

Commission on Human Rights

It's almost here, the 50th Anniversary Civil Rights March to the Capitol steps in Frankfort

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The 50th Anniversary Civil Rights March on Frankfort to the capitol steps will be Wednesday, March 5, at 10 a.m. (EST). Participants are asked to gather at the corner of 2nd Street and Capital Avenue at 9:30 a.m., for the approximate two-block walk to the State Capitol building at 700 Capital Avenue Bay, in Frankfort, Ky., 40601. In the case of inclement weather, the event will be in the Frankfort Convention Center at 405 Mero Street, a few blocks away from the Capitol. The Allied Organizations for Civil Rights (AOCR) will host the event and includes government and non-government entities from all over the state including the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights. The AOCR was formed for the sole purpose of facilitating the anniversary march.

The anniversary event commemorates an incredible moment in the nation's history, the 1964 Civil Rights March on Frankfort, when 10,000 people in a southern state walked in mass to the Kentucky Capitol to push for the end of segregation. The march ultimately helped lead the nation and the state to end legal segregation and establish civil rights laws to make discrimination illegal. The anniversary march will celebrate Kentucky's historic role and will also urge full voter participation, voter equality, and voter access in future elections; this includes restoration of voting rights to former felons.

The AOCR urges everyone who can to attend to do so to help demonstrate that Kentuckians support equal opportunity, equal treatment, and justice in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and that this is a southern state leading the way for civil and human rights.

Participants are welcomed to march without registering in advance, but are asked to do so for planning purposes by contacting Mary Ann Taylor of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights at 1.800.292.5566. Or, email her at AOCR@ky.gov.

Governor's Mansion tours and 1964 March on Frankfort exhibit at Education Center

The Governor's Mansion will be open for tours all day and will be serving light refreshments in conjunction with the march. This is also part of the centennial celebration of the mansion that will feature events throughout the year. Next door to the mansion at the Capitol Education

Center, the Kentucky Historical Society and Division of Historic Properties will have a historic exhibit of multi-media collections of the 1964 Civil Rights March on Frankfort and other Kentucky civil rights history. For information on the Education Center 1964 Civil Rights March on Frankfort exhibit, contact Laurel Harper, director of Marketing Communications of the Kentucky Historical Society, at 502.564.1792.

Afternoon Forum on African Americans and Future of Kentucky Politics

Also in conjunction with the march will be the William McAnulty Forum on African Americans and the Future of Kentucky Politics to be held at 2 p.m. The panel discussion addressing participation by Kentucky African Americans in the political process is being hosted by the Kentucky African American Heritage Commission (KAAHC) in partnership with the Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office, the Kentucky Historical Society and the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.

The forum will be in the Brown-Forman Room at the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History in downtown Frankfort. The event honors the late Justice William E. McAnulty Jr., the first African American to serve on the Kentucky Supreme Court. The forum is free.

Panelists will be Bardstown Mayor Bill Sheckles, Perryville Mayor Anne Sleet, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Councilman Chris Ford, and Owensboro City Commissioner Pamela Smith-Wright, in addition to several guest panelists. The moderator will be Renee Shaw, producer and host of KET's minority affairs program "Connections with Renee Shaw."

The forum will explore past and present political participation by African Americans as candidates, party leaders and voters, and also examine opportunities awaiting African Americans in future state and local elections, according to Dr. Gerald Smith, KAAHC chair and associate professor of history/Martin Luther King Jr. Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Kentucky.

For more information about the forum, contact Tressa Brown, Kentucky Heritage Council African American heritage coordinator, at 502.564.7005, ext. 125 or tressa.brown@ky.gov.