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2025

ACRC KOREA Annual Report



Anti-Corruption &
Civil Rights Commission

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Greetings from the Chairperson



As modern society grows increasingly complex and multifaceted, so too do the ways in which citizens' rights and interests are infringed upon. At the same time, the public's expectations for a fair and transparent society have never been higher. Against this backdrop, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) has devoted itself wholeheartedly to driving meaningful change across a broad spectrum of areas — encompassing anti-corruption efforts, civil rights remedies, and institutional reform — guided by an

unwavering commitment to serving as a steadfast pillar of protection for the people.

First and foremost, in pursuit of a fair and transparent society, the Commission has worked diligently to ensure the sound establishment of anti-corruption legislation. By clarifying the standards of key statutes — including the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act and the Act on Prevention of Conflicts of Interest — and by conducting fact-finding investigations and consultations to eradicate recruitment irregularities in public institutions, the ACRC has endeavored to instill and disseminate the values of integrity throughout the public sector. Furthermore, to enable citizens to report corruption and public interest violations with confidence and without fear, the Commission has actively promoted the anonymous proxy reporting system and substantially strengthened protections and rewards for whistleblowers, thereby fostering greater self-purification within our society.

In addition, the ACRC has fulfilled its role as the frontline institution for civil rights relief by resolving public grievances swiftly and with a firm focus on the field. Through the Onsite Outreach Program, the Commission listened directly to the voices of socially vulnerable and marginalized groups at the grassroots level and facilitated the amicable resolution of large-scale collective complaints and conflicts with far-reaching implications. At the same time, by integrating the online administrative appeals systems of previously dispersed general



and special administrative appeals bodies into a single unified platform and by expanding the public representative system, the Commission has laid the groundwork for an innovative administrative appeals framework that enables anyone to seek redress easily and conveniently.

The Commission's commitment to innovation — aimed at lowering the barriers of public administration and strengthening citizen-centered communication — has remained equally steadfast. Centered on the e-People, the Commission has interconnected civil complaint channels across institutions nationwide and introduced cutting-edge services, including an AI-based response system and multilingual support. The invaluable insights gathered through civil complaint big data and the People's Idea Box have served as an excellent policy foundation for fundamental reform of the corruption-prone areas and rectifying unreasonable institutional practices that directly affect the lives of the people.

Going forward, the ACRC will continue to listen attentively to even the smallest voices of the people, taking yet another step forward in its pursuit of tangible improvements in citizens' rights and interests and the realization of a society worthy of public trust.

The 2025 White Paper faithfully captures the meaningful achievements that the Commission, together with the people, has passionately deliberated upon and diligently worked toward over the past year. It is our sincere hope that this publication to be helpful for all those with an interest in the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission, and that it will further serve as a useful reference for policy development and academic research.

Jung Il yeon
Chairperson
Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission



Part
01

Assessment of Policies for
Citizens' Rights and Interests
and Future Directions



Chapter 1. Achievement over the Past Year and the Way Forward

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) of Korea was established on February 29, 2008, by integrating three institutions, Ombudsman of Korea, Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption, and the Administrative Appeals Commission under the Prime Minister to effectively prevent corrupt practices and to swiftly resolve infringements on citizens' rights and interests caused by unreasonable administrative actions.

1. Major Achievements in the Past Year

A. Promoting Anti-Corruption and Fairness Policies for an Integrity-Based Society

The ACRC, as a leading organization for the pan-governmental anti-corruption initiative, has led anti-corruption and fairness reforms to realize a transparent and fair society. The Commission focused its policy efforts on ensuring that the value of integrity could take root in the public sector and that the public could tangibly feel the changes.

The ACRC has made it a priority to improve unfair recruitment practices in the public sector. In January 2023, the ACRC established the 'Integrated Reporting Center for Recruitment Irregularities' to strengthen fairness in hiring and has been conducting annual inspections to assess the appropriateness of recruitment practices at public institutions.

In 2025, a comprehensive audit of recruitment practices conducted across 931 public service-related organizations uncovered a total of 832 cases of violations of fair hiring standards. The ACRC remains committed to eradicating recruitment-related corruption in the public sector and fostering a culture of fair and transparent hiring.

To ensure the effective operation of anti-corruption systems, the ACRC inspected the operational status of the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act across public institutions at all levels in 2025, focusing on the handling of violation reports and the provision of education and advisory services. The ACRC also devised measures to address areas where enforcement remained weak. In addition, marking the third anniversary of the enforcement of the Act on the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest related to Duties of Public Servants, the ACRC made continued efforts to ensure the stable settlement of the Act through initiatives such as the introduction of a QR code-based self-assessment service and regional briefing sessions.

The ACRC further made efforts to strengthen integrity education for future generations. The ACRC signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with all 17 metropolitan and provincial offices of education and 25 universities nationwide, establishing a collaborative framework for integrity education and laying the foundation for strengthening integrity education for future generations. The ACRC also reinforced international cooperation on anti-corruption. In February and July 2025, the ACRC hosted the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Experts Working Group (ACTWG) Meeting and the APEC High-Level Dialogue on Anti-Corruption Cooperation (AHDAC), further enhancing the country's standing as a global leader in integrity.

Korea ranked 31st out of 182 countries in the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), released in February 2026, as part of its ongoing efforts to join the ranks of the world's advanced nations in public sector integrity.

B. Active Handling of Corruption and Public Interest Violation Reports and Prevention of Public Fund Leakage

The ACRC has proactively reviewed and promptly handled reports of corruption and public interest violations, while conducting proactive fact-finding investigations to prevent and detect corrupt practices at an early stage. The ACRC is also working to block corruption factors that cause public fund leakage and to ensure the efficient management of national finance.

First, in 2025, the ACRC received 16,308 reports of corruption and public interest violations and processed 15,556 cases. The number of cases processed increased by approximately 27.3% compared with the previous year, demonstrating the ACRC's proactive handling of reported cases.

In addition, the ACRC uncovered entrenched corrupt practices through targeted fact-finding investigations in key corruption-prone areas. A fact-finding investigation into the misuse of public institutions' education and training budgets identified cases in which funds were improperly used to purchase high-value personal items. In addition, a comprehensive investigation into an aquatic seed stock release program in the southwestern coastal region uncovered corruption amounting to KRW 17.1 billion, including bid-rigging and supply-related fraud.

Meanwhile, the Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits, enacted in 2020, prohibits fraudulent claims on public finances and provides for the recovery and management of illicit gains.

In 2025, a fact-finding investigation into local governments' smart city support programs identified improper execution and inadequate management of approximately KRW 21.8 billion in government subsidies, including preferential treatment in the selection of outsourced service providers and wasteful spending of subsidy funds. Based on the findings, the ACRC requested audits and the recovery of misused funds, while also recommending institutional improvements.

C. Strengthening Protection of Vulnerable Groups and the Systematic Resolution of Public Grievances

The ACRC actively resolves public grievances to make a transparent, fair, and inclusive society where citizens' rights and interests are protected. It also makes on-site visits directly to ensure that no group or region is left behind.



In 2025, the ACRC resolved more than 14,000 individual grievance petitions and successfully addressed 240 collective grievance petitions involving issues that had remained unresolved due to disagreements among government agencies, including central government ministries and local governments, or that had significant social impact. As a result, the long-standing grievances of approximately 66,000 residents were resolved. In particular, following the inauguration of the new administration, the ACRC worked in collaboration with the National Policy Planning Advisory Committee to resolve a collective grievance petition calling for a planned high-embankment section of the Dongseo High-Speed Railway in Yanggu to be constructed as a bridge rather than an embankment, thereby addressing the long-standing community division and travel inconvenience experienced by local residents.

In addition, the ACRC operated the Onsite Outreach Service 120 times throughout the year, bringing civil complaint services directly to citizens in underserved regions and vulnerable communities with limited access to such services. Through the program, the ACRC provided more than 2,300 onsite consultations, actively engaging with citizens across the country.

Meanwhile, since its launch in October 2019, the Government Complaint Counseling Center has enabled citizens to receive one-stop consultation for complaints involving multiple agencies in a single place, and it handles more than 20,000 complaints each year.

In 2025, the ACRC supported the operation of offline service desks for 'Plaza for All', the National Policy Planning Advisory Committee's online public engagement platform for gathering public opinions on national policy.

D. Enhancing Quasi-Judicial Relief through Administrative Appeals

Through the handling of administrative appeals, the ACRC provides prompt relief for citizens whose rights have been infringed by unlawful or unfair administrative actions. Based on the Central Administrative Appeals Commission's overall management and coordination functions, the ACRC also supports the operation of administrative appeals commissions at the provincial and municipal levels.

In 2025, the administrative appeals acceptance rate reached 28.3% (for general cases), while the average adjudication period was reduced to 54.4 days (compared with the statutory period of 60 days, with a possible 30-day extension). Compared with the previous year, the ACRC increased the acceptance rate and shortened the average adjudication period, thereby providing more proactive and timely relief for citizens' rights and interests.

In June 2025, the ACRC launched a government-wide One-Stop Administrative Appeals System by integrating the online systems that had been dispersed across 90 administrative appeals bodies. The new system enables citizens to file administrative appeals, track the progress of their cases, and access decisions in one place, significantly improving both convenience and accessibility. In addition, the ACRC continued its efforts to protect citizens' rights by actively operating the State-Appointed Counsel Program for socially vulnerable individuals who cannot afford legal assistance and by expanding oral hearings, allowing appellants to present their views directly in administrative appeals proceedings.

E. System Improvement through the Digital Public Participation Platform

The ACRC operates digital public participation platforms such as e-People and People's Idea Box. These platforms not only handle the receipt and processing of civil complaints, proposals, and reports but also offer discussion and public deliberation services, using big data analysis of civil grievances to reflect the voices of the public in policymaking.

The e-People system integrates and connects the civil grievance channels of administrative and public institutions. Following a complete overhaul in 2020, it has improved user convenience and efficiency. As of 2025, a total of 1,312 administrative and public institutions are using the system, reflecting a steady increase in the number of participating institutions.

The People's Idea Box is a digital policy participation platform that allows citizens to directly engage in proposing and improving policies. In 2025, a total of 717 policy ideas were submitted through a public contest, and 43 ideas, including developing measures to recycle books that are discarded or withdrawn annually from public libraries, were utilized for policy improvements.

In addition, the ACRC provided insights for policy improvements at various institutions through multi-dimensional analysis of civil complaint data.

The ACRC monitors civil petition trends to identify cases of public inconvenience and issues alerts on civil petitions that occur frequently or increase rapidly to encourage relevant agencies to take proactive measures.

Public opinions also lead to improvements in systems that cause public inconvenience or unfairness. In 2025, the ACRC issued recommendations to relevant agencies on measures such as improving driver's license management for high-risk drivers, improving road traffic flow by removing obstacles to emergency vehicle response, and rationalizing funeral hall fees. The ACRC will also actively monitor the implementation of these recommendations to ensure that they are promptly carried out by the relevant agencies.

2. The Way Forward

In 2026, the ACRC will continue its efforts to engage more closely with the public, effectively resolve social conflicts, and build an integrity-based society that earns the trust of the public.

First, the ACRC will further protect citizens' rights and interests by reaching out directly to people's daily lives and proactively addressing urgent civil complaints, while also establishing a more objective and professional framework for resolving collective conflicts involving sharply conflicting stakeholder interests, including those of local residents. In addition, the ACRC will continue to pursue revisions to the Administrative Appeals Act, including expanding eligibility for the State-Appointed Counsel Program, so that citizens whose rights and interests have been infringed can obtain remedies more quickly and conveniently.

Second, the ACRC will continue its efforts to build an integrity-based society by responding firmly to corruption and violations of the public interest. It will strengthen the implementation of anti-corruption measures by taking decisive action against corruption among public officials, while intensively identifying and addressing corruption risks that

affect citizens' daily lives in order to eradicate corruption at its source. Furthermore, the ACRC will improve the laws and institutional framework governing reported cases to enhance the timeliness and reliability of case handling, while further strengthening protection and support for reporting persons.

Third, the ACRC will actively pursue institutional improvements that deliver tangible benefits to the public based on public opinions. In the era of AI transformation, the ACRC will leverage an AI-powered public engagement platform to enable smarter handling of civil complaints. It will also systematically analyze large volumes of civil complaint data to identify risk factors for infringements of citizens' rights and interests at an early stage and use these insights to drive institutional improvements that deliver tangible benefits to the public.

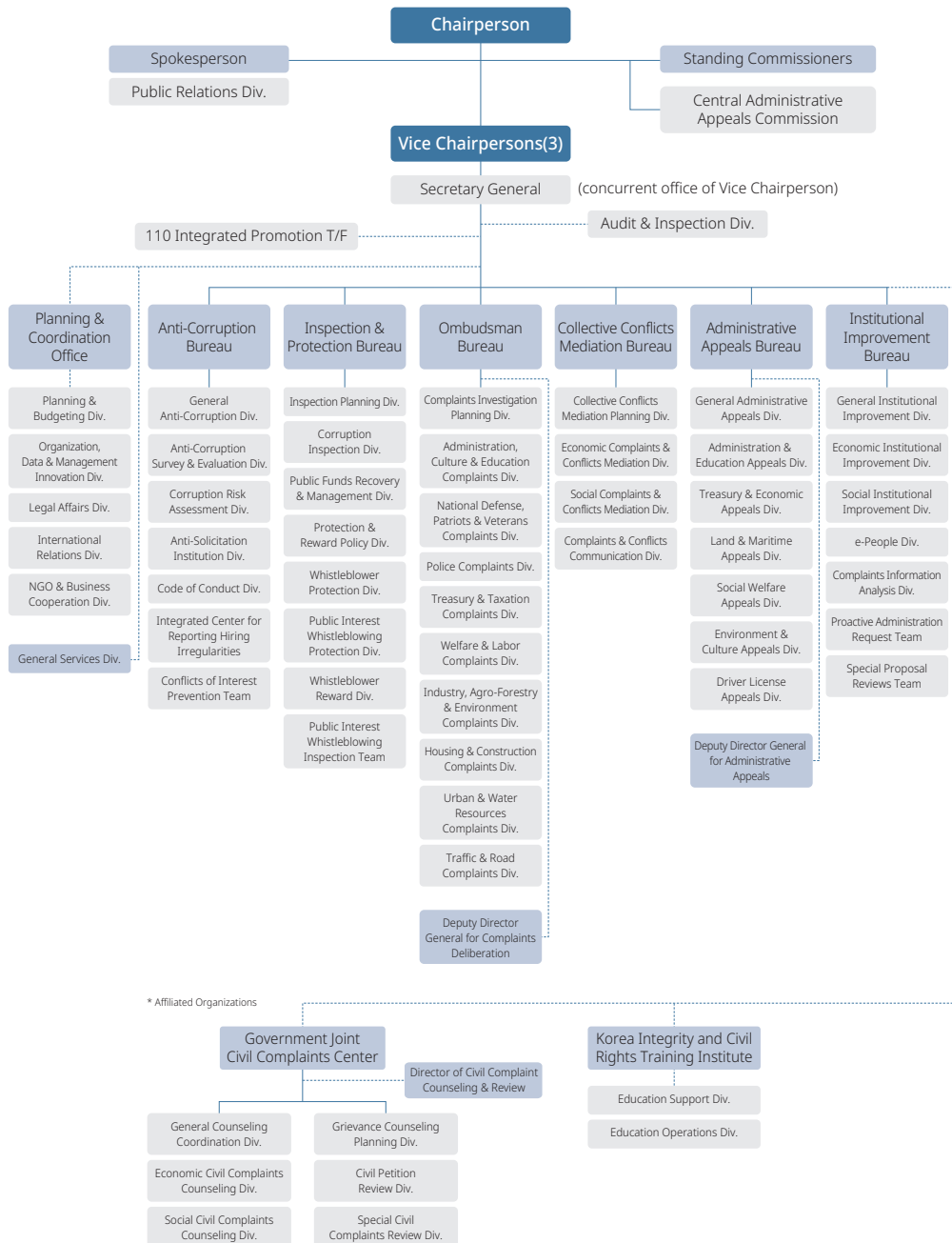




Chapter 2. Organization and Operation of the ACRC

The ACRC consists of 15 members, including one Chairperson, three Vice Chairpersons, and three Standing Commissioners. The Chairperson, Vice Chairpersons, and commissioners are appointed or commissioned according to the qualifications prescribed by law. Each of the three Vice Chairpersons assists the Chairperson by handling grievances, addressing anti-corruption, and operating the Central Administrative Appeals Commission (CAAC), respectively. The Commission also has a secretariat that handles its affairs. The position of Secretary General is concurrently held by one of the Vice Chairpersons designated by the Chairperson. The number of employees of the Commission is 574.

◦ [Figure 1-1] Organization chart



In 2025, the ACRC held a total of 249 meetings, during which it handled 10,989 agenda items, thereby ensuring the smooth operation of the Commission's core functions. By type, the plenary committee held 21 meetings to address 521 items, the small committee held 186 meetings to handle 10,087 items, and the subcommittee held 42 meetings to process 381 items.

<Table 1-1> Committee meetings held in 2025

(unit: times, cases)

Committee			2025
Plenary Committee	Meeting		21
	Item	Resolution·Decision	402
		Report	119
		total	521
Small Committee	1 st small committee	Meeting	38
		Item	3,607
	2 nd small committee	Meeting	38
		Item	2,757
	3 rd small committee	Meeting	38
		Item	1,469
	4 th small committee	Meeting	36
		Item	954
	5 th small committee	Meeting	36
		Item	1,300
Subcommittee	First subcommittee	Meeting	21
		Item	173
	Second subcommittee	Meeting	21
		Item	208
	Total	Meeting	42
		Item	381
Total	Meeting		249
	Item		10,989



Chapter 3. Private-Public Cooperation and Support for Ethical Business Management

Since its launch, the ACRC has steadily expanded communication and cooperation through the participation of private organizations and the public in policy development in order to spread a culture of integrity and protect citizens' rights and interests. In addition, it has supported the broader diffusion and institutionalization of integrity and ethical management across the business sector.

To this end, the ACRC has published the ACRC Integrity and Ethical Management Briefs, a monthly webzine, since 2005. It offers companies, business associations, academic institutions, and public enterprises the latest domestic and international trends, expert resources, and best practices in integrity and ethical management. The ACRC also continues to enhance the content and usability of the webzine.

Section 1. Support for the Spread and Establishment of Ethical Management of Business

The international community has, for more than two decades, called for the prevention of corruption in the private sector and corporate compliance with anti-corruption standards through instruments such as the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention (1999) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (2003). In particular, in 2019, the OECD adopted the Recommendation of the Council on Guidelines on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in State-Owned Enterprises, recognizing the growing role of state-owned enterprises in the global economy and emphasizing the need for transparent and efficient governance, effective risk management, and robust ethics and compliance frameworks.

Accordingly, to promote integrity and ethical management and enhance transparency in public institutions, the ACRC has been developing an 'Integrity & Ethical Management Compliance Program' since 2021. In June 2022, it distributed the 'Integrity & Ethics Compliance Program Guideline for State-Owned Enterprises.' In 2024, it published the Guide to Ethical Management Practices for Businesses. In June 2025, the ACRC further issued the Ethical Management Compliance Program Implementation Manual, which includes operational guidelines and best practices, and supported the operation of ethical management compliance programs at 16 companies by providing program maturity assessments and tailored consulting services.

The ACRC will continue to expand its support for the operation of ethical management compliance programs to help companies actively respond to global anti-corruption standards.

Section 2. Revitalization of Governance for Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Promotion

To enhance policy awareness and participation among the next generation of leaders, the ACRC operates the 'ACRC 2030 Advisory Group,' comprising 20 members in their 20s and 30s. The group gathers fresh and constructive ideas for policy improvement, helping the ACRC explore sustainable policy directions.

The 2030 Advisory Group actively engaged in various ACRC tasks, presented youth perspectives at occasions for sharing best practices with other ministries and local governments, and held discussions with youth organizations such as the Korea Youth Foundation and youth centers to share the current status of the actual implementation of relevant policies. Through these activities, youth opinions were referred to relevant departments for review through appropriate channels, including the sharing of agenda items with responsible divisions and the People's Idea Box.

To enhance accountability and transparency in public administration, the ACRC is working to promote a culture of integrity across society by supporting the active operation of the ‘Citizen Integrity Auditor System,’ an external citizen-participation body operated by central government ministries, local governments, and public service-related organizations.

Citizen Integrity Auditors monitor and investigate major projects and corruption-vulnerable areas within each organization, contributing to the prevention of corruption in public institutions by requesting corrective measures for improper practices and recommending institutional improvements. To enhance the effective operation of this system, the ACRC has included the Citizen Integrity Auditor System as an evaluation item in the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment of Public Institutions and uses this indicator to assess the effectiveness of its operation.

The ACRC will continue to actively support the Citizen Integrity Auditor System so that it can become firmly established as a key public-private collaborative framework for anti-corruption oversight. Such efforts will include holding workshops for Citizen Integrity Auditors and providing training programs to ensure the effective operation of the system.

Section 3. Discover and Support Programs to Promote Autonomous Integrity and Rights at the Private Level

Each year, the ACRC selects and provides grants for projects proposed by non-profit private organizations through an open call. This initiative aims to foster a culture of integrity and promote citizens’ rights and interests based on autonomy and creativity.

In 2025, the ACRC selected five projects after evaluating their themes, potential impact, and the implementing organizations’ capacity, and provided approximately KRW 113 million in funding. As part of its efforts this year to protect citizens’ rights and promote integrity, the ACRC developed new programs for various social groups that had previously received limited policy support. It also sought to make greater use of video content and online media while prioritizing support for programs with broad participation.



Major projects in 2025 include 'Barrier-Free Iruri 25', a media action project for the rights of persons with disabilities by Gwangju Citizens' Broadcasting; the Youth Integrity Heroes Explorers Project by the Korea Youth Village Network; and the Development and Education of Transparency Content for Ethical Management of Nonprofit Organizations by the Korea Public Corporation Association.

The ACRC is fostering a virtuous cycle of public-private cooperation by utilizing the outcomes of such voluntary private-sector activities as reference materials to inform the work of relevant departments.





Chapter 4. International Cooperation

The ACRC has been actively engaged in a wide range of international cooperation activities in the fields of anti-corruption and ombudsman affairs. In particular, in 2025, the ACRC took the lead in advancing the anti-corruption agenda through its hosting of APEC meetings and actively participated in various international consultative bodies, further expanding its international cooperation and engagement.

Section 1. International Anti-Corruption Cooperation

1. Implementation and Negotiation of the International Anti-Corruption Conventions

A. United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)

The Republic of Korea signed the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2003 and ratified the convention in 2008. Korea completed its first cycle review in 2013 under Chapters III (Criminalization and Law Enforcement) and IV (International Cooperation) of the UNCAC. The second cycle review (2016–2026) was focused on Chapters II (Preventive Measures) and V (Asset Recovery), and Korea completed it in December 2023.

At the meetings of the Implementation Review Group of the UNCAC, held in Vienna, Austria, on three occasions in 2025, the ACRC presented the achievements made in implementing implementation review recommendations, including mechanisms for the protection and reward of reporting persons. The ACRC also shared best practices, including its efforts in providing anti-corruption technical assistance and promoting the

Act on the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest related to Duties of Public Servants through the People's Idea Box.

At the 11th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC, held in Doha, Qatar, in December 2025, the ACRC presented Korea's anti-corruption efforts and key achievements, including the successful implementation of the Act on the Prevention of Conflicts Interests related to Duties of Public Servants, progress in implementing the UNCAC, strengthened protection for internal whistleblowers, and efforts to expand integrity education for future generations. During a side event themed 'Promoting Integrity through New Technologies,' the ACRC shared its experience in establishing and operating the Clean Portal, a data-driven digital corruption reporting system. The ACRC also held bilateral meetings with eight anti-corruption institutions, including counterparts from Austria, Zimbabwe, Japan, and the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), to discuss practical cooperation measures, including the exchange of best practices, sharing of experiences in UNCAC implementation reviews, and personnel secondments.

B. OECD Anti-Bribery Convention

In order to implement the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, Korea enacted the Act on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (the International Anti-Bribery Act) in December 1998, and the Act entered into force in February 1999. This Act is supported by the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, which provides legal protection to individuals who report violations of the International Anti-Bribery Act. Korea reported on its implementation of the Phase 4 recommendations in December 2023, including those concerning the political neutrality of prosecutors and effective sanctions against legal and natural persons involved in bribery. In November 2024, the OECD Working Group on Bribery (WGB) conducted a technical mission to enhance implementation of the recommendations. At its 2025 meeting, the WGB decided to further discuss future implementation directions based on the findings of that mission.

C. Korea–United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Upgrade Negotiations

Korea and the United Kingdom concluded negotiations to upgrade the Korea–UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and signed a Joint Declaration confirming the conclusion of the negotiations in London on 15 December 2025. Notably, for the first time in Korea’s FTA history, an anti-corruption chapter was incorporated into a free trade agreement, addressing the distorting effects of corruption on trade and investment and thereby strengthening mutual trust between the two Parties. The anti-corruption chapter will contribute to reinforcing both Parties’ international obligations and upholding international standards of integrity and transparency, while ensuring that trade and investment flows are conducted in a transparent and accountable manner.

2. Participation in Anti-Corruption Meetings with International Organizations

A. APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG)

In 2025, as the Republic of Korea assumed the APEC Chairmanship, the ACRC hosted two meetings of the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG). At the 40th meeting, held in February 2025, member economies shared updates on the implementation of the UNCAC and their anti-corruption efforts to enhance integrity in the private sector. At the 41st meeting, held in July 2025, participants discussed progress in implementing APEC anti-corruption commitments, including examples of using networks to strengthen cooperation among law enforcement agencies. The ACTWG also revised its Terms of Reference (ToR), which were scheduled to expire in 2025, to ensure the continuity of its operations.

In addition, the ACRC convened the first-ever APEC high-level dialogue on anti-corruption cooperation. The dialogue brought together senior representatives from APEC member economies and international organizations, who emphasized a shared commitment to the need for strengthened anti-corruption efforts and enhanced cooperation through the participation of diverse stakeholders, including the public and private sectors, civil society, and academia, in order to achieve APEC’s goal of sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity.

B. G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group

In 2025, South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency, and the ACRC participated in the G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meeting held in October 2025 as Korea's lead delegate. At the meeting, the ACRC presented Korea's efforts to strengthen international anti-corruption cooperation and its achievements in anti-corruption policies.

In addition, through three meetings of the working group, key outcome documents on major anti-corruption issues were adopted, including the Joint Chairs' Statement, High-Level Principles on the Management of Seized and Confiscated Assets, a collection of best practices on the roles of multi-stakeholders in preventing corruption, a collection of best practices for fostering a transparent, ethical, and accountable public sector, and an implementation review report on the protection of internal whistleblowers.

C. OECD Working Party on Public Integrity and Anti-Corruption and the Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum

The OECD holds the Public Integrity and Anti-Corruption meetings twice a year and the Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum once a year to promote the design and implementation of integrity and anti-corruption policies that support good public governance.

In accordance with the OECD Recommendation on Public Integrity adopted in 2017, PIAC has developed the Public Integrity Indicators (PII) to measure public integrity in a more objective and evidence-based manner and uses these indicators to assess the integrity of OECD member countries. Since November 2025, the ACRC has participated in the OECD PII Task Force and contributed to the development of more objective and effective indicators.

D. ADB/OECD Asia-Pacific Anti-Corruption Initiative

Since its establishment in 1999, the ADB/OECD Asia-Pacific Anti-Corruption Initiative has been supporting anti-corruption efforts in the Asia-Pacific region through the effective implementation of the UNCAC.

In September 2025, at the 12th Regional Conference of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific (ACI), held in Jakarta, Indonesia, Korea participated in a panel discussion on ‘Integrity Tools for Strengthening Public Administration’ and shared its case of systematic monitoring for the effective operation of the employment restriction system for public officials dismissed for misconduct. During a panel discussion on strengthening integrity in the private sector, Korea presented the operation of the Clean Portal system and an AI-based reporting assistant case aimed at facilitating corruption reporting. At the public integrity workshop, Korea also presented the achievements of its anti-corruption strategies through the operation of the public funds recovery system, as well as a case of garnering public support for anti-corruption policies through policy participation via the People’s Idea Box platform.

E. International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA)

The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) is an international organization dedicated to anti-corruption education and training. The ACRC made a voluntary contribution of approximately KRW 150 million to IACA in 2013 and has contributed EUR 50,000 annually since 2019, thereby helping to support and expand IACA’s anti-corruption research and education activities.

At the 14th Session of the Assembly of Parties held in Vienna, Austria, in November 2025, the ACRC participated in discussions on the latest trends regarding the impact of AI and digitalization on anti-corruption efforts. The ACRC also presented Korea’s anti-corruption initiatives and key achievements over the past year, including achievements related to hosting the APEC ACTWG meetings and the High-Level Dialogue, efforts to enhance fairness in recruitment processes, strengthened institutional support for the protection and reward mechanisms for reporting persons, and efforts to lay the foundation for strengthening integrity education for future generations.

3. Anti-Corruption Technical Assistance

To share Korea's anti-corruption experience with the international community and support developing nations in adopting Korea's exemplary anti-corruption systems, the ACRC signed an MOU with the UNDP on December 4, 2015. Through this MOU, the ACRC has shared the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment of Public Institutions, the Corruption Risk Assessment, and the Clean Portal system. In 2025, Protection and Reward System for Corruption Whistleblowers was newly selected as a new area of cooperation.

In February 2025, the ACRC provided a virtual training program on the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment of Public Institutions to Sri Lanka. In June, the ACRC provided consulting support in cooperation with the UNDP country offices and anti-corruption authorities of Montenegro, Algeria, and Uzbekistan, where the system is being implemented in a stable manner. This consultation covered experiences in overcoming risks during the institutionalization process and future directions for implementation.

Also, in June 2025, the ACRC hosted a project performance briefing on the Clean Portal sharing project in Pristina, Kosovo. The briefing was attended by anti-corruption authorities and UNDP country offices from a total of nine nations, including Mongolia, Kosovo, and Uzbekistan. During the event, the ACRC shared Korea's experience in implementing anti-corruption technical assistance projects, and participants identified key lessons learned and success factors.

