

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) consists of the following divisions:

- Health Department
- Council on Aging
- Veterans Services
- Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC)
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion

The Department also coordinates the activities of the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Health
- Council on Aging
- Veterans Council
- Board of Youth Services
- Disability Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- Rainbow Commission

The mission of the HHS Department is to protect the health of the public and assist residents with accessing services to meet basic human needs. In order to accomplish the mission of HHS, the Department relies on many different sources of funding including, Town, state and federal funds, grants, foundation funding, and donations. Additionally, hundreds of volunteers assist with carrying out the Department mission.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

BOARD OF HEALTH

The mission of Arlington's Board of Health is to protect the public health of the town through enforcement of health codes and regulations, while promoting a healthy community. The Board of Health is a statutory board comprised of three community members at large, one of which must be a physician, appointed by the Town Manager for three-year terms. The Board holds public meetings and conducts public hearings as necessary to evaluate data, establish regulations, and review health code violations.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Community Center. The Department handles day-to-day procedural operations and administrative duties associated with the Board of Health. The Department is required by State statutes and regulations to perform many duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. These mandated requirements are fulfilled by environmental health and public health nursing staff within the Health Department. The Department is comprised of a Public Health Director, three Health Compliance Officers, one Administrative Assistant (which is shared with Human Services) and a part-time Public Health Nurse.

Permits Issued	2019	2020	2021	2022
Food	368	198	216	269
Tobacco	19	19	19	19
Waste Hauler	21	16	17	18
Funeral Director	7	7	7	7
Tanning Establishment	1	1	0	1
Public Pool	8	4	8	8
Public Beach	3	2	3	3
Ice Rink	1	0	0	0
Keeping of Hens	14	17	22	23
Camps	6	4	12	7
Body Art Establishment	1	1	3	3
Body Art Practitioner	2	2	9	7
Total	448	271	316	364

Inspection Type	2019	2020	2021	2022
Food Establishment & Temporary Food Event*	484	254	304	350
Tobacco Compliance Check	20	20	26	55
Housing	138	14	166	159
Demolition Inspection	16	7	35	23
Nuisance Inspection	408	124	97	238
Keeping of Hens	10	4	25	23
Bodywork Establishment	0	1	1	4
Total	1,076	424	654	852

*Temporary food event inspections include: Farmer's Market, Feast of the East, Town Day, and other various public health events throughout the year.

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Type of Food Permits Issued	2019	2020	2021	2022
Food Establishment Permits	193	175	174	163
Mobile Food Permits	3	0	3	3
Residential Kitchen Permits	11	9	9	5
Farmers Market Permits	12	7	10	9
Temporary Event Food Permit	149	7	20	94

Public Health Nursing

Communicable Disease	2020	2021	2022
Babesiosis	--	2	5
Calicivirus/norovirus	1	1	1
Campylobacter Enteritis	4	4	17
Clostridium Perfringens	--	--	--
COVID-19	1,051	2,478	5,142
Cryptosporidiosis	--	--	--
Cyclosporiasis	--	1	--
Dengue Fever	--	--	--
Giardia	--	1	10
Group A strep	--	--	3
Group B Strep	3	2	--
Haemophilus influenza	--	1	1
Hepatitis A	--	--	--
Hepatitis B	--	11	3
Hepatitis C	5	9	20
Hepatitis D	--	--	--
Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis	--	1	1
Influenza	127	7	190
Invasive Bacterial Infection	--	--	--
Legionellosis	1	3	--
Listeriosis	--	1	--
Lyme Disease	--	--	50
Malaria	--	1	--
MPox	--	--	4
Mumps	1	--	--
Pertussis	1	--	--
Salmonella	--	8	5
Shigatoxin	--	1	1
Shigellosis	--	--	--
Strep pneumonia -invasive	--	--	1

Tickborne	--	--	1
Tuberculosis <i>contact, and suspected cases in addition to probable and confirmed cases</i>	--	42	74
Varicella	--	2	4
Vibriosis	--	--	1
West Nile Virus	3	--	--
Yersiniosis	1	1	--
Total	1,196	1,860	5,534

-- Denotes disease not tracked/present in those years

In 2022 the Health Department administered 1,310 COVID vaccines and 353 Influenza vaccines.

