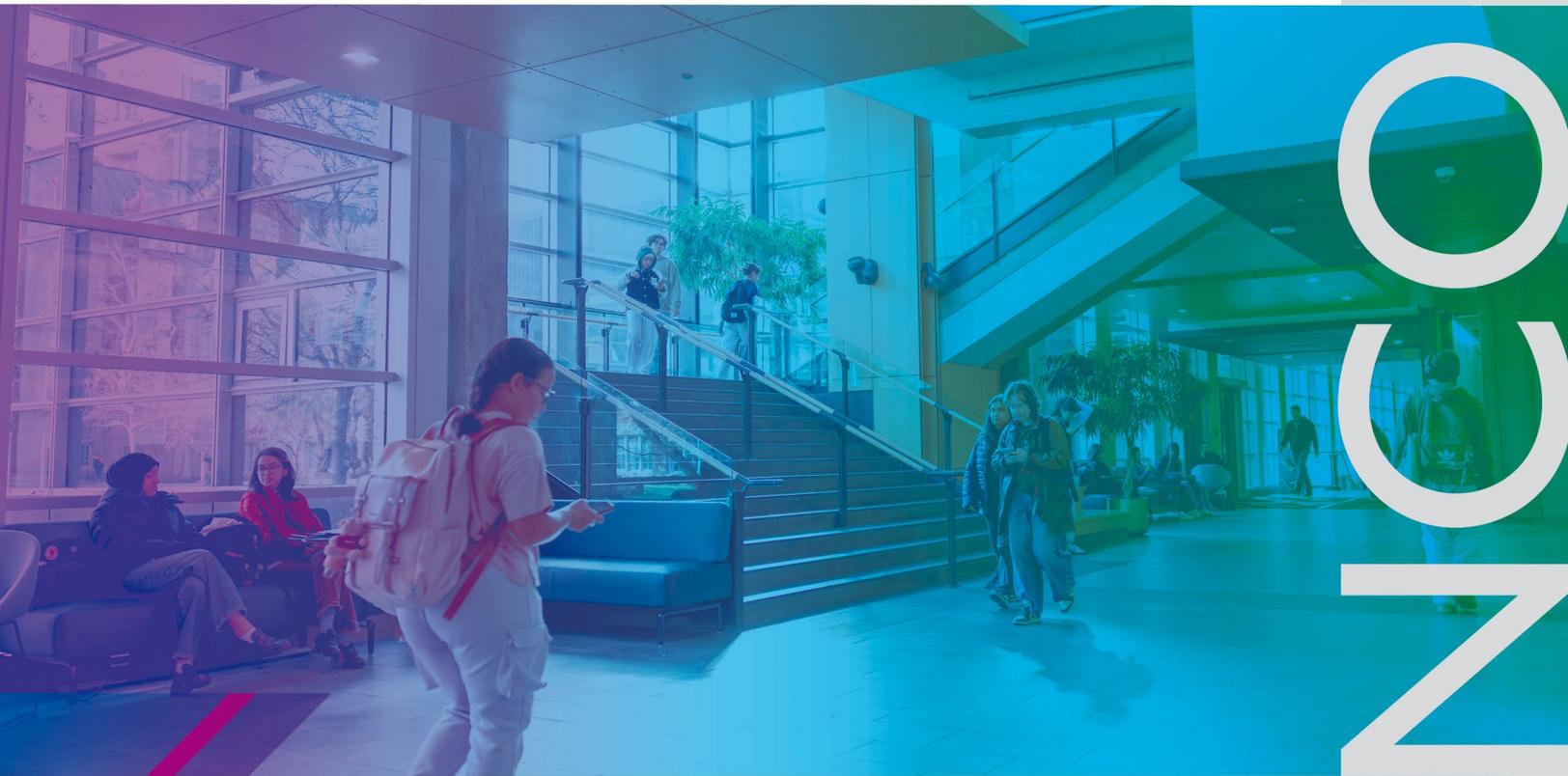


OFFICE OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES  
Promoting Respect on Campus



**ANNUAL REPORT 2024–2025**

JANUARY 2026

CONCORDIA

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## Message from the Director

At the Office of Rights and Responsibilities, we are deeply committed to upholding the values set out in Concordia's Code of Rights and Responsibilities, including civility, equity, respect, non-discrimination and an appreciation of diversity. In a time of increasing global polarization, the importance of working collectively to maintain a safe and respectful campus climate is critical.