Meanwhile, 42 countries applied for the newly launched project to share the Protection and Reward Scheme for Reporting Persons in 2025. Among them, Tajikistan, Zambia, Vanuatu, and Tonga were selected as four target countries. The ACRC plans to actively provide various forms of support, including training and consulting programs, as well as the development of joint publications and other materials.

In addition, to enable other countries with strong anti-corruption reform initiatives to benchmark Korea's experience, the ACRC has worked with UNDP to develop knowledge

products related to the Integrity Assessment, Corruption Risk Assessment and Clean Portal. A joint publication on the Protection and Reward Scheme for Reporting Persons, which is currently being implemented as of 2025, is under preparation.

Section 2. Ombudsman Cooperation

The ACRC actively participates in the activities of international ombudsman organizations, including the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) and the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), and continues to promote international cooperation among ombudsman institutions by exchanging information on ombudsman systems and policies with the global community.

Ombudsman of Korea, the predecessor of the ACRC, joined the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), a conference of heads of ombudsman organizations, in 1996. Since the establishment of the ACRC in 2008, the Chairperson of the Commission has actively participated in the IOI as the Regional Director for Asia, contributing to discussions and decision-making on various agenda items at the IOI Board of Directors and General Assembly.

In addition, the ACRC attended the 26th Board Meeting and the 18th General Assembly of the AOA held in September 2025, and presented case studies on the resolution of collective grievance petitions and best practices in institutional improvement at the International Ombudsman Conference held as a side event.

Section 3. Bilateral Cooperation on Anti-Corruption and Ombudsman

The ACRC, as Korea's anti-corruption coordinating authority under the UNCAC, actively participates in anti-corruption technical assistance and continues to expand bilateral exchanges and cooperation, including the sharing of experiences and information. In particular, cooperation with African countries was further strengthened in 2025. In March, the ACRC signed a new MOU on anti-corruption cooperation with the Anti-Corruption

Commission of Zimbabwe. In May, during its participation in the IOI Board Meeting held in Morocco, the ACRC also signed bilateral anti-corruption MOUs with the National Authority for Probity, Prevention and the Fight against Corruption of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Public Protector of South Africa, respectively.

In November, the ACRC also renewed an MOU on anti-corruption cooperation with the National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand, which had previously expired in 2016 and was therefore suspended. The two institutions agreed to further deepen and expand exchanges and institutional cooperation.

Meanwhile, in September, a delegation from the Central Inspection Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam visited the ACRC, and the ACRC held a policy briefing session for the delegation to introduce its anti-corruption policies and systems. In October, officials from the Office of the President of Kazakhstan visited the ACRC to benchmark Korea's civil complaint management system and the use of AI technologies. In December, the ACRC also held policy briefing sessions for delegations from Malaysia and Mongolia. For the Malaysian delegation from the Parliament Public Accounts Committee, the ACRC introduced its anti-corruption systems and public interest whistleblower protection system. For the Mongolian parliamentary delegation, the ACRC held a briefing session introducing its overall functions, including the grievance-handling system, administrative appeals system, e-People portal, and People's Idea Box platform.

In addition, in February, the Japan Federation of Administrative Scriveners Associations visited the ACRC, and the ACRC introduced Korea's administrative appeals system and the e-People platform, both operated by the ACRC. In July, the ACRC also shared Korea's anti-corruption systems and policy initiatives with a delegation of Vietnamese public officials participating in a training program in Korea.



Chapter 5. Public Relations

As the frontline institution for protecting citizens' rights and interests, the ACRC has actively promoted its efforts to resolve social conflicts and grievances through a public- and field-centered approach, while also preventing conflicts of interest, eradicating improper solicitations, and protecting and rewarding whistleblowers. These efforts form part of the Commission's broader initiatives to protect rights and interests and spread a culture of integrity.

In particular, following the inauguration of the new government, the ACRC concentrated its public communication efforts on the Commission's National Policy Task No. 16, 'Anti-Corruption Reform to Advance Citizens' Rights and Interests.' It promoted the Commission's work from multiple perspectives, including the resolution of grievance petitions filed by socially vulnerable groups, recommendations for institutional improvements affecting citizens' daily lives, and the publication of the results of major fact-finding surveys, as well as activities related to grievance redress, institutional improvement, administrative appeals, and anti-corruption. To this end, the Commission provided the public with detailed information on its major initiatives through various means, including press releases, media briefings, broadcast appearances, meetings, and contributed articles.

By hosting international events such as the APEC ACTWG, the ACRC shared its anti-corruption policies, initiatives, and efforts with the international community and the public. In addition, following the fire at the National Information Resources Service, the ACRC promptly provided updates on the impact of the incident and recovery progress regarding public service systems, including the e-People system, through social media live broadcasts, press releases, and briefings, thereby minimizing inconvenience to the public.

The ACRC produced and broadcast TV public service advertisements to actively inform the public about its work in anti-corruption, grievance resolution, administrative appeals, and institutional improvements, while also encouraging public participation through the reporting of corruption and public interest violations, filing of grievance petitions, and submission of administrative appeals. The Commission also operated a regular segment on radio broadcasts to enhance public awareness.

In 2025, the ACRC distributed a total of 434 press releases and held 79 policy briefings. Key policy briefings included the announcement of the findings of a fact-finding investigation into bidding irregularities in an aquatic seed stock release project in the southwestern coastal region (July 30) and the announcement of the results of a review of training expenditure practices at public institutions (September 2).

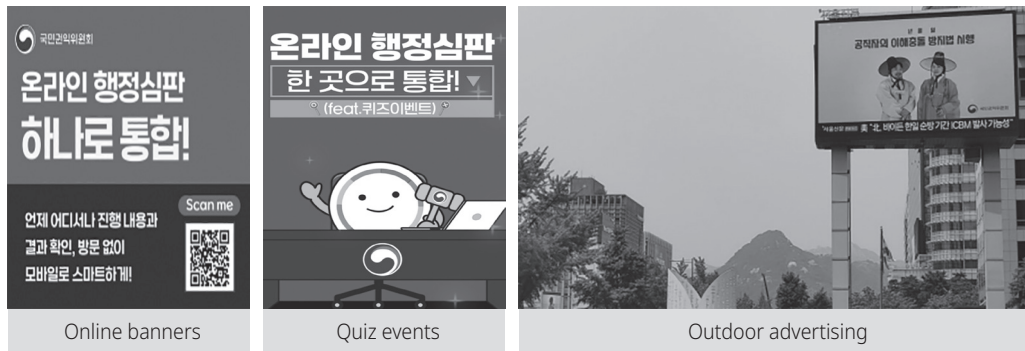
<Table 1-2> Media relations activities (2023–2025)

Year	Press releases issued	Interviews	Contributed articles	Briefings
2023	518	38	13	67
2024	447	38	23	55
2025	434	39	33	79

In addition, to enhance awareness and utilization of the administrative appeals system, the ACRC carried out intensive promotional activities in conjunction with key events such as the launch of the One-Stop Administrative Appeals System (June 2025) and the 40th anniversary of the Administrative Appeals System (November 2025). These activities included tailored outdoor advertisements for senior citizens and vulnerable groups, as well as posters and banner advertisements on websites, in publications, on city buses, and through other channels.



◦ [Figure 1-2] Examples of intensive promotional activities

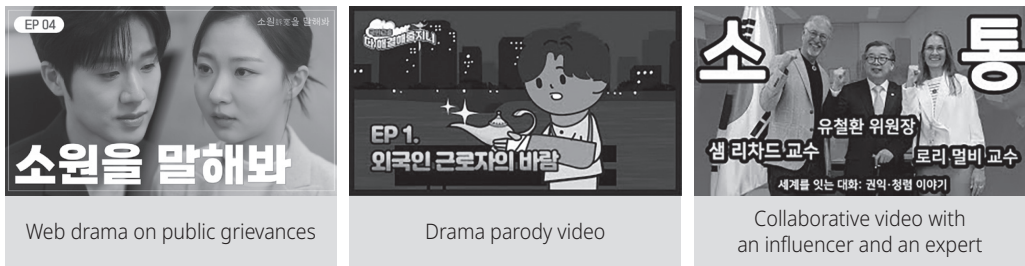


In addition, the ACRC implemented strategic online communication efforts in response to the development of new media and the growing influence of younger, digitally savvy generations. Through content production for its official YouTube channel, *Gwon-ik Vision* as well as social media platforms (blogs, Facebook, Instagram, and X), the ACRC engaged in tailored and interactive communication. It also widely utilized diverse promotional methods, such as short-form videos and online events that are familiar to younger audiences.

The ACRC developed a diverse range of video content to help the public easily understand the system for handling civil petitions for grievances and its achievements by presenting real-life grievance resolution cases as engaging stories. It also introduced the process of resolving grievance petitions through character- and storyline-based content, including drama parody animations, thereby generating positive public responses and fostering broader public understanding and support.

In addition, the ACRC featured a video dialogue between the Chairperson and Professor Sam Richards, a well-known influencer and expert in conflict management, to highlight the excellence of the ACRC's approach to resolving collective grievance petitions. Through this initiative, the ACRC enhanced the reach of its promotional efforts and strengthened public trust in its policies.

◦ [Figure 1-3] Examples of promotional content development reflecting communication trends



Furthermore, the ACRC operated a regular twice-monthly segment titled 'In Search of Our Rights' on YTN Radio's 'Smart Radio Life' (weekdays, 10:30–11:30). The ACRC also actively promoted its key policy issues and achievements through appearances on KTV's 'Live Korea' (weekday morning and afternoon segments). Interviews with senior officials, including politically appointed officials, and working-level staff on TV and radio programs provided an ongoing opportunity to inform the public about the ACRC's major policies, issues, and initiatives.

The ACRC published the ACRC Newsletter, a quarterly publication containing updates on its major policy initiatives and policy cases that resonate with the public. From its inaugural issue in March 2008 through the Winter 2024 issue, a total of 83 issues were published and distributed to public institutions, libraries, and other relevant organizations. Beginning in 2025, the publication was converted into a webzine format in order to more effectively promote the ACRC's key policies to a wider public audience. By providing content on major grievance cases, institutional improvement, and administrative appeals that are closely related to citizens' daily lives, the webzine delivers practical and useful information to the public. In recognition of these efforts, the ACRC Newsletter webzine received the Top Excellence Award in the Electronic Newsletter category at the 2025 Korea Communication Awards, presented by the President of the Korea Newsletter Association. The ACRC is expected to further strengthen communication with the public and become a more accessible institution through diverse and innovative content tailored to the public's needs.





Part 02

Implementing Anti-Corruption
Policies to Build a Cleaner and
Fairer Korea



Chapter 1. Embedding Anti-Corruption Laws and Institutions as Everyday Norms

Section 1. Enhancing the Normative Force and Effectiveness of the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act (Anti-Graft Act)

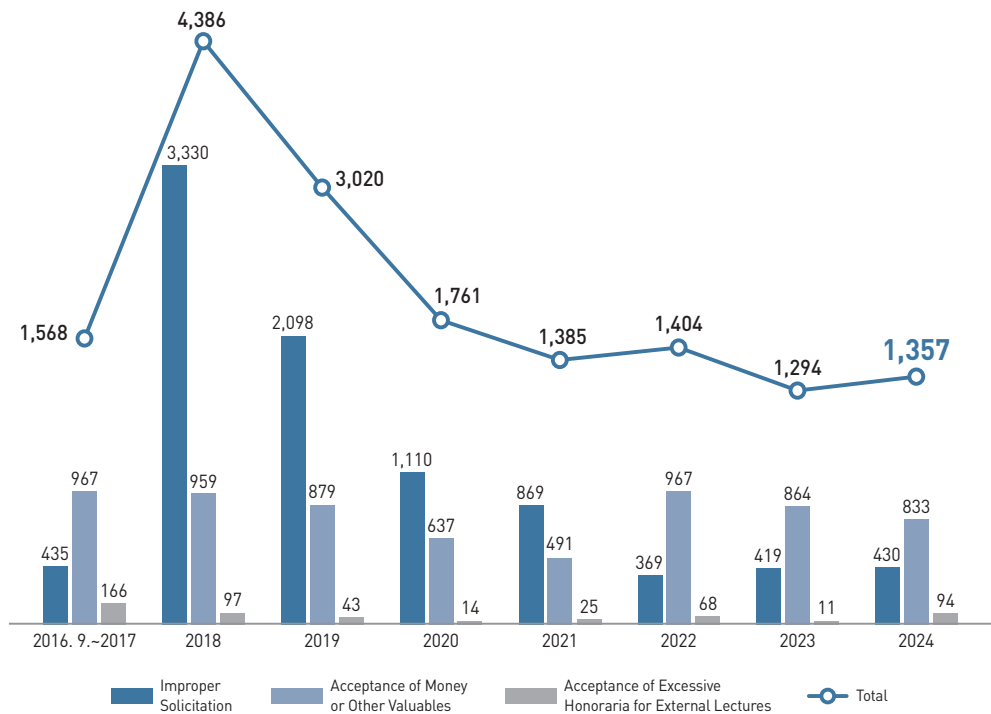
The Improper Solicitation and Graft Act (Anti-Graft Act), which was enacted and took effect on September 28, 2016, in response to the public's desire for a transparent and corruption-free society, is widely regarded as having brought about meaningful positive changes across the country by becoming an everyday norm not only in the public sector but also in citizens' daily lives.

From the enforcement of the Anti-Graft Act on September 28, 2016 through the end of December 2024, the ACRC conducted a comprehensive inspection of the implementation of the Act across approximately 24,000 public institutions, including constitutional institutions, central administrative agencies, local governments, public service-related organizations, schools, and school foundations. The inspection covered the overall operation of the system, including the status of reports received and handled regarding violations of the Act, the designation of improper solicitation prevention officers, and the implementation of education and consultation activities.

From the enforcement of the Anti-Graft Act through the end of 2024, a total of 16,175 reports of violations were received by public institutions at all levels. By type of violation, improper solicitation accounted for the largest share, with 9,060 cases (56.0%), followed by the acceptance of money or other valuables with 6,597 cases (40.8%), and the acceptance of excessive honoraria for external lectures, etc. with 518 cases (3.2%).

[Figure 2-1] Annual trends in reported cases

(unit: cases)



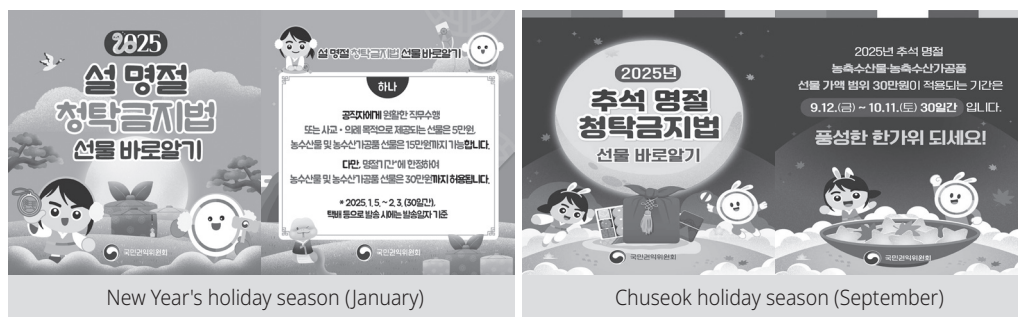
Since the enforcement of the Act, a total of 2,643 public officials and other persons have received sanctions for violating the Act. By violation type, 2,504 individuals (94.7%) were sanctioned for accepting money or other valuables, followed by 126 individuals (4.8%) for improper solicitations and 13 individuals (0.5%) for accepting excessive honoraria for external lectures, etc. In 2024 alone, a total of 446 individuals were sanctioned for violations of the Act, representing the highest annual figure since the Act took effect. Among them, cases involving the acceptance of money or other valuables accounted for 96%.

Through onsite inspections, the ACRC identified a total of 13 cases of improper handling by public institutions in the process of receiving and handling reports of violations of the Act, including cases where administrative fines were notified only to recipients of money or other valuables. The ACRC requested corrective measures for these cases and achieved a 100% implementation rate for the requested corrective actions.

In February, a briefing on the results of the operational inspection of the Anti-Graft Act was held for 1,235 participants, including officials responsible for administering the Act at institutions at all levels. Between March and April, seven regional briefing sessions on the Anti-Graft Act were also held across six regions nationwide, drawing 1,641 participants, including officials in charge of administering the system from 1,180 institutions.

In addition, as inquiries regarding the giving and receiving of money or gifts tend to surge ahead of the Lunar New Year and *Chuseok* — the two biggest holiday seasons in Korea — card news materials were distributed in advance to public institutions at all levels. They were also posted on the ACRC's website and social media channels to improve public access to information. Furthermore, the relevant legal provisions were promoted through YouTube and various other media platforms so that anyone could understand them easily and in an engaging way.

- [Figure 2-2] Public awareness campaign: understanding the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act (Card news)



Section 2. Promoting the Stable Implementation and Effective Operation of the Act on the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest Related to Duties of Public Servants

The Act on the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest Related to Duties of Public Servants (Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act) was enacted in 2021 and took effect on May 19, 2022, in order to prevent potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the course of public servants' duties, thereby ensuring fair performance of official duties and securing public trust in public institutions. As 2025 marks the third anniversary of the Act's implementation, one of the ACRC's key tasks was to create conditions that would enable the conflict-of-interest prevention system to take root and become internalized throughout the public sector.

The ACRC held consultative meetings with relevant agencies to hear about practical difficulties in operating the system and established interpretive guidelines so that the system could be implemented effectively in the field. Accordingly, it revised and distributed to all public institutions new interpretive guidelines on 'restrictions on entering into private contracts' and on the 'reporting of private interested parties and applications for recusal.'

In addition, the '2025 Work Handbook of the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act' was published. This handbook includes legal interpretation standards, frequently asked questions and answers.

To promote the key elements of the conflicts of interest prevention system and gather feedback on the challenges faced by institutions in operating the system, the ACRC held regional briefing sessions for conflicts of interest officers in September 2025. The sessions were held 10 times across five regions, with 1,169 public officials from 798 public institutions participating.

Regarding the ten standards of conduct under the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act, requests for authoritative interpretations from public officials, institutions, and citizens



have been submitted through various channels, including the e-People platform. From the enforcement of the Act on May 19, 2022, through 2025, the ACRC received a total of 2,876 requests for authoritative interpretations and provided responses to 2,871 cases (99.8%) following consultations with experts.

<Table 2-1> Standards of conduct for public officials under the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act

- Obligations to report and submit -	- Restricted and prohibited acts -
① Reporting of private interests and requests for recusal	⑥ Restrictions on external activities related to official duties
② Reporting of real estate holdings or purchases related to official duties	⑦ Restrictions on the employment of family members
③ Submission of senior officials' private-sector activity records	⑧ Restrictions on discretionary contracts
④ Reporting of transactions with duty-related persons	⑨ Prohibition on the private use of public institution goods or property
⑤ Reporting of private contact with former public officials	⑩ Prohibition on the use of official secrets or confidential information

From the enforcement of the Act (May 19, 2022) through 2025, a total of 753 reports were filed with the ACRC, and 708 cases were processed. Among them, 99 cases, which were deemed to require further investigation due to potential violations, were referred or forwarded to the investigative agencies, such as relevant public institutions.

From April to August 2024, the ACRC conducted onsite inspections of the conflicts of interest prevention system at 20 local councils (7 metropolitan and 13 basic councils), which were considered to have a higher risk of conflicts of interest due to their close ties with local communities, and in November, announced the inspection results.

Accordingly, the ACRC developed and distributed the 'A Case-Based Guide to Preventing Conflicts of Interest in Local Councils' (July 2025), which categorizes conflict-of-interest situations by type, to all local councils and local governments nationwide in order to promote the effective operation of the system.

Since the enactment of the Act, the ACRC has provided tailored onsite training on the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act to 536 institutions that requested training directly provided by the ACRC. For other institutions, the ACRC provided standardized training materials to support their own internal training programs.

In addition, to raise awareness of the Act, the ACRC carried out promotional activities through various media, including card news, outdoor advertisements at railway stations, promotional stickers attached to postal service vehicles, and YouTube. It also developed and distributed self-assessment QR codes, which enable public officials to check whether they are subject to conflict-of-interest situations, as well as promotional items such as magnets, to public institutions nationwide.

◉ [Figure 2-3] Promotional activities



Section 3. Reviewing and Strengthening the Code of Conduct for Public Officials

The ACRC has actively promoted the autonomous discipline of institutions and supported the more effective operation of the code of conduct system. This included preparing and implementing institutional codes of conduct tailored to the characteristics of different levels of public institutions.

In March and August 2025, the ACRC held briefing sessions to support the establishment and operation of codes of conduct for 92 institutions newly designated as public service-related organizations. Through these sessions, it explained the need for each institution to adopt its own code of conduct and introduced the key provisions of the system. The ACRC also reviewed submissions on the enactment and amendment of codes of conduct from institutions at all levels and notified the relevant institutions when corrective action was required. In addition, it responded to 316 inquiries received through official correspondence, the e-People system, and the code of conduct consultation corner on the Clean Portal. The revised 'Work Handbook on the Code of Conduct for Public Officials' was published and distributed to a total of 1,900 organizations.

In 2025, the ACRC handled 376 reported cases, identified a total of 44 violations of the code of conduct by public officials, notified the relevant organizations, and referred or forwarded necessary cases to the relevant organizations for further investigation.

The ACRC annually investigates and inspects the operation and implementation of the code of conduct by public institutions according to Article 9 of the Enforcement Decree of the ACRC Act. The ACRC is committed to reducing blind spots in corruption control by reviewing codes of conduct in areas of vulnerability to corruption.

In 2025, the ACRC conducted inspections of compliance with the code of conduct for public officials at 11 institutions, including metropolitan and provincial offices of education, local public enterprises and corporations, and local government-invested and -funded

organizations, as well as 28 organizations that were newly designated as public service-related organizations in 2021.

The ACRC notified the relevant institutions to take necessary actions such as disciplinary measures and the recovery of funds.

In addition, in order to eradicate corruption such as receiving money and goods during major holidays such as Lunar New Year and *Chuseok*, the ACRC conducted intensive inspections targeting public institutions with lower integrity scores. These inspections focused on the giving and receiving of money, entertainment, and gifts during vulnerable periods. Violations of the code of conduct, such as receiving gifts, were notified to the relevant organizations, and necessary measures such as disciplinary actions were recommended.





Chapter 2. Legal and Institutional Reforms to Address Factors Undermining Integrity and Fairness in People's Daily Lives

Section 1. Eliminating Recruitment Irregularities in Public Institutions and Promoting a Culture of Fair Recruitment

The government established and operated the Task Force for the Eradication of Recruitment Irregularities in Public Institutions (the TF), a temporary body established in November 2018 to promote comprehensive government-wide measures to eliminate recruitment irregularities in public institutions. In January 2023, the Integrated Center for Reporting Recruitment Corruption (the Center) was established to promote the national tasks in a more systematic manner and to deepen the culture of fair employment in the public sector.

Since the launch of the Center, the ACRC has been regularly receiving and resolving reported cases of recruitment irregularities in order to establish a fair hiring culture in the public sector, and its ability to detect hiring irregularities has been strengthened by conducting fact-finding investigations. Meanwhile, various efforts have been made to eradicate hiring irregularities, such as consulting on the hiring regulations of public service-related organizations, professional training on fair hiring, and expanding preventive functions such as system improvement.

Since 2019, the ACRC has conducted annual comprehensive inspections of recruitment practices at public service-related organizations jointly with relevant ministries. In 2025, a comprehensive inspection was carried out at 931 such organizations. As a result of reviewing whether recruitment procedures newly conducted by public service-related

organizations in 2024 had been carried out properly in accordance with relevant regulations, a total of 832 cases involving violations of fair recruitment practices were identified across 458 organizations. Among these, 34 cases were identified as recruitment irregularities subject to referral for investigation or disciplinary action. The number of recruitment irregularity cases dropped by 81.3%, from 182 cases in 2019 to 34 cases in 2024.

<Table 2-2> Results of comprehensive recruitment inspections by year

Category		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Recruitment irregularities	Referral for investigation	36	9	5	4	2	-	1
	Disciplinary action	146	74	71	43	42	39	33
Negligence in the performance of duties	Caution and warning	1,160	862	799	774	823	822	798

As part of its continuous monitoring and oversight system to eradicate recruitment irregularities in the public sector, the ACRC receives and handles reports of recruitment irregularities filed by citizens throughout the year. In 2025, the ACRC received 147 reports concerning violations of recruitment-related laws and regulations and improper interference, and handled 174 cases in total.

In addition, to prevent recruitment irregularities, the ACRC provided improvement proposals for internal recruitment regulations to 402 public service-related organizations, thereby helping prevent unfair recruitment practices caused by deficiencies in their internal regulations. It also provided specialized fair recruitment training (both in-person and online) to 9,211 personnel from 1,208 institutions.

Section 2. Corruption Risk Assessment of Enacted and Revised Laws to Address Corruption Risk Factors

Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA) is a tool that seeks to systematically analyze and evaluate corruption-causing factors within laws and regulations in order to prevent corruption in advance by preparing improvement measures. The CRA system was introduced through the amendment of the ACRC Act on December 29, 2005, and was officially implemented starting April 1, 2006. For affiliated public institutions, the system was introduced and has been operated since December 28, 2007. Furthermore, with the amendment of the ACRC Act on April 16, 2019, internal regulations of public institutions¹⁾ also became subject to CRA by the ACRC.

First, in the assessment of enacted and revised laws, a total of 1,357 enacted and revised laws were reviewed in 2025. During this process, 247 corruption-inducing factors were found in 122 laws, and recommendations for improvements were made to the relevant ministries. The average processing time was 4.3 days, enabling faster support for the enactment and revision of laws and regulations. The rate of recommended legal improvements reached 18.2%, marking a 3.4% increase compared to the previous year.

Corruption Risk Assessment is conducted based on 12 criteria across four domains: compliance, implementation, administrative procedures, and anti-corruption controls. By criterion, improvement recommendations were made in 79 cases based on the predictability criterion, 63 cases based on the specificity and objectivity of discretionary provisions criterion, 27 cases based on the appropriateness of sanction provisions criterion, and 24 cases based on the risk of conflicts of interest criterion.

Meanwhile, the ACRC recognized the need to fundamentally diagnose and address local government corruption. Therefore, a plan to conduct the CRA on local autonomous

1) Public institutions under the Act on the Management of Public Institutions and local public corporations and foundations under the Local Public Enterprises Act

rules was established. Under this plan, the ACRC has spearheaded the first-ever comprehensive inspection of all current laws and regulations including ordinances and rules.

From 2022 to 2025, the ACRC conducted CRA on 243 local governments and 152,881 local ordinances. Through these assessments, the ACRC recommended a total of 7,705 improvements across 3 key areas: local councils, institutional operations, and project implementation.

The main results of the corruption risk assessments on local ordinances are as follows.

First, to prevent the improper use of subsidies for local council associations, the provision of subsidies was prohibited for general operating expenses unrelated to research and development for local administration or institutional improvement projects. This measure was introduced to ensure that local government subsidies are provided only for purposes permitted under relevant laws, including the Local Finance Act and the Local Subsidy Management Act.

Second, to prevent the prolonged retention of certain advisors and enhance fairness, regulations were established to limit the number of consecutive terms served by legislative and legal advisors to local councils. This measure was intended to prevent potential corruption risks in advance, such as favoring specific individuals through repeated assignment of work due to long-term appointments and public-private collusion based on personal relationships, while removing barriers to entry that restrict opportunities for other qualified experts to be appointed.

Third, the ACRC improved the criteria for imposing administrative fines for acts such as failure to attend or refusal to take an oath or provide testimony during administrative audits and investigations conducted by local councils, which had lacked specificity and varied among local governments. The criteria were refined by categorizing violations by type and allowing fines to be imposed on a graduated basis in consideration of the severity

of each violation, thereby enhancing the appropriateness and proportionality of sanctions. Fourth, to enhance fairness and transparency in civil service recruitment, the ACRC required the removal of the provision in the ‘Special Provisions for New Appointment Exams for Professional Career Officers’ that allowed additional points to be awarded at rates determined by the appointing authority for qualifications designated by the appointing authority. If such provisions are retained, the relevant qualifications and corresponding rates for additional points must be publicly disclosed through official notices or recruitment announcements to ensure transparency in selection criteria.

Fifth, to prevent improper claims for travel expenses by local government officials, measures were introduced to require reimbursement based on actual expenses supported by documentary evidence for transportation fares and other travel-related expenses, in accordance with the Regulations on Travel Expenses for Public Officials. In cases of improper receipt, the additional amount to be collected was clearly set at five times the amount of travel expenses improperly received, thereby preventing the fraudulent receipt of public funds and strengthening sanctions against improper claims.





Chapter 3.

Support for Improving Integrity in the Public Sector

Section 1. Enhancing Integrity through the Comprehensive Public Integrity Assessment

The ACRC has been conducting an objective assessment of the integrity levels of public institutions every year since 2002 and publishing the results in order to overcome the limitations of existing anti-corruption policies of the public sector, which are mostly focused on countermeasures such as detection and punishment. This allows public institutions to voluntarily improve areas vulnerable to corruption and to keep the public informed about the level of integrity in the public sector, thereby building consensus on the need to fight corruption and improve integrity.

Under Articles 12 and 27-2 of the ACRC Act, the 2025 Comprehensive Integrity Assessment covered 721 institutions across 17 categories. However, results were announced for 709 institutions, excluding 8 institutions exempted because they were located in special disaster areas affected by wildfires, 1 institution undergoing liquidation, and 3 institutions for which results were not announced due to insufficient sample sizes.

Taking institutional characteristics into account, different evaluation models were used for various types of institutions, including central government agencies, local governments, offices of education, and public service-related organizations. Separate models were used to measure national and public universities and local councils.

