

# **EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION**

## Data Analysis Report

2025 Annual Review

City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Data Period: January - December 2025

## Executive Summary

*This comprehensive report analyzes the communication records and complaint data of the Equal Rights Commission (ERC) for the full calendar year 2025 (January through December). The ERC serves as a critical resource for Milwaukee residents seeking assistance with issues related to housing, employment, discrimination, and civil rights under Milwaukee Code of Ordinances Chapter 109.*

### 1. Total Complaints:

**45 (Employment: 19, Housing: 13, Public Accommodations: 10, Other: 3)**

Top Basis for Discrimination: Disability (18 cases, 20%)

Second Basis: Race (17 cases, 18.9%)

Third Basis: Color (9 cases, 10%)

Peak Complaint Month: December 2025 with 8 complaints

Most Active Zip Codes: 53209 (7), 53206 (6), 53225 (5), 53215 (4)

### 2. Total Communications:

**466 (203 calls + 263 email interactions)**

Total Calls Processed: 203

Total Emails Processed: 263

Top Inquiry Categories: Housing (33 cases) and Employment (28 cases)

Average Monthly Volume: 63.8 communications

Primary Staff Processor: Ramona Ramos (94% of all cases)

### 3. TOTAL EVENTS / OUTREACH IMPACT.

Total Community Outreach Events: 12 (3 ERC-hosted + 7 festival booths + 2 ERC supported events)

**Major Festivals:** PrideFest, Juneteenth, Bronzeville Cultural & Arts Festival, Mexican Fiesta, Silver City Festival (VIA CDC), Puerto Rican Festival of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Hmong New Year

**Other events supported by the ERC:** LGBTQ+ Roundtable Discussion with Mayor Johnson & The Americans With Disabilities Act 35th Anniversary Celebration in collaboration with Independence First.

**ERC Hosted events:** Two Winter Know Your Rights Community Training Events, and the Annual ERC International Human Rights Day Event.

Total Issues Reported at Events: 22

Complaints Filed from Events: 3 (PrideFest: 1, Bronzeville: 2)

Walk-In Consultations (July-Dec): 16 total, 6 resulted in complaints (37.5%)

Top Outreach Zip Code: 53215 with 21 responses across events

Geographic Reach: Multi-state (IL, IN, MN, TX) and International (Mexico, Sweden)

## KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

## Section 1: Total Complaints Analysis

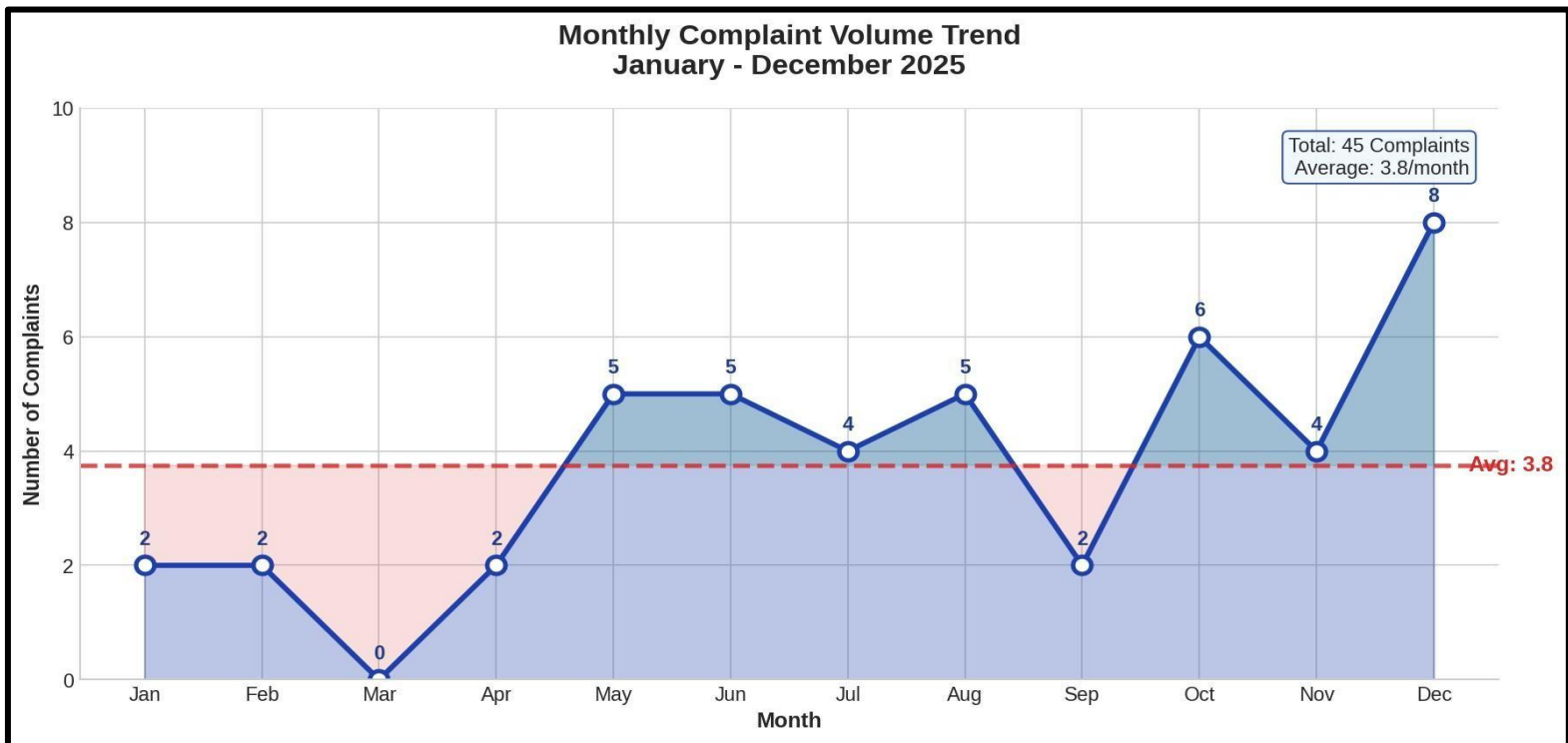
### 1.1 Overview of Formal Complaints

The ERC received and processed 45 formal complaints during the 2025 calendar year (January through December). These complaints were filed through the online complaint submission system and represent cases falling under ERC jurisdiction per Milwaukee Code of Ordinances Chapter 109.

#### Monthly Complaint Distribution (January - December 2025)

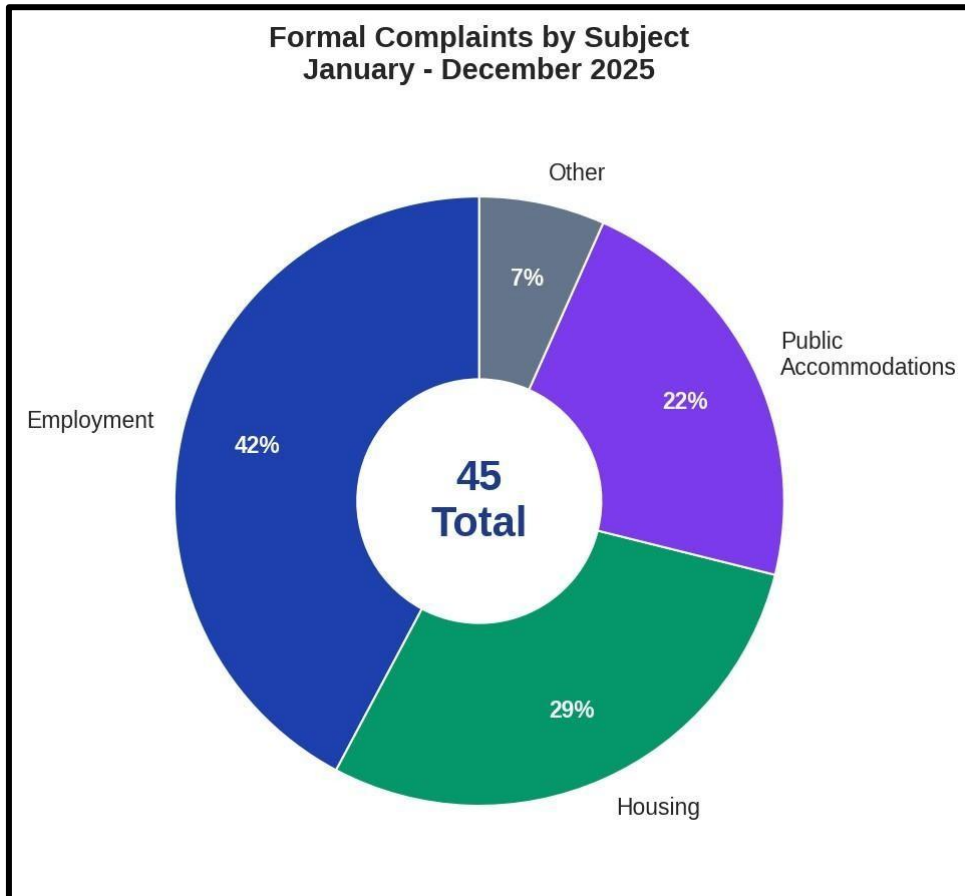
Month	Complaints	Month	Complaints
January	2	July	4
February	2	August	5
March	0	September	2
April	2	October	6
May	5	November	4
June	5	December	8