Our small but dedicated team supports students, faculty, and staff as they navigate complex situations involving incivility, harassment, discrimination, threats and violence of any kind. Throughout the 2024-2025 year, the Office continued to strengthen its educational initiatives and refine its case management practices. In addition, we continued to deepen collaboration with key partners across the university, including Campus Safety and Prevention Services, Campus Wellness, Equity Office, and the Sexual Assault Resource Centre.

Our work is made possible by the commitment, professionalism, and empathy of our team and colleagues, whose efforts often take place behind the scenes but have a meaningful and lasting impact on the Concordia experience.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General, as well as my colleagues in the Secretariat and across the University, for their invaluable guidance and support. I look forward to continuing our collaboration with community members to provide a safe and respectful environment for all Concordians.

Sincerely,



Aisha Topsakal  
Director and Senior Advisor, Office of Rights and Responsibilities

# Annual Report 2024-2025

## Introduction

The present report covers the activities of the Office of Rights and Responsibilities (“**ORR**” or the “**Office**”) from May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025. Submitted to the Secretary-General each year, the ORR’s annual report aims to do the following:

- offer an overview of the mandate of the Office;
- present statistics on services provided during the previous academic year;
- make recommendations with respect to policies or operations of the Office.

The report is made available to the University community via [www.concordia.ca/rights](http://www.concordia.ca/rights). It is also submitted, for information purposes, to Concordia’s Senate and Board of Governors.

## ORR’s Mandate

The Office administers the Code of Rights and Responsibilities (the “**Code**”), which sets out the behavioural expectations that apply to all members of the University, including students, faculty and staff. It explicitly prohibits a range of behaviours, such as harassment, discrimination, threats, and violence of any kind. The Code governs behaviour that takes place on campus or on other premises during University activities or events.

When any University member has a behavioural concern, they may approach the Office to obtain impartial and confidential advice and support in resolving the situation. The Office helps members by reviewing all available options and assisting in selecting the most appropriate approach. Options include:

- Helping informally resolve disputes by providing shuttle diplomacy, mediation, crafting settlement agreements, and/or providing strategies for resolution;
- Initiating the appropriate formal complaints process, such as forwarding cases to the Office of Student Tribunals or to the appropriate human resources authority for resolution/investigation;
- Directing complaints to another, more appropriate mechanism for addressing their complaints, for example: union grievance, police complaints, etc.

In addition to resolving conflicts, the Office coordinates the University’s response in handling urgent cases and managing behaviours that may pose a danger or threat to our community. Members may approach the Office to flag any such behaviour. Immediate steps are taken to

direct an appropriate and time-sensitive response, in consultation with colleagues from across the University.

ORR frequently participates in committees and other University bodies, such as the Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence and the new Standing Committee on Training.

## Policies that Guide ORR's Work

In addition to administering the Code, the Office is guided in its work by several related University policies, including:

- [Policy Regarding Sexual Violence](#)
- [Protocol on the Coordination of Urgent Cases of Threatening or Violent Conduct](#)
- [Policy on Student Involuntary Leave of Absence \("POSILA"\)](#)
- [Policy on Harassment](#)

Each policy sets out timelines, decision-making structures, and a selection of appropriate responses to potential situations. The policies aim to guide difficult decisions so that they can be made in a timely manner with input from experts from across the University.

## The ORR Team

During the 2024-2025 year, the ORR team was composed of the following staff members:

- Director and Senior Advisor: Aisha Topsakal, the undersigned;
- Associate Advisor: Cynthia Alphonse;
- Junior Associate Advisor, shared with the Ombuds Office: Bailey Hardy.