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD

The Council on Aging Board met monthly throughout 2022 on the 3rd Thursday of the month with Michael Quinn as Chair. Highlights of Board activities for the year included assisting staff and other committees with guidance toward the final steps of the building renovation and grand reopening of the Arlington Community Center. The Board was instrumental in the ribbon cutting event that took place in April. Board members were active at the COA booth on Town Day and also volunteered with various COA programs and services such as meal deliveries on Thanksgiving morning, AARP Tax Preparation, and/or serving as volunteers in the day-to-day activities of the Arlington Community Center. Toward the end of the year the Board was a force behind a campaign to raise money for an Emergency Fund through the Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation.



Town staff, Council on Aging members, and the public celebrate the opening of Arlington's new Community Center.

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COUNCIL ON AGING

The Council on Aging (COA), a division of the Department of Health and Human Services, is a community based social services organization that supports residents age 60 and over in Arlington.

The highlight of 2022 was the grand re-opening of the Arlington Community Center (formally Senior Center) after a 2+ year renovation. The renovated center is home to space for older adults during the hours the COA is open and includes: a Yoga/Exercise Room, Pool/Billiards Room, Games Room, Café, Library, Arts & Crafts Room, Drop-In Room, Main Hall and state of the art Kitchen. There is no membership fee and all older adults are welcome.

New offerings for older adults in the Community Center include: various levels of fitness classes five days a week, Art Therapy classes, cooking and nutrition education, a diverse list of support groups, Intergenerational programs such as Technology Help, various theater and acting classes, mah jongg and other games, new affinity groups and plenty of time for dropping in to casually visit with neighbors in the café or drop-in room. Each month the Community Center also hosts themed luncheons and special events. Two days per week, lunches are served by Minuteman Senior Services, providing the social connection of a congregate meal.

Between pandemic restrictions and construction closures, older adults were eager to have the opportunity to connect in person again. Since re-opening in April, the Community Center has seen over 1,700 unique Arlington residents in the building for COA programming. In addition, the division also continued to engage nearly 200 residents virtually, using hybrid options for programs whenever possible to accommodate those who are not able to attend in person.

Other Highlights

Following several years of research and planning, the COA released the Arlington Age and Dementia Friendly Action Plan in January. The plan highlights action steps to improve social and physical environments to make Arlington livable for older residents, while also prioritizing members of the community living with dementia and their families.

The robust COA Transportation program continues to be a crucial need for the town, completing nearly 9,000 rides in 2022. In addition to running two fully accessible passenger vans in town 5-days a week, the program also offers partnerships with Uber, Arlington Belmont Taxi for discounted taxi vouchers, a volunteer medical escort program for out-of-town appointments, and transportation to Arlington EATS market. The COA also continues to run the town-wide Sanborn Foundation transportation program, scheduling rides to cancer related appointments with no cost to the rider.

When 19 older adults were displaced due to a fire at Chestnut Manor in January, the COA mobilized to support them and worked with other town organizations and departments to rehome each resident, replace needed items that were lost in the fire and provide mental health support.

4,779 one-on-one direct social work services were provided by COA Social Workers in 2022 via home visits, office appointments or phone consultation.

The COA distributed \$13,400 to older adults in need through the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Fund, \$30,000 through the Senior Property Tax Work off program, \$4,500 through the Harry Barber Volunteer Program, \$6,800 through the Sevoyan Dental Assistance Program, and \$34,000 of financial assistance through other various trusts and special programs.

The COA connected over 200 residents with volunteer SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) Counselors for Medicare enrollment assistance and also financial and/or legal assistance.

Continued as a certified SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) outreach and application provider, conducting outreach, and assisting with applications.

Continued providing support to residents applying for the state low-income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP) Fuel Assistance with both new applications and renewals. Due to the unprecedented increase in oil and heating costs, October – December 2022 had a 200% increase in assistance requests.

Smaller initiatives in 2022 included: 50 volunteers delivered 100 turkey dinners to isolated older adults on Thanksgiving Day; 100 holiday gift bags were distributed by volunteers and the Arlington Police Department to homebound older adults through our 5th annual Warm Wishes program; 140 older adults participated in the Technology Loan Library Program, borrowing devices such as Chromebooks and Wi-Fi hot spots.