**Total Formal Complaints: 45**



## 1.2 Complaint Subject Categories

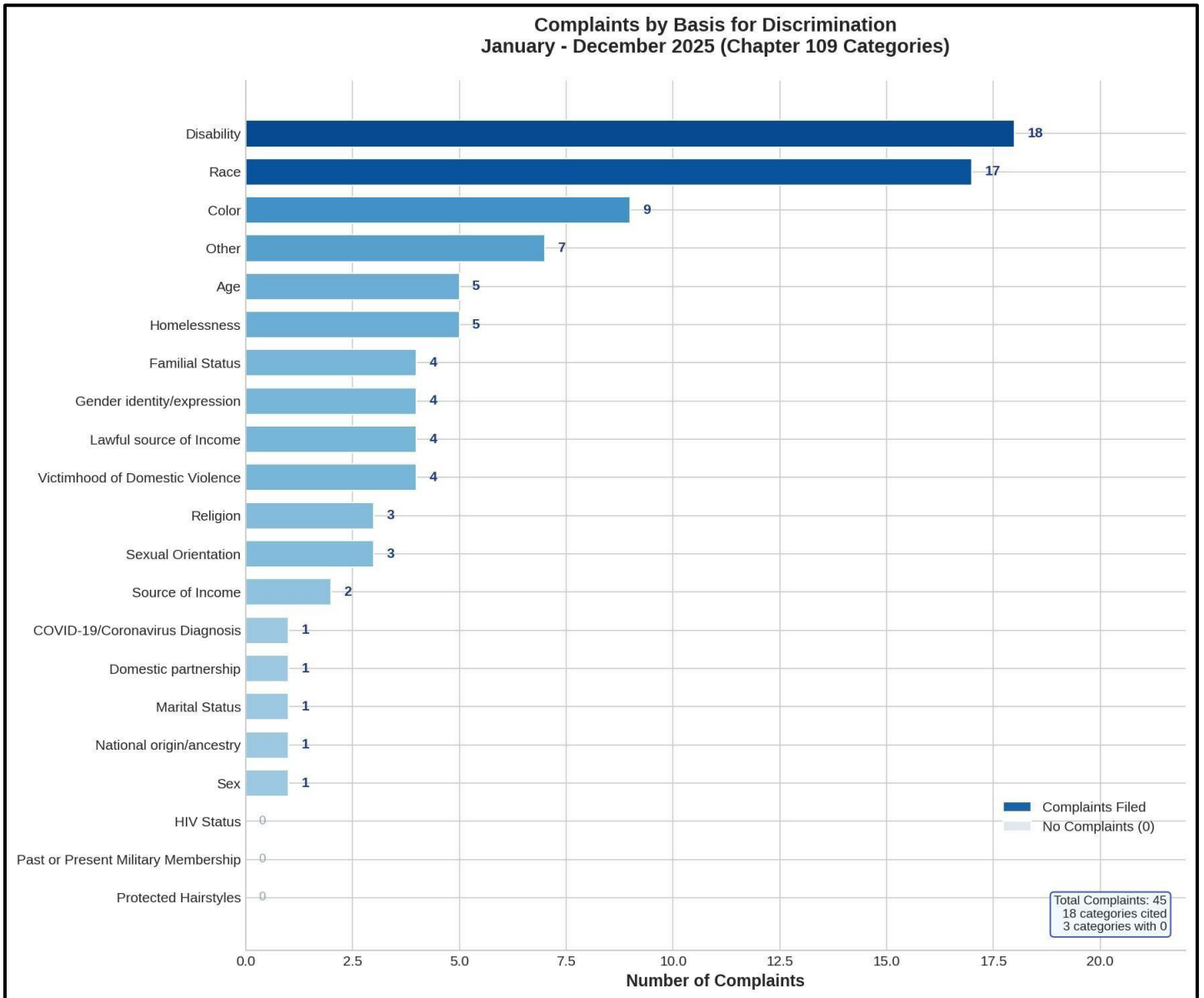
Complaint Subject	Count	Percentage
Employment	19	42.2%
Housing	13	28.9%
Public Accommodations	10	22.2%
Other	3	6.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100%</b>