While we have a small team at ORR, we coordinate efforts with numerous colleagues to effectively address every dossier. On a daily basis, we collaborate with: Campus Safety and Prevention Services, Campus Wellness and Support Services, Equity Office, Sexual Assault Resource Centre, Legal Services, Employee and Labour Relations, Office of the Provost, Dean's Offices and Department Chairs. By coordinating actions and relying on the expertise of our colleagues, we were able to address the **507 concerns and complaints** brought to our office.

## Activity Summary and Breakdown of Requests for Assistance

The Office categorizes its assistance to members in the following ways:

- **Consultations:** ORR provides information and guidance but usually does not play an active role in the conflict or concern.
- **Formal and Informal cases:** ORR provides advice, directly intervenes, reviews evidence or plays an ongoing role in the situation. This can include forwarding a complaint to the appropriate authority. In informal cases, ORR typically assists in reaching a voluntary agreement to resolve a dispute.
- **Student of Concern (“SOC”)/POSILA:** An SOC file is opened when a student is identified as presenting a potential threat or danger to themselves or others under the Policy on Student Involuntary Leave of Absence (POSILA). ORR typically assembles a Case Team to review these files and recommends appropriate actions. Measures can include various interventions, such as connecting students with appropriate resources, restricting campus access, or placing a student on a leave of absence.

An ORR dossier typically begins as a consultation. If it ultimately evolves into a case, it is only counted once when reporting the data. Cases are generally categorized as behavioural issues under the Code or as SOC files under POSILA.

In the 2024-2025 reporting period, ORR received **486 new requests for assistance**, compared to 433 new requests recorded in the previous recording period. In addition to new files, we managed 21 ongoing files carried over from the previous year, for a total of **507 active files**, compared to 442 in the previous reporting period.

Below you will find a 4-year comparison of total files processed by ORR in the relevant reporting periods.

TABLE 1: FOUR YEAR ANNUAL COMPARISON OF TOTAL FILES PROCESSED IN REPORTING YEAR (NEW AND CONTINUING)

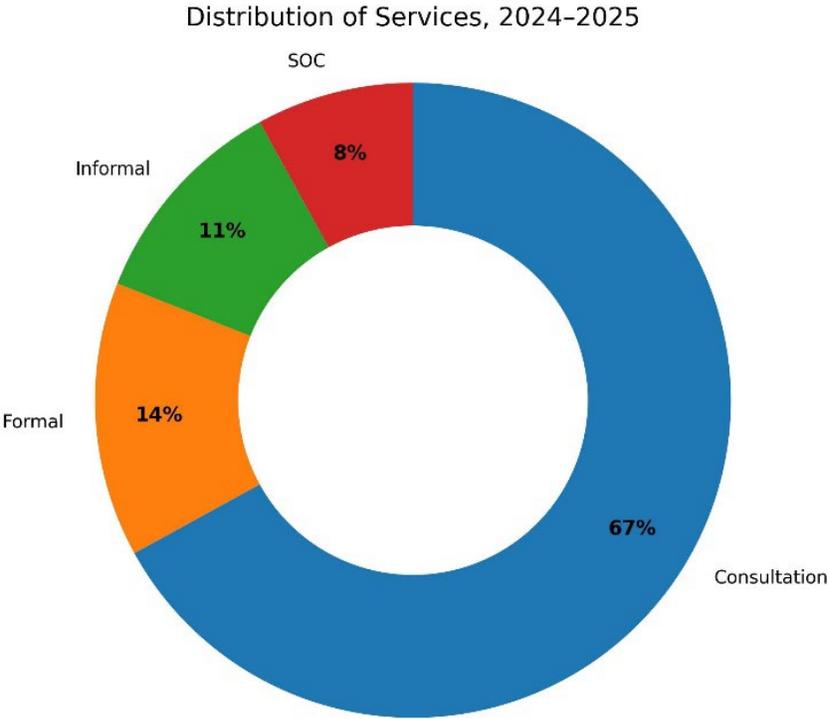
Year	Informal	Formal	SOC	Consults	Total
2024-2025	56	68	42	341	507
2023-2024	53	46	47	296	442
2022-2023	44	40	40	280	404
2021-2022	68	31	44	251	394

SOC files represent some of the most challenging cases at ORR, often involving complex problems of mental health and requiring threat assessments in collaboration with colleagues from across the university. This year, ORR had 42 active SOC files.