VETERANS' SERVICES

Veterans' Services is a division of Health and Human Services. The Director of Veterans' Services works with Veterans living in Arlington to assist with accessing basic needs. Through Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 115, direct financial assistance is provided to veterans who qualify. Additionally, the Director assists veterans with accessing federal VA benefits.

2022 Veterans' Services Highlights

- The Director serves as the Chairman of the Veterans Council along with six other members. The Council focuses on addressing current issues related to veteran memorials, the review and development of policies pertaining to Arlington veterans, and new

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- projects to promote Arlington and veterans.
- The annual Memorial Day ceremony featured Air Force combat pilot, LT. Taylor Bye. LT. Bye participated in two school assemblies and as one of the keynote speakers for the ceremony conducted at Town Hall. Navy CAPT. Eric Jabs participated in the ceremony as a keynote speaker.
- The Director assists local veterans and families in applying for, and receiving, federal VA benefits. Arlington veterans and/or dependents receive over \$4.65M in tax-free veteran benefits from the VA.
- The Director has conducted a series of open meetings to update veterans on the recent changes in federal VA benefits.
- The Select Board unanimously approved the design renderings for Arlington's Veterans Memorial Park to replace the current park located in the town center next to the Central Fire Station. With this approval, long overdue improvements to this area will be made that will be a fitting tribute to our veterans and will provide residents an opportunity to enjoy the newly designed park.



One of the renderings of the proposed Veterans Memorial Park.

2023 Veteran Services' Goals

- The Director and Veterans Council will begin seeking and reviewing funding options for the new Veterans Memorial Park.
- The Director will continue to engage the community on benefits and services available to our veterans and families. The focus will include increasing public awareness of the recent legislative changes that have expanded benefits to veterans of all eras.
- The Director will continue to work with other agencies and companies in the area to promote benefits and services provided on the local, state, and federal level.



ARLINGTON YOUTH COUNSELING CENTER (AYCC)

The Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC) is a state-licensed, community-based mental health center serving Arlington youth (ages 3-21) and their families. AYCC is the leading provider of outpatient and school-based child and adolescent mental health services in Arlington, offering individual, group, and family counseling, psychiatric evaluation, and medication management. Central to its mission, AYCC is committed to ensuring that all community youth and families have access to comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and high quality mental health care, regardless of their ability to pay. In addition to mental health services, AYCC oversees First Step: a support group for victims and survivors of domestic violence, and offers community resource coordination and case management services to Arlington residents experiencing unmet basic needs.



2022 AYCC Highlights

- Provided mental health services to a total of 369 children, teens, and adult caregivers, including 141 new AYCC clients. Conducted a total of 8,048 sessions (including psychotherapy, psychiatric evaluation, and medication treatment), as well as 22 group sessions. 3,663 of all sessions were conducted via telehealth.
- Provided an additional 550 hours of clinical consultation and care coordination to AYCC clients and families.
- Provided 1,155 counseling sessions to 82 APS students through AYCC's school-based Project Success program.
- Partnered with the Arlington METCO Director to ensure Arlington METCO students have equitable access to AYCC's services.
- Contracted with Lexikeet Language Services to provide document translation and interpretation services to non-English speaking

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AYCC clients.

