



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Sylvia Ghazarian, Chair

City of
Santa Monica[®]

2018 US CEDAW Report

Introduction

The City of Santa Monica is home to 92,169 residents. Santa Monica women and girls make up over half of the population at 47,623.

What is the lead organization for CEDAW?

The Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women.

On August 30, 2015, Santa Monica City Council adopted a resolution to support the local implementation of CEDAW. With the adoption of the Resolution to Support CEDAW, the Santa Monica City Council delegated responsibility to oversee local implementation of CEDAW principles to the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women.

In 1981, the COSW was founded to promote equal access to and equity in many areas including health care, economic development, and educational opportunities for women and girls. Over the past thirty years, the COSW has worked diligently in areas such as domestic and sexual violence prevention, campaign measures to increase the number of women candidates in public office, work-life, mentoring local high school girls, and public works projects that promote adequate lighting to protect the safety of women and girls.

What are your lead achievement and plan of action?

The first achievement of the COSW was its "Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica, 2015". Received by City Council on August 29, 2015, the report includes a gender analysis of elected officials and residents in Santa Monica and a set of key findings and recommendations.

Since Santa Monica adopted CEDAW, the COSW reorganized its Ad Hoc Committees to align with CEDAW principles. These Ad Hoc Committees - Community & Health, Learn & Thrive, Economic Opportunity, and Women's History Month - are continuing to develop strategies with deliverables, deadlines and action items to guide them in moving towards their vision of eliminating discrimination and violence against women, promoting economic development and educational opportunities for women and girls.

Our specific achievements from 2016 - 2017 include:



1) Putting a Stop to Human Trafficking. Through the COSW partnership with the NCJW LA and the 2016 Human Trafficking Resolution authored by City Council member Kevin McKeown, and unanimously passed by City Council -- and with the leadership of the Santa Monica Deputy City Attorney Gary Rhoades and the COSW's human trafficking training and outreach, Santa Monica is the first city in LA County to enforce the law that mandates certain businesses (including taxi and ride services) to publicly post human trafficking hotline information. AND, we can now report 100% compliance with the Santa Monica sites we've been working on thanks to collaboratively putting pressure on the owners to comply.



2) Domestic Violence Awareness Month - In partnership with the Santa Monica Chamber the COSW collected over 190 handbags filled with toiletries for its annual Handbags for Hope Campaign. This year at the COAST event, we asked community members to also write personal notes of inspiration that we placed in each bag. We had an overwhelming response of touching and personal notes along with many conversations about breaking the silence. Handbags were delivered to The People Concern/Sojourn and Saving Innocence. In addition the COSW created a community resource guide with vital services and phone numbers. The link to our resource guide is:

https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/CCS/About/Boards_Commissions/COSW%20resource%20guide%202017%20FINAL.pdf



3) **Mentoring our future leaders.** Each year the COSW mentors a young woman from a local high school to inspire them to be involved with community change and encourage them to one day run for office. Each of the past young women mentored by the COSW have graduated high school and gone on to college. This year we are mentoring two young women from Santa Monica High School.

4) **Cradle to Career** - working with the SMMUSD Data Director and the City, the COSW supplemented the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) with additional and expanded questions that are now being used in the survey that SMMUSD students will take in February with the results report to be distributed in late May. Additional and expanded questions were added to the following modules: Social Emotional Health, Gender and Sex Based Harassment, Resilience and Youth Development, and Safety and Violence. These questions will help us better understand some of the major challenges kids face including depression, self-harm, anxiety, all forms of harassment, gender identity, bullying and future goals. The COSW also asked our two mentees from Santa Monica High School to become a part of the Youth Advisory Board to assist the COSW in working with the high school on the continued development of a Wellbeing Center. Our involvement also includes being a part of the Behavioral Health and Vulnerable Youth Workgroups.

5) Women's History Month. For the past eight years the COSW has accepted a proclamation from City Council declaring March as WHM. Throughout the year, the COSW worked with over 30 partners to put together a month of events. This includes an opening reception and a poetry/art exhibit at City Hall. Youth in grades 6-8 were asked to write an original poem and design an original drawing depicting a woman they admire either from history, politics, science, medicine or their personal life such as a teacher, friend, mentor, super hero, or family member. Youth organizations participating included the Santa Monica Boys & Girls Clubs, Rosie's Girls, Santa Monica Girl Scouts and Police Activities League (PAL), among others. Our other partners include the Santa Monica Library, Santa Monica Chamber, Westside Family Health Center, Annenberg Community Beach House, League of Women Voters, St. Joseph Center, Santa Monica History Museum, Venice Family Clinic, YMCA, Sojourn, Westside Anti-Violence Network, YMCA, WISE & Healthy Aging, and Woodlawn Cemetery.

Link to 2018 Women's History Month Calendar: https://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/CCS/About/Boards_Commissions/WHM%20calendar%20of%20events%202018-Print%20Version.pdf





6) Voting. COSW embarked on a huge voter participation campaign in 2016 that involved community outreach, calls, community fairs, and distribution of stickers and information in English and Spanish along with a two month long social media campaign in English and Spanish highlighting important issues relevant to women and girls and the importance of voting and running for government.

7) Housing. Partnered with Rent Control Board and the City Attorneys' Office to present a segment on domestic violence and women's issues at annual seminar on hot issues in tenant rights and successfully advocated for domestic violence survivors obtaining housing priority preference for affordable housing wait list.

8) Gender Data. Since the passing of the CEDAW resolution in 2015 by City Council, the COSW has been working on a long term project to take concrete, strong steps to make the promises of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the city's long-held commitment to gender equity and inclusion a reality for the cisgender and transgender women and girls who live, work, obtain services, and enjoy the amenities of Santa Monica. With the release of the 2017 Wellbeing Index we are looking to partner with the City and/or Mount Saint Mary's University to create a new report focused specifically on these issues.

[Another link to some of the above accomplishments: https://youtu.be/HJ3ACf5w_v8o](https://youtu.be/HJ3ACf5w_v8o)

Who are your strategic partners within the city government and/or council? In civic society, stakeholders, businesses, etc.?

Within the municipal code, the Commission is charged with consulting and maintaining contact with groups and individuals who are concerned with the status of women or who are primarily responsible for assuring equal opportunities for women and girls. (Prior code § 2915; added by Ord. No. 1216CCS, adopted 8/25/81). To that end, COSW has many strategic partners within the community to support its work. The COSW works closely with the Santa Monica Police Department, the City Attorney's office, the Westside Anti Violence Authority and Sojourn on issues of domestic violence, sexual assault against women, and human trafficking. Other strategic partners within the City include the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and non-governmental organizations that represent health care, education and social service organizations.

Who is the responsible for implementation in the City?



The City Council delegated implementation of CEDAW to the Commission on the Status of Women. The COSW consists of nine members, all of whom are Santa Monica residents and appointed by the Santa Monica City Council. Commissioners may serve two consecutive four-year terms. The Commission does not serve a regulatory function. Their role is to advise City Council on issues, gather data and provide pertinent information within their respective areas, formulate policy recommendations, and conduct public hearings. City Council may

direct City Staff and the Commission to consider specific issues to assist them in making informed decisions for the benefit of women and girls in the community.

The COSW is staffed by the City's Human Services Division within the Community & Cultural Services Department. The City allocates a budget to the COSW to support its work.

The COSW reports annually to the City Council on its progress in implementing and monitoring CEDAW.