The relative distribution of services remained fairly consistent with previous years. The Office did experience a notable increase in the processing of formal complaints, from 46 to 68. As illustrated in the chart below, consultations continued to account for the vast majority of services provided by the Office.

When advising members on whether to pursue informal or formal processes, we weigh a multitude of factors, including the nature and seriousness of the behaviour reported and whether there appear to be conditions favourable to reaching a voluntary agreement. Ultimately, however, it is the right of the complainant to decide whether to file an informal or formal complaint.

**CHART A: DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICES (2024-2025)**



## Complainant and Respondent Demographics

In the charts that follow, we take a closer look at our Complainant and Respondent demographics in both our complaint and consultation files.

The following definitions apply when we consider demographics:

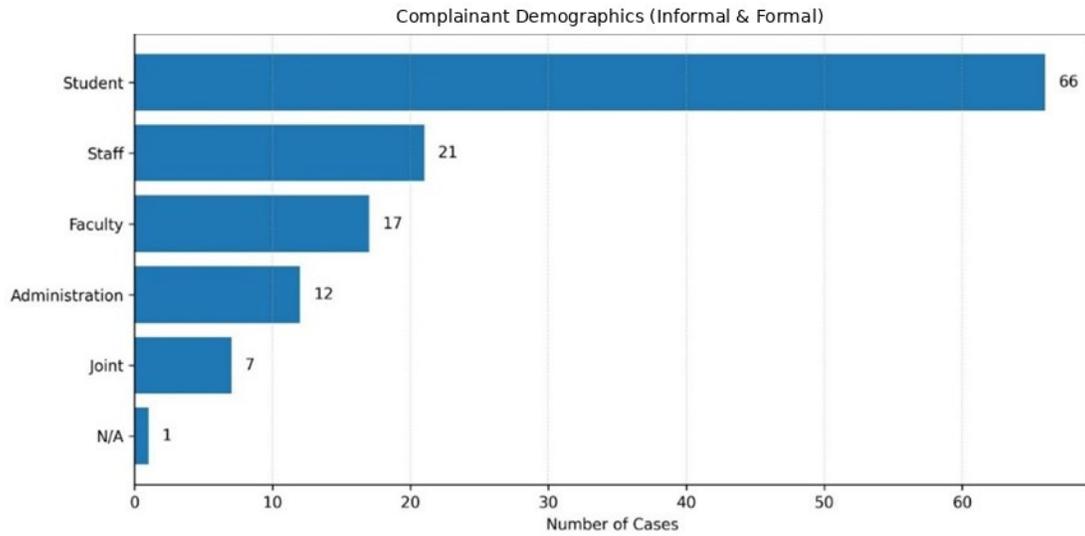
- **Student** – Members registered in any academic program on a full-time or part-time basis, independent students, members registered in non-credit courses, auditors, exchange students and visiting students.
- **Staff** – Full-time, part-time, and casual employees who are not faculty members and/or do not perform administrative and/or supervisory functions as specified in the “Administration” category.
- **Faculty** – Full-time and part-time professors including extended and/or limited term appointments, visiting lecturers, etc.
- **Administration** – Employees and/or units who fulfill specific administrative and/or supervisory functions including Deans, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, Campus Security, Residence Life, etc.
- **Joint** – Two or more Complainants and/or Respondents from different demographic categories.
- **N/A** – Complainants in the “N/A” category are typically anonymous and seeking consultation services from the Office or are not members of the university community (alumni, contractors, non-academic visitors, volunteers). Respondents in this category are generally either unknown to the Complainant or not identified by the Complainant.