<Table 2-3> Institutions subject to Comprehensive Integrity Assessment in 2025

(unit: number)

Total	Central Administrative Agencies		Local Government Agencies			Offices of Education	Public service-related institutions					National and public universities	Local councils				
			Metro politan	Lower-level local gov'ts			Metro politan	Lower-level local gov'ts									
	I (Ministry)	II (Office)		I (City)	II (County)			III (District)	I (Public Enterprises)	II (Quasi-Governmental Organizations)	III (Key Institutions)		IV (Local Public Enterprises)	V (Research Institutes)	I (City)	II (County)	III (District)
709	25	23	17	74	75	69	17	31	56	21	19	23	16	17	75	82	69

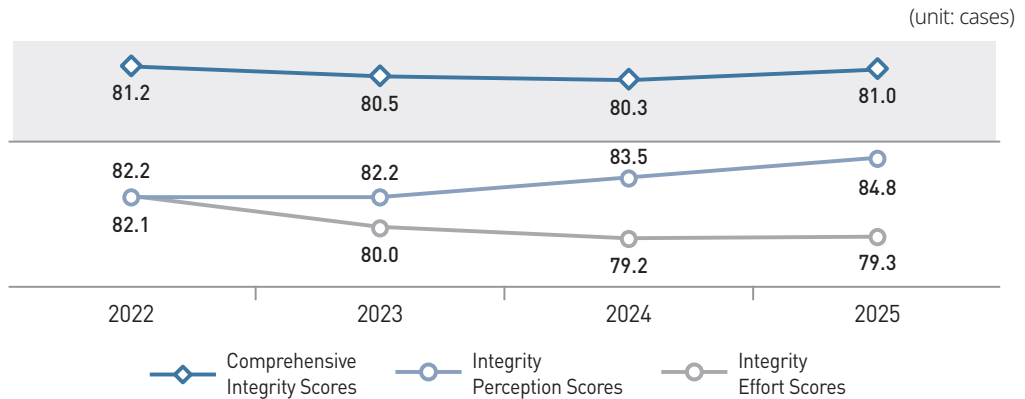
The 2025 Comprehensive Integrity Assessment is based on a 100-point scale, the same as in 2024. Scores are determined using a weighted sum of 60% for integrity perception and 40% for integrity effort, with a maximum of 10 points deducted for corrupt practices.

Integrity perception was measured through an objective survey conducted by a social research organization on awareness and experience of corruption in the main business of an institution. Integrity effort was measured by a group of internal and external experts evaluating the institution's anti-corruption efforts and performance using quantitative and qualitative indicators and confirmed through an appeal process. The corruption status assessment comprehensively incorporated the results of both a quantitative evaluation calculated using a formula based on data on corruption cases and a qualitative evaluation conducted by an expert review committee.

The assessment results for each level of institution were presented on a scale of 1 to 5 for comprehensive integrity level, integrity perception, and integrity effort. The rating for each institution is based on its total score, which was calculated by determining the rating range using the average score and standard deviation of each type. Each institution was provided with detailed scores for each area (including average scores for all institutions and for each type of institution) in the form of an institutional report for analysis of the institution's corruption-prone areas and voluntary improvement efforts.

Across 450 administrative agencies and public service-related organizations in 12 institutional categories, the average comprehensive integrity score was 81.0, up 0.7 points from the previous year. For the first time since the integrity assessment system was reorganized into the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment in 2022, the results showed an upward trend.

● [Figure 2-4] Trends in Comprehensive Integrity Scores (Integrity Perception & Integrity Effort)



The integrity perception score across these 450 institutions was 79.3 points, with external and internal perception scores of 87.0 and 61.1 points, respectively. In particular, the average gap between external and internal perception scores was 25.9 points. Although this gap narrowed slightly compared to the previous year, it remained significant at more than 20 points. This indicates that while transparency and fairness in public-facing administration were assessed at a high level, integrity in internal organizational management fell short of the expectations of public officials within the organizations.

The average integrity effort score across 450 institutions was 84.8 points, representing a 1.3 point increase from the previous year. Integrity effort scores improved across all types of institutions compared to the previous year, suggesting that relevant institutions systematically implemented anti-corruption and integrity initiatives in consideration of the intent of the evaluation indicators.

In 2025, as in the previous year, the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment was conducted for all local councils, including 17 metropolitan and provincial councils and 226 basic-level local

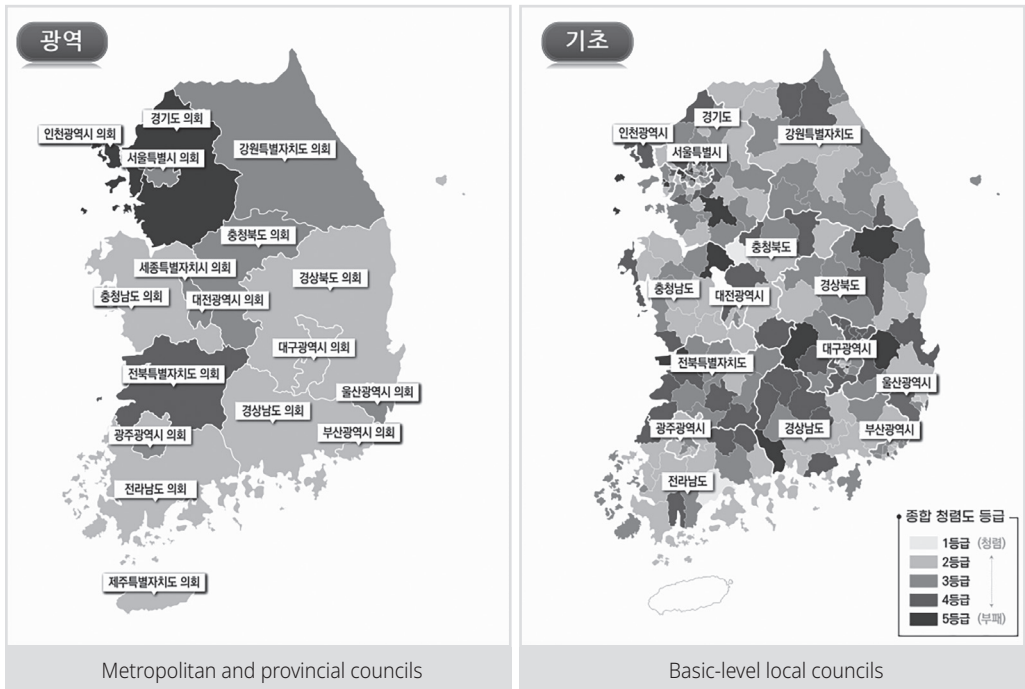
councils. The Comprehensive Integrity Assessment score for local councils was 74.9 points, representing a 5.7-point increase from the previous year. However, the score remained lower than the average score of 81.0 points for 450 administrative agencies and public service-related organizations. Specifically, the integrity perception score was 67.0, while the integrity effort score was 87.4, with the perception area yielding particularly lower results.

The comprehensive integrity score of 16 national and public universities was 78.0, lower than that of administrative agencies and public service-related organizations. The integrity perception score was 74.1, and the integrity effort score was 86.7. Among the 16 institutions, the overall integrity score of 4 institutions improved compared to the previous year, while 4 institutions saw a decline.

The results of this Comprehensive Integrity Assessment will be reflected in the public enterprise and quasi-government agency management evaluations. In accordance with the ACRC Act, each institution is required to publish its individual results on its website within 14 days of the announcement date and keep them posted for at least one month.

The public can access the results of the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment of each institution through their websites. Additionally, an integrity map is posted on the Clean Portal operated by the ACRC, offering a user-friendly visualization of the level of integrity of each institution.

◦ [Figure 2-5] Integrity map for local councils in 2025



Section 2. Supporting Integrity Consulting for Corruption-Prone Institutions

1. Background

The ACRC objectively measures the integrity levels of public institutions and discloses the results every year. To improve overall integrity of public institutions, it is important to share and disseminate outstanding anti-corruption practices from high integrity institutions. It is also essential to diagnose the shortcomings of institutions with lower integrity from an objective perspective and support the establishment of fundamental and effective countermeasures.

Integrity consulting is a follow-up policy tool used by the ACRC to improve integrity levels. It diagnoses the problems and underlying causes faced by public institutions with relatively low integrity levels or with a need to strengthen anti-corruption capacity, and provides tailored solutions accordingly. Through this consulting, the ACRC seeks to raise overall integrity across the public sector by creating successful improvement cases among lower-performing institutions and disseminating those examples to institutions at all levels.

2. Progress

Integrity consulting has been implemented since 2006 as part of efforts to strengthen the consulting functions for public institutions. In March 2016, the revision of the ACRC Act formally institutionalized the provision of consulting support to public organizations.

The integrity consulting program targets all public institutions, including central administrative agencies, local governments, metropolitan and provincial offices of education, and public service-related organizations. Beginning with two institutions in 2006, the program was conducted for a total of 292 institutions by 2025. By institution type, the breakdown was as follows: 28 central administrative agencies, 25 metropolitan and provincial governments, 109 basic-level local governments, 4 local councils, 22 offices of education, 98 public service-related organizations, and 6 public medical institutions.

In 2025, 39 groups (39 mentor institutions and 79 mentee institutions) applied for the program. Taking into account factors such as the integrity levels of the mentor and mentee institutions, their willingness to implement reforms, and the conditions needed for success, the ACRC provided consulting to 14 groups. By type, the mentee institutions participating in the integrity consulting program included 2 metropolitan governments, 15 basic local governments, 1 local council, 2 offices of education, and 8 public service-related organizations.

Out of the 27 institutions that received integrity consulting in 2025, 18 (66.7%) institutions saw an increase in their ratings in the 2025 Comprehensive Integrity Assessment



compared to last year's results. In particular, seven organizations moved up two or more levels.

Section 3. Communicating with Institutions at All Levels through Meetings of Public Institution Auditors

As an anti-corruption agency, the ACRC holds regular and ad hoc meetings each year with auditors at all levels of public institutions, including the central government, local governments, and public service-related organizations, to guide the direction of the government's new anti-corruption and integrity policies and to discuss major issues and priority initiatives.

At the beginning of each year, the ACRC hosts a meeting to discuss the 'anti-corruption and integrity policy implementation tasks' to be promoted throughout the year, and shares information needed to promote integrity policies and philosophy on the direction of the Korean government's anti-corruption policy. The meeting serves as an opportunity for mutual communication. The ACRC also holds customized auditors' meetings on an ad hoc basis, adjusting the agenda and scope of attendance to reflect emerging corruption issues and administrative and social changes.

In February, the ACRC held a policy briefing for five types of institutions: central administrative agencies, metropolitan governments, metropolitan and provincial offices of education, metropolitan councils, and public service-related organizations. It provided customized information tailored to each institutional type, including the main provisions of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials and related laws such as the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act and the Anti-Graft Act, directions for operating the relevant systems, and support measures to strengthen integrity capacity, such as customized integrity education and integrity consulting. Through these briefings, the ACRC also introduced exemplary anti-corruption and integrity policy cases, encouraging participating institutions to further advance their own anti-corruption and integrity efforts.

◉ [Figure 2-6] Public institution auditors meeting



* Source : Yonhap News, News1

In April, the ACRC held in-depth discussions with 17 metropolitan and provincial offices of education on measures to promote integrity education for future generations, including elementary, middle, and high school students. The meeting provided an opportunity to build consensus on the importance of school-based integrity education in helping students grow into responsible individuals who have internalized the values of integrity, and to exchange views on ways to implement integrity education in schools.



Chapter 4.

Strengthening Anti-Corruption and Integrity Education to Foster a Culture of Integrity

Section 1. Strengthening the Management of Mandatory Integrity Education

Since the enforcement of the amended ACRC Act in September 2016, which requires public officials to undergo at least 2 hours of integrity training annually, the ACRC has been making efforts to enhance the effectiveness of integrity education by providing high-quality and tailored integrity training programs and by continuously managing the completion status of statutory training across all institutions. Consequently, the number of public officials who have completed integrity training since it became mandatory has remained consistently high over the past three years: 1.76 million public officials in 2022, 1.76 million in 2023, and 1.74 million in 2024.

A survey conducted in 2025 found that 96.0% of all eligible public officials had completed their integrity training in 2024. This represented a 0.1 percentage-point decrease from the previous year (96.1%). At the same time, both the participation rate of heads of institutions in integrity training and the completion rate among senior public officials increased. These results suggest that the ACRC's efforts to strengthen the implementation of integrity education have been effective, particularly since special training for managers has been conducted under the amended ACRC Act and its Enforcement Decree.

In 2025, the ACRC provided guidance on the integrity education system to public institutions with limited access to integrity training and conducted onsite inspections of newly established institutions, small-scale institutions with low training completion rates, and national and public universities. In addition, to improve completion rates for anti-

corruption training at national and public universities, the ACRC developed and distributed tailored anti-corruption educational materials for faculty members to 59 national and public universities. Furthermore, to support the early establishment of anti-corruption capacity among newly designated public service-related organizations, the ACRC conducted Onsite Anti-Corruption Training for 33 organizations, with ACRC officials visiting in person to introduce relevant anti-corruption laws and regulations and thereby strengthen preventive anti-corruption activities.

Section 2. Delivering High-Quality Integrity Education through Diverse and Differentiated Approaches

1. Operating the Integrity Academy to Enhance Integrity Awareness in the Public Sector

To create a clean and corruption-free society, the ACRC has not only enacted various anti-corruption laws such as the Anti-Graft Act and the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act, but has also implemented diverse policies such as the Integrity Assessment and Corruption Risk Assessment to steadily improve perceptions of corruption within the public sector. However, with the advancement of digital technologies and the increasing complexity of corruption issues, it is now emphasized that, beyond establishing laws and systems, there is a growing need to enhance integrity awareness throughout society. Accordingly, the importance of anti-corruption and integrity education, aimed at preventing corruption and establishing individual values of integrity, is becoming even greater.

In response to this need, the ACRC established the Korea Integrity and Civil Rights Training Institute (KICTI), Korea's only specialized education and training institution for anti-corruption and integrity education, in October 2012. Formerly known as the Anti-Corruption Training Institute, it was renamed on December 30, 2025. For more than a decade, the Institute has pursued its mission of 'Fostering Integrity Leaders to Transform Korea' by providing specialized integrity education to members of the public sector, including central government ministries, local governments, and affiliated public institutions. Through these

efforts, it has continuously worked to spread a culture of integrity throughout the public service.

Last year, the KICTI operated a variety of differentiated integrity education programs, including training courses tailored to each generation of public officials, from newly appointed officials to senior executives, as well as customized courses for sectors vulnerable to corruption. It also provided Integrity and Ethical Management training courses for public service-related organizations.

The training was delivered through various formats, including training at the institute for participants who visited the training center, outreach training provided directly at the workplaces of organizations and public officials who had difficulty visiting the institute, and virtual training.

As a result, more than 40,000 public officials completed training programs at the KICTI. In particular, the training satisfaction score reached 94 points, while the job application score, which measures the extent to which training is applied in participants' work, increased by 2.3 points from the previous year to 89.5 points, the highest score ever recorded. These results demonstrate the high quality of the training program.

2. Strengthening the Foundation for Integrity Education through Professional Instructor Training and Educational Content Development

As interest in anti-corruption and integrity across society grows, the demand for integrity education continues to rise. In response, the KICTI has expanded the foundation for public officials to access integrity education by training integrity education instructors, developing educational content, and operating online courses, thereby effectively addressing the increasing demand for education.

The KICTI trains integrity education instructors who possess both strong teaching skills and professional expertise so that they can support in-house integrity education programs



throughout the public sector. In addition, it operates capacity-building programs for integrity education instructors in order to share the latest anti-corruption policy trends and enhance their instructional capabilities. In particular, with the emergence of generative AI and growing recognition of AI literacy as a core future competency, the Institute organized and provided training for integrity education instructors on the use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT in order to strengthen public officials' ability to respond to technological change.

To build broader social consensus on integrity and enhance the effectiveness of integrity education, the KICTI has also developed and distributed a wide range of educational materials, including customized standard lecture plans tailored to the educational levels and characteristics of different target groups, such as elementary school students, university students, and public officials.

◉ [Figure 2-7] Integrity education video content



The KICTI operated 35 online courses through various platforms, including the Government e-Learning Platform for public officials and the Integrity Learning Center for affiliated public institutions. This year, a total of 1,712,790 public officials completed KICTI online courses.

Section 3. Investing in the Future: Integrity Education in Schools

1. Background

As the government-wide anti-corruption authority, the ACRC formulates and implements nationwide anti-corruption policies while also working to enhance Korea's level of integrity through exchanges and cooperation with the international community. One of the most widely recognized anti-corruption indicators worldwide is the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), published annually by Transparency International (TI). Korea's CPI has shown significant improvement in recent years, rising from a score of 53 out of 100 and a ranking of 52nd among 176 countries in 2016 to a score of 64 out of 100 and a ranking of 30th among 180 countries in 2024.

Given that Korea's economic and cultural standing and its level of integrity are closely connected to economic growth, it is necessary to adopt a new perspective that goes beyond being satisfied with the current global ranking of 30th and instead seeks to further enhance national competitiveness by fundamentally improving the integrity culture of our society. Based on the practices of countries with high CPI rankings and the 2018 report published by the OECD, the ACRC identified the internalization of integrity values among future generations as a key factor in fundamentally spreading a culture of integrity throughout society.

2. Progress

Going beyond conventional anti-corruption training that focused primarily on public officials, the ACRC sought to expand the scope of education to include future generations, such as elementary, middle, high school, and university students, so that a culture of integrity could firmly take root across all sectors of society.

To this end, in 2025, the ACRC signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with 17 metropolitan and provincial offices of education and 25 major universities nationwide, establishing a cooperative framework with the education sector.

Under these MOUs, the offices of education collaborated with the ACRC to enable elementary schools to use the ‘Integrity Education Program for Elementary School Students,’ developed and distributed by the KICTI, as actual classroom materials. As a result, within approximately three months of its distribution, around 38,000 students at 142 elementary schools nationwide participated in learning activities focused on integrity.

Furthermore, four universities, — Hanyang University, Jeonbuk National University, Korea National University of Education, and Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology — introduced credit-bearing regular integrity courses. In addition, integrity special lectures were offered at 18 universities, resulting in more than 3,000 university students receiving integrity education.

The KICTI operated various education programs to foster integrity awareness among the future generations. First, the Institute operated the Onsite Integrity Experience Classroom for elementary, middle, and high school students. The programs were conducted for a total of 8,210 students at 60 schools, providing them with opportunities to understand and embrace the value of integrity in an engaging and meaningful way. In addition, the ACRC operated the Elementary School Integrity Camp for fifth- and sixth-grade students, an experiential, activity-based educational program designed to help students learn the value of integrity through hands-on activities outside the classroom, including visits to historical sites.

◉ [Figure 2-8] Integrity education programs for elementary, middle, and high school students



Onsite integrity experience classroom



Elementary school integrity camp

Moreover, the ACRC operated the 2030 Integrity Leader Academy and provided integrity education for young interns at public institutions. By offering young people opportunities to understand corruption issues in their daily lives and organizational settings and to explore solutions, the ACRC contributed to enhancing integrity awareness and practical capabilities among the broader youth population beyond university students.

Section 4. Fostering a Deeper and Broader Culture of Integrity

1. Hosting an Integrity Content Contest Open to the Public

Efforts to build an integrity-based society require the participation and commitment of all members of society, not only those in the public sector. To this end, the KICTI has hosted the annual ‘Public Participation Integrity Content Contest’ since 2015, providing an opportunity for everyone to participate and contributing to the spread of a culture of integrity across society.

In 2025, to mark the 11th anniversary of the contest, a new category for elementary school integrity education programs was introduced, allowing winning entries to be directly utilized as educational content. In addition, the contest invited submissions in various other categories, including integrity-themed merchandise design, theater, and video productions.

As a result, a total of 532 entries were submitted to this year’s contest. After evaluation by internal and external judges and the collection of public opinions, 40 works were selected as award-winning entries.

◉ [Figure 2-9] Awards ceremony for the integrity content contest



2. Promoting the Excellence of Korea's Anti-Corruption Policies to the International Community

As Korea is recognized internationally as a successful model of both economic development and corruption reduction, there is growing global demand for Korea's anti-corruption and integrity policies. In response to this trend, the KICTI is strengthening Korea's international standing as a leading nation in integrity by operating a multi-country anti-corruption capacity-building training program for public officials from developing countries. As part of official development assistance (ODA) efforts, this program introduces Korea's outstanding anti-corruption systems to support the enhancement of integrity capacities in developing nations.

In 2025, the ACRC expanded the scope of the ACRC Training Course for International Anti-Corruption Practitioners, which has been conducted annually since 2013, by introducing a new Arabic course for countries in the Middle East and North Africa, in addition to the existing English course for countries in the Indo-Pacific and African regions. The English course (April 22–30) and the Arabic course (May 20–28) were each conducted over nine days, providing specialized training to a total of 30 officials from anti-corruption agencies in eight countries, including Vietnam, Indonesia, South Africa, Algeria, and Morocco, to strengthen their professional capacities in anti-corruption policy development, prevention, and investigation.

In addition, the ACRC operated a customized training program for Kazakhstan, Korea's largest trading partner and a key cooperation partner in Central Asia. The program consisted of two sessions: an invitational training program (June 24–28) and an onsite training program (November 25–27). Through these sessions, a total of 148 public officials, including officials from the Agency for Public Service Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutors' Office, and other relevant institutions, as well as employees of public enterprises, received training on the Comprehensive Integrity Assessment for Public Institutions, the whistleblower protection system, the Corruption Risk Assessment, and integrity education programs.

◉ [Figure 2-10] Operation of anti-corruption capacity building training programs



Anti-Corruption training course in English language
(Jun. 10. - Jun. 19.)



Anti-Corruption training course in Arabic language
(Sep. 3. - Sep. 11.)

In addition to its anti-corruption capacity-building programs, the KICTI invited public officials from countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, and Thailand, who sought to learn about Korea's anti-corruption system and policies. Through these programs, the Institute introduced Korea's anti-corruption policies and shared relevant experience and expertise.

3. The Publication of an Academic Journal to Enhance the Expertise of Korea's Only Integrity Education Institution

The KICTI regularly publishes and operates 'Kwonik', a specialized scholarly journal in the fields of anti-corruption and citizens' rights, to raise social interest in integrity and public rights and to promote free and professional research activities.

In 2025, the ACRC published Volume 2 of 'Kwonik', featuring a total of 12 research papers. To mark the 10th anniversary of the enactment of the Anti-Graft Act, this issue included two feature articles that examined the achievements of the Act and identified future tasks for its advancement. It also presented research findings on a wide range of topics, including integrity and anti-corruption policies, public service ethics, protection of public interest whistleblowers, enhancement of social transparency, and innovation in civil petition administration in the era of digital transformation.



Part
03

Systematic Handling of
Corruption and Public Interest
Reports and Protection of
Whistleblowers



Chapter 1. Promoting Social Self-Correction Through the Handling of Corruption and Public Interest Violation Reports

Section 1. Operation of the Corruption and Public Interest Violation Reporting System

The corruption reporting system is designed to protect the basic rights and interests of citizens, ensure the propriety of public administration, and foster a transparent and ethical social climate by preventing abuses of authority and other violations of law by public officials and by effectively regulating corrupt conduct. The system was introduced under the Anti-Corruption Act, enacted on July 24, 2001, and put into effect on January 25, 2002.

The Public Interest Violation Reporting System (whistleblowing system) was introduced under the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, which was enacted on March 29, 2011, and entered into force on September 30, 2011. It is an effective means of stabilizing people's lives and building a transparent and clean society by protecting and supporting those who report acts that infringe upon public health and safety, the environment, consumer interests, fair competition, and other comparable public interests.

Reports are received by the Inspection Planning Division (Report Reception Team) and assigned to the relevant division in charge of handling the reported cases. They undergo the process of examination and verification by inspectors, review by the commissioner in charge, and then deliberation by the ACRC. If it is deemed necessary to conduct an audit under the Board of Audit and Inspection Act, the case is referred to the Board of Audit and Inspection. If there are suspicions of a crime or a need for investigation, it is referred to investigative authorities. In other cases, it is referred to the supervisory body of the

respective public institutions. When it is unclear whether the case should be referred or closed, the case is sent to the public institution if it is deemed appropriate for that institution to handle it.

The investigative agency to which the report is referred or forwarded should notify the ACRC of its findings within 10 days of completing the audit, investigation, or inspection. Upon receipt of the results of the audit, investigation, or inspection, the ACRC should notify the reporter of the summary of the results and report the results to its internal committee. If the Commission deems that the audit, investigation, or inspection by the investigative organization is not sufficient, it may request the investigative agencies to re-investigate, citing reasonable grounds such as the submission of new evidence.

1. Receipt and Handling of Corruption Reports

A. Status of Corruption Reports Received

The total number of cases of counseling and guidance related to corruption provided by the end of December 2025 is 237,715. While there may be fluctuations from year to year, the overall trend shows an increase.

<Table 3-1> Counseling & guidance services by year

(unit: No. of cases)

Total	'02 ~ '05	'06 ~ '10	'11 ~ '15	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
237,715	25,406	27,090	41,732	11,104	10,884	12,312	14,465	14,004	12,952	13,000	13,972	14,233	13,609

From January 25, 2002, when the former Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption was launched, until the end of December 2025, a total of 106,371 reports were submitted with an average of 370 per month.

<Table 3-2> Corruption reports received by year

(unit: No. of cases)

Category	Total	'02 ~ '05	'06 ~ '10	'11 ~ '15	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of cases	106,371	7,988	11,585	17,186	3,758	4,066	7,328	9,435	6,103	9,690	7,300	6,853	6,771	8,308
Monthly average	370	167	193	287	313	339	610	786	506	808	608	572	565	693

B. Status of Corruption Reports Processed

From January 25, 2002, to the end of December 2025, a total of 106,371 reports were received, of which 105,832 were processed.

<Table 3-3> Status of reports processed

(unit: No. of cases)

Category	Total	Referral	Notification of violation of code of conduct	Forwarding to public institutions	Closed
Report Handling	105,832	3,749	1,738	16,701	83,644

The total number of referred cases was 3,749. As of December 2025, excluding 260 cases still under investigation or inquiry, the substantiation rate for the remaining 3,489 cases was 72.7%.

<Table 3-4> Referral to investigative agencies by year

(unit: No. of cases, %)

Category	Total	Notification of investigation result			Under investigation	Corruption detection rate [②/①]
		Sub-total ①	Corruption detected ②	Acquitted		
Total	3,749	3,489	2,538	951	260	72.7

An investigation of 2,538 cases in which corruption was detected led to the prosecution of 5,763 individuals (including referrals for indictment and deferred prosecution) and disciplinary action against 5,636 individuals. The detection of corruption resulted in the collection and recovery of approximately KRW 910.2 billion.

<Table 3-5> Result of notification by investigative agencies

Category	Prosecution/discipline, etc. (persons)						Institutional warning (cases)	Other (cases)	Amount to be collected or recovered (KRW 1 million)
	Total	Prosecution	Referral to the prosecution with a recommendation for indictment	Deferred prosecution	Discipline	Accusation/dismissal from office			
Total	11,592	5,590	169	4	5,636	193	254	1,220	910,257

* Excludes 260 cases that remain under investigation by investigative agencies.

* Others: administrative measures, including warnings, corrective actions, restrictions on eligibility, and restrictions on participation.

Of the 3,749 corruption cases referred to investigative bodies, 1,929 cases (51.5%) were based on internal reports. Excluding 99 cases still under investigation, the rate of substantiated allegations among the remaining 1,830 cases for which investigation results had been notified was 73.6%.

2. Receipt and Handling of Public Interest Violation Reports

A. Status of Public Interest Violation Reports Received

From September 30, 2011, when the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act entered into force, to the end of December 2025, a total of 61,219 public interest reports were received by the ACRC. By type, health-related violations, such as the manufacture of harmful food and the sale of unlicensed drugs, accounted for the largest share, with 19,105 cases (31.2%), followed by safety-related violations, such as poor construction and the failure to install firefighting facilities, with 9,508 cases (15.5%).

<Table 3-6> Public interest reports received by the ACRC by year

(unit: No. of cases)																
Category	Total	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of cases	61,219	292	1,153	2,887	9,130	5,771	2,611	2,521	3,923	5,164	5,546	4,531	3,266	3,005	4,561	6,858
Monthly average	340	97	96	241	761	481	218	210	327	430	462	378	272	250	380	572

The number of public interest reports received by the ACRC increased steadily from 2018 through 2020, but has declined since 2021. This trend is attributed to the diversification of reporting channels, as public interest reports can now be submitted not only to the ACRC but also to investigative agencies, law enforcement authorities, and public organizations related to public interest violations. In addition, strengthened penalties for violations of obligations to protect public interest whistleblowers through legislative amendments, proactive public awareness efforts to promote the whistleblower protection system, and initiatives to improve awareness among officials in charge at public institutions have contributed to creating an environment in which public interest whistleblowers can

confidently report to institutions other than the ACRC, including investigative and law enforcement agencies.

B. Status of Public Interest Violation Reports Processed

Since the enactment and enforcement of the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, the ACRC has processed 60,716 of the 61,219 public interest reports received, including referring or forwarding 30,442 cases to investigative or law enforcement agencies.

An analysis of the investigation outcomes of referred or forwarded public interest reports shows that, since the enactment of the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, the ACRC has received notifications on 27,969 cases from investigative or law enforcement agencies. Of these, 13,346 cases (47.7%) involved substantiated violations, leading to measures such as prosecution or criminal complaints (3,786 cases), fines (259 cases), and penalty surcharges and administrative fines (2,616 cases).

<Table 3-7> Result of cases referred/forwarded to investigative agencies

(unit: No. of cases)

Investigation result on referred/forwarded cases					Action taken							
Result notification status				Under inspection/ investigation by another agency	Prosecution	Referral to the prosecution with a recommendation for indictment	Deferred prosecution	Accusation	Fine	Penalty surcharge	Administrative fine	Others
Total (D=F+G)	Suspicion confirmed (F)	Confirmation rate (F/D)	Acquitted (G)									
27,969	13,346	47.7%	14,623	2,473	1,366	690	46	1,503	259	1,116	1,500	8,464



Chapter 2.