- Provided a free virtual workshop, “Self-Compassion for Arlington Parents and Caregivers,” and subsequent 4-week therapeutic group for parent/caregiver members of the community.
- Facilitated a six-week, school-based friendship group for Gibbs students.
- Offered a series of free, therapeutic groups during summer break, including Cooking Club for elementary students, and a Teen Support Group for 7th and 8th graders.
- Partnered with the Board of Youth Services to host a virtual community forum, “Talking to Children –Young and Old– about Suicide.”
- Provided community resource support and case management to 60 Arlington residents to identify and address unmet basic needs and to facilitate access to local and statewide resources and assistance programs.
- Awarded a \$500,000 Sustaining Grant from the Cummings Foundation, to be disbursed over ten years.
- Oversaw a successful fundraising campaign for Arlington’s Holiday Help Program, generating over \$35,000 in donations from schools, churches, local business, community groups, and individual donors.
- Supported 167 families (317 children and teens) through the Holiday Help program. In total, families received \$32,000 in gift cards to help purchase gifts for their children.
- Established an Emergency Assistance Fund to support Arlington residents experiencing unexpected and short term financial crises. Through an end of year appeal, HHS/AYCC raised nearly \$10,000 to support this initiative.
- Collaborated with the Board of Youth Services (BYS) on a successful year-end fundraising appeal. Through the generous support of community members and local businesses, AYCC and the BYS raised nearly \$40,000 to support youth mental health services at AYCC.
- Collaborated with the Board of Youth Services to honor former Board member and founder of First Step, Elaine Shea. The Board of Youth Services planted a tree in memory of Elaine, and hosted a tree dedication ceremony at the Whittemore Robbins House for a small gathering of Elaine’s family and friends.



The tree planted and ceremony in memory of Elaine Shea.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Division of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is responsible for leading the racial equity initiatives laid out by the Town. The DEI Division responds to questions, concerns, and complaints that pertain to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, and cooperates with other departments to ensure the ADA Self-Evaluation Transition and Implementation Plan is being used and considered as projects across town develop. The DEI Division collaborates with departments, boards & commissions, community organizations and faith communities across the Town to build supportive partnerships and strategize for increased community engagement to advance equity goals. The DEI Division manages and coordinates the work of the Human Rights Commission, LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission, and Disability Commission, including planning and executing programming and managing budgets. The following activities and programs are some of the highlights that took place during 2022:

Training, Education and Organizational Structure

- Established partnership and aligned DEI initiatives for Town and School District, in working directly with DEI Director for Arlington Public Schools (APS).
- Participated in and led YW Boston’s Stand Against Racism campaign throughout the month of April for Town Departments. The DEI Division provided workshops throughout the month open to all Town and School employees. Additionally, supported departments if they wished to hold further staff conversations focused on race.
- Two full-time positions were added to the DEI Division: Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, and ADA Coordinator.
- Contracted and began work with Opportunity Consulting, a Washington, D.C., Black and Women Owned business to conduct a Com-

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munity Equity Audit to assess the Town's barriers to access and determine ways to develop better and more equitable policies and practices in three areas: Voting/Civic Participation, Housing, and the Town Workforce.

- Attended week-long 2022 NAACP National Convention.
- Contracted and began work with Strategy Matters, to provide Racial Equity and DEI workshops to all Town employees, fostering a learning environment that encourages co-ownership over DEI values and responsibilities across the town.



Stand Against Racism employee discussion about representation in Town communications.

Programs and Projects

- Partnered with the Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observance Committee to put on the 34th annual celebration, which took place virtually for the second time.
- Coordinated and supported Arlington Human Rights Commission Black History Month programming and annual banner project.
- Supported and coordinated Pride Banner campaign with Rainbow Commission to create Pride banners for the center of town to celebrate and spread awareness of Pride Month, in addition to their Pride Event.
- Partnered Disability Commission with True Story Theater and Council on Aging to provide three community programs centered around the lived experience of individuals with disabilities.
- Conducted outreach at multiple farmers' market days and participated in National Day Out and Town Day and supported DEI commission's tabling and spreading awareness of the Division's services.
- Continued to be an active member and leader within the Municipal Immigrant Support Network (MISN) and continued to advance strategies and communications with neighboring municipalities, community organiza-

tions, APS, and Town entities to respond to increasing newcomer population.

- Continued participation in two-year Language Access Pilot Project, in partnership with MAPC, the Blue Hills Community Health Alliance, and the towns and cities of Beverly, Randolph, and Milton. Project consists of researching best practices in language accessibility and translation, and how to creatively provide resources and services to the community.
- Continued leadership of the MA Municipal DEI Coalition, and participated in DEI Guide Launch event, and monthly GARE/REMAP workshop sessions.
- Continued collaboration with Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC) and Artist in Residence on community engagement programming to support Black Joy in Arlington project. Engagement opportunities include creation of affinity spaces for Black community members to share, gather, and converse.