### Who is seeking assistance?

The term “Complainant” is used to refer to any member of the University community who raises a concern with the Office. The conduct in question should be within the scope of the Code or related policies. Students most often request assistance from the Office in both case and consultation categories, as can be seen in the following charts.

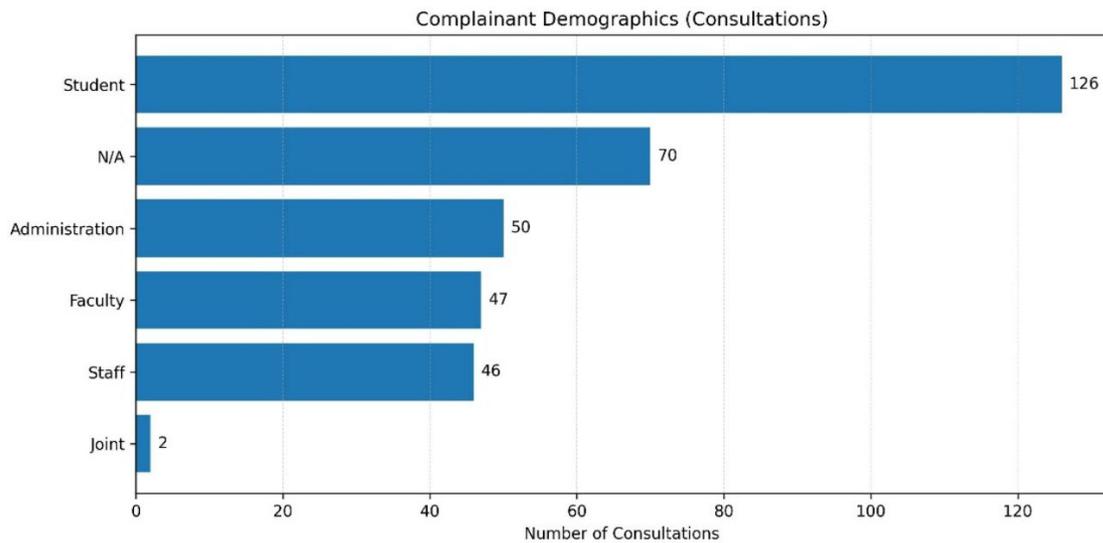
**CHART B: COMPLAINANT DEMOGRAPHICS 2024-2025 (CASES - INFORMAL & FORMAL)**

*In cases, requests for assistance were generated by:*



**CHART C: COMPLAINANT DEMOGRAPHICS 2024-2025 (CONSULTATIONS)**

*In consultations, requests for assistance were generated by:*



## Who are complaints being made against?

The term “Respondent” refers to the person against whom a complaint is made. A “Respondent” is any member who is alleged to be responsible for undesirable behaviour described as an offense/infraction under the Code. Students were predominantly the respondents in both complaints and consultation dossiers.

CHART D: RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS 2024-2025 (CASES - INFORMAL & FORMAL)