### 1.3 Basis for Discrimination

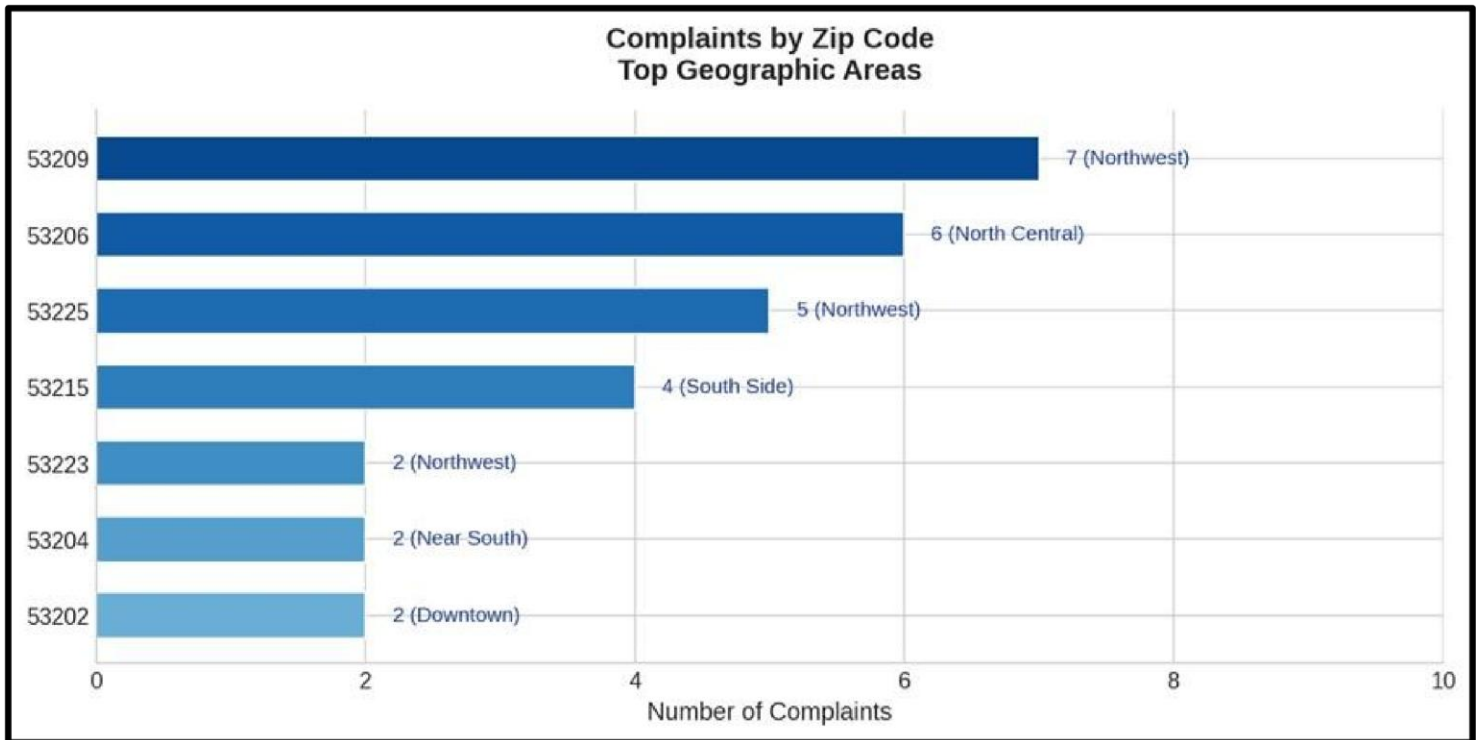
The Basis for Discrimination listed in complaints are self-reported by the complainants. Individuals often select multiple categories, select “other,” or do not select any category at all. During the complaint intake interview, staff review the information with the complainant and determine which discrimination bases appropriately apply to the case if it is not indicated.