Goals Moving Forward

Complete the Racial Equity and DEI workshops with Strategy Matters and continue partnership and support as employees will incorporate the learnings into their work.

- Co-create implementation steps based on outcomes and recommendations of the Community Equity Audit, to advance equity across all facets of the Town.
- Provide, improve, and build up educational programming and opportunities for employees and community members, including additional training and workshops.
- Continue alignment of DEI programming and equity initiatives with the DEI Director for Arlington Public Schools, including increased programming for multicultural holidays.
- Establish outreach and communication initiatives to improve access and expand community engagement, including development of a working group made up of individuals from Town departments and community organizations that will guide the development of the



One of many Strategy Matters Racial Equity and DEI Workshops held at Town Hall.

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Community Engagement Strategic Plan.

- Expand programming available in multiple languages, including community forums focused on understanding Town government and a Social Services fair with HHS and community-based organizations.
- Support DPCD and assist with engagement strategies for the MBTA Community Zoning Project.
- Municipal Equality Index (MEI) Working Group will address areas in need of change, specifically improvements to the Town's laws, policies, and services affecting the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Continue to provide support to Human Rights, Disability, and LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commissions.
- Revitalize summer Community Conversation series to be collaborative with multiple departments and APS DEI.
- Continue to advance the Black Joy Project and the Elevating Arlington's Voices of Color (EAVoC) archive project, in partnership with the Robbins Library and Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture (ACAC), and supplemental programming, to continue to give voice to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community members.
- Formalize and continue participation in the MA DEI Coalition, established in early 2021, to connect DEI municipal leaders across the state to share challenges and best practices.

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

The Arlington Disability Commission continued to provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to Town officials, residents, organizations, and others to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services, and programs.

In September the Commission welcomed Tim Ross, the new full-time ADA Coordinator, to manage the Town's ADA compliance and also support the Commission. Teresa Marzilli, the Town's Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, is guiding the Commission in developing a plan to reach more disabled residents and their allies.

The Commission continues to strengthen connections with other commissions and groups, both within Arlington and in neighboring communities. Commission representatives join the two other DEI Commissions on a monthly basis to share information, and Commission designees participate on various Town Committees, such as the AHS Building Committee and the Remote Participation Study Committee. There is Commission

representation at the monthly meetings organized by CODA (Commissions on Disability Alliance), which have been a valuable source of information on how surrounding communities are serving residents with disabilities. The Commission has been well represented at several trainings and events organized by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) this year.

In December the Commission held its first hybrid meeting, with both in-person and remote attendees, as part of the Hybrid Meeting Pilot program. This initiative holds promise for removing barriers to civic engagement for people with disabilities, and the Commission looks forward to exploring new tools and technologies to advance participation.

The Town continues to make progress in implementing the changes that were identified in the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (released in 2020) to make public buildings and spaces ADA-compliant. Notable examples that were completed in 2022 are: the Community Center (formerly the Senior Center); Whittemore Park and the renovation of Broadway Plaza. The Town renovated several playgrounds with Universal Design principles this year—with more renovations planned in 2023—providing diversified and more inclusive recreational opportunities available to all. In partnership with the Department of Public Works, the Commission submitted the application to continue the curb cut ramps program using CDBG (community Development Block Grants) funds, which was approved.

Commission Highlights

Civic Engagement

- Participated in the Hybrid Meeting Pilot Program for municipal meetings, and funded the technical tools for the Health and Human Services Conference Room.
- Monitored voting accessibility issues.
- Funded the new ADA compliant Adobe licenses for the Town, to improve website compliance.

Recreation & Open Space

- Advocated for Communication Boards in playgrounds, with one installed at the Summer Street playground to help community members who cannot easily verbalize to communicate.
- Met with advocates about inclusive recreation, such as Universal Design playgrounds, the TOPSoccer program, and beach wheelchairs.
- Participated in playground renovation meetings and Mystic Bike Path meetings.

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Communication Board at the Summer Street Playground.