Promotion of the Public Funds Recovery System

Section 1. Operation of the Public Funds Recovery System

1. History of the Act on the Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits

With the expansion of public funds and the continuous occurrence of cases involving fraudulent claims and receipt of public funds, the ACRC pushed for the establishment of a general law regarding the recovery of and sanctions on the fraudulent claim of public funds since 2014. As a result, the Act on the Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Profits (Public Funds Recovery Act) was enacted on April 16, 2019, and finally came into effect on January 1, 2020.

It is mainly regarding four types of false claims of public funds such as subsidy, reward, and contribution. The types are as follows: ① Claiming public fund payments without legitimate qualifications; ② claiming excessive amounts of such payments; ③ using the fund for a purpose or usage other than specified purposes; and ④ falsely receiving such funds. The Act stipulated that the administrative authority should impose and collect an additional monetary sanction of up to five times the value of relevant illicit profits where there exists a violation such as false claims.

On March 26, 2024, the Act was amended to strengthen sanctions against fraudulent receipt of public funds and enhance protection and compensation for whistleblowers.

The following are the main contents of the amendments: (1) in the case of mistaken payments that are not attributable to the unlawful beneficiary, the interest charge is exempted upon repayment; (2) excluding public schools from the category of unlawful beneficiaries; (3) imposing interest by applying the Public Funds Recovery Act when other laws have provisions for recovering underpayments but do not have provisions for recovering interest; (4) even if a fraudulent claim is voluntarily reported and all illicit gains are returned before the administrative agency issues a prior notice for recovery, if the investigation has already begun, a 50% reduction will apply instead of granting a full exemption of the penalty surcharge; (5) adding a new provision on criminal punishment for both fraudulent claimants and payers (false claim: imprisonment for up to 3 years or a fine of up to KRW 30 million, and overbilling: imprisonment for up to 1 year or a fine of up to KRW 10 million); (6) introduction of non-real-name proxy reporting; (7) establishment of a relief fund system.

2. Status of Reports Processed

Of the 8,986 reports of fraudulent receipt of public funds received since January 2020, 8,884 cases (98.9%) were processed, and 2,751 cases (31.0%) among them were referred or forwarded to investigative or supervisory authorities.

In 2025, a total of 1,753 reports of fraudulent receipt of public funds were received, and 1,574 cases were processed. Among these, 355 cases were referred or forwarded to investigative or supervisory authorities, while 1,219 cases were closed.

<Table 3-8> Status of reports received and processed

(unit: No. of cases)

Year	Reports received	Reports processed			
		Total	Referred	Forwarded	Closed
2020	1,187	1,205	299	313	593
2021	1,598	1,639	62	575	1,002
2022	1,467	1,520	13	433	1,074
2023	1,600	1,532	58	319	1,155
2024	1,381	1,414	73	251	1,090
2025	1,753	1,574	84	271	1,219
Total	8,986	8,884	589	2,162	6,133

Of the 2,751 cases referred or forwarded between January 2020 and 2025, investigations were completed for 2,317 cases; fraudulent receipts were substantiated in 1,575 cases (68.0%), leading to decisions to recover KRW 72.5 billion in illicit profits.

<Table 3-9> Status of substantiated violations in referred or forwarded cases (cumulative, January 2020–December 2025)

(unit: No. of cases)

Referred/ Forwarded Cases	Notification of investigation result	Corruption detected		Under investigation
		Corruption detected	Acquitted	
2,751	2,317 (Recovery of KRW 72.5 billion ordered)	1,575 (68.0%)	742 (32.0%)	434



Chapter 3.

Effective Protection and Reward for Whistleblowers

Section 1. Strengthening the Whistleblower Protection and Reward System and Improving Awareness

1. Strengthening the Protection and Reward System for Whistleblowers of Corruption and Public Interest Violations

The ACRC has continuously enhanced the relevant legal and institutional frameworks to ensure that individuals can report acts of corruption and public interest violations with confidence, and that they receive reliable protection and support from the state following such reports.

The five anti-corruption laws under the ACRC's jurisdiction currently contain different provisions on whistleblower protection and support due to factors such as differences in the timing of their enactment. These differences have caused equity issues among whistleblowers arising from varying levels of protection and support, as well as inefficiencies in operating the system. To address these challenges, the ACRC is developing improvement measures to ensure that whistleblowers receive the same level of protection and support regardless of which law applies. Through these efforts, the ACRC seeks to enhance public predictability regarding the application of laws and restore public trust in the system.

Among the five anti-corruption statutes, partial amendments to the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act and the ACRC Act are currently underway. The key amendments include introducing support measures for internal whistleblowers who report corruption, expanding the scope of protective measures applications and decisions

to include cases where whistleblowers are expected to face disadvantageous measures, and establishing a mechanism to temporarily suspend procedures for disadvantageous measures against public interest whistleblowers.

To address protection gaps caused by the emergence of new types of public interest violations, four additional laws closely related to the public interest and requiring a high level of whistleblower protection were added to the scope of public interest reporting.

Additional laws brought within the scope of the whistleblower protection framework include the Act on Environmental Dispute Mediation and Environmental Damage Remedy, the Marine Use Impact Assessment Act, and the Special Act on the Expansion of the National Power Grid, among others.

2. Promoting Anonymous Proxy Reporting for Internal Whistleblowing

Since the ACRC introduced the anonymous proxy reporting system through attorney representation in October 2018, which allows public interest whistleblowers to file reports under an attorney's name instead of their own in order to protect their identity, the number of cases using this system has steadily increased. When the system was first introduced, there were only two cases, but the number rose significantly to 91 cases in 2024 and 102 cases in 2025. In particular, the ACRC operates a Non-Real-Name Proxy Report Advisory Lawyer Group with around 100 members to provide free assistance to whistleblowers who may face disadvantages for reporting.

3. Efforts to Improve Public Perception through Events such as 'Public Interest Whistleblowing Day'

In 2018, the ACRC declared December 9, the UN-designated World Anti-Corruption Day, as Public Interest Whistleblowing Day to raise the self-esteem of whistleblowers and promote positive awareness of whistleblowing and held the 7th Public Interest Whistleblowing Day ceremony in 2025.

The ACRC awarded commendations to individuals from related organizations who actively cooperated and participated in whistleblower protection and support efforts. Outstanding cases and experiences encountered while handling whistleblower protection and support duties were shared by the award recipients. In addition, the ACRC invited actual public interest whistleblowers and academic experts to deliver special lectures aimed at advancing the protection and support of whistleblowers, thereby fostering a broader public consensus on the importance of reporting corruption and protecting whistleblowers.

4. Providing Tailored Training on Whistleblower Protection and Support Systems

Recently, grievances have been filed through various channels, such as e-People and the internal reporting centers of each institution, and the number of corruption and public interest violation reports submitted in the form of grievances has also increased. However, in the course of handling these reports, cases have arisen in which the confidentiality of whistleblowers was not properly protected. In response, the ACRC has sought to prevent breaches of whistleblower confidentiality in advance by providing practical training focused on key points and precautions to be checked at each stage of receiving and processing corruption and public interest reports, as well as by sharing actual cases of confidentiality breaches and offering guidance on necessary precautions.

Section 2. Protection of Corruption and Public Interest Whistleblowers

1. Significance of the System

The protection system for reporting persons serves as a critical institutional safeguard that supports proactive reporting by organizational members and the general public. Whistleblowers who report wrongdoing and corruption conducted covertly within an organization often face a high risk of retaliation and may be perceived as informants or traitors, encountering significant difficulties in continuing their careers within the organization. Therefore, the purpose of the whistleblower protection system is to create



an environment where anyone can report wrongdoing without fear by actively ensuring the confidentiality and employment status protection of whistleblowers, thereby effectively preventing corruption and public interest violations.

2. Key Contents

A. Whistleblower Protection System for Reporting Corruption

The subjects of corruption reporting include acts of corruption as defined in Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the ACRC Act, as well as violations of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials under Article 67 of the same Act.

When a public official becomes aware, in the course of performing their duties, that another public official has engaged in corrupt conduct, or is compelled or offered to engage in such conduct, they must report it without delay to an investigative agency, the Board of Audit and Inspection, or the ACRC. In addition, any person shall receive the same protection as if the report had been submitted to an investigative agency, the Board of Audit and Inspection, or the ACRC in cases where they report an act of corruption to the public institution to which the person being reported belongs, or to a public institution that supervises the relevant institution, organization, or company; report a violation of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials; testify before the National Assembly or a court regarding an act of corruption or a violation of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials; or file a complaint or accusation with an investigative agency regarding such conduct.

A whistleblower must submit a signed written report that includes their personal information, the purpose and reason for the report, and must present evidence related to the subject of the report and the corrupt act. Alternatively, a whistleblower may file an anonymous report through attorney representation with the ACRC by appointing a lawyer to report on their behalf without disclosing their identity. However, reporting persons are not protected if the persons knew the report was false, or if the report was made for a fraudulent purpose, such as to solicit money or employment preferences.

In addition to the whistleblower, those who assist in the audit, investigation, or inquiry related to the report — such as by providing statements, testimony, or submitting relevant materials — are also protected in the same way as whistleblowers.

Under the ACRC Act, the protection system for corruption whistleblowers consists of: Confidentiality of Whistleblowers, which prohibits disclosing, publicizing, or reporting a whistleblower's identity or any information from which their identity can be inferred without consent; Guarantee of Position, which protects whistleblowers from dismissal, disciplinary action, status-related disadvantages, or discrimination in working conditions resulting from a report, statement, or submission of evidence under the Act; Measures to Protect Personal Safety, which prevent threats to a whistleblower's safety arising from the report; and Mitigation of Culpability, which mitigates or exempts liability for unlawful acts committed by the whistleblower in connection with the report.

B. Public Interest Whistleblower Protection System

Acts of public interest violation subject to reporting are acts detrimental to public health and safety, the environment, consumer interest, fair competition, and public interest equivalent thereto as defined in Article 2(1) of the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, which are subject to administrative disposition such as penalty or cancellation of license or permission or injunction, suspension, etc. according to 498 applicable laws (as of December. 31, 2025).

Any person who reports or provides information on public interest violations to investigative agencies (administrative or supervisory agencies that have the authority to guide, supervise, regulate, or investigate acts detrimental to the public interest), prosecutorial or law enforcement bodies, the ACRC, or the head of the institution where the violation occurred, or who provides a clue for an investigation, is eligible for protection. In addition to whistleblowers, individuals who assist by providing statements, testimony, or materials in relation to public interest reports and the investigations, prosecutions, lawsuits, or whistleblower protection measures arising from such reports are also protected. However, if a whistleblower knowingly files a false report or

reports with an improper purpose, such as demanding money, favors, or employment advantages, they are not eligible for protection.

The public interest whistleblower protection system consists of: Protective Measures, which prevent disadvantageous actions, such as dismissal or disciplinary action, resulting from a public interest report, or provide restoration for disadvantages already incurred; Personal Safety Protection Measures, which prevent harm to the life or body of the whistleblower; Confidentiality of Whistleblowers, which prohibits disclosing or reporting a whistleblower's personal information or any facts from which their identity can be inferred without consent; and Mitigation of Culpability, which mitigates or exempts liability for unlawful acts committed by whistleblowers.

3. Performance of Protection Activities

A. Track Record of Corruption Whistleblower Protection

Since 2012, a total of 1,378 protection applications have been filed by corruption whistleblowers or cooperators, averaging 98.4 cases annually.



<Table 3-10> Status of protection applications filed by corruption whistleblowers and related persons

(unit: cases, based on the date of receipt)

Year	Total	Guarantee of position	Protection of personal safety	Confirmation of details on identity disclosure	Temporary suspension	Mitigation of culpability
Total	1,378	1,003	85	211	37	42
2012	27	19	2	6	-	-
2013	27	20	4	3	-	-
2014	26	17	3	6	-	-
2015	22	19	3	-	-	-
2016	5	5	-	-	-	-
2017	17	14	1	2	-	-
2018	51	33	-	15	3	-
2019	123	82	6	23	12	-
2020	129	96	6	21	6	-
2021	118	81	4	28	5	-
2022	132	85	7	30	4	6
2023	110	82	7	15	1	5
2024	186	130	15	31	1	9
2025	405	320	27	31	5	22

B. Track Record of Public Interest Whistleblower Protection

Since the enactment and enforcement of the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act in 2012, a total of 1,893 applications for protection have been filed by public interest whistleblowers or cooperators through 2025, averaging 135.2 cases annually.

<Table 3-11> Status of protection applications filed by public interest whistleblowers and related person

(unit: cases, based on the date of receipt)

Year	Total	Protection measure	Protection of personal safety	Confirmation of details on identity disclosures	Prohibition of disadvantageous measures	Mitigation of culpability
Total	1,893	960	199	354	190	190
2012	11	5	3	1	1	1
2013	17	13	1	2	-	1
2014	17	3	2	10	1	1
2015	16	9	1	4	2	-
2016	20	12	1	3	2	2
2017	34	19	2	7	1	5
2018	61	33	8	10	3	7
2019	147	76	17	35	8	11
2020	156	79	13	37	6	21
2021	169	79	9	44	12	25
2022	157	89	8	31	8	21
2023	186	83	28	44	6	25
2024	282	123	40	60	31	28
2025	620	337	66	66	109	42

Section 3. Reward for Corruption and Public Interest Whistleblowers

1. Significance of the System

The reward and award system for whistleblowers provides monetary payments to whistleblowers when their reports of corruption, public interest violations, or similar misconduct contribute to the promotion of the public interest or directly result in the recovery or increase of revenue or the reduction of costs. By rewarding such courageous acts undertaken despite various risks, it functions as an effective means of preventing corruption and public interest violations by encouraging the voluntary participation of the public in making such reports.

2. Key Details of Rewards, Awards, and Relief Funds for Corruption Whistleblowers

A. Award System

Where a report of corruption submitted to the ACRC or a public institution results in significant financial benefits to a public institution, prevents financial losses, or contributes to the promotion of the public interest, the whistleblower may be recommended for an award in accordance with the Awards and Decorations Act and other relevant laws and regulations, and may receive a monetary award as prescribed by Presidential Decree. However, in cases where the corruption report is submitted to a public institution, this provision applies only when the relevant public institution requests a recommendation for an award or the payment of a monetary award.

Award payments may be made in the following cases: ① where criminal charges are brought, prosecution is deferred, prosecution or investigation is suspended (limited to cases involving the suspension of a suspect), disciplinary action is taken, or corrective measures are implemented against a person who has committed a corruption offense; ② where the report contributes to institutional improvements, such as the enactment or amendment of laws and regulations; ③ where the report prevents financial losses to a public institution through the improvement, suspension, or termination of policies or programs related to the reported matter; or ④ where the Rewards Deliberation Committee determines that award payments should be made for other reasons. If the requirements for payment are met, award payments may be made up to KRW 500 million.

B. Reward System

Unlike award payments, rewards for corruption reports are paid upon a whistleblower's application when the report directly results in the recovery or increase of revenue for a public institution, the reduction of costs, or the establishment of a related legal relationship. An application for a reward must be submitted within three years from the date on which the applicant becomes aware that the legal relationship concerning the recovery or increase of revenue or the reduction of costs has been established, and no application may

be submitted after five years have elapsed from the date on which such legal relationship was established. Rewards are paid at a rate of 4% to 30% of the reward eligible amount, up to a maximum of KRW 3 billion, and may be reduced in cases prescribed by Presidential Decree.

C. Relief Fund System

Relief funds may be paid, as prescribed by Presidential Decree, to corruption whistleblowers, cooperators, and their relatives or cohabitants for expenses incurred in connection with the report, such as medical treatment, relocation, and litigation, as well as for lost wages during the period of disadvantageous measures. Previously, an application for costs incurred to restore the whistleblower's original status could only be made together with a reward claim, and only when the requirements for reward payment were met. However, for corruption reports filed on or after October 17, 2019, applications for relief funds may be submitted separately from applications for rewards.

3. Track Record of Rewards, Awards, and Relief Funds for Corruption Whistleblowers

Since 2010, monetary awards totaling KRW 1.31 billion have been paid to whistleblowers in 123 cases. From 2010 to 2025, the total amount recovered by public institutions as a result of corruption reports reached KRW 417.14 billion. Based on these recoveries, rewards totaling KRW 36.53 billion were paid in 2,920 cases, with the average reward amount per case being KRW 12.51 million. The average reward-to-recovery ratio was 8.8% of the total amount recovered by public institutions. Since 2019, relief funds totaling KRW 25.53 million have been provided in eight cases.

4. Key Details of Rewards, Awards, and Relief Funds for Public Interest Whistleblowers

Under the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, rewards for public interest reports are paid when a report of a public interest violation directly results in the recovery or

increase of revenue for the central government or a local government, or when the legal relationship thereof has been finalized, through: ① criminal penalties or penalty notices; ② confiscation or the imposition of collection orders; ③ the imposition of administrative fines or compulsory enforcement charges; ④ the imposition of penalty surcharges; ⑤ the imposition of national or local taxes; ⑥ the imposition of charges or additional charges; ⑦ judgments for damages or the return of unjust enrichment; or ⑧ the recovery of damages or the return of unjust enrichment. A public interest whistleblower must file an application for a reward within three years from the date they becomes aware that the legal relationship concerning the recovery or increase of revenue for the central government or a local government has been established, and no later than five years from the date such legal relationship is established. However, for reports filed on or after September 22, 2023, a whistleblower may apply for a reward not only for the direct recovery or increase of revenue for the central government or a local government, but also for that of a public institution.

The amount of a reward is determined through deliberation by the ACRC's Rewards Deliberation Committee and subsequent decision by the Plenary Session. As a general rule, for reports filed on or before December 18, 2023, the reward shall be determined within the range of 4% to 20% of the reward eligible amount, whereas for reports filed on or after December 19, 2023, it shall be within the range of 4% to 30%. However, the reward may be reduced or denied under the circumstances prescribed by Presidential Decree. For reports filed on or before August 7, 2024, the reward is capped at KRW 3 billion per individual report, whereas no maximum limit applies to reports filed on or after August 7, 2024.

The ACRC may pay awards of up to KRW 200 million where a public interest report directly results in significant financial benefits to a public institution, prevents financial losses, or promotes the public interest through any of the following causes: ① the imposition of a criminal sentence; ② an administrative disposition ordering or prohibiting a specific act; ③ contributions to institutional improvements; ④ an administrative disposition imposing administrative fines, penalty surcharges, charges, or additional charges; or ⑤ contributions to the prevention of and mitigation of the spread of social disasters. However, for reports filed on or after December 19, 2023, awards of up to KRW 500 million may be paid.

The ACRC may pay relief funds, as prescribed by Presidential Decree, to public interest whistleblowers, etc. (including cooperators, and their relatives or cohabitants) for medical treatment, relocation, litigation expenses, lost wages during the period of disadvantageous measures, attorney fees incurred during investigative proceedings, or any other significant economic losses incurred due to the report.

5. Track Record of Rewards, Awards, and Relief Funds for Public Interest Whistleblowers

In 2025, rewards were paid for a total of 33 public interest reports, amounting to over KRW 379 million. As a result, since the enforcement of the Public Interest Whistleblower Protection Act, cumulative reward payments have reached over KRW 15.33 billion for 6,812 cases. Since the introduction of the award system on January 25, 2016, awards have been paid to whistleblowers in a total of 95 cases, amounting to over KRW 1.69 billion. Relief funds have been paid to whistleblowers in a total of 53 cases, amounting to over KRW 169.89 million.

6. Key Details of Rewards and Awards for Whistleblowers Reporting Fraudulent Claims for Public Funds

Where a report of fraudulent claims for public funds submitted to the ACRC or a public institution results in a significant financial benefit to a public institution, prevents financial losses, or contributes to the promotion of the public interest, the whistleblower may be recommended for an award in accordance with the Awards and Decorations Act and other relevant regulations, and may receive award payments as prescribed by Presidential Decree. The grounds for paying award payments include any of the following cases: ① the fraudulent beneficiary is subject to prosecution, suspension of indictment, suspension of prosecution, suspension of investigation (limited to suspect-absconding suspensions), disciplinary action, or corrective measures; ② the report contributes to institutional improvements, including the enactment or amendment of laws and regulations; ③ the report prevents financial losses to a public institution as the policies or programs related

to the reported matter are improved, suspended, or terminated; or ④ where the Rewards Deliberation Committee determines that award payments may be made for other reasons. If the requirements for payment are satisfied, award payments may be made up to KRW 500 million.

Unlike award payments, rewards for reporting a fraudulent claim for public funds are paid upon the whistleblower's application when the report directly results in the recovery or increase of revenue for a public institution, the reduction of expenditures, or when the legal relationship thereof has been established. Following the amendment to the Public Funds Recovery Act, which took effect on September 27, 2024, an application for a reward must be submitted within three years from the date the applicant becomes aware that the legal relationship concerning the recovery or increase of revenue for a public institution or the reduction of expenditures has been established, and no application may be filed after five years from the date such legal relationship is established. Rewards shall be paid within the range of 4% to 30% of the reward eligible amount, up to a maximum of KRW 3 billion, and may be reduced under the circumstances prescribed by Presidential Decree.

7. Track Record of Rewards and Awards for Whistleblowers Reporting Fraudulent Claims for Public Funds

In 2025, rewards were paid for a total of 76 reports of fraudulent claims for public funds, amounting to over KRW 796.76 million. Accordingly, since the enforcement of the Public Funds Recovery Act, cumulative reward payments have reached KRW 3.02 billion for 202 cases. One award has been paid to a whistleblower, amounting to KRW 5 million.



Chapter 4.

Operation of the System Restricting the Employment of Public Officials Dismissed for Corruption

1. Overview

The employment restriction system for individuals dismissed for misconduct was first introduced with the enactment of the ACRC Act in 2001 to protect public trust in the civil service and prevent corruption by restricting the re-employment of public officials dismissed for corruption for a specified period. Following the amendment to the Act in March 2016, the scope of persons subject to employment restrictions was expanded to include not only public officials dismissed for corruption, but also former public officials who, after retirement, were sentenced to a fine of KRW 3 million or more for corruption committed during their tenure. The scope of restricted employers was also broadened to include public institutions, organizations related to the corruption offense, for-profit private enterprises closely related to the duties of the department or institution in which the individual served during the five years prior to retirement, and associations. Furthermore, an amendment effective January 2022 explicitly mandated that the head of a public institution must inform individuals dismissed for misconduct of the fact that they are prohibited from seeking employment with restricted employers.

Since the scope of for-profit private enterprises and other entities subject to employment restrictions is determined by the duties performed by the individual during the five years prior to retirement, the head of the public institution to which the individual belonged is responsible for informing them of the employment restriction system and managing compliance, including verifying whether employment is prohibited pursuant to Article 89 of the Enforcement Decree of the ACRC Act.

To ensure the effective operation of the employment restriction system, the ACRC regularly monitors the employment status of individuals dismissed for misconduct. If it is confirmed that such an individual has obtained employment in violation of the law, the ACRC imposes sanctions, such as requesting their dismissal or referring the matter for criminal prosecution.

2. Operational Performance

A. Status of Public Officials Dismissed for Misconduct²⁾

Over the past five years (2020-2024), a total of 1,035 public officials were dismissed for corruption. Among them, the most common type of corruption was a receipt of money, entertainment, or other valuables, with 112 cases, followed by 48 cases of embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds, 8 cases of abuse of authority or dereliction of duty, and 3 cases of document forgery or counterfeiting. In addition, 30 officials were dismissed for other reasons (leaking official secrets and violation of statutes related to budget and finances).

<Table 3-12> Dismissal of public officials by type

(unit: persons)

Type of corruption	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Receipt of money, entertainment	91	72	70	63	112	408
Embezzlement or misappropriation of public funds	49	53	43	52	48	245
Abuse of authority or dereliction of duty	12	20	12	22	8	74
Document forgery or counterfeiting	9	10	8	9	3	39
Others	55	59	69	56	30	269
Total	216	214	202	202	201	1,035

2) Statistics on public officials dismissed for misconduct are based on the date on which the disciplinary action was imposed.

B. Inspection Results on the Employment Status of Persons Dismissed for Misconduct

In its inspection of the employment of former public officials dismissed for corruption, the ACRC detected 46, 53, 34, 47, and 48 violators of the employment restriction provision in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 respectively. For those caught for unauthorized reemployment, the ACRC requested their former organizations to take prosecution or precautionary measures to prevent a recurrence, while for those who are still working, the ACRC requested that measures be taken to terminate their employment or dismiss them.

For the purposes of this system, employment encompasses not only the conclusion of a standard employment contract but also the provision of services such as handling business, offering advice, or providing consultation to a restricted employer, regardless of job title, position, or contractual arrangement, provided that such activities are performed on a regular or fixed-term basis in return for wages, salaries, or other remuneration. This expanded definition of employment was introduced through the 2016 amendment to the ACRC Act to minimize potential loopholes in the employment restriction system.



Chapter 5.

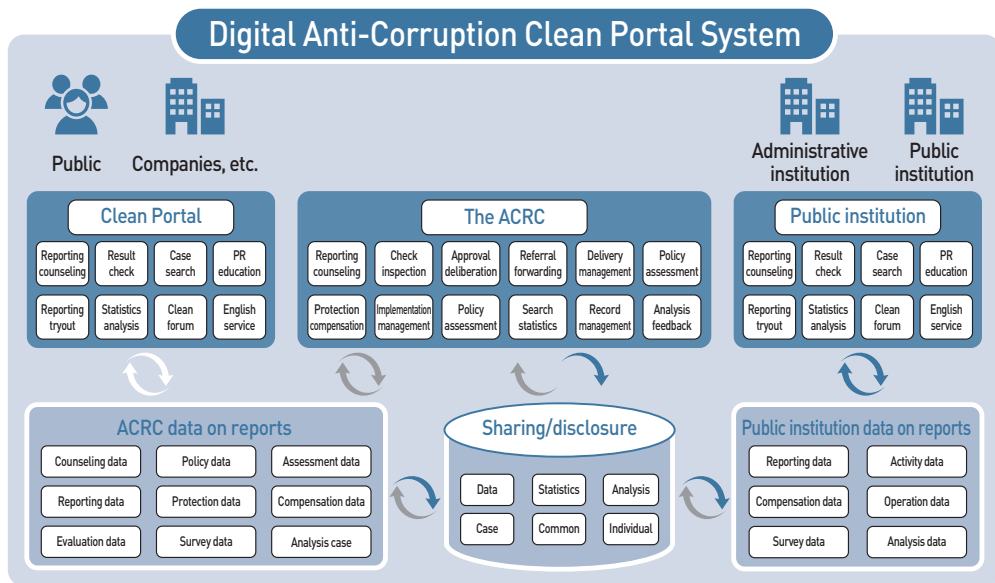
Innovation of Anti-Corruption Work by Advancing Clean Portal System

Section 1. Support for Anti-Corruption Efforts through the Clean Portal

1. Overview

The Clean Portal is a comprehensive anti-corruption information platform that allows users to conveniently file reports online and easily search for necessary anti-corruption information. In 2018, the ACRC completely overhauled its corruption reporting system, which had been in operation since 2003, to provide a one-stop service covering procedures from user-tailored reporting to applications for protection and rewards. This also established a common platform that enables anti-corruption officers to handle related tasks promptly and accurately by supporting the sharing and disclosure of anti-corruption information.

◦ [Figure 3-1] Digital anti-corruption Clean Portal System



2. Major Achievements

In 2020, the existing 'National Integrity Information System' was renamed 'Clean Portal' to make the public clearly aware of the functions of the Clean Portal, and a standardized reporting system was disseminated to public institutions for the convenience of the public.

In addition, an analytical foundation has been laid to enable the ACRC and public institutions to utilize intelligence and information technology in their anti-corruption work based on the establishment and dissemination of the Clean Portal system and the anti-corruption information accumulated therefrom.

In 2021, the ACRC secured the budget and established an implementation plan to create a conflicts of interest reporting and counseling channel on the Clean Portal, in preparation for the enforcement of the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act. Internationally, the ACRC also pursued a pre-feasibility study for exporting Korea's Clean Portal system to Colombia.

In line with the enforcement of the Conflicts of Interest Prevention Act on May 19, 2022, the ACRC opened the service which enables mandatory reporting by public officials and violation reports by the public.

The Clean Portal was upgraded to enable anonymous proxy reporting of public interest violations, allowing submissions not only through offline channels (e.g., written documents) but also online.

In 2025, as part of a government-proposed project for the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the ACRC participated in a planning and feasibility mission to Colombia from March 18 to 30 to support the development of the Colombian Anti-Corruption Reporting System (PACO II).

The ACRC will continue to stabilize the Clean Portal by conducting annual user surveys, collecting improvement suggestions, performing maintenance, and continuously enhancing its functions. It also plans to explore ways to upgrade the Clean Portal with AI-based technologies and to continue providing support for the PACO II project through 2027.



Part
04

Protecting Citizens' Rights and
Interests by Addressing
Grievances with a Focus on
Real-Life Problems



Chapter 1. Grievance Petition Handling System

1. Overview of Grievance Petitions

Definition

The term “civil petition for grievance” means a civil petition for the redress of a grievance pertaining to matters that infringe the rights of the people, or give any inconvenience or burden to people, due to unlawful, irrational, or passive disposition (including factual act and omission) of an administrative agency, etc., or the irrational administrative system. (Article 2(5) of the ACRC Act)

A. General civil Petitions and Grievance Petitions

Article 2 of the Civil Petitions Treatment Act classifies civil petitions into general civil petitions and grievance petitions. The Act defines the former, while the definition of a ‘grievance petition’ is governed by the ACRC Act. A general civil petition includes a statutory civil petition filed with an administrative agency for authorization, permission, approval, patent, license, registration, certification, or the like; an inquiry petition requesting an explanation of statutes, regulations, or systems; and a recommendation petition requesting improvement of administrative systems and operations. A grievance petition is a secondary complaint filed by a person dissatisfied with the outcome of a general civil petition.

In principle, a grievance petition should be handled by the audit department of the original processing agency or by a supervisory body with authority over the matters related to the grievance. However, the ACRC may also handle it directly, as it serves as the final complaint-handling body within the administration.