*In cases, complaints were generated against:*

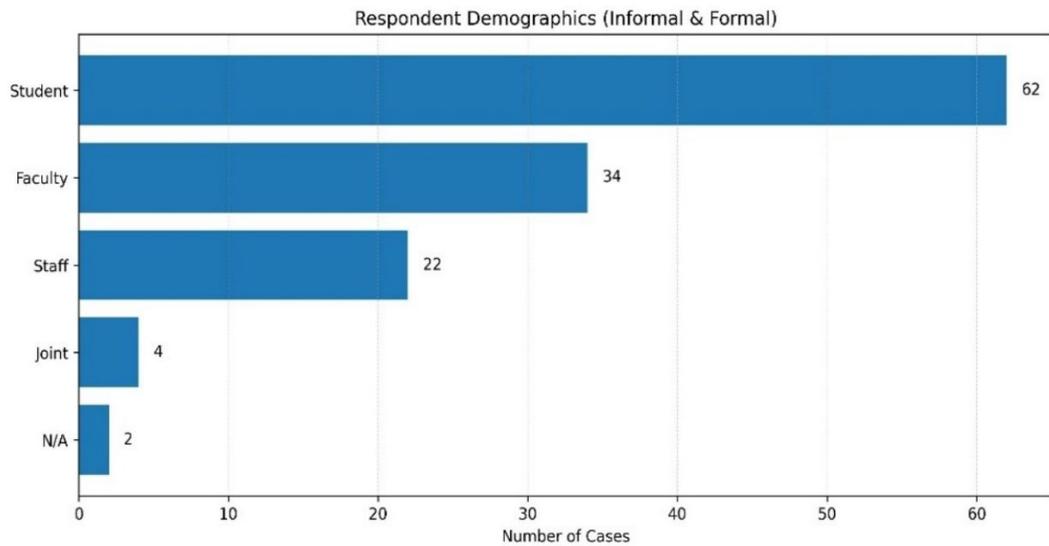
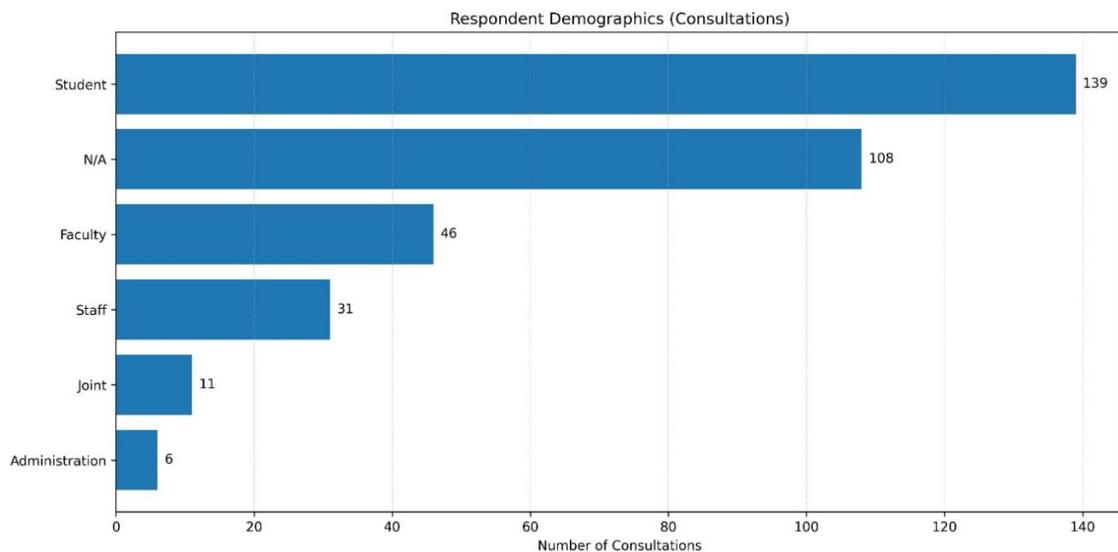


CHART E: RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS 2024-2025 (CONSULTATIONS)

*In consultations, complaints were generated against:*



## What infractions are reported to ORR?

Some complaints allege multiple Code infractions. These complaints are counted as a single file, regardless of the number of offences cited.

Below, you will see a breakdown of all infractions reported. Consistent with previous years, harassment and SOC reports accounted for the vast majority of concerns brought to ORR. Reports of discrimination and sexual violence were fairly consistent with previous reporting years.

TABLE 2: BREAKDOWN OF INFRACTIONS ALLEGED IN CASES AND CONSULTATIONS (2024-2025)