Basis for Discrimination	Count	Percentage
Disability	18	20.0%
Race	17	18.9%
Color	9	10.0%
Other	7	7.8%
Age	5	5.6%
Homelessness	5	5.6%
Familial Status	4	4.4%
Gender identity/expression	4	4.4%
Lawful source of Income	4	4.4%
Victimhood of Domestic Violence	4	4.4%
Religion	3	3.3%
Sexual Orientation	3	3.3%
Source of Income	2	2.2%
COVID-19/Coronavirus Diagnosis	1	1.1%
Domestic partnership	1	1.1%
Marital Status	1	1.1%
National origin/ancestry	1	1.1%
Sex	1	1.1%
HIV Status	0	0
Past or Present Military Membership	0	0
Protected Hairstyles	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### 1.4 Complainant Zip Codes

Zip Code	Complaints	Neighborhood Area
53209	7	Northwest Milwaukee
53206	6	North Central Milwaukee
53225	5	Northwest Milwaukee
53215	4	South Side Milwaukee
53223	2	Northwest Milwaukee
53204	2	Near South Side
53202	2	Downtown/East Side
Other	17	Various
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	



## Section 2: Total Communications

### 2.1 Communications Overview

The ERC processed 466 total communications during 2025, comprising 203 telephone calls and 263 email interactions. This represents an average of 38 communications per month. [Staff Distribution](#)

Staff Member	Calls	Emails	Total	% of Total
Ramona Ramos	191	247	438	94.0
Omar Barberena	7	14	21	4.5%
Jaclyn Schiessl	5	2	7	1.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Top Inquiry Types

Inquiry Type	Count	Percentage
Housing	33	27.5%
Employment	28	23.3%
Unknown/Not Specified	13	10.8%
Wages	4	3.3%
Public Accommodations	4	3.3%
Other Categories	38	31.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Section 3: Total Events / Outreach Impact

### 3.1 Community Outreach Events

The ERC participated in 12 community outreach events during 2025, including 3 ERC-hosted events and 9 festival vendor/booth appearances.

#### ERC-Hosted Events

Event	Date	Location
Know Your Rights Community Event	January 29	Mitchell Street Library
Know Your Rights ERC Session	March 25	Mitchell Street Library
ERC International Human Rights Day	December 6	Milwaukee Youth Arts Center

#### Festival/Vendor Events

Event	Date(s)	Location
PrideFest	June 6-7	Summerfest Grounds
Juneteenth Celebration	June 19	Dr. MLK Jr. Drive
LGBTQ+ Roundtable with Mayor	June 25	MKE LGBT Community Center
ADA 35th Anniversary	July 31	Independence First
Bronzeville Cultural & Arts Festival	August 3	North Avenue
Mexican Fiesta	August 22-24	Henry Maier Festival Park
Silver City Festival	September 6	National Avenue
Puerto Rican Festival	September 21	Henry Maier Festival Park
Milwaukee Hmong New Year	December 12-13	State Fair Park

### 3.2 Event Outcomes

Event	Issues Reported	Complaints Filed
PrideFest	3	2
Juneteenth	9	0
Bronzeville	9	2
Mexican Fiesta	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>

### 3.3 Walk-In Consultations (July - December 2025)

Outcome	Count	Percentage
Resulted in ERC Complaint	6	37.5%
Resources/Referrals Only	9	56.3%
Complaint-Related Follow-up	1	6.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