In addition, unlike the audit departments and supervisory bodies of the original processing agencies, the ACRC, as the national ombudsman, investigates and handles grievance petitions through an independent organization with dedicated functions. The Ombudsman receives grievances from the public regarding public administration, conducts impartial investigations, and, when necessary, issues corrective recommendations or expresses opinions. It also mediates and arbitrates disputes between citizens and administrative agencies and improves administrative practices to enhance trust in the government and public satisfaction.

B. Corrective Recommendations and Expressions of Opinion on Unlawful or Unjust Administrative Actions

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a disposition taken as a result of an investigation into a grievance petition is unlawful or unjust, the ACRC recommends that the relevant administrative agency rectify it. Additionally, if it is deemed that the argument of a petitioner is based on reasonable grounds, the Commission expresses its opinion to the relevant administrative agency to take corrective action.

C. Recommendation for Institutional Improvement and Expression of Opinions on Unreasonable Laws and Systems

If it is deemed necessary to improve laws or regulations, systems, policies, etc. in the course of processing grievance petitions, the ACRC recommends that the heads of relevant administrative agencies make improvements or expresses its opinions, thus preventing the same kind of complaints from recurring.

D. Settlement and Mediation of Grievance Petitions Between the Petitioner and the Respondent as a Neutral Third Party

The ACRC acts as a neutral third-party mediator and arbitrator between the petitioner and the respondent to reach an amicable settlement or to mediate and arbitrate public conflicts involving multiple parties. Especially for a grievance petition that involves multiple people



or that is recognized as having a high social impact, the mediation is a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR).¹⁾

Features of the ACRC grievance process

- Republic of Korea's National Ombudsman
- The final grievance authority in the government
- Performing indirect administrative control functions by making corrective recommendations and expressing opinions
- Help desk for government policies and affairs
- Quick, easy and flexible processing from a third-party, non-bureaucratic perspective

2. Cooperation, Support, and Training for the Local Ombudsman

As a national ombudsman²⁾, the ACRC supports local government in establishing and operating Local Ombudsmen and provides them with the Commission's know-how and information on handling grievance petitions to help the Local Ombudsmen fulfill their role of protecting and promoting the rights and interests of local residents.

3. Comprehensive Evaluation of Civil Service of Administrative Agencies

Every year, the ACRC, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, conducts a comprehensive evaluation of civil service to improve the civil service of local governments, offices of education, etc. and visits each institution to provide consultation on resolving grievance petitions and group conflicts to help improve inadequate civil service practices.

1) Alternative Dispute Resolution: A process of bringing disagreeing parties for dispute settlement with the help of a fair and neutral third party -except for the court- without resorting to litigation

2) Ombudsman : A system that originated and developed in the Nordic countries of Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Norway. An ombudsman is a person who has been appointed as a representative of the public to monitor whether a public institution is properly fulfilling its statutory responsibilities.



Chapter 2.

Receipt and Processing of Grievance Petitions

1. Overview

Receiving, investigating, and processing grievance petitions are among the ACRC's core functions for protecting citizens' rights and interests. The ACRC examines petitions concerning matters that infringe upon citizens' rights or cause inconvenience or burden due to unlawful, unfair, or passive dispositions by administrative agencies or due to unreasonable administrative systems. It recommends corrective measures or expresses opinions to the relevant administrative agencies and resolves grievance petitions through mediation and settlement.

In 2025, the ACRC received 51,079 grievance petitions and processed a total of 53,187 cases. Satisfaction with grievance petition handling increased slightly by 0.5 points. Meanwhile, the acceptance rate, which refers to the percentage of cases in which the petitioner's request was accepted and the grievance was resolved, fell by 4.1 percentage points from the previous year to 25.5%, indicating the need for continued efforts to improve the acceptance rate.

<Table 4-1> Receipt and handling of grievance petitions

Category	2023	2024	2025
No. of cases received	44,390	42,917	51,079
No. of cases handled	42,581	42,549	53,187

<Table 4-2> Acceptance rate and satisfaction score of grievance petitions

Category	2023	2024	2025
Acceptance [%]	28.7	29.6	25.5
Satisfaction score [points]	80.1	77.9	78.4

2. Status of Corrective Recommendations and Expressions of Opinion

A. Overview

In 2025, the ACRC made a total of 469 decisions in favor of petitioners, including 126 corrective recommendations and 343 expressions of opinion, pursuant to Articles 46 and 47 of the ACRC Act.

<Table 4-3> Status of corrective recommendation and expression of opinions

Category	2023	2024	2025
Corrective recommendation	181	170	126
Expression of opinions	336	415	343

B. Efforts to Improve the Acceptance Rate of Corrective Recommendations and Expressions of Opinion

The resolution of the ACRC has an ‘advisory effect’ and is not enforceable. This is intended to provide a broad and flexible remedy for people’s grievances by complementing litigation, which is a rigid means of compulsory resolution. If the decisions made by the ACRC were to have binding force, it would require strict legal judgments such as litigation, to handle a civil petition, which could undermine the protection of the rights and interests of the public instead. In addition, if a specific factual investigation and logical judgment are made, most respondents are willing to accept without legal compulsion. Even if they express their intention to refuse, the ACRC continues to persuade them, taking responsible management efforts until the grievance petition is resolved.

For example, the ACRC confirms and inspects the actual status of compliance with recommendations under Article 52 of the ACRC Act, and holds grievance resolution cooperation meetings for institutions with a high number of unaccepted cases, aiming to diagnose and analyze the cause of unacceptance and find alternatives, together with administrative agencies such as the ACRC, the relevant institutions and competent ministries. The ACRC will continue to make efforts to protect citizens' rights and interests by direct and indirect efforts to improve acceptance of corrective recommendations and feedback.





Chapter 3.

Complaint Processing to Enhance Public Awareness

1. Overview

Since 2003, the ACRC has been operating the Onsite Outreach Service, visiting sites directly to consult and receive grievances. The service targets regions with poor access to administrative services, such as rural areas, islands, and remote regions, as well as vulnerable groups including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and marriage immigrants. Through onsite consultations and grievance resolution, the ACRC has worked to reduce regional and social inequalities.

From 2003 to 2025, the Onsite Outreach Service visited local governments 1,312 times and consulted 33,281 grievances. Since 2012, the Onsite Outreach Service has been operating as a one-stop comprehensive counseling channel for citizens to consult and resolve their daily inconveniences in collaboration with related organizations such as the Korea Legal Aid Corporation, the Korea National Council on Social Welfare and the Small Enterprise and Market Service, etc.

In addition, since 2018, the ACRC has operated a dedicated team for business grievances in order to actively protect the rights and interests of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small business owners.

In September 2025, the ACRC established 'People's Livelihood Economy Grievances Investigation Division' to provide stronger practical support for the recovery of the livelihood economy by addressing onsite difficulties and resolving institutional irrationalities arising in the public livelihood economy sector.

In particular, the ACRC has consistently held 'Onsite Meetings on Business Grievances' to listen directly to the concerns of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small business owners struggling with various regulatory challenges. By proactively identifying and resolving latent grievances, the ACRC provides substantial support for business activities. Furthermore, it works closely with relevant agencies to pursue direct institutional improvements, including the reform of unreasonable regulations and other policy issues, through ongoing consultation and review.

※ No. of meetings held: (2019) 12 → (2020) 7 → (2021) 12 → (2022) 13 → (2023) 12 → (2024) 12 → (2025) 8

2. Onsite Outreach Service for Eliminating the Blind Spots in Citizens' Rights and Interests

A. Role and Operating Procedures of the Onsite Outreach Service

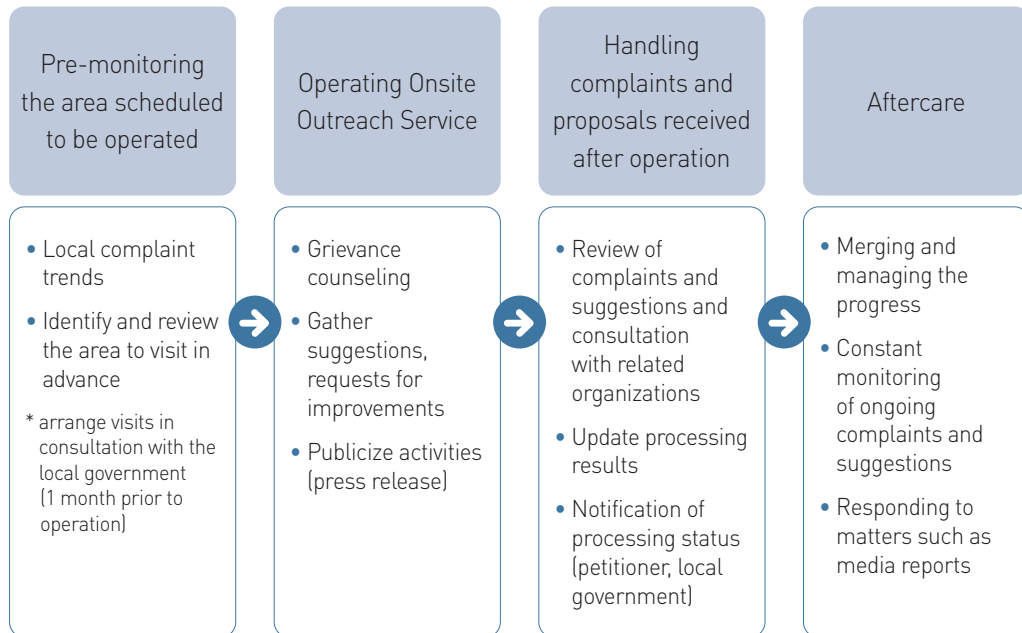
The Onsite Outreach Service is a visiting civil petition consultation and reception program designed to help people in islands, remote areas, farming and fishing villages, and other areas with limited access to civil petition services, as well as older persons, persons with disabilities, marriage migrant women, and others in need, who may have difficulty seeking consultation because of limited internet access, lack of time, or other reasons.

In addition, the ACRC serves as a communication and resolution channel for identifying collective grievances and local pending issues, gathering diverse voices from the regions, and reflecting them in policymaking. Since 2016, the Commission has also been implementing the Welfare Blind Spot Identification and Support Project, which identifies crisis households* — those with special circumstances who are in urgent need of financial assistance but are unable to receive government support — and provides them with emergency living expenses.

* Cases include households where individuals were unable to receive living support because their names were misused to falsely indicate real estate ownership, or because a husband engaged in income-generating activities during divorce proceedings or separation.

Among the civil petitions filed through the Onsite Outreach Service, those that can be settled on the spot are resolved immediately by coordinating the disagreement between the civil petitioner and the administrative agency concerned. Those that require further investigation are submitted as grievance petitions to the ACRC, and the ACRC investigates and resolves them according to the procedure.

<Table 4-4> Operation and grievance resolution procedure for Onsite Outreach Service



B. Performance of the Onsite Outreach Service

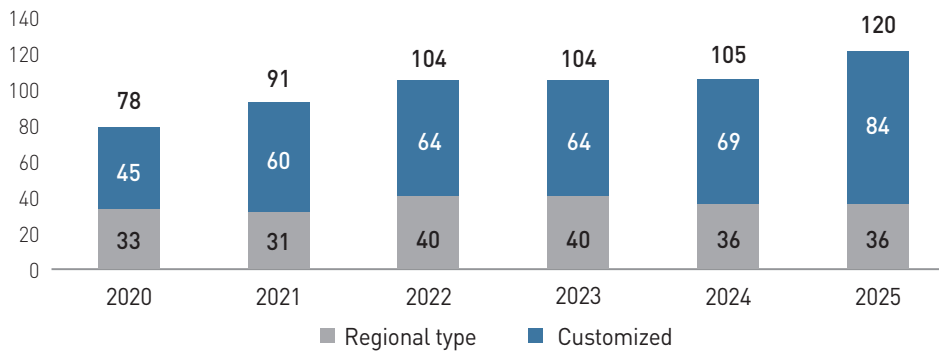
The ACRC operated the Onsite Outreach Service 120 times in 2025, counseling a total of 2,361 complaints. 1,653 complaints (70.0%) were received, of which 141 cases (8.5%) were resolved on the spot through mutual agreement.

<Table 4-5> Operation performance of the Onsite Outreach Service

(unit: cases)

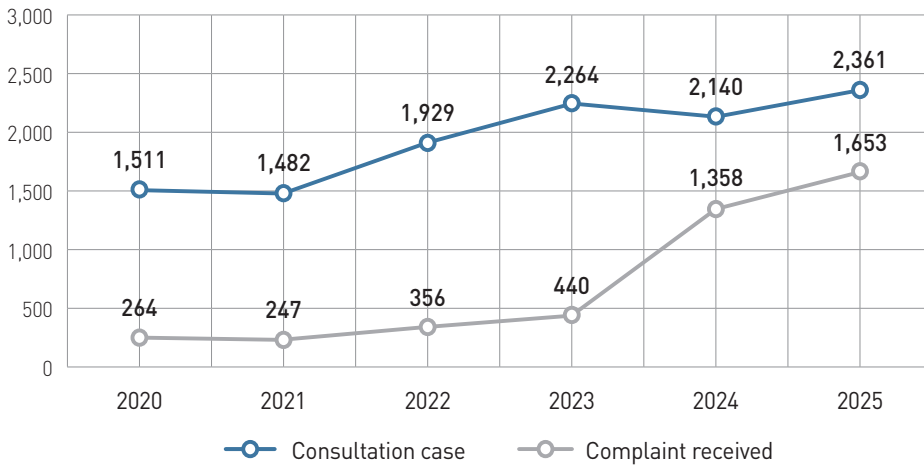
Category		Total	2003 ~ 2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Frequency (times)		1,312	710	78	91	104	104	105	120
[Regional]		626	410	33	31	40	40	36	36
[Tailored]		686	300	45	60	64	64	69	84
Consultation record	Total	33,281	21,594	1,511	1,482	1,929	2,264	2,140	2,361
	Complaint Submission (on-the-spot agreement)	9,742 (2,964)	5,424 (2,390)	264 (54)	247 (41)	356 (57)	440 (92)	1,358 (189)	1,653 (141)
	on-the-spot consultation (closed on the spot)	23,539	16,170	1,247	1,235	1,573	1,824	782	708

● [Figure 4-1] Operation performance of the Onsite Outreach Service



* Increased by 15 sessions (14.3%) year-on-year: Driven by collaboration with the 'Rural Visiting Medical Bus' program and the additional operation of the 'Plaza for All Bus Outreach' program.

◉ [Figure 4-2] Trends in consultations and grievance petition intake for the Onsite Outreach Service



* Compared with the previous year, the number of consultations increased by 221 (10.3%), and the number of petitions received increased by 295 (21.7%), due to expanded consultation operations and expanded support for crisis households.

◉ [Figure 4-3] Operation of the Onsite Outreach Service



Regional Onsite Outreach Service in Gapyeong County
(March 27, 2025)



Tailored Onsite Outreach Service in Cheonan Youth Center
(March 13, 2025)

In 2025, through the Welfare Blind Spot Identification and Support Project, the ACRC identified a total of 76 crisis households and provided KRW 114.5 million in emergency living expenses.

<Table 4-6> Support status by type

(unit: household)

Total	Young caregivers	Children·Youth	Female heads of household	Elderly living alone	Extremely poor households
76	1	16	11	13	4

<Table 4-7> Support status by sponsoring organization

(unit: household, KRW 10,000)

Category	Korea Racing Authority (KRA)	GKL	LX	Korea National Oil Corporation	Korea Rural Community Corporation
11,450	2,100	2,000	450	500	600
	Korea Asset Management Corporation	Korea Airports Corporation	Korea Gas Corporation	Korea Water Resources Corporation	Korea Gas Safety Corporation
	2,000	2,000	1,000	500	300

C. Way Forward

The Onsite Outreach Service will be continued by visiting all corners of the country to resolve complaints from marginalized areas and vulnerable groups. In addition, the Onsite Outreach Service will do its best to solve the business difficulties of small business owners in small and medium-sized cities in the countryside, which are experiencing economic difficulties due to population decline, high prices and high interest rates, and the difficulties of young people in job seeking and starting a business.

3. Strengthening Public Engagement through the 'Plaza for All Bus Outreach' Program

A. Overview

The Popular Sovereignty Government, which took office without a presidential transition committee, established and operated the National Policy Planning Committee (hereinafter the 'Planning Committee') in order to design the direction of state administration and formulate national policy tasks.

To develop national policy agendas through broad public communication, the Planning Committee operated both online and offline channels for policy proposals. Due to high expectations for the new administration, the area around the Committee's headquarters was crowded throughout the day with citizens from all walks of life who had come from across the country.

The ACRC proposed to the Planning Committee a plan to use the ACRC's Onsite Outreach Service platform to travel nationwide and efficiently provide consultations and receive petitions so that practical public opinion-gathering could take place.

The Planning Committee accepted the ACRC's proposal, and the Plaza for All Bus Outreach Program was launched. Within a short period, it established an operational framework covering the securing of personnel, selection of operating areas, inter-agency consultations, and follow-up action plans.

As part of this initiative, the ACRC rebranded and repurposed a large bus that it had been operating for use as a dedicated consultation bus. It selected 23 professional investigators with extensive experience in handling civil petitions and deployed them as support personnel for civil petition and policy proposal consultations and onsite visits. Together with personnel from the Planning Committee, the program officially began operation with a launch ceremony on July 1.

◉ [Figure 4-4] Promotional bus and launch ceremony for 'Plaza for All Bus Outreach' program



B. Operation Performance

From July 2 to July 31, the ACRC operated consultation centers in 13 local governments across six regions for one month and received a total of 850 civil petitions and policy proposals (an average of 65 cases per day). This was more than twice the average daily number of consultations handled through the ACRC's regular Onsite Outreach Service, demonstrating public expectations for the new administration and citizens' willingness to participate in national governance.

To ensure that the intent behind citizens' proposals was properly conveyed, professional investigators consulted with citizens one by one and organized the details of their proposals. Civil petitions were formally received as grievance petitions and handled fairly. In addition, petitions that had to be handled by competent administrative agencies or public institutions, such as local governments, were immediately transferred to the relevant authorities to ensure prompt processing.

In addition to civil petition and policy proposal consultations, the ACRC visited 14 livelihood-related sites in different regions to hear residents' voices firsthand and receive policy suggestions. These site visits were grouped into four main themes: ① public safety; ② region-specific collective civil complaints; ③ policy-themed sites related to national policy tasks; and ④ local pending issues.

C. Operational Assessment

In press releases and other materials dated July 16, the Planning Committee evaluated the Plaza for All Bus Outreach Program as having significantly lowered barriers to participation for older persons and digitally vulnerable groups and, by directly receiving opinions on site and linking some of them to immediate handling or policy proposals, as having served as a public forum in which 'inclusive participation' was meaningfully put into practice.

Also, at many locations, those seeking consultation continued to visit the sites even after the scheduled consultation hours had ended, demonstrating the strong public interest in and positive response to the program.

Feedback from Consultation Participants (Selected Survey Responses)

- “I hope the government continues to listen to the people and communicate with them sincerely.”
- “I hope the government continues to engage with the public as actively as it does now.”
- “Please continue to pay attention to policy suggestions from the public and provide channels for ongoing dialogue.”
- “I had been carrying a great deal of frustration, but after the consultation, I was able to let go of the concerns I had been holding inside. Thank you for coming to meet with us.”
- “Please continue to listen to people’s voices on the ground so that those facing unfair circumstances are not left behind.”
- “Thank you for coming all the way to our rural community.”

In addition, the field visits laid the groundwork for resolving collective civil complaints. One notable case was a collective civil complaint regarding the Dongseo High-Speed Railway project in Yanggu County, Gangwon Province, which was raised during the Plaza for All Bus Outreach Program in Chuncheon, Gangwon Province, on July 3. Following the visit, discussions on the issue progressed substantially, and the civil petition was resolved through an on-site mediation meeting held by the ACRC on August 7, with officials from the Planning Committee in attendance. The complainants expressed their gratitude to the ACRC for standing on the side of citizens, listening carefully to their concerns, and working to resolve the issue swiftly.

4. Onsite Meetings on Business Grievances

The ACRC operates Onsite Meetings on Business Grievances to provide practical support for businesses based on voices from the field. To that end, it visits industrial sites of SMEs and small business owners across the country, listens to grievances, identifies difficulties, and seeks multidimensional solutions together with relevant institutions.

In 2025, the ACRC held eight Onsite Meetings on Business Grievances, at which it received a total of 103 grievance petitions. Of these, 86 cases were resolved through measures such as investigations by relevant institutions and guidance on the applicable systems.

<Table 4-8> 2025 status of onsite meeting for business grievance

Date	Target entities	Date	Target entities
1. 22.	Korean Association of Industrial Packaging	7. 23.	Companies in the Climate Tech Industry
2. 25.	Bioindustry Companies in the Chungbuk Free Economic Zone	9. 2.	Companies in the Semiconductor Materials, Parts, and Equipment Industry in Chungnam
4. 16.	Companies in the Shipping Industry	9. 19.	Companies Employing Foreign Workers
7. 8.	Companies in the Robot Parts Industry	12. 4.	Small Manufacturers in Gyeonggi Province

To help create a strong growth environment for SMEs and small business owners and to enhance the vitality of business activities, the ACRC will continue its efforts to respond in a timely manner to various business difficulties through cooperation with relevant ministries and to provide guidance on relevant government policies for businesses.





Chapter 4.

Efforts to Further Protect Citizens' Rights and Interests

1. Overview

As mentioned earlier, a grievance petition is a secondary complaint filed by a person who is dissatisfied with the outcome of a general civil petition (court, inquiry, suggestion, etc.). Here, the term secondary is not a numerical indication of a sequence or order but it is used to signify dissatisfaction or objection, and the secondary complaint itself may be filed several times. At this point, the petitioner's dissatisfaction is at its peak, so the investigators of the ACRC are simultaneously tasked with resolving the grievance and improving the satisfaction level.

First, in order to resolve collective complaints that are difficult to resolve due to the involvement of multiple agencies and complex interests, and that take a long time to resolve even if resolved in a professional manner, the ACRC is working toward the enactment of the Act on the Mediation of Collective Grievances.

Second, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, the ACRC conducts the annual Overall Civil Complaint Service Evaluation to enhance the grievance-handling capacity of local governments and offices of education, and to improve citizen satisfaction.

Third, the ACRC supports the establishment of local ombudsmen to promptly and fairly resolve complaints arising from local governments, and for those that have already been established, to revitalize their operations.

Last, to improve the quality of complaint handling by each organization and the ACRC investigators, the ACRC continues to conduct capacity-building training, sharing resolved complaint cases and disseminating methods for handling unusual and repeated complaints.

2. Mediation of Collective Grievances to Smoothly Resolve Complex Conflicts

A. Promotion Status

As economic growth has accelerated in our society, awareness of citizens' rights has increased and perceptions of participation in civil society have matured. As a result, public conflicts involving complex interests and large numbers of people have been intensifying. With the inauguration of the Popular Sovereignty Government in May 2025, the government has recognized the importance of conflict management at the national level. Through its national policy agenda, it has emphasized the proactive identification and early resolution of collective civil complaints, while strengthening efforts to achieve the final resolution of disputes and conflicts.

The ACRC actively uses the mediation system as a policy tool to promptly and fairly resolve grievances that involve large numbers of people or matters with significant social impact, thereby effectively resolving various types of collective grievances in the public sector.

In the past, many collective civil complaints were relatively simple, involving conflicting interests between a single administrative agency and a single village or group. In recent years, however, there has been an increase in complex disputes involving multiple agencies, such as the central government, local governments, and public institutions. These disputes arise not only between residents and administrative agencies but also among residents themselves and between administrative agencies.

<Table 4-9> Progress in resolving grievance complaints through mediation

Category	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Receipt of collective complaints	310	317	384	407	458
No.of cases resolved through mediation	41	33	63	81	70
Rate of resolution through mediation	13.2	10.4	16.4	19.9	15.2

Collective civil complaints tend to arise from conflicts of interest among the parties involved in public-interest projects, budgetary constraints of the relevant institutions, and institutional limitations imposed by statutes and regulations, rather than from the unlawfulness or unfairness of an administrative agency's decision. This makes them difficult to resolve through conventional grievance-handling methods. Against this backdrop, ACRC mediation has become firmly established as an alternative means of dispute resolution that seeks an optimal agreement through communication and compromise among the parties.

In response to increasingly complex and diverse collective civil complaints, the ACRC is strengthening practical consultations by conducting more proactive field investigations, persuading stakeholders, and organizing a mediation council consisting of relevant organizations and experts. The chairperson and members of the ACRC are doing their best to come up with win-win mediation solutions by visiting the sites and listening to residents' grievances. It is also focusing on strengthening publicity such as media reports on good solutions, mediation systems and their effects. This is expected to build public trust, resulting in an increase in the number of collective civil complaints requiring mediation and prompt resolution by the ACRC, thereby fostering a virtuous cycle.

B. Major Cases of Onsite Mediation of Collective Civil Complaints

One of the most notable cases of collective civil complaints resolution through mediation by the ACRC in 2025 involved 'the conversion of a stormwater retention facility under construction in the Hoecheon Development Area of Yangju, Gyeonggi Province, into a waterfront park.'

The ACRC resolved a collective civil complaint filed by 485 residents of Yunjung Apartment concerning a stormwater retention facility* being constructed in the Hoecheon Development Area of Yangju, Gyeonggi Province, to prevent damage caused by torrential rainfall.

* Stormwater retention facility: A facility designed to temporarily store rainwater during torrential rainfall events and release it after water levels in nearby rivers have decreased.

The apartment, which was occupied in October 2002, was excluded from the Yangju Hoecheon Housing Site Development Project in December 2006. However, in early 2024, when the Korea Land and Housing Corporation (LH) sought to construct a stormwater retention facility adjacent to the apartment complex in the Hoecheon Development Area, residents raised concerns about potential damage, including construction noise, structural cracks, and the possible inflow of river water into the underground parking garage. They requested that the facility be relocated farther away from the apartment complex and covered with a structure so that it would not be visible. When no agreement could be reached, the residents filed a collective civil complaint with the ACRC in June 2024, seeking resolution of their grievances.

The ACRC engaged in lengthy discussions on plans for the installation of the retention facility, with LH, Yangju City, and the complainants participating, but no agreement could be reached. However, a breakthrough was achieved when the ACRC proposed developing the facility as a waterfront park, a suggestion that all relevant authorities and the complainants ultimately accepted, leading to the final mediation agreement.

According to the mediation plan, LH agreed to install the retention facility at a location 23 meters away from the apartment and develop an ecological learning area, sports facilities, walking trails, and other amenities for use by apartment residents.

Yangju City agreed to regularly monitor the development of the retention facility and ensure the continued maintenance and management of the ecological learning area, sports facilities, and other related amenities after completion.

This case is significant as it resolved a collective civil complaint by transforming residents' negative perceptions of the stormwater retention facility into a more positive view through the proposal to create a waterfront park.



Onsite mediation meeting on the collective civil complaint on requesting improvements to the stormwater retention facility in the Hoecheon District of Yangju (June 12, 2025)

The second notable mediation case involved resolving a conflict that arose during the implementation of the 'Chuncheon-Sokcho Railway Construction Project,' a national policy project.

During implementation of the project, the Korea National Railway (KR) planned to construct a 665-meter section of railway line between Yongha village and Yachon village in Guktojeongjungang township, Yanggu County, Gangwon Province. Under the original plan, 310 meters of the section would be constructed as a bridge, while the remaining 355 meters would consist of a high embankment.*

* High embankment : An embankment, generally higher than six meters, constructed by placing and compacting soil to raise the ground level

Residents of Yanggu County, together with the Yanggu County Office and the Yanggu County Council, argued that the planned high embankment would divide the village and cause damage to crops, adversely affecting residents' living environment and economic activities. They therefore requested that the entire Yongha to Yachon village section be

constructed as a bridge rather than a high embankment. However, the KR rejected the request, stating that Yanggu County's opinions had already been reflected in the project. The residents subsequently filed a collective civil complaint with the ACRC.

Following the inauguration of the Popular Sovereignty Government, the ACRC conducted a joint onsite investigation with the Planning Committee, which had been established to formulate the government's national policy tasks. Through continued consultations with the complainants, relevant authorities, and other stakeholders, the ACRC developed the following mediation plan.

Under the agreement, the KR agreed to: make every effort to modify the construction plan so that the 355-meter section originally planned as a high embankment between Yongha Village and Yachon Village in Guktojeongjungang Township, Yanggu County, Gangwon Province would be constructed as a bridge; calculate the additional construction costs resulting from the conversion of the embankment section into a bridge and consult with Yanggu County on those costs; consult with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Ministry of Economy and Finance to determine the amount of additional costs, and then establish the cost-sharing ratio through consultation with Yanggu County while minimizing the county's financial burden; and faithfully cooperate with Yanggu County by sharing the information and materials necessary to secure the budget for the additional construction costs.

Yanggu County, in turn, agreed to: actively support the prompt processing of administrative procedures, including permits and approvals, to ensure smooth implementation of the project; determine the specific cost-sharing ratio for the additional construction costs in consultation with the KR; and actively cooperate with the KR by sharing information and materials necessary to secure the budget for the additional construction costs.

This mediation is significant in that it amicably resolved a conflict with local residents that arose during the implementation of a national policy project, thereby creating favorable conditions for the smooth implementation of the Chuncheon–Sokcho Railway Construction Project.



Onsite visit regarding the collective civil complaint
'Requesting the Conversion of the High
Embankment Section into a Yongha-Yachon Bridge
in Yanggu County (July 3, 2025)



Onsite mediation Meeting 'Regarding the Collective
Civil Complaint Requesting the Conversion of the
High Embankment Section into a Yongha-Yachon
Bridge in Yanggu County (August 7, 2025)

The third major mediation case involved a collective civil complaint filed by parents of students at nearby schools and others regarding the construction of Happy Housing in Jungwon District, Seongnam, Gyeonggi Province. Through mediation by the ACRC, the grievances of students, parents, and other complainants that had continued for four years were resolved.