Events & Outreach

- Hosted an Emergency Preparedness Training, presented by the Massachusetts Office on Disability, for people with disabilities in the Arlington community.
- Co-sponsored events with the LBGTQIA+ Rainbow and Human Rights Commissions, including “Intersections of LBGTQIA+ Identity and Neurodiversity.”
- Met with disability educators about the Understanding Our Differences program, which has been implemented in all seven of Arlington’s elementary schools, and being funded by AEF.
- Hosted three programs about living with disabilities with True Story Theater, one of which was co-sponsored by the Council on Aging.
- Two Commissioners completed MOD’s Community Access Monitor Training.
- Expanded outreach and commission awareness at the Farmer’s Market.
- Collaborated on, and published, disability-related resources, including: the updated Disability Commission brochure; the Communication Boards brochure; the Robbins Library accessibility web page; and the Resource List on the Disability Commission website.
- Co-chair Paul Parravano, Deputy Town Manager Jim Feeney, and ADA Coordinator Tim Ross spoke at MOD’s Disability Summit and presented on a grant used to fund hybrid technology in the HHS conference room.

Guidance on ADA Compliance

- Continued conversations regarding building and zoning variances.
- In the fall the Development Review Team was established, with representation from the ADA Coordinator, the Department of Planning & Community Development, Inspectional Services, the Fire Department, and the Natural Resources Department. This multi-department team works to review appli-

cations to the Redevelopment Board (ARB) for Special Permits under Environmental Design Review.

The Commission will continue to advocate for the rights of Arlington residents living with disabilities. All interested residents are encouraged to attend the monthly public meetings, on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. For questions or concerns the Commission can be reached at disabilitycomm@town.arlington.ma.us.



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The mission of the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is to work individually and collaboratively with various groups in our community to celebrate the ever-changing tapestry of our Town and to emphasize, through educational and social outreach, the danger of intolerance at every level. The School Committee, Town Moderator, and the Town Manager, with approval by the Select Board, have appointing authority for thirteen members of the Commission.

The AHRC held regular monthly meetings throughout 2022, with working groups meeting monthly or as appropriate, based on need. The Commission had a retreat in November to discuss its policy of police presence at its monthly meetings. The current co-chairs, Rajeev Soneja and Christine Carney, were elected in January 2022, and new co-chairs will be elected in early 2023.

With the continued constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing policies, discussions about diversity, racial equality, and inclusion continued within the Town. Heightened awareness of racial and religious persecution domestically and internationally allowed for further reflection by the community on these issues within our Town. To address incidents of racism, homophobia, religious persecution, and other human rights violations in the Town of Arlington, the AHRC focused on the education and social awareness of the community. The AHRC promoted conversation and action by addressing individual incidents of human rights violations, fostering debate about critical human rights issues in Arlington through sponsored programs, and fostering community activities to make Arlington a more welcoming and inclusive town.

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Education, Training, and Institution Building

- Commissioners renewed ethics training.
- Relationships with the Town Manager, Chief of Police, and Co-Chairs of Town Commissions were maintained and strengthened to promote the needs of the community at large.



AHRC returned to Town Day with brochures and yard signs for the community.

Community Outreach

- The AHRC continued to offer the public a forum during each monthly meeting to allow the community to address the Commission on matters relating to equality and fairness. Throughout the year, several community members took advantage of this opportunity.
- Monthly agendas provided continuity for productive discussions raised by community members during the previous month's meeting.
- The Community was given the opportunity to meet with Commissioners twice in person at the Arlington Farmers' Market in July and October and at Town Day in September.
- In March, the current and previous co-chairs participated in a Friends of the Robbins Library, "Conversation with the Arlington Human Rights Commission."
- Co-sponsored or publicized events with a wide range of community groups and government entities.
- AHRC representatives participated in the Massachusetts Association of Human Rights Commission (MAHRC) meetings and the APS Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee.
- Continued co-sponsorship of the Town's Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration and began working collaboratively to support its efforts.
- Celebrated Black History Month in February 2022 by expanding our collection of banners along Massachusetts Avenue highlighting Black Massachusetts citizens.