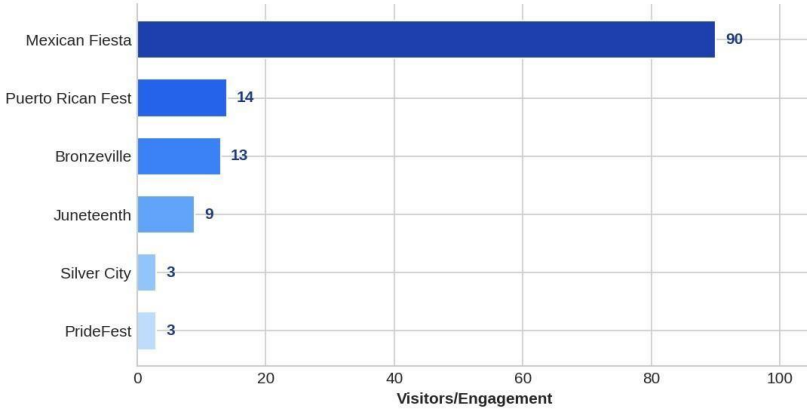
### 3.4 Geographic Reach

Zip Code	Event Responses	Neighborhood
53215	21	South Side Milwaukee
53204	12	Near South Side
53207	9	Bay View/South Shore
53212	6	Riverwest/Harambee
53202	3	Downtown/East Side

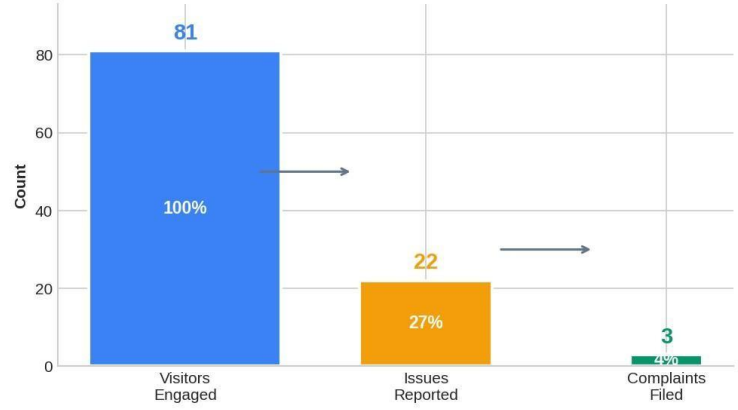
## ERC Outreach & Walk-In Summary Dashboard 2025



Event Engagement Comparison



Outreach Conversion Funnel



## Section 4: Limitations

- The online complaint system—including the ERCComplaints@milwaukee.gov email and the ERC phone line (414-286-5900)—was not fully operational during the first quarter.
- Data collection and tracking began in Quarter 2 (April 2025).
- Zip code collection at outreach events began in August 2025.
- Members of the public are not always willing to share personal details (e.g., zip code).
- Primary and secondary bases for discrimination are initially self-reported on the online form, which does not distinguish which basis is primary or secondary. Multiple categories may be selected simultaneously, and the primary basis may have been determined later during the complaint interview process.
- Multiple protected-class categories are recorded, and staff work with the complainant to determine which category takes precedence during the complaint interview.
- Categories such as Race and Color and National Origin/Ancestry may not have been clearly distinguished by complainants. Responses may have been combined under Race or selected interchangeably.
- Moving forward, the online form will be updated to include descriptions of each protected class category and provide a clearer selection process, allowing complainants to self-report each category more accurately and consistently.

## Section 5: Recommendations

### 5.1 Documentation Improvements

- Standardize complaint category coding
- Develop consistent case tracking identifiers
- Continue collecting zip code data in complaints and at events

### 5.2 Capacity Planning

- Maintain follow-through with the training and complaint-processing SOPs that were developed and provided.
- Use summer event data and peak-season trends to guide staffing needs

### 5.3 Outreach and Education

- Develop targeted materials on workplace discrimination and tenant rights
- Expand outreach to high-complaint zip codes (53209, 53206, 53225)
- Continue participation in major cultural festivals
- Increase interdepartmental collaborations across City departments to streamline processes and ensure equity and civil rights are applied consistently across all operations

## 5.4 Technology Enhancements

- Improve online complaint submission processes
- Launch and implement a unified case-management system (ERC web-based application) for staff to process complaints, with a public-facing portal for submitting complaints

— *End of Report* —