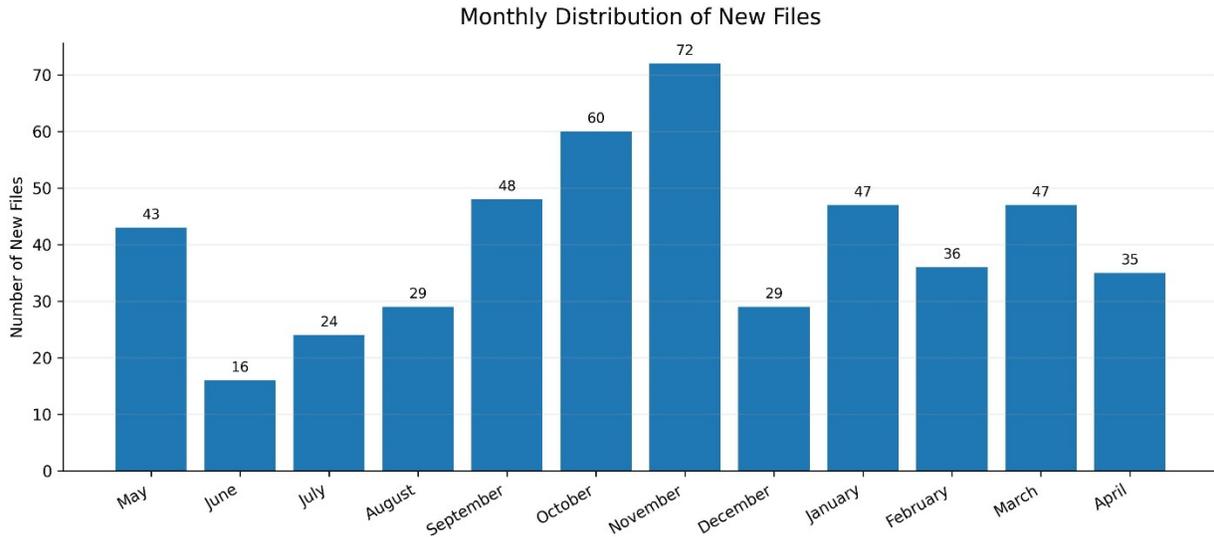
<b>Offenses Reported</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Consults</b>	<b>Totals 2024- 2025</b>	<b>Totals in Previous Year</b>
<b>Harassment</b>	59	81	140	219
<b>Discrimination and Communication of Discriminatory Matter</b>	47	60	107	93
<b>Student of Concern</b>	42	37	79	64
<b>Threatening or Violent Conduct</b>	21	12	33	27
<b>Any other action not described in the Code that is an offence in any law or regulation</b>	12	11	23	5
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	11	12	23	19
<b>Offences against property</b>	10	4	14	3
<b>Sexual Violence and Sexual Assault</b>	6	7	13	14
<b>Obstruction of teaching, research, administration, study, student disciplinary procedures or other University activity</b>	4	9	13	7
<b>Knowingly furnishing false information</b>	9	2	11	7

<b>Forging, or without authority, knowingly altering, using, receiving or possessing University supplies or documents</b>	1	2	3	1
<b>Theft or abuse of computing facilities or computer time</b>	2	0	2	1
<b>Unauthorized entry into any University property</b>	2	0	2	2
<b>Unauthorized use or duplication of the University's name, trademarks, logos or seals</b>	1	1	2	0
<b>Camping or lodging on University property</b>	1	0	1	0
<b>Unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, use, threatened use, storage, sale or the attempted manufacture, distribution, or sale of controlled substances</b>	1	0	1	0

**When do members reach out to ORR?**

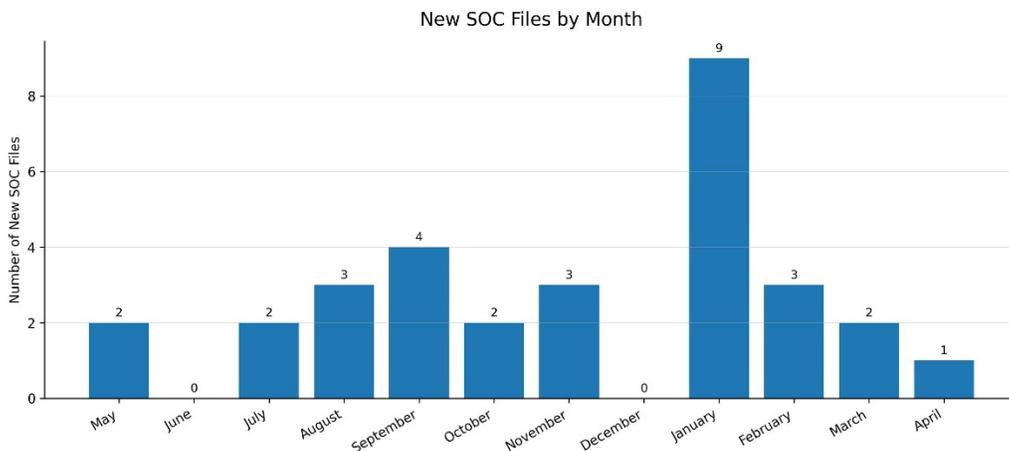
In analyzing historic requests for assistance throughout the years, we noted that the Office typically received more requests in the months of September to November. As illustrated in the chart below, this year, the most requests for assistance occurred in November.