- Supported and co-sponsored Indigenous Peoples Day programs in neighboring communities, including Belmont, Winchester, and Newton.
- Co-Sponsored events with the Arlington LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission, APS LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Task Force, Network for Social Justice, Cyrus Dallin Art Museum, Robbins Library, Belmont Celebrates Indigenous Peoples Day, and the Arlington Chapter of Moms Demand Action to End Gun Violence.
- Participated in the AHS Heterogeneous Study Group.

Formal AHRC Statements

- Statement on the War in Ukraine
- China's Treatment of the Uyghur People and Other Ethnic Minorities in Xinjiang Province
- Statement on Recent Gun Violence
- Recent advances in Human Rights in MA
- Statement on Reproductive Rights
- Statement on Protests in Iran

Incidents and Complaint Response

- Handled 29 incidents related to human rights violations occurring in Arlington. Incidents were reported by residents, schools, and the APD, as follows: 29 Cases, 11 of which involved the APS and 11 of which were also referred from or handled by the APD.
- Continued to work closely with the APD and APS to learn of, track, and, where necessary, address incidents impacting human and civil rights.
- Continued to work under a Memorandum of Agreement that includes the APS, AHRC, and APD sets forward Guidelines for Responding to Hate Incidents in the Arlington Public Schools.

The Commission continues to address human rights issues challenging those who live, work, pass through, and visit Arlington. 2022 was another year of changes that required the community and the Commission to adapt alike. We held virtual meetings and virtual events to encourage community engagement to welcome and celebrate diversity. The Commission sponsored and held community activities, discussions with police, and outreach to community groups to foster respect and facilitate training, education, and incident reporting with the police, the Town, and our schools to increase protection for all in Arlington.

Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

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The Commission generally meets each third Wednesday of the month at 8:30pm. Visit arlingtonhumanrights.org/ to stay updated on the work of the Commission or contact the co-chairs at ahrc@town.arlington.ma.us

LGBTQIA+ RAINBOW COMMISSION

The LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission was established by Town Meeting in 2017 with a mission to promote equality-affirming policies regarding the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities, and to bring greater visibility and empowerment to the LGBTQIA+ population through education, advocacy, and collaboration with other Town agencies, schools, and community groups.

During 2022 the LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission fulfilled its mission in the following ways:

Events, Organization and Participation

- In March, the Commission co-hosted LGBTQIA+ Community Conversation, with the Arlington Public Schools' Rainbow Task Force, and the Arlington Human Rights Commission. The panel discussion highlighted the experiences of LGBTQIA+ students and staff from Arlington Public Schools. Moderated by Jeff Perotti, founding director of the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students.
- In April, about 50 people tuned in to the co-sponsored webinar "Intersections of LGBTQIA+ Identity and Neurodiversity" featuring a discussion between Lyric Holmans, founder of the internationally recognized neurodiversity lifestyle blog Neurodivergent Rebel and creator of the popular hashtag #askingautistics on Twitter, and Rainbow Commissioner Kari Sasportas. Both answered questions and talked about what it's like to be neurodivergent and LGBTQIA+.
- Commissioners and their families participated in the Arlington Heights Window Painting in May, by painting the windows at Roasted Granola café. The Commission sponsored windows painted by QSA, GSA, and Rainbow Alliance student groups from Pierce Elementary School, the Gibbs and Ottoson middle schools, and Arlington High School, in addition to its own window. The theme of the painting event was spring, to celebrate environmental sustainability.
- Organized three rainbow crosswalk paintings for Pride Month, in Arlington Center at the intersection of Mystic Ave. and Massachusetts Ave.; in Arlington Heights at the intersection

of Park Ave. and Massachusetts Ave.; and in East Arlington at the intersection of Lake Street and Massachusetts Ave.

- Hosted Pride Festival at Town Hall Gardens. Over 300 people, many of them residents of Arlington (and more than a few from neighboring towns) attended. Participants included the young and the old—and everyone in between; LGBTQIA+ parents and their kids; straight, cisgender parents who were there to support their LGBTQIA+ kids; and straight allies there to support all of us. We also had town leaders out in force living the town's tagline: "Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion."
- Pride Festival outreach resulted in high attendance including Arlington town employees and leaders.
- Hosted an LGBTQIA+ Community Picnic in October at Robbins Park.
- On November 20th, the Commission co-sponsored a candlelight vigil in honor of Transgender Day of Remembrance on the lawn at First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, MA in Arlington Center. First Parish Minister Rev. Erica Richmond offered remarks honoring the lives of transgender and gender diverse individuals that have been lost to bias-related violence. Rainbow Commissioner Kym Goldsmith called on community members to honor those lost to violence by taking action to support Arlington and Greater Boston's richly diverse transgender and gender diverse community.