The area surrounding Middle School B and High School B in Jungwon District, Seongnam, is home to a dense concentration of schools, including five high schools, three middle schools, and two elementary schools. This high concentration of schools resulted in severe traffic congestion during commuting hours, as student and vehicle traffic mixed on the roads. Furthermore, students were using a narrow roadside shoulder (approximately 0.7 to 1 meter wide) lacking basic safety facilities as their route to and from school, posing a significant risk of accidents.

The situation worsened when construction began on a Happy Housing complex (public rental housing for young people) near the schools, resulting in increased construction vehicle traffic in the area. As traffic congestion and the risk of accidents intensified, parents, students, and school staff requested that the relevant authorities implement safety measures, including relocating the main access point for construction vehicles, widening

the existing road, and separating pedestrian walkways from vehicle lanes. However, the Korea Land and Housing Corporation (LH) explained that it was difficult to immediately accommodate these requests, as necessary procedures required before project implementation, including consultations with residents and compensation processes, had yet to be completed.

Although parents, students, and school staff had continuously raised concerns with LH and the Seongnam City Government and requested measures to ensure students' safety, the requested measures were not implemented promptly. As a result, they filed a collective civil complaint with the ACRC in April 2025. Following several onsite investigations and consultations with the relevant agencies, the ACRC resolved the complaint through an onsite mediation meeting.

Under the mediation plan, LH agreed to: relocate the vehicle access points for the Happy Housing construction project to ensure that students' safety on their way to and from school would not be compromised, and manage the existing vehicle access point near the school gate so that it would only be used by special-purpose vehicles, such as fire engines, as well as vehicles accessing nearby commercial facilities and pedestrians; widen the road to a total width of 15 meters, separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and install traffic safety facilities, including speed-control facilities and traffic signals; and actively cooperate with representatives of the complainants and relevant authorities to ensure students' safety during the construction period.

Seongnam City Government agreed to: take over the road and traffic safety facilities installed during the project and conduct a comprehensive review of traffic volume and road conditions to install and operate additional facilities as necessary; and provide full cooperation regarding all administrative procedures required for changes to existing conditions.

Seongnam Jungwon Police Station agreed to review the traffic management plan and other related documents to be submitted by LH regarding the additional entrance for the Happy Housing complex, and to promptly notify LH of the review results.

Seongnam Office of Education in Gyeonggi Province agreed to determine the specific locations for construction vehicle access routes after gathering opinions from the affected schools, nearby schools, and relevant departments, and then coordinate the final decision with LH; and actively support communication regarding school route safety throughout the construction period. The complainants agreed not to file any further petitions if the terms of the mediation plan were implemented as agreed, while the schools agreed to provide students with safety education in response to changes in the school commuting environment.

The ACRC's proactive mediation efforts have not only created a safer commuting environment for students but also paved the way for the smooth progress of the Happy Housing project.



Status of school commuting routes near the planned Happy Housing Site in Jungwon District, Seongnam



Onsite mediation meeting on the collective civil complaint for school commute route safety in Jungwon District, Seongnam (November 2, 2025)

3. Provision of Civil Complaint Services that Satisfy the Public

The ACRC, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, conducts a 'comprehensive evaluation of civil service' every year to examine the handling of civil complaints at various levels of agencies in order to improve the quality of public services provided by administrative agencies.

In 2025, a total of 308 organizations were evaluated, including 48 central administrative agencies, 243 local governments, and 17 offices of education. The evaluation indicators were as follows.

<Table 4-10> Evaluation indicators of the 「2025 Comprehensive Evaluation of Civil Service」

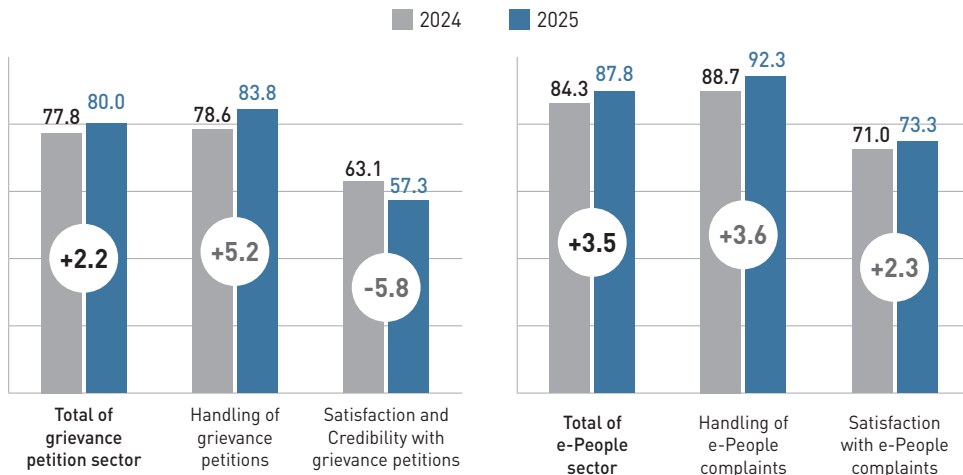
Evaluation areas	Evaluation items (5)	Evaluation indicators	Evaluator
Civil complaint administration activities	Handling of grievance petitions	1) Efforts to handle grievance petitions 2) Efforts to resolve grievance petitions 3) Management and inspection of grievance petition 4) Activation of local ombudsman	ACRC
	Handling of e-People complaints	1) Speed of handling complaints 2) Fidelity of response to civil complaints 3) Appropriateness of handling complaints 4) Efforts to improve civil complaint administration	
	Operation of civil complaints system	1) Provision of civil complaint information and operation of civil complaint laws 2) Monitoring and reviewing the status of civil complaints and record of personal data training 3) Civil complaint administration and institutional improvement 4) Reorganization of civil complaints and reduction of required documents 5) Adherence to the legal complaint processing deadline	Ministry of Interior and Safety
Management basis for civil complaint administration	Civil complaint administration strategy and system	1) Suitability of establishing civil complaint administration and institutional improvement plan 2) Performance of civil complaint administration by the head of an agency 3) Civil complaint administrative management organization 4) Protection of vulnerable complainant and civil complaint officers	
Civil complaint handling performance	Satisfaction	1) Satisfaction with legal complaints 2) Satisfaction with e-People complaints 3) Satisfaction and credibility of grievance petitions	Common

In 2025, the overall average score of the 「Comprehensive Evaluation of Civil Service」 was 85.6: 86.3 for central administrative agencies, 94.3 for provincial offices of education, 88.0 for metropolitan municipalities, and 81.7 for basic local governments.

The average score for the sectors covered by the ACRC was 80.0 (2.2 ▲) for grievance petitions and 87.8 (3.5 ▲) for e-People complaints, both of which improved from 2024.

While the satisfaction score for the e-People system among complainants rose slightly by 2.3 points year-on-year to 73.3, the satisfaction and trust score for civil petitions for grievances handling fell by 5.8 points to 57.3. This underscores the need for service improvements in frontline civil petition handling to boost public satisfaction and trust throughout the resolution process of civil petitions for grievances.

◉ [Figure 4-5] ACRC sector evaluation results



The ACRC publicizes the results of its annual comprehensive evaluation of civil service in the media in order to encourage voluntary efforts by administrative agencies to improve their civil service, and actively supports the strengthening of their capacity to handle civil complaints by providing awards to outstanding agencies and consulting services to those that are not up to par.

In fact, of the 46 organizations that received customized consulting in 2025 due to underperformance in their 2024 assessment, a total of 37 (80.4%) saw their rankings increase by an average of 22 or more positions.

The ACRC will continue to thoroughly monitor the quality of civil complaint services across all administrative agencies. It also plans to make ongoing efforts to help improve the overall quality of public service delivery.

4. Revitalizing Local Ombudsmen to Strengthen the Rights and Interests of Local Residents

The ACRC recommends the establishment of a Local Ombudsman, an independent complaint-handling body with expertise to promptly and fairly resolve grievances against local governments and their affiliated organizations.

The legal basis for establishing the first Local Ombudsman in Bucheon City in 1997 was later put in place through the enactment of the Act on the Establishment and Operation of Local Ombudsmen in 2005. As of December 2025, 100 local governments (12 metropolitan governments and 88 basic local governments) were operating Local Ombudsmen.

<Table 4-11> Status of establishment and operation of the Citizens' Grievance Mediation Committee

- **[12 Metropolitan/Provincial Governments]** Seoul Metropolitan City, Daegu Metropolitan City, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Gyeonggi-do, Gangwon Special Self-Governing Province, Chungcheongnam-do, Chungcheongbuk-do, Jeollanam-do, Jeonbuk Special Self-Governing Province, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, Sejong Special Self-Governing City

- **[88 Local Governments]** (Seoul) Gangdong-gu, Gangbuk-gu, Gangseo-gu, Gwanak-gu, Gwangjin-gu, Guro-gu, Geumcheon-gu, Nowon-gu, Dobong-gu, Dongdaemun-gu, Dongjak-gu, Mapo-gu, Seodaemun-gu, Seocho-gu, Seongdong-gu, Seongbuk-gu, Yangcheon-gu, Yongsan-gu, Eunpyeong-gu, Jongno-gu, Jung-gu, Jungnang-gu, (Busan) Saha-gu, (Incheon) Gyeyang-gu, Michuhol-gu, Seo-gu, Yeonsu-gu, Jung-gu, (Daegu) Dalseo-gu, Dong-gu, Buk-gu, (Gwangju) Gwangsan-gu, Nam-gu, Buk-gu, Seo-gu, (Daejeon) Daedeok-gu, Dong-gu, Seo-gu, Jung-gu, Yuseong-gu (Ulsan) Nam-gu, Buk-gu, Jung-gu, Ulju-gun, (Gyeonggi) Goyang-si, Guri-si, Gwacheon-si, Gwangmyeong-si, Gwangju-si, Namyangju-si, Dongducheon-si, Bucheon-si, Seongnam-si, Suwon-si, Siheung-si, Ansan-si, Anseong-si, Anyang-si, Yangju-si, Yeosu-si, Yeoncheon-gun, Yongin-si, Uiwang-si, Icheon-si, Paju-si, Pyeongtaek-si, Pocheon-si, Hanam-si, Hwaseong-si, (Gangwon) Wonju-si, (Chungnam) Gongju-si, Dangjin-si, Boryeong-si, Asan-si, Cheonan-si, Buyeo-gun, (Chungbuk) Jecheon-si, Cheongju-si, Yeongdong-gun, (Jeonnam) Gwangyang-si, Suncheon-si, Yeosu-si, Goheung-gun, Damyang-gun, Hwasun-gun, (Jeonbuk) Iksan-si, (Gyeongnam) Yangsan-si, (Gyeongbuk) Sangju-si

※ Establishment Status : (2016) 26 → (2017) 30 → (2018) 37 → (2019) 43 → (2020) 49 → (2021) 62 → (2022) 70 → (2023) 80 → (2024) 94 → (2025) 100

In 2020, the ACRC established operational guidelines for the National Council of Grievance Mediation Committees to create an institutional platform for policy discussions and the exchange of opinions with citizens' grievance committees. Based on this framework, the ACRC held the first National Council meeting in March 2021. Since then, annual meetings have been held through 2025, providing a forum for collecting feedback on policies and systems aimed at strengthening the role of the committees, and for discussing mutual cooperation. These efforts have supported continued collaboration and exchange among citizens' grievance mediation committees nationwide.

<Table 4-12> Overview and activities of the National Council of Grievance Mediation Committees

- (Council) A consultative body between the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) and Citizens' Grievance Mediation Committees
- (Composition) Chairperson of the ACRC and the lead representatives of each Citizens' Grievance Mediation Committee
- ※ Co-chairs : ACRC Chairperson (ex officio) and a committee representative (elected)
- (Functions) Consultation on matters such as information sharing and cooperation for committee activation, collecting feedback on policies and systems, and providing consulting and training to enhance committee capabilities
- (Meetings) Held once a year (regular), with additional sessions (as needed)
- (Support) Allowance and travel expenses may be provided within budget limits

Furthermore, the ACRC supports the effective operation of Local Ombudsman Commissions by providing intensive programs, such as tailored consulting and mentoring, for local governments that are preparing to establish such commissions or have recently done so. It also regularly holds forums and workshops to strengthen the capacities of ombudsmen and investigators serving on these commissions.

○ [Figure 4-6] Forum and workshop with local ombudsmen



In addition, to facilitate the sharing of information related to Citizens' Grievance Mediation Committees, the ACRC has established a centralized information portal on its official website. This portal provides local government ordinances on the establishment and operation of grievance committees, examples of grievance resolutions, and updates on their operation. Through these efforts, the ACRC continues to actively support the establishment and enhancement of Citizens' Grievance Mediation Committees.

5. Training to Strengthen Capacity for Handling Grievance Petitions

The ACRC provides annual capacity-building training on complaint handling for public officials at institutions at all levels in order to improve the quality of public service and broaden understanding of grievance petitions and the protection of citizens' rights and interests.

The training program for strengthening capacity to handle grievance petitions at institutions at all levels consists of one basic course and four specialized courses. Training is provided in various formats, including regional sessions, nationwide sessions, and programs conducted in cooperation with training institutes, taking into account training effectiveness and participant convenience.

<Table 4-13> Training courses to strengthen capacity for handling grievance petitions

Category	Course title	Target audience
Basic course	① Basic course for handling grievance complaints	Newcomer, civil affairs worker
Advanced course	② Professional investigation course by grievance complaint field	Investigation team leader, middle manager
	③ Collective grievance complaints and public conflict course	
	④ Local ombudsman course	City committee members, secretariat staff
	⑤ Investigation course for special civil complaints	Common

The ACRC also provides on-the-job training on laws and investigative techniques to new and transferred investigators to improve their work skills. In order to proactively respond to the increasing number of large-scale collective complaints and social conflicts, the ACRC also provides outsourced training to the Korean Commercial Arbitration Board and the Korea Institute of Public Administration to cultivate a higher level of mediation expertise and conflict management capabilities.

◉ [Figure 4-7] Training for strengthening the capacity to handle grievance petitions



6. Planned Investigations Based on Analysis of Frequently Filed Civil Complaints

The ACRC identifies recurring civil complaints each year and conducts in-depth analyses, coordinates with relevant agencies, and performs field investigations. These efforts aim to improve related policies and systems by addressing the root causes of grievances.

Notable examples of field investigations

1. Establishing a Legal Basis for Obtaining Vehicle Owners' Contact Information to Address Illegally Parked Vehicles

• Key Issues

- Illegally parked vehicles without displayed contact information cause significant inconvenience to nearby residents. In 2024, approximately 9,000 related civil petitions were filed through the e-People system and other complaint channels.
- Existing measures available under current laws, such as vehicle towing, are insufficient to ensure the prompt removal of illegally parked vehicles, limiting efforts to effectively address public inconvenience.

• Recommendations

- The ACRC recommended that the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport amend the Road Traffic Act and the Parking Lot Act to establish a legal basis allowing local government heads to obtain and use vehicle owners' telephone numbers, originally collected for purposes such as vehicle recall notifications, to facilitate the prompt removal of illegally parked vehicles without displayed contact number.

2. Closing Gaps in Veterans' Allowances for Support-Eligible Soldiers or Police Officials Wounded on Active Duty

• Key Issues

- Local governments have gradually expanded the payment of veterans' allowances to persons of national merit and other persons eligible for veterans' benefits through their respective local ordinances. However, some local governments have omitted soldiers or police officials wounded on active duty* who are eligible for support from the list of beneficiaries for veterans' allowances, resulting in gaps in benefit coverage.

* Support-eligible soldiers or police officials wounded on active duty: Military personnel or police officials who died or sustained injuries in the course of military service or official duties but were not registered as persons of distinguished service to the State because their death or injury was partly attributable to their own negligence or other similar reasons. Instead, pursuant to former Article 73-2 of the Act on the Honorable Treatment of and Support for Persons of Distinguished Service to the State, they, or their surviving family members, are registered as persons equivalent to persons of distinguished service to the State.

- Although all local governments with residents who are support-eligible soldiers or police officials wounded on active duty and other equivalent beneficiaries had enacted and implemented ordinances to honor and support persons eligible for veterans' benefits in accordance with the Framework Act on Veterans Affairs and other relevant laws, 121 local governments were found not to provide veterans' allowances to those beneficiaries.

- **Recommendations**

- The ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs develop measures to expand veterans' allowances to support-eligible soldiers or police officials wounded on active duty and other equivalent beneficiaries. It also recommended that local governments actively review the provision of veterans' allowances for these beneficiaries and gradually expand such support.

7. Strengthening Capacity to Respond to Unusual Civil Complaints

Unusual civil petitions, previously referred to by various names including malicious civil petitions, aggressive civil petitions, and special civil petitions, are defined as civil petitions where the complainant refuses to accept the outcome of their petitions and repeatedly files the same issue, or engages in unlawful acts, such as verbal abuse, physical assault, or filing of repeated criminal complaints and reports, thereby significantly hindering the normal processing of civil petitions.

As the problems caused by unusual civil petitions, including administrative inefficiency and declining morale among public officials, have become more serious, the ACRC, as the government's lead agency for the management of civil petitions for grievances, has implemented a range of measures to strengthen the capacity of public institutions at all levels to respond to such petitions.

First, recognizing the need to establish a dedicated division for an effective response system for unusual civil petitions, the ACRC established the Complaints & Conflicts Communication Division on December 30, 2025. By transferring the responsibilities related

to unusual civil petitions, which had previously been handled partially by the division responsible for investigating civil petitions for grievances, to the newly established division, the ACRC was able to further strengthen its role as the control tower for responding to unusual civil petitions.

To develop a government-wide framework for managing and responding to unusual civil petitions, the ACRC commissioned the 2025 Study on the Survey, Analysis, and Improvement Measures for Unusual Civil Petitions. The study surveyed 1,097 civil petition officers from 393 public institutions. According to the findings, 947 respondents (86%) reported having handled unusual civil petitions during the previous three years. Collectively, they had dealt with 5,213 unusual complainants, an average of 5.5 unusual complainants per respondent.

Beginning in 2025, the ACRC has operated the Citizen Counselor Program, under which experts from various fields—including lawyers, psychological counselors, retired public officials, and experienced civil petition professionals—provide training on responding to unusual civil petitions, as well as counseling and support for legal action for public officials affected by such petitions. From July to December, 20 civilian experts appointed as Citizen Counselors carried out a total of 182 support activities. Institutions that received training support reported an average satisfaction score of 4.486 out of 5, while those that received counseling support reported an average score of 4.667 out of 5, indicating a high level of satisfaction.

Finally, the ACRC held six workshops across five regions to provide training and consulting aimed at strengthening the capacity of institutions at all levels to respond to unusual civil petitions. A total of 1,866 participants from 393 institutions attended the workshops.

Part
05

Handling Administrative
Appeals in a Fair and Prompt
Manner



Chapter 1. Administrative Appeals System

Section 1. Overview of the Administrative Appeals System

1. Key Functions of the Administrative Appeals System

Administrative appeals serve two main purposes: redressing the rights and interests of the people and controlling autonomous administration. The redress of rights and interests refers to protecting the rights and interests of individuals who have been infringed upon by unlawful or unjust administrative actions, and autonomous administrative control refers to ensuring the legality and rationality of administrative actions by allowing administrative agencies to self-correct.

The Administrative Appeals Act stipulates that “The purpose of this Act is to relieve citizens from the infringement of rights or interests caused by any illegal or unjust disposition or omission of public power by administrative agencies through the administrative appeals procedures, thereby achieving a due operation of administration.”

2. Characteristics of the Administrative Appeals Commission

The Administrative Appeals Commission is a deliberative administrative body established to review and decide administrative appeal cases.

The administrative appeals commission is divided into three types: the Central Administrative Appeals Commission (CAAC) established under the ACRC; and administrative appeals commission established under the jurisdiction of a Mayor/Provincial Governor of

the 17 metropolitan governments; and other administrative appeals commissions. Among these, the CAAC and the Provincial Administrative Appeals Commissions handle the largest number of cases and are the most actively operated.

Established under the umbrella of the ACRC, the CAAC deliberates and rules on appeal cases related to the disposition or omission of the agencies below:

- Heads of state administrative agencies, or their subordinate administrative agencies (except for agencies for which the establishment of an Administrative Appeals Commission is mandated),
- Special Metropolitan City Mayors, Metropolitan City Mayors, the Special Metropolitan Autonomous City Mayor, Provincial Governors, and the Special Self-Governing Province Governor,
- Superintendents of education or the Assembly of the Special Metropolitan City, Metropolitan Cities, the Special Metropolitan Autonomous City, Provinces or the Special Self-Governing Province,
- Other administrative agencies jointly established by the State, local governments, public corporations, etc. in accordance with relevant laws such as the Local Autonomy Act.

The CAAC consists of no more than 70 members, including one chairperson and its standing members not more than four (currently 3 persons). It has one Chairperson, from among the vice chairpersons of the ACRC, and where the Chairperson is absent or is unable to perform their duty because of inevitable circumstances, or where they deem it necessary, a standing member (in order of seniority of service as a standing member, and in cases of equal seniority of service, in order of their age) should act on the Chairperson's behalf. The meetings of the CAAC should be attended by 9 persons, including the Chairperson, standing members, and non-standing members designated by the Chairperson for each meeting. The CAAC should adopt a resolution with the attendance of a majority of the members and by the concurring vote of a majority of those present.

The municipal or provincial administrative appeals commission deliberates and makes a ruling on an appeal filed against the disposition or omission by administrative agencies

under the jurisdiction of a Si (City), Gun (County) or an autonomous Gu (District) located under the jurisdiction of a city or province, its subordinate administrative agencies, or the Assembly of a city, county or autonomous district, or an administrative agency jointly established by at least two local governments and a public corporation, etc. under the jurisdiction of a city/province. It is a board-style administrative agency like the CAAC.

In addition, there are other administrative appeals commissions subject to the Administrative Appeals Act under the jurisdiction of the 17 municipal/provincial education offices, 6 high prosecutors' offices, 4 regional corrections headquarters. In consideration of the expertise and specific nature of certain matters, such as taxation, patents, and land expropriation, special administrative bodies are designated under individual laws. These either replace the general administrative appeal process or provide exceptions to the Administrative Appeals Act.

Section 2. Operation of the Administrative Appeals System

1. Active and Warm-Hearted Approaches

The ACRC promoted the introduction of the court-appointed defense counsel system, which allows an appellant, who is unable to appoint a representative due to their financial difficulties, to request the administrative appeals commission to appoint a public defender, and where the Chairperson of the Commission appoints the appellant's defense counsel to represent them in the appeal for free. Those who are eligible to apply for a public defender are basic livelihood security recipients, basic pension recipients, single-parent family support recipients, disabled pension recipients, North Korean defectors, and other persons who are recognized by the chairperson of the administrative appeals commission as having difficulty in appointing a representative due to their financial circumstances. In 2021, the CAAC eased the income threshold for individuals eligible for a court-appointed defense counsel from KRW 2.7 million to KRW 3 million per month. The ACRC also expanded the eligibility to include small-business owners whose monthly sales are KRW 400 million or less, so that the rights and interests of the less privileged can be better protected.

The ACRC has actively promoted the development of an online administrative appeals system to eliminate the inconvenience of visiting institutions or sending documents by mail. Through this system, the public can file appeals, submit documents, and check decisions — all online. It also allows easy access to search for relevant appeal cases.

In a rapidly changing society, disputes of various types and sizes between the public and administrative agencies are increasing. But administrative appeals have shown certain limitations as a system for resolving public conflicts by the administration itself, with a structure in which only one of the persons directly involved can obtain satisfaction. The ACRC introduced the administrative appeal mediation system to resolve appeals swiftly and reasonably within the scope of the parties' rights and authority. This system has been in effect since May 1, 2018, and is actively used to protect civil rights.

2. Engagement and Cooperation with Agencies related to Administrative Appeals and Enhancement of Employee Competence

To enhance understanding of administrative appeals and strengthen professional expertise, the ACRC has provided training to officials in charge of administrative dispositions with a focus on the introduction of the administrative appeals system, case handling procedures, and major re-adjudication case precedents. In 2024, the ACRC conducted its first nationwide training tour in collaboration with provincial administrative appeals commissions. This training targeted decision-making authorities and covered the administrative appeals system, how to prepare written responses, and key considerations in decision-making — based on accumulated case rulings — to help prevent rights violations caused by administrative errors.

In 2025, the CAAC held workshops with provincial administrative appeals commissions and provincial offices of education appeals commissions. The CAAC has strived to address infringements on public rights at an early stage by providing education on the information disclosure system and publishing the findings of its 2025 review.



Chapter 2.

Performance of the Central Administrative Appeals Commission

In 2025, 19,616 administrative appeals were filed with the CAAC, a decrease of 740 from the previous year: specifically, an increase of 84 in general cases, a decrease of 73 in patriots/veterans' cases and a decrease of 751 cases in driving cases. Meanwhile, the number of cases processed was 18,983, a decrease of 374 from the previous year. Of these, there were an increase of 312 in general cases, a decrease of 73 in veterans' cases, and a decrease of 613 cases in driving cases.

<Table 5-1> Receipt and handling of appeal cases over the past 8 years

(unit: No. of cases)

Year	Receipt	Deliberation·Resolution				Acceptance rate (%)	Withdrawal·Transfer
		Total	Acceptance	Rejection	Dismissal		
2018	23,043	25,153	3,814	18,928	2,411	16.8	1,401
2019	24,076	21,534	1,567	14,166	5,801	10.0	1,271
2020	22,367	22,727	1,573	16,783	4,371	8.6	1,094
2021	19,229	18,873	1,710	14,892	2,271	10.3	1,140
2022	21,467	21,159	1,468	15,581	4,110	8.6	1,527
2023	30,896	27,887	1,247	15,994	10,646	7.2	1,904
2024	20,356	19,357	964	15,051	3,342	6.0	1,392
2025	19,616	18,983	1,436	14,559	2,988	9.0	618

1. Analysis by Type

In 2025, the number of cases filed with the CAAC by case type was 11,411 driver's license cases (58.2%), 7,110 general cases (36.2%), and 1,095 patriots/veterans' cases (5.6%). Among the cases received, driver's license cases account for the largest proportion (58.2%), which is most likely due to the system, which requires that appeals against administrative dispositions of driver's licenses must go through a trial under the Road Traffic Act. Given the fact that the number of administrative dispositions on drivers' license violations of the Road Traffic Act reaches hundreds of thousands, driver's license cases are expected to account for a significant proportion of administrative appeals cases in the future.

<Table 5-2> Receipt of cases by category

(unit: No. of cases, %)

Category	Driver's license-related cases		Patriots and veterans affairs cases		General cases	
	Receipt	Percentage	Receipt	Percentage	Receipt	Percentage
2023	12,332	39.9	1,150	3.7	17,414	56.4
2024	12,023	59.5	1,168	5.8	7,026	34.8
2025	11,411	58.2	1,095	5.6	7,110	36.2

General cases, which are appeals against dispositions, excluding driver's license cases and veterans' cases, are in various fields such as employment and labor, information disclosure, national defense, legal affairs, land and transportation, various examinations, etc.

In 2025, the number of general cases handled was 6,371, an increase of 312 (5.1%) from the previous year. Especially, the number of accepted cases increased to 1,099 in 2025, an increase of 557 (102.8%) cases compared to 2024. While the increase in the number of decisions granting administrative appeals cannot be attributed to any single factor, it appears to be primarily driven by an increase in certain types of cases and the discovery of the substantive truth through ex officio investigations of evidence.

<Table 5-3> Receipt and handling cases of general cases

(unit: No. of cases)

Year \ Category	No. of cases received [%]	Number of cases handled			
		Total	Acceptance [%]	Rejection	Dismissal
2023	17,414 [56.4]	14,253	513 [13.0]	3,425	10,315
2024	7,026 [34.8]	6,059	542 [17.5]	2,549	2,968
2025	7,110 [36.2]	6,371	1,099 [28.3]	2,782	2,490

Patriots and veterans cases are administrative appeal cases related to the registration of applications for veterans — national veterans, independence patriots, and war veterans — or their bereaved family members under laws related to veterans affairs, and most often disputes the rejection of national veterans' registration by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, its regional offices and branch offices.

<Table 5-4> Receipt and handling of patriots and veterans affairs cases

(unit: No. of cases)

Year \ Category	No. of cases received [%]	Number of cases handled			
		Total	Acceptance [%]	Rejection	Dismissal
2023	1,150 [3.7]	1,241	92 [8.0]	1,062	87
2024	1,168 [5.8]	1,136	41 [3.8]	1,024	71
2025	1,095 [5.6]	1,063	40 [4.0]	961	62

Driver's license cases are administrative appeals against the suspension or revocation of a driver's license due to violations of the Road Traffic Act, and each year, about 170,000 such dispositions are issued. These cases are often referred to as livelihood cases since driver's licenses are often crucial for employment or as a means of livelihood for the appellants. In addition, compared to general cases and veterans' cases, driver's license cases involve a larger number of appeals, but they typically lack complexity and also have relatively straightforward facts, such as drunk driving.

<Table 5-5> Receipt and handling of driver's license-related cases

(unit: No. of cases)

Year \ Category	No. of cases received [%]	Number of cases handled			
		Total	Partial acceptance [%]	Rejection	Dismissal
2023	12,332 (39.9)	13,393	642 (5.3)	11,507	244
2024	12,023 (59.5)	12,162	381 (3.2)	11,478	303
2025	11,411 (58.2)	11,549	297 (2.7)	10,819	436

2. Processing Period and Oral Hearings

According to Article 45 of the Administrative Appeals Act, a ruling on a case should be made within 60 days from the date on which the appellee or the commission has received a written appeal. Where unavoidable circumstances arise to the contrary, the chairperson of the administrative appeals commission may extend the period for another 30 days ex officio, so that the case is handled within 60 days in principle, and within 90 days at the latest.

In practice, the CAAC had been handling some cases beyond the statutory time limit every year due to the consistent growth in case numbers and lack of manpower. As a result of various efforts such as improving work processes and conducting capacity-building training to shorten decision-making periods, the CAAC reduced the average decision period in 2025 to 54.4 days, 0.18 days shorter than the previous year.