**CHART F: MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF NEW REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE (Total New Requests: 486)**



*Note: 21 ongoing requests for assistance were carried over from 2023-2024.*

**CHART G: NEW STUDENT OF CONCERN (SOC) FILES, DISTRIBUTION BY MONTH**



*Note: 11 ongoing SOC files were carried over from 2023-2024.*

Of the 31 SOC cases received in 2024-2025, the most were reported in the month of January. One student was placed on an involuntary leave of absence in 2024-2025, while one student opted for a voluntary leave from their studies. As always, the SOC dossiers received by the

Office required varying levels of intervention, coordination and/or implementation of restrictions, where appropriate.

## Education, Outreach, Promotion and Collaboration

ORR education and outreach takes many forms throughout the year. The ORR staff participates in student, faculty and employee orientations, offers workshops and training, and provides information regarding harassment, discrimination, threats and violent conduct.

Throughout 2024-2025, ORR participated in and presented at various University events and activities, primarily in-person. Here are some specific examples of our activities during the reporting year:

- Orientation sessions for Concordia's New Faculty and New Chairs, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, Ombuds, Campus Wellness and Support Services, Equity Office, SARC, and the Office of Indigenous Directions;
- A session for faculty members on dealing with challenging behaviours in the classroom, with the Ombuds Office, Equity Office and Campus Wellness and Support Services, and Centre for Teaching and Learning;
- Academic Unit Heads Professional Development session on "Guiding your faculty members through challenging behaviours in the classroom," with the Center for Teaching and Learning;
- Spotlight Series information session for frontline student services staff;
- Information sessions for undergraduate students, alongside the Sexual Assault Resource Centre;
- EXPLORE Services Fair for new students (Fall and Winter Semesters);
- "Spirituali-Tea" session for students hosted by the Multi-Faith & Spirituality Centre;
- Training sessions for Concordia Student Advocacy and CSU Student Advocacy;
- Strategic placement and distribution of QR Code linking community members to the ORR Intake Form;
- ORR was highlighted in the mandatory SARC training completed by all university employees "It Takes All of Us".

In addition to trainings provided by our team, we also attended a variety of training sessions to develop skills needed to address our files effectively and to better serve the University Community.

Our team welcomes all invitations to meet with community members, including departments, units, student clubs and more. If you would like to invite our advisors to deliver a presentation or interactive workshop on a particular topic, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [rights@concordia.ca](mailto:rights@concordia.ca).

## Closing Remarks

As we look ahead, our Office will continue to find new ways to support community members through some of their most challenging moments involving behavioural issues. While the volume of files we address remains high, our team makes every effort to approach each matter with care and thoughtfulness. At the heart of our work is a shared commitment to preserving and strengthening an academic environment that is thriving, diverse, and vibrant. We remain dedicated to continually strengthening policies and procedures that support individuals while upholding the values and behavioural expectations of the University community.

CONNECTION  
THREATS  
DISRUPTIVE  
BEHAVIOUR  
EQUITY  
DISCRIMINATION  
COOPERATION  
COLLEGIABILITY  
DIVERSITY  
TRESPASSING  
CIVILITY  
HARASSMENT  
THEFT  
RESPECT  
HARMONY