

**Tennessee Human Rights Commission
in partnership with**

**City of Chattanooga Office of Multicultural Affairs
City of Chattanooga Office of Economic and Community Development**

Present:

**Fair Housing Hot Topics:
What You Need to Know**

**Tuesday, May 11, 2021
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. CST**



This webinar is made possible by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

WEBINAR AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m.** **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Beverly Watts-Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission
Anthony Sammons- Director, City of Chattanooga Office of Economic and Community Dev.
Karen McReynolds- Director, City of Chattanooga Office of Multicultural Affairs
- 9:10 a.m.** **Emily O'Donnell**- Attorney at Law, City of Chattanooga Community Leader
Fair Housing and the Eviction Process
- 10:00 a.m.** **Tracy McCracken**- Director of Fair Housing-National Community Reinvestment Coalition
Fair Housing During COVID-19: Does it Matter?
- 10:50 a.m.** **Beverly Watts**- Executive Director- Tennessee Human Rights Commission
Tennessee Human Rights Act: An Overview of Fair Housing
- 11:15 a.m.** **Open Q&A**
- 11:30 a.m.** **Closing remarks and adjournment**
Beverly Watts-Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Commission

SPEAKERS



Emily O'Donnell, ESQ.

Attorney-at-Law and Chattanooga Community Leader

Emily O'Donnell was born and raised in Decatur, Georgia. She earned her B.A. in Political Science at Sewanee, The University of the South. After college, she spent 2 years serving in an Americorps program in Flagstaff, AZ. Emily then earned her J.D. from Georgia State University. After graduation, she moved to Chattanooga. For more than 7-years, she worked as a staff attorney at Legal Aid of East TN, where she represented low-income clients in civil legal cases. During this time, she gained a passion for affordable housing and social justice.

She also came to understand and appreciate the systemic and chronic nature of poverty. After Legal Aid, Emily spent several years as a nonprofit executive at the Public Education Foundation and the Women's Fund of Greater Chattanooga, where she championed equity in education and gender equality. She has advocated for victims of human trafficking, written legislation to protect victims of domestic violence from eviction, and worked with local groups to increase the political activism of women in her community. She is now a private practice attorney in Chattanooga, where she lives with her husband and two young daughters.



Tracy McCracken, ESQ.

Director of Fair Housing- *National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)*

Tracy McCracken is NCRC's Director of Fair Housing. She has garnered extensive fair housing and fair lending testing experience as a project coordinator with DB Consulting Group, as a senior project coordinator with the National Fair Housing Alliance, and as the executive director of the Mobile Fair Housing Center. She has conducted testing in the areas of rental, sales, lending, insurance and public accommodations.

Tracy is one of the authors of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Study of the Fair Housing Initiatives Program." She is a graduate of The University of Montevallo and Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law. She is a member of the Alabama State Bar Association.



Beverly L. Watts

Executive Director- Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Nashville native Beverly L. Watts was appointed the Executive Director of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission in July 2007. Prior to her current appointment she served as Special Advisor to the Chair at the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission responsible for state and local relations. She has more than 30 years of experience in civil rights enforcement and education in the public and private sector. From October, 2004 to October 2006 she served as the first Executive Director of the National Fair Housing Training Academy.

Beverly served for more than 12 years as the Executive Director of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and served in numerous other leadership positions in Illinois, and Kentucky. She was one of the first Title IX Coordinators in the US at the Office for Civil Rights and has served as adjunct faculty in Sociology at Spalding University. She was Senior Consultant for Ralph G. Moore & Associates (RGMA) in Chicago assisting clients in developing strategic initiatives in operations, diversity and supplier diversity programs. She has presented to numerous organizations on leadership, civil rights, diversity, and motivation at the local, national and international level.

Beverly Watts is a past President of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) where she currently serves as the 1st Vice President. She currently serves on the Equal Educational Opportunities Group (EEOG) and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC) Boards. She is a member of the TN Access to Justice Commission. She is a past Chair of Women Executives in State Government, has served on the CABLE Nashville and the YWCA of Middle Tennessee boards.

Beverly is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the 2019 CABLE Power of Inclusion Champion Award, the 2018 CABLE Spirit of Leadership Award, 2018 YWCA Academy of Women, 2016 YWCA Nashville Athena Nominee, the ECHO 2014 Dreamers Award, the 2014 Frances Dancy Hooks Award, the YWCA 2014 Carrie Hull Award, the City of Louisville Martin Luther King award and the 2005 induction into the KY Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

She is a graduate of Tennessee State University, Southern Illinois University. She has completed the Duke University Leadership Program for State Executives and the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Leadership Program.



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Tennessee Human Rights Commission

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