<Table 5-6> Yearly breakdown of the handling period

(unit: No. of cases)

Year	Total number of cases handled	Average ruling period (days)	Within the statutory period		Over the statutory period
			Within 60 days	61-90 days	Over 90 days
2023	27,887	60.11	19,616 (70.3%)	3,445 (12.4%)	4,826 (17.3%)
2024	19,357	55.60	13,563 (70.1%)	3,019 (15.6%)	2,775 (14.3%)
2025	18,983	54.42	14,166 (74.6%)	2,161 (11.4%)	2,656 (14.0%)

The review of an administrative appeal is made verbally or in writing. In an oral hearing, the involved party appears before the commission and testifies. Compared to a review based on documents, oral hearing also makes it easier to establish facts and identify inconsistencies through spontaneous questions and answers. In addition, oral hearings offer the advantage of allowing the general public, who may struggle with written statements, to fully express their opinions. The Administrative Appeals Act stipulates that if a party requests an oral hearing, it should be conducted unless the case can be clearly decided through written review alone.

Moreover, to enhance the convenience of oral hearings, the CAAC coordinated with local governments to utilize nearby municipal buildings for video hearings. It also increased the number of special case review committees dedicated to oral hearings from once to twice a month. As a result, the number of oral hearings in 2025 reached 176 cases, an increase of 21 from 2024. The Commission will continue to expand oral hearings to strengthen procedural rights and improve the quality of case deliberations, while also working to enhance convenience for participants through institutional improvements.

3. Suspension of Execution and Provisional Disposition

The Administrative Appeals Act adopts the principle of non-suspension of execution. In principle, even if a request for adjudication is made, the effects of a disposition or its execution, or continuation of proceedings continues. If the commission deems that it is urgent to prevent the appellant from suffering a serious loss that may occur, it may decide to suspend the execution, ex officio, or upon request by the concerned party.

If there is a decision by the commission to suspend execution, the disposition subject to judgment shall be suspended until a decision is made by the administrative appeal, and if there is a decision, the decision to suspend execution shall lose its effect. However, from 2023, the period of suspension of execution has been extended to 30 days from the date of ruling. To prevent a gap in the protection of rights that may occur between the administrative appeal decision and the filing of an administrative lawsuit, the CAAC has,

since 2023, extended the duration of the suspension of execution to up to 30 days from the date of ruling.

The suspension of execution system plays an important role in protecting procedural rights, but it is limited in that it only maintains the status quo before the administrative action. As such, it provides insufficient relief for passive administrative actions such as rejections or inaction. For this reason, the Administrative Appeals Act contains provisions on provisional disposition to better protect the rights and interests of people that cannot be adequately addressed through suspension of execution alone.

A provisional disposition may be issued when it is strongly suspected that a disposition or omission is unlawful and unjust, and thus, it is necessary to prevent a serious disadvantage or urgent danger that might occur to the concerned party to whom a provisional status is granted. It can be filed if the concerned party is unable to obtain the desired outcome through suspension of execution. The provisional disposition system has stricter requirements than suspension of execution and is not widely used. However, it is expected to significantly contribute to protecting procedural rights in cases not covered by the suspension of execution system, such as exam failure decisions.

<Table 5-7> Filing and handling outcomes for suspension of execution

(unit: No. of cases)

Handling Year	No. of cases filed	Handling outcome			Ex officio suspension of execution	Withdrawal · Transfer
		Acceptance (%)	Rejection	Dismissal		
2023	1,336	119 (10.8)	982	40	177	65
2024	1,303	85 (8.0)	982	51	157	55
2025	1,289	91 (8.6)	973	72	97	50

<Table 5-8> Filing and handling outcomes for provisional disposition

(unit: No. of cases)

Handling Year	No. of cases filed	Handling outcome			Ex officio suspension of execution	Withdrawal · Transfer
		Acceptance [%]	Rejection	Dismissal		
2023	37	-	21	12	4	3
2024	77	-	24	14	33	10
2025	67	1 [2.6]	38	13	10	3

4. Key Precedent Decisions

A. [2024-20688] Request for Revocation of an Administrative Disposition Imposing an Enforcement Fine

[Issue of the Case]

Whether, in relation to a relief order (reinstatement) issued by the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), appointing a worker as the head of a newly established task force constitutes reinstatement to the original position when there are no vacant department head positions available at the time of reinstatement.

[Case Overview]

Following the respondent NLRC's order granting relief for unfair dismissal (reinstatement), the claimant reinstated the worker as the head of a newly established task force. The respondent subsequently imposed an enforcement fine on the claimant, alleging a failure to comply with the relief order.

[Summary of Decision]

Whether a reinstatement constitutes a return to the original position depends on whether the worker was assigned to the same rank and duties as at the time of dismissal, or whether different duties were assigned with the worker's consent. In this case, while the duties prior to the dismissal were related to project planning, the duties after reinstatement were related to project management. However, the duties are considered equivalent in terms of project execution and management. Furthermore, considering that the task force was established out of necessity to comply with the relief order since there were no vacancies in other department head positions, this personal assignment constitutes a legitimate exercise of managerial rights.

B. [2024-18313] Request for Revocation of an Administrative Disposition Issuing a Warning to a Taxi Driver

[Issue of the Case]

Whether requiring a passenger to get off the taxi because the passenger changed the destination when the taxi was nearing the original destination constitutes a justifiable reason for requiring a passenger to leave the taxi.

[Case Overview]

The claimant was operating a taxi based on a ride-hailing request with a specified destination. During the trip, after one of the two passengers was dropped off at the original destination, the remaining passenger requested to be driven to a different destination. The respondent subsequently issued a warning to the claimant on the grounds that the claimant had declined the request due to personal circumstances.

[Summary of Decision]

Although the passengers requested an additional destination during the trip, they exited at the original destination after the claimant explained that he was unable to accommodate the request due to personal circumstances. Given that the claimant did not provide any further transportation services after dropping the passengers off at the original destination, his assertion that he had personal circumstances is considered credible. In light of this, the disadvantage imposed on the claimant by the warning is considered substantial. Accordingly, the warning disposition is deemed unjustified.

C. [2025-2731] Request for Revocation of an Administrative Disposition Ordering the Recovery of Overpaid Veterans' Benefits

[Issue of the Case]

Whether the retroactive recovery of veterans' benefits that had already been paid, following the acknowledgment of children born out of wedlock, violates the principle of Protection of Trust.

[Case Overview]

The claimant was registered as a person of distinguished service to the State in 2009 and had since been receiving a dependency allowance for persons without family support. In December 2024, the claimant filed an acknowledgment (designation of parental authority) for two children born out of wedlock. The respondent subsequently determined that, because the acknowledgment of children in the family register has retroactive effect, the dependency allowances previously received had been overpaid. Accordingly, taking into account the five-year statute of limitations for claims under the National Finance Act, the respondent issued an administrative disposition ordering the recovery of the dependency allowances paid from 2020 to 2024.

[Summary of Decision]

The recovery of veterans' benefits is a discretionary administrative act, and the decision whether to recover such benefits rests with the administrative agency. However, the retroactive effect of acknowledgment under Article 860 of the Civil Act is intended to protect the rights of the acknowledged child, particularly in matters such as inheritance. Accordingly, it is inappropriate to apply that retroactive effect directly under the Act on the Honorable Treatment of and Support for Persons of Distinguished Service to the State. Furthermore, because the claimant submitted a report of personal status changes to the respondent immediately after acknowledging the children, it is difficult to conclude that the claimant intentionally or through gross negligence improperly received the veterans' benefits.



Chapter 3.

Integration and Operation of the Online Administrative Appeals System

1. Background

The Online Administrative Appeals System is an information system that has been in operation since 2016. It provides the public with a one-stop online service covering the entire administrative appeals process from filing an appeal to checking the adjudication result anytime and anywhere, without requiring users to identify the competent appeals adjudication body. It also enables administrative authorities and appeals adjudication bodies to process all aspects of administrative appeals online, from receipt, response, and review to adjudication and the service of the written decision.

However, this online administrative appeals system faced several limitations. First, there are currently 123 agencies operating administrative appeal systems. These include 57 general administrative appeals bodies established under the Administrative Appeals Act, such as the Central Administrative Appeals Commission and the municipal and provincial administrative appeals commissions, and 66 specialized administrative appeal bodies established under individual laws rather than the Administrative Appeals Act, including the Tax Tribunal and the Health Insurance Dispute Mediation Committee. As administrative appeals bodies are dispersed across multiple institutions, the competent body and procedures vary depending on the nature of the administrative disposition, making it difficult for the public to identify where to file an administrative appeal. Furthermore, nearly ten years after its initial launch, the Online Administrative Appeals System had become outdated and was no longer capable of supporting further expansion or accommodating the latest information technologies, making the transition to a new system necessary.

Accordingly, it became necessary to establish a One-Stop Integrated Administrative Appeals System so that the public could access administrative appeals more easily and conveniently by integrating the online portals of general and specialized administrative appeals bodies into a single platform.

2. Key Contents

The newly established Online Administrative Appeals System integrates the systems of 90 administrative appeals bodies across the general, civil service appeals, compensation and insurance, and land sectors, enabling the public to file administrative appeals in all fields through a single online portal. Meanwhile, in consideration of the diverse operational characteristics of the participating bodies, such as differences in statutory application forms and agency-specific functions, the integrated system was designed to accommodate their respective institutional frameworks while ensuring that administrative appeals procedures under both the Administrative Appeals Act and individual statutes can be carried out through the integrated system.

In addition, a smart, paperless administrative appeals framework based on the latest information technologies was established. An electronic system for issuing authentic copies of adjudication decisions and other decision documents was also put in place, while the foundation was laid for conducting deliberation and decision-making procedures online through features such as online case review and electronic deliberation.

Furthermore, with the integration of previously fragmented online administrative appeals portals into a single platform, the disclosure of adjudication and decision information generated and stored through the system was expanded, thereby strengthening the public's right to know.

Claimants with limited legal knowledge often find it difficult to present their arguments logically through written submissions alone, making oral hearings necessary in many cases. However, the broader use of oral hearings has been limited because claimants were required to appear in person before the Administrative Appeals Commission. To



address this issue, a remote video hearing function was introduced, allowing claimants, respondents, other parties, and committee members to participate from different locations using laptops or mobile devices.

3. Progress and Future Plans

The ACRC will continue to enhance the Online Administrative Appeals System to ensure that the public can use the system to pursue administrative appeals without difficulty.

First, the ACRC plans to provide user-centered administrative appeals services and enhance the clarity and transparency of administrative procedures by expediting the stabilization of the remote oral hearing system, thereby enabling claimants and other parties who wish to participate in oral hearings but have difficulty traveling long distances to do so from anywhere by accessing the Online Administrative Appeals System via a mobile device or PC, while also expanding public access to administrative appeals decisions and other information produced by 90 administrative appeals bodies.

In addition, the ACRC plans to further enhance the system into a more innovative and technologically advanced platform by providing AI-assisted support for preparing administrative appeal petitions and offering 24-hour legal consultation services on administrative appeals throughout the year, thereby proactively addressing the difficulties and inconveniences faced by the public in filing administrative appeals.





Part
06

Strengthening Policy
Feedback Through Public
Communication



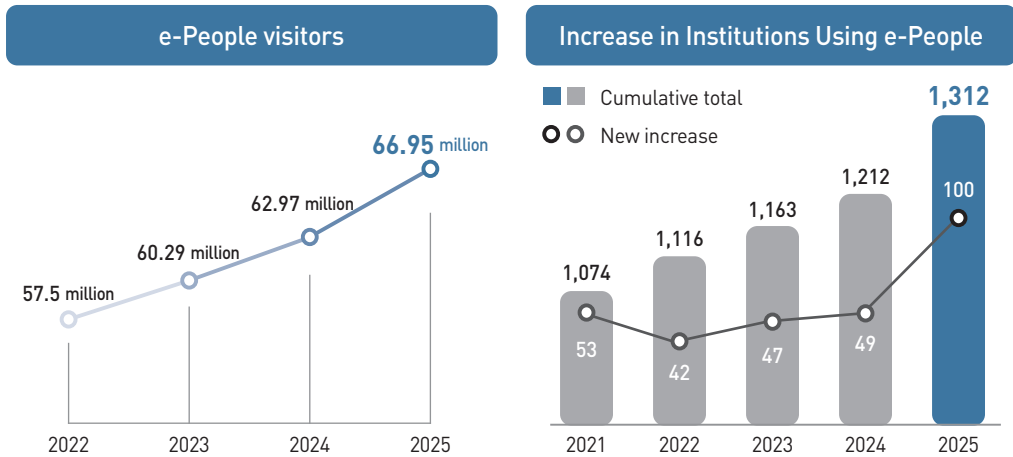
Chapter 1. Citizen-Centered Communication System

Under the slogan of “No voice left unheard,” the ACRC launched the integrated government-citizen communication portal called e-People that combines all of the public communication channels previously operated separately by individual administrative agencies for handling civil complaints, public proposals, and policy participation.

Starting with the integration of such systems of 7 central government agencies in August 2005, the Commission continued to integrate public service systems of all central government agencies in July 2006, and then combined systems of local governments and major public institutions in February 2008. This laid the foundation for an integrated system of public service. As part of the e-government development project with a total budget of KRW 10 billion, the ACRC utilized cutting-edge information technologies to establish an upgraded e-People system with improved user convenience and work efficiency starting in August 2018. The e-People system was officially launched in February 2020. As of the end of 2025, a total of 1,312 administrative institutions are providing services through the e-People.

In 2025, the number of users who visited e-People reached 66.95 million, and its public awareness rate, as surveyed in 2025, stood at 93.8%. This firmly established e-People as one of Korea’s leading public service platforms.

• [Figure 6-1] The number of e-People visitors and registered Institutions





Chapter 2.

Promoting the Integration of Non-Emergency Consultation Numbers into 110

1. Background

The large number of administrative telephone numbers makes it difficult for the public to know which number to call, causing unnecessary inconvenience. In addition, the lack of a centralized system for identifying and managing the numerous telephone numbers used by individual government agencies has left certain areas of public service guidance underserved.

To address these issues in public service guidance, the ACRC established the Task Force for the Implementation of the 110 Integrated System for Non-Emergency Public Inquiry Numbers (hereinafter referred to as the 'Task Force') in December 2025 and has since operated it to develop comprehensive measures.

2. Key Contents

A. Just Call 110, and You're Connected in Korea.

The ACRC is actively promoting the initiative to transform 110 into a government-wide 24/7 directory assistance system, enabling the public to receive consultation and information on public services through a single call without having to worry about which number to contact. The initiative aims to establish 110 as the government's central contact point by providing information on and directly connecting callers to the telephone numbers of all central administrative agencies and public institutions. The scope of the information and connection services will be significantly expanded from the current 150 numbers to a total of 697.

B. Making the 110 Call Center a Consultation Hub

Beyond simply consolidating telephone numbers, the ACRC aims to minimize inconvenience for the public by transforming the Integrated Government Call Center (110) into a true hub for national public service inquiries.

First, the ACRC will gradually integrate and link the call centers of central government agencies with the Integrated Government Call Center (110). As part of this initiative, the 23 general consultation call centers currently operated separately by individual central administrative agencies will be progressively integrated into the 110 Call Center.

Second, the ACRC will promote the integration of 120 call centers, which serve as local government public service consultation channels. The ACRC plans to encourage local governments to consolidate their currently separate 120 consultation services and operate them at the level of the 17 metropolitan cities and provinces.

3. Future Plans

In 2026, the ACRC plans to launch a pilot project to integrate 110 services across 15 government agencies, including the Ministry of the Interior and Safety and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. Beyond the parallel use of agency-specific telephone numbers and 110, the pilot project will lay the groundwork for the future integration of their operations, organizational functions, and systems.

Furthermore, the ACRC plans to build and promote consensus among local governments on the need for integrated call centers. It will recommend that local governments establish 120 call centers and develop guidelines outlining the establishment and operation of integrated call centers at the metropolitan local government level.



Chapter 3.

Operation of Integrated Government Call Center (110)

1. Overview

Operated by the ACRC, the 110 Government Call Center offers one-stop service to individuals who dial 110 for inquiries, reports, or recommendations, etc. regarding public services, providing them with consultation, assistance, and appropriate referrals to the relevant agencies.

2. Number of Calls Received and Handled

The 110 Government Call Center processed a total of 2,358,239 calls. Of these, 2,198,935 received consultation services and 2,195,954 were handled.

3. Activities of the 110 Government Call Center

A. Fostering Cooperative Labor Relations and Establishing a Stable Consultation Environment

To improve working conditions and reach agreements on workplace policies and practices, the ACRC strengthened dialogue and communication between labor and management, fostering a cooperative and mutually beneficial labor-management culture. In 2025, through collective bargaining, the ACRC reached agreements on key issues, including maintaining adequate staffing levels and regulating real-time monitoring, and concluded a wage agreement. In addition to an 8.1% increase in labor costs, the ACRC improved the working environment by securing additional training and counseling rooms and replacing outdated office equipment, thereby providing counselors with a stable foundation to focus on their work.

B. Improving public satisfaction with the 110 Government Call Center consultation service

By updating the counseling database and enhancing counselor expertise through periodic training, counselors are able to resolve inquiries independently without referring callers to other agencies, or provide contact information for the relevant agencies when necessary. This has contributed to improving public satisfaction through an increased self-closing consultation rate.

C. Enhancing Public Accessibility and Convenience

The ACRC operates a wide range of consultation channels, including text messaging, appointment-based consultations, online chat, social media, video sign language interpretation, and *KakaoTalk* (Korea's leading mobile messaging app). It has also reduced waiting times by introducing intelligent services such as a chatbot (12,115 cumulative cases) and a digital ARS system (11,271 cumulative cases). In addition, the ACRC has enhanced public access to information by providing consultation Q&As through *Naver Knowledge iN* (a Q&A platform operated by *Naver*, Korea's leading search engine) and currently offers foreign language interpretation services in cooperation with three partner organizations.

D. Joint Response to Government-wide Issues

The ACRC responded promptly to major government-wide issues, such as disruptions to administrative information systems and the distribution of Livelihood Recovery Consumption Coupons, in close cooperation with relevant government agencies. It also enhanced the consistency of public inquiry services by sharing consultation cases and providing standardized responses through a cooperative network among government call center operators.

E. Enhancing Public Awareness Through Diversified Promotional Activities

The ACRC has implemented a wide range of promotional activities through online platforms such as YouTube and *KakaoTalk*, as well as outdoor advertising and public engagement

events. As a result, public awareness of the 110 Government Public Inquiry Call Center has steadily increased from 38.6% in 2021 to 48.9% in 2025.

4. Future Plans

The ACRC will continue to enhance people-centered consultation services by further stabilizing the government-wide intelligent integrated call center and will strengthen support for counselors through external psychological support programs and improved working conditions. In addition, it will continue to raise public awareness of the 110 Call Center by expanding digital promotional activities tailored to citizens' everyday lives.





Chapter 4.

Enhancing Civil Service Consultation and Guidance Services

The primary mission of the Government Complaints Counseling Center is to contribute to the stability of people's livelihoods and the protection of the rights and interests of socially vulnerable groups by directly listening to citizens' grievances and providing prompt and accurate consultation and guidance. The Center provides grievance consultation services, offering guidance on administrative laws, systems, and procedures, as well as consultation and guidance on solutions to rights infringements and inconveniences arising from administrative dispositions and other actions taken by government agencies.

To this end, the Center operates civil affairs offices in Sejong and Seoul. Consultations are provided not only by ACRC investigators but also by professional advisors, including lawyers, labor attorneys, and tax accountants, as well as civil petition counselors composed primarily of retired public officials, ensuring that vulnerable groups and other members of the public can receive consultation services and guidance on available remedies without undue burden.

1. Overview of Consultation Services at the Government Complaints Counseling Center

The Government Complaints Counseling Center operates a one-stop consultation service where citizens can receive guidance on a wide range of matters including civil petitions, corruption and public interest reports, and administrative appeals regardless of the type of matter or the competent government agency. In 2025, the Center handled a total of 29,771 consultations.

Furthermore, to enhance convenience for residents in the capital area, the Center operates video consultation services linking its Sejong and Seoul offices, allowing citizens to consult with ACRC investigators. In 2025, the Center provided 73 video consultations. In addition, it provides an online consultation request service through the Government Complaints Counseling Center's official website.

2. Onsite Consultation

A. Civil Petition Consultation and Guidance by Investigators

Consultations with ACRC investigators are provided at the Sejong and Seoul civil affairs offices through in-person, video, and telephone consultations. Drawing on their legal expertise and practical experience, investigators provide guidance on resolving grievance-related civil petitions and, where necessary, receive and process civil petitions. In addition, the Center provides consultation on general administrative matters through personnel dispatched from central government ministries and public institutions. It also operates a professional advisory program involving lawyers, tax accountants, and labor attorneys to provide consultation on everyday civil petitions, while continuously improving its consultation services to ensure that citizens can receive assistance conveniently.

In 2025, a total of 1,590 consultations were provided across various fields, including public administration and safety, police affairs, and agriculture and livestock.



<Table 6-1> Status of investigator consultations and guidance by sector

(unit: No. of cases)

Year	2022		2023		2024		2025	
Total	1,836	100%	1,293	100%	1,715	100%	1,590	100%
Public administration and safety	118	6.4%	51	3.9%	84	4.9%	114	7.2%
Police	170	9.3%	168	13.0%	130	7.6%	107	6.7%
Agriculture, forestry and livestock	92	5.0%	69	5.3%	66	3.8%	76	4.8%
Health and welfare	137	7.5%	72	5.6%	104	6.1%	65	4.1%
Housing	119	6.5%	77	6.0%	101	5.9%	64	4.0%
Finance and banking	78	4.2%	45	3.5%	88	5.1%	63	4.0%
Urban affairs	83	4.5%	81	6.3%	62	3.6%	53	3.3%
Roads	99	5.4%	56	4.3%	66	3.8%	51	3.2%
Taxation	101	5.5%	51	3.9%	75	4.4%	50	3.1%
Construction and architecture	46	2.5%	59	4.6%	90	5.2%	43	2.7%
Civil affairs and legal services	117	6.4%	34	2.6%	89	5.2%	42	2.6%
National defense and veterans affairs	78	4.2%	54	4.2%	69	4.0%	40	2.5%
Employment and labor	57	3.1%	50	3.9%	55	3.2%	36	2.3%
Other	541	29.5%	426	32.9%	636	37.2%	786	49.5%

B. Consultation and Guidance by Professional Advisors and Civil Petition Counselors

To meet the increasingly diverse and specialized needs for civil petition consultations, the ACRC provides consultation in specialized areas such as law, labor, and taxation through professional advisors, including lawyers, labor attorneys, and tax accountants. A total of 927 cases were handled in 2025.

<Table 6-2> Status of consultation and guidance by professional advisors

(unit: No. of cases)

Category	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total	1,223	1,152	1,076	927
Lawyers	1,109	1,077	980	842
Labor attorneys	54	-	35	47
Tax accountants	60	75	61	38

In addition, the ACRC appoints former public officials with extensive experience in local governments and police agencies as Civil Petition Counselors to provide consultation and guidance on a wide range of civil petitions. In 2025, they handled a total of 1,008 consultations, contributing to greater public convenience.

3. Consultation and Reception of Corruption and Public Interest Reports

The Government Complaints Counseling Center (Seoul) operates a 'General Civil Affairs Office' alongside a 'Corruption and Public Interest Reporting Consultation Office.' Since its establishment in February 2008, the ACRC has operated the Reporting Consultation Office to ensure that reporting persons can seek consultation and submit reports in person with confidence. It also operates the 'Corruption and Public Interest Reporting Hotline' (☎ 1398, toll-free), which provides specialized consultation services for corruption and public interest reports.

Reporting persons can obtain guidance through the Corruption and Public Interest Reporting Consultation Office and the ☎ 1398 Hotline on how to report violations under the six anti-corruption laws, including those concerning corruption, public interest violations, improper solicitations, conflicts of interest, false claims for public funds, and violations of codes of conduct, as well as on the systems for whistleblower protection and rewards. In addition, through the Clean Portal (www.clean.go.kr), reporting persons can not only submit reports of legal violations and apply for protection and rewards but also access related information online.

4. Online Consultation Services for Public Convenience

Launched in October 2019, the online consultation application system of the Government Complaints Counseling Center enables citizens to conveniently access civil petition consultation services anytime and anywhere, 24 hours a day, via mobile devices or PCs. With the growing preference for contactless services, the promptness and accessibility of online consultations, and high levels of user satisfaction, approximately 30,000 civil petition consultations are received and handled annually.

<Table 6-3> Status of online civil complaint consultations

(unit: No.of cases)

Category	Total	2019. 10.	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Online consultation	153,088	1,995	31,949	36,753	31,868	26,274	24,249	26,244
Multi-agency/complex petitions	10,103	3	609	1,154	1,406	3,267	3,664	5,875

To provide comprehensive and professional solutions, the online civil petition consultation service is staffed not only by ACRC grievance investigators but also by public officials from 10 government agencies (Employment and Labor, Welfare, Environment, Education, Interior and Safety, Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Oceans and Fisheries, Trade, Industry and Resources, Food and Drug Safety, and Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs), as well as specialized consultants from organizations such as the Korea Land and Housing Corporation and the Korea Workers' Compensation & Welfare Service.

Online civil petition consultation services provide citizens with accessible guidance prior to submitting formal complaints, offering answers regarding the responsible agency, relevant laws, and procedures. These services deliver support that aligns with public expectations and help resolve so-called 'ping-pong complaints' or issues with unclear jurisdiction by directing citizens to the appropriate agency or department. Additionally, for multi-agency or complex civil petitions—an area seeing yearly growth—the Government Complaints Counseling Center consolidates review opinions from national and local authorities to provide integrated, one-stop responses.

By providing prompt responses to inquiries and requests for information on government policies, projects, and administrative systems that citizens want to know more about, the Government Complaints Counseling Center reduced the average consultation processing time to 1.2 days in 2025. In addition, it contributed to enhancing citizen satisfaction by resolving 24,389 out of 26,244 online consultation requests it handled, achieving a resolution rate of 93.0%.

The Government Complaints Counseling Center is the only government-wide online one-stop civil petition service organization that directly provides consultation services to the public on a wide range of government policies closely related to citizens' daily lives. Drawing on a diverse pool of personnel from various government ministries and agencies, it offers consultation regardless of the competent agency or policy area. Unlike general call centers, which are limited to responding to simple inquiries and providing agency information, or other civil petition channels that handle only matters within the jurisdiction of specific ministries or departments, the Center responds not only to routine inquiries but also to a wide range of complex consultations, including complaints about public officials responsible for handling civil petitions and requests for assistance related to financial hardship. Through these efforts, the Center helps improve public satisfaction with government services and strengthen public trust in the government.

5. Operation of Onsite Outreach Consultation Services

The Government Complaints Counseling Center introduced the 'Onsite Outreach Consultation Service' for the first time, moving beyond the conventional approach of providing consultations solely through online channels. Notably, the Center provides tailored onsite consultation services that take into account the diverse consultation needs and characteristics by region and sector, with a particular focus on people who face difficulties accessing online services, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those with limited digital literacy. In 2025, through the Onsite Outreach Consultation Services, the Center provided tailored consultation services by region and sector, primarily in densely populated metropolitan areas, covering employment and labor and social

welfare (Paju, Gyeonggi Province), veterans affairs (Dongjak District, Seoul), living and residential environment (Suwon, Gyeonggi Province), and road and traffic safety (Yongin, Gyeonggi Province).

6. Operation of the Civil Complaint Consultation Council to Coordinate and Resolve Multi-Agency and Complex Civil Complaints

The Center addresses civil petitions that are difficult to resolve through online consultations alone, including those involving multiple agencies, complex civil complaints spanning different areas of responsibility, and civil petitions repeatedly passed back and forth between agencies, by conducting onsite investigations and joint consultations with relevant agencies. The Center also operates the Civil Petition Consultation Council, in which private-sector experts, including lawyers and specialists in conflict mediation and in the road and transportation fields, participate in seeking practical consultation, coordination, and resolution measures. Major cases by sector include safety (a request to install a traffic safety mirror at an intersection in front of a daycare center in Cheonan), land administration (a request to discontinue the use of state-owned land (irrigation ditch) in Andong), road infrastructure (a request to pave an access road near the Sejong–Pocheon Expressway), and traffic safety (a request to remove the school zone designation in front of a closed elementary school in Buyeo).

7. Classification of Online and Offline Civil Complaint Filings

The Center registers civil complaints received through various channels, including e-People, in-person visits, mail, and fax, in the e-People system. After review, the petitions are classified and assigned to the appropriate departments for processing. Among the civil petitions received by the ACRC, civil petitions for grievances are assigned to the investigation departments of the Ombudsman Bureau, while general civil petitions, including corruption and public interest reports, are assigned to the competent departments, such as the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Audit and Inspection Division. Civil petitions falling under the jurisdiction of other agencies are transferred in accordance with the Civil Petitions Treatment Act.

The receipt and classification of civil complaints require an accurate understanding of the nature and key issues of each petition, as well as professional expertise. The Center manages this process through dedicated personnel to ensure prompt and accurate handling.

In 2025, a total of 145,147 civil complaints were received and classified (including 34,012 general civil petitions and 111,135 civil petitions for grievances). To enhance operational efficiency, the ACRC developed and distributed the 'Civil Petition Classification Manual' to support the classification of civil petitions and the handling of cases by investigation departments.

8. Support for Processing Petition Letters Submitted to the Office of the President

Written civil petitions submitted to the Office of the President by mail or through other written means are registered in e-People by the Government Complaints Counseling Center in accordance with the Regulations on the Operation of the Online Civil Participant Portals (Presidential Directive) and then transferred to the relevant agencies responsible for handling them.

In 2025, a total of 17,251 petition letters were submitted via e-People: 6,119 cases (35.5%) requested corrective actions or remedies; 4,260 (24.7%) called for investigations, audits, or inspections; 4,083 (23.7%) were classified as other matters; 1,671 (9.7%) involved policy proposals; 839 (4.9%) raised objections to court rulings; and 234 (1.4%) requested pardons or reinstatements.

<Table 6-4> Status of petition letters submitted to the Office of the President

Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
17,251 cases	1,397 cases	2,464 cases	7,865 cases	5,525 cases



Chapter 5.

