



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Commission on Human Relations

414 Grant Street – Room 908, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2464
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Press Release

Pittsburgh Joins Global “Zero Evictions Days” & Files Human Rights Report with United Nations

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Pittsburgh, PA: A coalition of local human rights advocacy groups are filing a report on the region’s top human rights concerns to the United Nations, while highlighting the housing crisis. The report spotlights local human rights challenges including persistent and worsening racial inequities, housing insecurity, immigrant rights, health and the environment, and local democracy.

Community activists, along with the City’s Commission on Human Relations and Gender Equity Commission will be holding a press conference to mark the release of this report on Tuesday October 1 at 12:00 Noon at the City County Building (5th Floor). This event is free and open to the public.

We will also be marking the start of “[Zero Evictions Days](#),” with a City Council Proclamation. Zero Evictions Days is a campaign led by the International Alliance of Inhabitants to raise awareness of the global nature of the housing crisis and to promote “international solidarity to achieve dignity and security in housing” for all people. The Proclamation helps emphasize the need for more concerted government action to protect the human right to housing.

In 2011, the City of Pittsburgh became the fifth Human Rights City in the United States, promising to “to provide leadership and advocacy to secure, protect, and promote human rights for all people.” Among these rights is the right to housing, food, education, and other basic needs. Local advocates say not enough has been done to fulfill the City’s commitment to advancing human rights.

A series of community forums have helped identify key human rights concerns and informed the report submitted to the United Nations as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the US human rights record. The UPR report will be used to develop concrete local strategies for helping realize the vision of the City’s Human Rights City Proclamation. Pittsburgh is part of a national effort of cities—including Chicago, Washington DC, Atlanta, Jackson MS, New Orleans, Providence, among others—to identify critical human rights concerns and policy recommendations for improving human rights in urban contexts.

In submitting this report, we strive not only to catalogue local human rights violations impacting the United States’ human rights record, but also to demand local accountability for securing and protecting human rights for all residents. We recommend changes in national policies to better support local compliance with international human rights expectations. These actions today are part of an ongoing effort to engage residents in work to “bring human rights home,” and help Pittsburghers realize the human rights defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related human rights laws and standards.



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SPEAKERS

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Megan Stanley, Director, City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations

Erika Strassburger, Councilperson, City of Pittsburgh

Celeste Scott, Pittsburgh United

Gerald Dickinson, Professor of Law, University of Pittsburgh