



Human Rights Commission Statement June 2020

The City of Salem Human Rights Commission pledges to take an active role in conversations with those who want to be heard. The Commission stands ready to help with experiences of discrimination and to provide feedback to systems of power: contact us for assistance at 503-540-2371, humanrights@cityofsalem.net or on our webpage at cityofsalem.net/accessibility.

The Human Rights Commission stands with the words of fellow Commission Member Oni Marchbanks:

It's a difficult topic... and we keep having these moments in time where it arises. How can we move towards this conversation together. How do we move forward in this conversation. It's really important that we find reasons to talk about it and make it a part of what's next. And in that conversation and in that discomfort the black experience will start to heal and the white experience will start to heal. And the answers to our question about what's next will make themselves known... through the hearts and minds of those of us gathered. Is the trauma that we've all experienced due to the systems that we were born into and conditioned into and how that's harmed us in so many ways? To heal a nation, we have to open the wound and touch the wound and begin to heal together. Once we begin to heal, then and only then will we be able to show up in the work of dismantling harmful, oppressive systems and create new systems. Learning to care, addressing our trauma as humankind individually and collectively. Get in touch with what's inside and know that that's a part of the journey, not the whole journey. These conversations are a lifestyle, a way of being in life. In order for humanity to rise together we have to stick with what needs attending to, not give up, ask questions and ask instead of assume. We need to grieve for what's been lost, who's been lost and repair the fabric of our connection to one ourselves and one another.

-Oni Marchbanks,
Visionary, Consultant & Activist

The City of Salem Human Rights Commission is a group of community members that promote social equity, respond to human rights concerns, and facilitate collaboration and partnerships to help each person fully experience the life of the city through removing discriminatory barriers.