty World

Housing discrimination case at the MCAD resulted in a \$60,000 award for emotional distress, the largest amount ever awarded at that time.

Mak v. Fall River Housing Authority

Successfully represented Cambodian tenants against the Fall River Housing Authority, which failed to protect them from racial violence and harassment.

1993

McDuffy v. Secretary of the Executive Office of Education

SJC struck down Massachusetts' public school financing system, which relied heavily on local property taxes and resulted in gross disparities between districts. SJC ruled that Massachusetts has a duty under the state constitution to provide an adequate education for all children, regardless of the wealth of their local communities.

Bennett v. City of Boston

Federal lawsuit on behalf of families challenging unlawful searches and seizures by police during the Carol Stuart murder investigation.

LCR CASE HISTORY

1992

Culbreath v. BayBanks

BayBanks agreed to an \$11 million settlement in a lawsuit over its indirect home improvement financing program, which used illegal sales tactics to lure homeowners in communities of color to take out high interest loans, in violation of consumer protection and civil rights laws.

1988

At the Lawyers' Committee's 20th Anniversary, Sen. Edward Kennedy called for "a new abolitionist movement" to stamp out racism.

Black Political Task Force v. Connelly

Federal court invalidated the State House redistricting plan based on the 1985 state census for violating the "one person, one vote" principle. First Latino state legislator elected from newly created Boston district.

NAACP v. Boston Housing Authority

Federal class action lawsuit against the Boston Housing Authority for maintaining racially segregated public housing.

1987

Thong Lim v. Somerville Housing Authority

Federal class action lawsuit against the Somerville Housing Authority for its failure to protect minority tenants from racial violence and harassment.

Hispanic Parents Advisory Council v. City of Lowell

School desegregation and bilingual education case in Lowell, resulting in a favorable settlement.

1986

Established Fair Housing Project

1983

**Latino Political Action Committee
v. City of Boston**

Federal court invalidated Boston's redistricting plan for violating the constitutional principle of "one person, one vote," under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

1982

**Established Project to Combat Racial Violence
1981**

Rendell-Baker v. Kohn

Represented several teachers at a private special education school in Brookline.

Hispanic Parents Advisory Council v. City of Holyoke

School desegregation case in Holyoke, resulting in a favorable settlement including bilingual and special education plans.

1979

**Brown
v. City of Salem**

Successfully represented minority applicant who was not hired as a police officer despite ranking first on the civil service exam.

1978

**Latino Association for Progress & Action
v. Worcester Public Schools**

Lawsuit to compel the Worcester Public Schools to provide equal educational opportunities to children with limited English proficiency. Settled by a consent decree.

Latinos Unidos de Chelsea en Acción v. HUD

Challenged the disbursement of federal funds to the City of Chelsea under the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act.

NAACP v. HUD

Class action lawsuit challenging the discriminatory use of HUD funds disbursed to Boston, resulting in a favorable settlement.

MAMLEO v. Boston Police

Challenged a discriminatory civil service exam for promotions to sergeant, resulting in a consent decree that led to the first permanent Boston Police sergeants of color. The consent decree survived a challenge as "reverse

discrimination” in *MAMLEO v. Boston Police*. A court upheld the consent decree’s extension to lieutenants and captains in *Stuart v. Roache*.

Castro & NAACPv. Beecher

Successfully challenged discriminatory police and fire department hiring practices in communities across Massachusetts, including Boston. As a result of consent decrees, there are now hundreds of police officers and firefighters of color in Massachusetts.

1974

Morgan v. Hennigan

Federal court ordered the Boston Public Schools to desegregate in 1974, a landmark decision upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

1970

Published “The Quality of Justice in the Lower Criminal Courts of Metropolitan Boston,” a groundbreaking report that led to systemic court reforms.

1968

The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association was formed in 1968 in the midst of riots and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the findings of the Kerner Commission report (concluding that the nation was “moving toward two societies, one Black, one White – separate and unequal”). Funded with a grant from the Ford Foundation and contributions from Boston law firms, the Committee became the first of eight independent affiliates of the national Lawyers’ Committee. President Kennedy’s vision of the legal profession mobilizing its resources to support progress in civil rights came home to his birthplace. Gaspard D’Andelot “Don” Belin served as the first Chair of the Committee.

1963

On June 21, 1963, President John F. Kennedy and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy met with 244 leading American lawyers in the White House.

The President and Attorney General made a special appeal to mobilize the legal profession to support the struggle for civil rights. The national Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law was created.

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Lauren Sampson Fellowship

We are committed to honoring the memory and legacy of our colleague Lauren Sampson. As part of that effort, we recently created a legal fellowship dedicated to deepening and expanding Lauren's impactful work from housing to climate justice and beyond. The Lauren Sampson Fellowship will nurture the next generation of civil rights leaders to help fully realize Lauren's vision of justice and equity.

The Lauren Sampson Fellowship is dedicated to the memory of LCR's legal warrior Lauren Sampson, who passed away on January 30, 2022. Lauren was a distinguished civil rights attorney and community leader. She consistently impressed colleagues throughout the legal community with her powerful legal talent. She played a leading role in many precedent-setting cases, including:

- Massachusetts Fair Housing Center v. HUD;
- Henry v. Town of Needham, and
- GreenRoots & City Life/Vida Urbana v. Boston Planning & Development Agency.

Her legal analysis and commentary was prominently featured in the news, including publications such as the New York Times. A prolific writer, Lauren contributed thought-provoking pieces to WBUR and Commonwealth Magazine. In one of her latest, she called on the City of Boston to require "greenspace plans."

Through the creation of the Lauren Sampson Fellowship, LCR will honor Lauren's powerful legacy while growing and broadening her inspiring work. The fellowship will also help inspire the next generation of civil rights attorneys and leaders.



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If you, your firm, or your organization are interested in helping us create this legacy in honor of Lauren Sampson, please contact LCR's Executive Director Iván Espinoza-Madrigal (iespinoza@lawyersforcivilrights.org) so that we may add you to our donor list and publicly recognize your generosity.

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