Community Event Co-sponsorship

- LGBTQ + Seniors and Friends weekly virtual meetings
- "Black, Queer, and Aging," on February 10, 2022, from 7-8pm via Zoom. Simmons University Professor Gary Bailey facilitated a discussion of Black LGBTQIA+ people on the topic of aging in the LGBTQIA+ community. Organized by LexPride and co-sponsored by the LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission.
- Robbins Library Queer Book Group
- Robbins Library screenings of Reel Queer films
- Active Bystander Training for LGBTQIA+ Seniors and Friends," March 15, 2022. Organized by LexPride and co-sponsored by Lexington Senior Services, Arlington Council on Aging, and Arlington LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission.
- Transgender Day of Visibility, March 31, 2022. Panel discussion of transgender

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

and gender diverse people including panel discussion, Krysta Petrie (she/her), Noah Stang-Osborne (they/he), and Parker Morri-Sciolla (they/them). Organized/co-hosted with Rainbows Across Communities.

- Supported Arlington High School GSA t-shirt sale fundraiser for the Transgender Emergency Fund of Massachusetts INC and publicized their t-shirt sale.
- SAGE Table Dinner, November 10, 2022. Intergenerational dinner of LGBTQIA+ people and allies. Organized by and co-hosted with Arlington's Council on Aging.

Collaborations with Arlington Town Government and Commissions

- Worked closely with Arlington Rainbow Task Force to advocate for LGBTQIA+ inclusion in school curricula, data, and professional development and to support school community equity work. Successfully launched Community Conversation series, which elevates the voices of LGBTQIA+ students, faculty and staff. Partnered with Arlington Assistant Superintendent Rod MacNeil and the Arlington Human Rights Commission on this work.
- Continued conversations with Arlington Police Chief Julie Flaherty and members of her command staff to advocate for equitable treatment of transgender and gender diverse residents. Lt. Greg Flavin attended the Commission's March 2022 meeting to report back to Commissioners on how the department's updated policy on interacting with transgender and gender diverse residents was being implemented and offered anecdotes from the field on how it had improved APD responses to transgender residents experiencing crises.
- Supported Arlington DEI Office efforts to participate in the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index for which Arlington has earned a score of 100 in 2020, 2021, and 2022
- Collaborated with the Arlington Human Rights Commission and Disability Commission to issue a statement condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine and offering

Arlington residents meaningful and actionable ways to take local action to support those affected by the invasion. This statement marked the first time that the town's three DEI Commissions have issued a joint statement.

Advocacy & Social Justice

- Drafted the annual Pride Proclamation from the Select Board.
- Submitted a warrant to Town Meeting amending Arlington's domestic partnership bylaw to make it more equitable for domestic partnerships of more than two people and successfully advocated for its passage.
- Unanimously voted to support a Town Meeting warrant article creating a Civilian Police Advisory Commission.

Communications

- Published 14 blog posts on the Rainbow Commission website on matters of relevance and importance to Arlington's LGBTQIA+ community.
- Sent 21 news and events emails to our newsletter subscribers.
- Maintained social media presence to update the community on Commission activities and issues of interest or importance to the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Generated news coverage in
 - YourArlington for Transgender Day of Remembrance event
 - Boston Spirit for Pride events
 - Provided background information for Boston Globe Love Letters podcast episode on polyamary

The commission generally meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. via hybrid fashion by meeting in person at the Arlington Community Center and livestreaming the meeting for online participants via Zoom. All meetings are open to the public and the commission encourages community members and representatives from other Town committees and commissions to attend. For more information, see rainbowarlington.org/ or email rainbow@town.arlington.ma.us.



Crosswalk spray painting in the Heights for Pride Month and the Transgender Day of Remembrance Candlelight Vigil