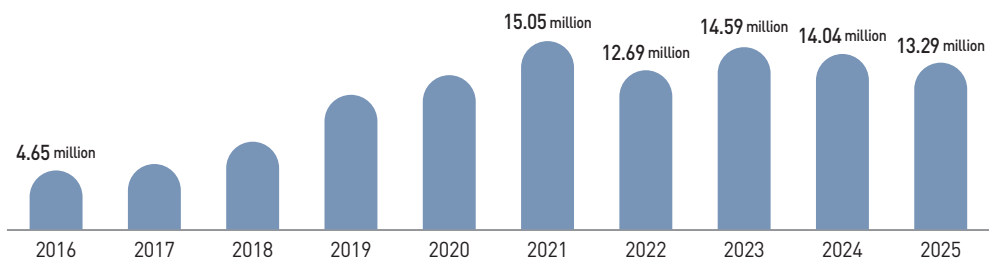
Policy Improvement Through Civil Petition Big Data Analysis

In 2025, approximately 13.29 million civil petitions were submitted by the public to central government ministries and local governments through e-People and individual local government channels, representing a 5.3% decrease from 14.04 million cases recorded in 2024. This decrease was attributed to the suspension of e-People services from September 26 to October 27, 2025, following a fire at the National Information Resources Service. However, excluding October 2025, the average monthly volume of civil petitions increased by 3.3% compared with 2024.

Since the Public Grievance Analysis System was launched in 2012 to collect civil complaint data, the accumulated volume of civil complaints has shown some fluctuations. However, over the past five years, an annual average of approximately 13.9 million complaints has been recorded. This indicates that the public is increasingly expressing its views on the policies of administrative agencies, and the utilization of accumulated big data is becoming more important.

• [Figure 6-2] Yearly collection of complaint data

© On average 13.9 million complaints since 2021



Big data analysis of complaints plays an important role in identifying patterns within individual complaints and uncovering problems with the system as a whole. This analysis enables the direct identification of public inconveniences and provides guidance on areas where policies need to be improved. As such, big data analysis of civil complaints is being utilized as a key tool to systematically incorporate ‘people’s opinions’ into policy.

1. Analysis of Civil Complaints Data of Various Types

A. Providing information on civil complaint trends through big data monitoring

The ACRC publishes ‘Voice of the People,’ a comprehensive report on complaint trends derived from big data analysis, which offers weekly and monthly complaint trends, the status of complaints by institution, and cases of public inconvenience. The ACRC provides it to more than 1,760 public and research institutions and makes it accessible to the public.

In 2025, the weekly edition of the report was published 32 times, the monthly edition 9 times, with one annual report. Its weekly edition includes not only the trends of complaints during the week but also cases of public inconvenience that are deemed to require fundamental system improvements to prevent the recurrence of the same or similar complaints. The monthly edition provides periodic forecasts of complaints expected to occur at a specific time or to surge or spread and presents trends by organization, region, and major policies for the month.

B. Planned Analysis to Address Public Inconvenience and Unfairness

The ACRC promptly conducted civil petition analyses on policy issues discussed at State Council meetings and other ministerial meetings and provided the findings to the Office of the President and relevant agencies, thereby supporting timely government responses to public policy needs. In 2025, the ACRC conducted a total of 10 policy issue analyses. Major examples are as follows:



<Table 6-5> Overview of policy issue analyses

Analysis topic	
Support for victims of large-scale wildfires (March 2025)	School Bus for infants and young children (April 2025)
Relocation of Gwangju Military Airport (July 2025)	Support for residents of single-room housing during heatwaves (July 2025)
First and second analyses of major high-volume civil petitions following the launch of the National Policy Planning Advisory Committee (July 2025)	Summer drainage facilities (July 2025)
Public concerns over the rising cost of living (September 2025)	Crimes targeting overseas Koreans in Southeast Asia, Including Cambodia (December 2025)
Student health examinations (April 2025)	

C. Operation of the Public Grievance Forecast System

Complaint forecasting is a system that helps related organizations prepare for complaints thoroughly in advance by capturing issues that appear periodically at a certain time and notifying them before the damage spreads, or sharing information on newly emerging and rapidly increasing complaints. Specifically, the ACRC issues regular and occasional civil complaint forecasts, depending on the frequency of complaints and the time of issuance, and actively informs the public of all forecasts through ‘Civil Complaint Big Data at a Glance’ and social media.

In 2025, a total of ten civil complaint forecasting were issued, consisting of nine regular forecasts and one ad hoc forecast. The regular forecasts covered secondhand transactions in February, wildfires in March, unmanned stores in April, pest control in May, personal mobility devices in June, companion animals in July, food trucks in August, and accommodation businesses in September. Due to the fire at the National Information Resources Service on September 26, which resulted in the complete destruction of the servers of the Civil Petition Information Analysis System, civil petition analysis and forecasting could not be conducted in October and November. Following the restoration

of the system on November 27, a forecast on cold-wave-related issues affecting vulnerable groups was issued in December. In addition, an ad hoc forecast on emerging online fraud schemes was issued in May, prompting relevant agencies to take swift action.

2. Establishing an AI-Based Civil Petition Analysis System and Promoting Collaborative Data Analysis

The ACRC has continuously expanded collaboration with relevant central government ministries and specialized institutions to promote the systematic utilization of civil petition big data and strengthen the reflection of analytical results into policymaking. In particular, in 2025, the ACRC designated the advancement of AI-powered civil petition analysis as a key priority and, through a competitive call for proposals, launched full-scale efforts to establish an AI-based civil petition processing system in collaboration with relevant government agencies.

The project titled ‘Building a Generative AI-Based Public Communication and Civil Petition Analysis System,’ implemented through the ‘2025 Hyperscale AI Service Development’ public competition organized by the Ministry of Science and ICT and the National Information Society Agency (NIA), aimed to simultaneously enhance the efficiency of civil petition processing and the accuracy of analysis by applying the latest AI technologies to civil petition processing and analysis and leveraging generative AI to process and analyze large volumes of civil petition data submitted through the e-People system.

Furthermore, with the goals of promoting technological exchange in civil petition analysis and contributing to improvement of quality of life, the ACRC carried out collaborative research projects on civil petition big data analysis with academia and specialized research institutions. In collaboration with the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (KRIHS), the ACRC conducted the ‘Nowcast Research for AI-Based Ultra-Short-Term Disaster Prediction’ project, which integrates civil petition big data with external data, including weather, wildfire, and flood information, to detect early signs of anomalies in key infrastructure, such as sinkholes, and predict high-risk areas. In partnership with

the POSTECH Institute for Social and Cultural Data Science, the ACRC also conducted the ‘Research on Civil Petition-Based Policy Demand Analysis and Policy Improvement Measures for Addressing Low Birth Rates’ to identify areas where existing low-birth-rate policies fail to adequately address the needs of certain groups or issues and to develop more effective policy response strategies.

The ACRC shared the research findings through the ‘Civil Petition Big Data at a Glance’ website and with relevant agencies to facilitate their utilization in developing policy alternatives.

3. Operation of the Complaint Data Analysis System and Opening up of Public Data

A. Operation of the Complaint Data Analysis System

The complaint data analysis system collects a vast amount of complaint data from major complaint channels in Korea, including the e-People system (1,312 organizations integrated and linked as of Dec. 2025) and individual channels of local governments. The ACRC provides support for the operation and management of the system, training, and consulting so that each administrative and public institution can monitor and analyze its own complaints using the complaint data analysis system.

B. Operation of the website, Civil Complaint Big Data at a Glance

In Civil Complaint Big Data at a Glance, which was reorganized in 2020 to align with the new features of the next-generation complaint data analysis system, the results of data analysis are presented in various visual formats and made available to the public. In particular, a horizontal layout has been applied so that statistical graphs can be checked immediately without scrolling left and right, and a responsive web design has been fully implemented to make it easy to use on mobile devices.

In addition, a total of 23 types of information are currently available through annual efforts to expand Open-API-based public data disclosure. This allows users to develop their own



applications and services. The number of applications to utilize Open-API through public data portals, as well as requests for data linkage and provision from research institutes, academia, media, and the National Assembly is steadily increasing.

4. The Way Forward

The ACRC has been systematically managing and analyzing civil complaint big data, which reflects the voices of the people, to extract public opinion from the data and utilize it for policy improvement.

Building on the accumulated civil petition big data and the AI-based analytical capabilities validated through pilot projects, the ACRC plans to further advance its civil petition analysis system and expand the utilization of analysis results for policymaking. Beginning with the ‘BPR/ISP for Building an AI-Based National Rights Platform and Expanding Its Services’ in 2026, the ACRC plans to develop and disseminate customized AI-based civil petition analysis models by 2030 for central government ministries, local governments, and public institutions, reflecting the operational characteristics of each institution and the types of civil petitions they handle.

Through these efforts, the ACRC will continue to ensure that the voices of the public are more accurately and promptly reflected in policymaking, thereby generating sustained improvements in policies that are more directly felt by citizens.





Chapter 6.

Promoting Public Requests for Proactive Administration

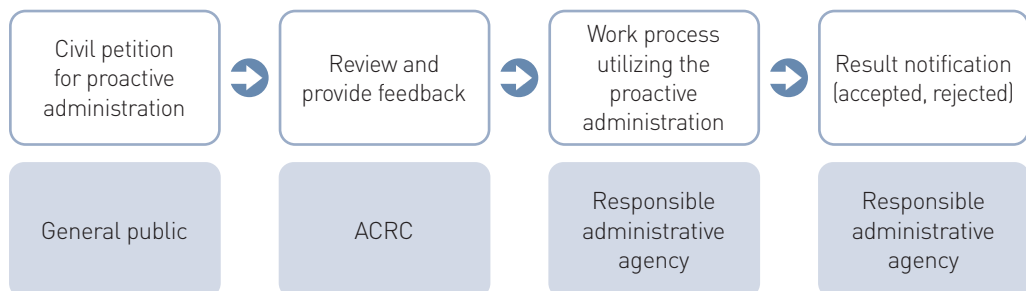
1. Operation of the Civil Petition System for Proactive Administration

A. Overview

The Public Petition for Proactive Administration is a pan-governmental initiative to drive proactive administration and a system that operates on a fast-track basis for redressing rights and interests.

When a citizen submits policy ideas for the public interest, the ACRC reviews the contents and actively provides its opinions or recommendations on how to handle the suggested ideas to the relevant administrative agency. Then, the administrative agency actively incorporates them into its administration by improving laws or systems and notifies the idea submitter of the outcome. If public officials has handled the matter following the opinions of the Proactive Administration Committee or pre-consultation with the Audit Department, they will be exempted from disciplinary action.

• [Figure 6-3] Procedures for civil petitions for proactive administration



<Table 6-6> Key drivers of proactive administration

- Introduced the ‘Proactive Administration National Application System’ by amending the ‘Proactive Administration Operating Regulations’ (July 27, 2021)
- Established the ‘Proactive Public Service Team’ (February 22, 2022)
- Revised the ‘Guidelines for Proactive Administration Application Processing and Operation’ (April 27, 2022, April 25, 2025)
- Published casebooks on the ‘Proactive Administration Applications’ (Dec. 2022, Dec. 2023, Dec. 2024, Dec. 2025)

B. Operational Performance Appraisal

From July 2021 to the end of December 2025, the ACRC received 18,290 petitions for proactive administration through the e-People system, processed 18,097 cases, and provided opinions to competent administrative bodies for 978 cases.

<Table 6-7> Civil petition for proactive administration (as of Dec. 2025)

Classification	No. of petitions received	Processing status			Under investigation
		Total	Recommendations	Transferred-closed	
Civil petition for proactive administration (implemented on Jul. 27, 2021)	18,290	18,097	978	17,119	193

The key cases can be categorized into four areas: improving inconveniences in daily life, addressing challenges faced by the younger generation, helping businesses and small business owners overcome difficulties, and supporting responses to various disasters and the recovery of people's livelihoods.

First, to improve inconveniences in daily life, the ACRC put forward policy recommendations that reflected the voices of the public, with the aim of resolving issues commonly experienced in everyday life.

Improving Everyday Inconveniences

Improvement of Bus Stop and Crosswalk Locations

- **(Situation)** Bus stops and crosswalks were positioned too close together without sufficient separation, forcing buses to stop beyond the crosswalk stop line and increasing the risk of traffic accidents.
- **(Recommendation)** The ACRC recommended establishing traffic safety measures for bus stops and crosswalks to help prevent traffic accidents involving pedestrians and other road users.

Second, to alleviate the challenges faced by the younger generation, the ACRC put forward practical recommendations that addressed the real-life concerns of young people and reflected their actual needs and demands.

Relieving Hardships for Young People

Ensuring Meaningful Educational Opportunities for Students with Tourette Syndrome

- **(Situation)** A review was needed to determine whether students with Tourette syndrome should be included as eligible recipients of special education services, in order to prevent them from leaving the public education system and help them develop the skills necessary for social participation.
- **(Recommendation)** The ACRC recommended providing proactive guidance and outreach to parents, teachers, and others concerned so that students with Tourette syndrome can undergo assessment and evaluation to determine their eligibility for special education services.

Third, to help businesses and small business owners address difficulties they face in their business operations, the ACRC put forward recommendations to improve unreasonable administrative procedures by closely examining regulatory hurdles and other issues encountered in the field.

Supporting Businesses and Small Business Owners

Allowing Exceptions to the Requirement for Professional Demolition Plans for Small-Scale Buildings

- **(Situation)** Even when demolishing small-scale buildings such as farm storage sheds, owners are required to submit a demolition plan reviewed by a qualified professional, such as an architect, resulting in significant administrative costs and burdens.
- **(Recommendation)** The ACRC recommended actively considering exemptions from professional review requirements for small-scale buildings involving short construction periods and simple demolition methods.

Fourth, to support responses to various disasters and the recovery of people's livelihoods, the ACRC put forward recommendations to establish effective, tailored support systems based on the voices of those affected.

Supporting Disaster Response and Livelihood Recovery

Strengthening Measures to Prevent Obstruction of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

- **(Situation)** After charging an electric vehicle in an apartment EV charging area, a complainant attempted to leave but was unable to do so because another vehicle was parked in the access aisle. The complainant reported the incident to the district office as an obstruction of parking, but no enforcement action was taken on the grounds that it did not constitute obstruction of EV charging.
- **(Recommendation)** The ACRC confirmed with the relevant ministry that the case clearly constituted an act of obstructing EV charging under applicable regulations and recommended that guidance be provided to local governments nationwide to prevent passive responses by frontline officials.

2. Prevention and Elimination of Passive Administration

To prevent and eliminate passive administration, the ACRC investigated refiled reports of passive administration and recommended that the head of the administrative organization take appropriate measures.

Passive administration is the act of a public official infringing on the rights and interests of the public or causing financial losses to the State through passive work behavior such as omission or negligence of duties.

<Table 6-8> Passive Administration re-report status (as of the end of Dec. 2025)

Classification	No. of petitions received	Processing status			Under Investigation
		Total	Opinion	Transferred-closed	
Re-report of passive administration (enforced on Aug.19, 2021)	25,843	25,698	83	25,615	145

From August 2021 to December 2025, the ACRC has received 25,843 refiled reports of passive administration via e-People, conducted investigations to verify the facts and made 83 recommendations to administrative agencies, including requests for reconsideration, and recommendations for improvements to work methods.

Examples of such recommendations are as follows: recommending to repair and take systematic management measures for the overpass along the elementary school commuting route that had been left in disrepair for a long time; recommending to make emergency repair and take responsible management to solve delayed measures for reports of manhole collapses and road damage; recommending improvements to ensure fair access to public tennis courts by addressing the issue of general residents being restricted from using the facilities due to reservations being allocated to specific clubs; as well as recommending that administrative measures against illegal buildings be taken in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

To prevent and eliminate passive administration, the ACRC plans to provide advice, counseling, and training to each administrative agency in a more systematic way, in addition to recommending appropriate measures for passive administration reports.





Part 07

Institutional Improvement to
Address the Underlying
Factors for Corruption and
Public Inconveniences



Chapter 1.

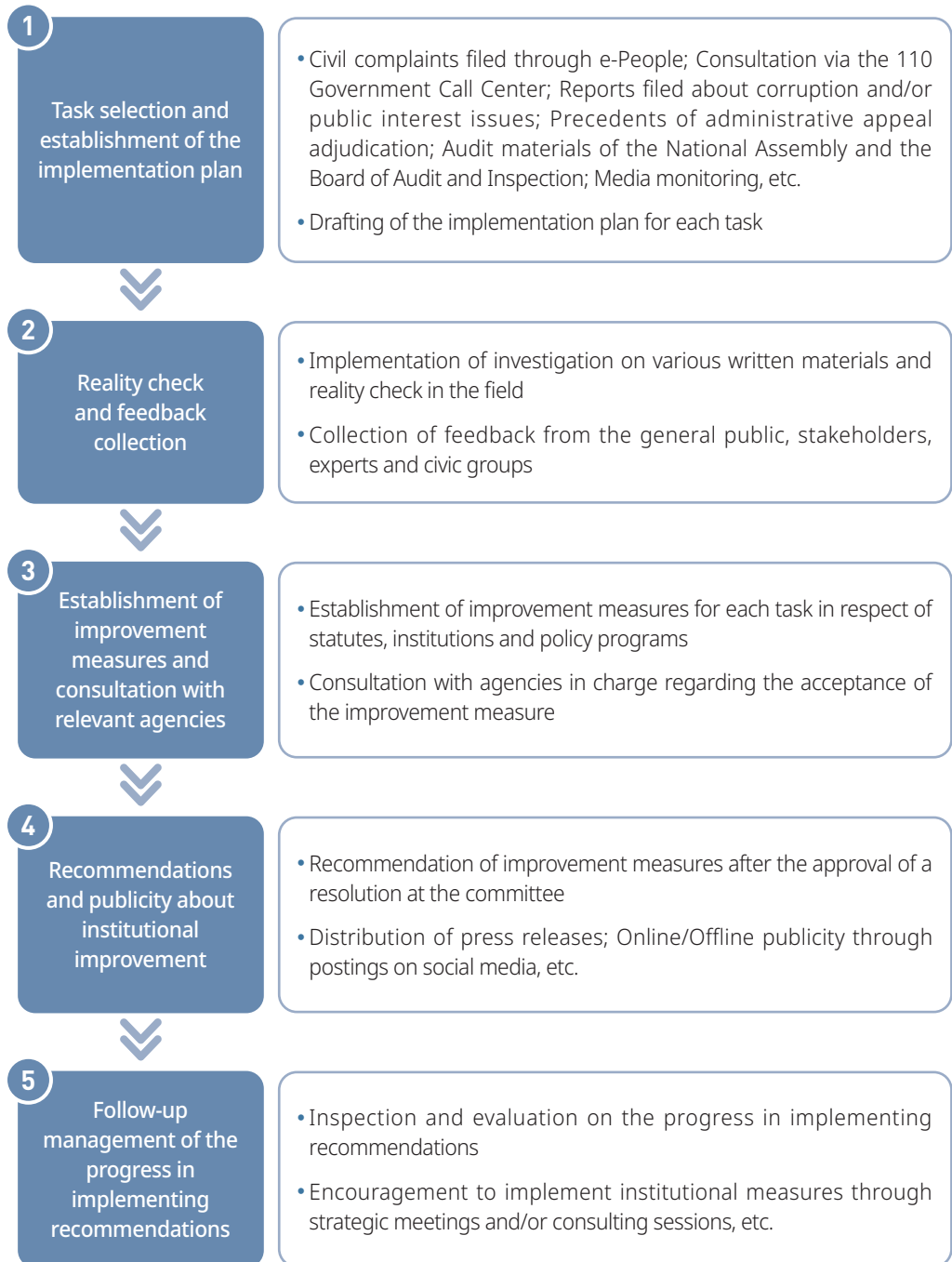
Task Overview and Major Achievements of Institutional Improvement

As modern society faces a rapidly changing policy environment driven by technological advancements and the expansion of national influence across countries, public demand for more rational laws and institutional frameworks continues to grow.

As a pivotal agency overseeing various policy communication channels — such as e-People, the 110 Government Call Center, and People's Idea Box (the online citizen participation platform) — the ACRC is committed to identifying problems in institutions and policies in need of improvement by analyzing corruption causing factors and people's opinions received through various channels.

The ACRC is promoting institutional improvements to prevent corruption and resolve people's grievances, pursuant to Articles 12, 27, and 47 of the Act on the Prevention of Corruption and the Establishment and Management of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (hereinafter referred to as the 'Act').

• [Figure 7-1] Workflow of institutional improvement



1. Institutional Improvements in Corruption-prone Areas to Eradicate Chronic and Systemic Corruption

In 2024, the ACRC selected fostering a fair and trustworthy society as a priority areas for anti-corruption and recommended improvements to address six related legal and institutional deficiencies.

The ACRC sought to enhance the efficiency and fairness of recruitment processes at public institutions by recommending measures to improve the effectiveness of employee recruitment examination management. Furthermore, through its recommendation on measures to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of the Bonded Goods Caretaker system, the ACRC laid the foundation for a more trusted system by ensuring the professional independence of Bonded Goods Caretakers, a role that is relatively unfamiliar to the general public due to its specialized nature, while improving the rationality and fairness of their work.

In addition, through recommendations on measures to enhance the fairness and transparency of the international student system for vocational high schools and to improve the transparency and efficiency of regional housing cooperatives, the ACRC sought to prevent and address social issues arising from institutional deficiencies and promote stability within the community. It also worked to fundamentally resolve unreasonable practices and corruption remaining in the public sector by recommending measures to enhance transparency in the operation of negotiated contracts by public institutions and measures to strengthen the management of inappropriate business entities at other public institutions to enhance the effectiveness of restrictions on eligibility to participate in bidding.

2. Institutional Improvements to Resolve Public Grievances

The ACRC analyzes recurring civil complaints and policy proposals to identify underlying issues in laws or systems. Through thorough investigations, the ACRC works to develop



reasonable improvement measures that address the root causes of public grievances and inconvenience.

In 2025, the ACRC adopted and recommended a total of 30 institutional improvement measures to address public grievances. In particular, amid growing difficulties in people's lives due to deteriorating domestic and international conditions, the ACRC focused on strengthening the social safety net and continued efforts to identify and improve inconveniences experienced by the public in their daily lives, ensuring that such improvements are directly felt by the public.

Key examples include identifying and addressing areas where vulnerable groups were not adequately covered by existing social safety net systems through measures such as 'Customized Care Support Measures for Persons with Developmental Disabilities,' 'Regulatory Improvements to the Prior Approval System for Rare Disease Drugs,' and 'Measures to Support Benefits for Foster Families with Several Children.' Furthermore, the ACRC worked to ease public concerns by promptly responding to issues directly related to citizens' lives and safety through recommendations such as 'Measures to Improve the Driver's License Management System,' 'Measures to Improve the Driving Environment in Road Tunnels,' and 'Measures to Prevent Drug-Impaired Driving.'

Moreover, the ACRC worked to address the low birth rate by recommending measures such as 'Measures to Strengthen Pregnancy and Childbirth Support for Military Families' and 'Measures to Improve Housing Finance Loan Programs for Newlyweds.' It also recommended institutional improvement measures to address structural issues causing inconveniences experienced by citizens in their daily lives, including 'Measures to Improve Procedures for Preconception Care Support Programs' and 'Measures to Protect the Rights and Interests of Users of Prepaid Electronic Payment Means.'

3. Strengthening Follow-up Measures to Ensure the Effectiveness of Institutional Improvements

Since its establishment in 2008, the ACRC has consistently expanded its recommendations for institutional improvements aimed at preventing corruption and resolving public grievances. To ensure that these recommendations are effectively implemented by the relevant agencies and that citizens can experience tangible improvements in daily life, the ACRC systematically manages follow-up measures.

In the first half of 2025, the ACRC inspected the implementation status of institutional improvement recommendations made from 2013 to February 2025 for 1,926 institutions, including central government agencies and local governments.

Based on the results of the inspection, for institutions that faced challenges in implementing the recommended measures and needed further discussion on implementation measures, the ACRC conducted meetings and consultations to form a consensus on the implementation tasks. Furthermore, the Commission encouraged active implementation efforts of the target institutions through institutional evaluation, etc.

Additionally, in the second half of the year, the ACRC conducted onsite implementation inspections on local governments and small public service-related organizations with low implementation rates to encourage implementation, emphasized the importance of implementing the recommendations, and sought to generate interest by explaining the objectives behind the recommendations.





Chapter 2.

Improvement Cases in Corruption-Prone Areas

1. Improving the Effectiveness of Recruitment Examination Management in Public Institutions

According to an ACRC survey of 686 public institutions, the number of institutions that outsourced recruitment increased by 22.8%, from 290 in 2019 to 356 in 2023. During the same period, outsourcing costs also increased by 23.6%, from KRW 33.53 billion to KRW 41.47 billion.

In contrast, small-scale public institutions often conduct recruitment processes internally because budget constraints make it difficult to outsource such work. In doing so, they have reported various challenges, including high costs associated with administering recruitment examinations, difficulties in securing evaluation committee members, and a shortage of personnel dedicated to recruitment tasks.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended expanding the adoption of integrated recruitment for public institution employees by drawing on models currently implemented by some local governments.

For regional public institutions under metropolitan local governments, the ACRC recommended that integrated recruitment be conducted under the leadership of the supervising metropolitan local governments. For public institutions subject to the Act on the Management of Public Institutions, the ACRC recommended that the relevant ministries initially implement integrated recruitment among small-scale public institutions and gradually expand the scope of participating institutions.

In addition, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of the Interior and Safety establish measures to provide incentives for public institutions participating in integrated recruitment led by their supervisory authorities, thereby promoting the wider adoption of such integrated recruitment systems.

Moreover, the ACRC recommended that written examinations be made mandatory for integrated recruitment. It also advised that detailed recruitment plans be prepared and announced in advance at the beginning or end of each year, thereby enabling job seekers to anticipate recruitment schedules and eliminating the inconvenience of having to repeatedly check for new postings.

These institutional improvements are expected to enhance the efficiency and fairness of recruitment processes at public institutions.

2. Measures to Enhance Fairness and Transparency in the International Student Program for Vocational High Schools

The education sector is facing a critical crisis due to the declining birth rate and the resulting decrease in the school-age population. In response, some offices of education have actively pursued the ‘recruitment of international students through scholarship programs*,’ an initiative that is gradually expanding nationwide.

* 16 students in Seoul in 2023 → 54 students in Seoul and Gyeongsangbuk-do Province in 2024 → 155 students in Seoul, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, and Jeollanam-do Province in 2025 → 283 students expected to be recruited by seven offices of education, including the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, in 2026.

However, the ‘Invited International Student Scholarship Program’ is primarily intended to provide international educational assistance and cooperation for students from developing countries. Despite this purpose, education authorities have focused mainly on competitively attracting international students, while systems for effectively managing the growing number of international students have been found to be insufficient.

In response, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Education establish a government-level ‘Standard Operating Guidelines for Invited International Student Scholarship Programs’ to ensure that such programs are operated in a systematic and rational manner. By establishing common government standards covering recruitment and selection, admission and graduation requirements, academic management, and student support, the ACRC sought to prevent metropolitan and provincial offices of education from recruiting scholarship students merely to offset the decline in the school-age population, thereby avoiding inefficient use of public funds.

Furthermore, the ACRC recommended that each metropolitan and provincial office of education establish ‘Detailed Regulations on the Recruitment and Operation of Invited Scholarship Students at Vocational High Schools’ and make every effort to implement the following measures: providing transparent information during the recruitment and selection process; establishing a fair and official selection system to prevent illegal brokers; protecting students’ right to self-determination; managing and supporting students’ academic goals in line with the purpose of the invited scholarship program; introducing a dedicated management system to ensure student safety; and strengthening the verification of internship companies to ensure safe workplace training.

3. Measures to Enhance the Effectiveness of Bidding Qualification Restrictions by Strengthening the Management of Inappropriate Business Entities in Other Public Institutions

Central ministries, local governments, and public institutions operate a sanction system for inappropriate business entities* to ensure the transparency and efficiency of public contracts and prevent unlawful practices. However, in the case of other public institutions, there is currently no legal or regulatory basis for imposing substantive sanctions, such as restrictions on eligibility to participate in bidding, against entities that fail to properly perform their contractual obligations. Furthermore, even where a basis for sanctions exists, the grounds for imposing such sanctions are mostly limited to specific violations, such as collusion, bribery, or the falsification or alteration of bidding-related documents.

As a result, even when a contracting party causes losses to the procuring organization or fails to properly perform a contract, sanctions often cannot be imposed, reducing the effectiveness of the system.

* A system that restricts eligibility to participate in bidding for a certain period or, in lieu of such restriction, imposes a penalty surcharge on business entities that may undermine fair competition or the proper performance of contracts, such as by providing money, valuables, or entertainment in public contracts or by falsifying or altering documents related to bidding or contracts.

Accordingly, the ACRC pursued improvements to the sanction system for inappropriate business entities to enhance transparency in public contracts at other public institutions funded by national finances and to enable effective sanctions against improper practices. The ACRC recommended these improvements to 243 other public institutions.*

* Other Public Institutions: Public institutions that are not classified as public corporations or quasi-governmental institutions pursuant to Article 5 of the Act on the Management of Public Institutions.

For institutions lacking a basis for sanctioning inappropriate business entities, the ACRC recommended establishing a basis for restricting eligibility to participate in bidding through the enactment of internal regulations. Furthermore, even for institutions that already have grounds for sanctioning inappropriate business entities, the ACRC recommended reviewing their regulations against higher-level laws, such as the Act on Contracts to Which the State Is a Party, and supplementing the grounds for sanctions in accordance with each institution's operational characteristics to ensure the effectiveness of such sanctions.

In addition, the ACRC recommended allowing relevant information on sanctioned inappropriate business entities to be disclosed on each institution's official website, thereby raising awareness among such entities and preventing repeated improper practices during the contracting process.



Chapter 3.

Improvement Cases in Areas with Frequent Grievances and Complaints

Section 1. Addressing Public Inconvenience and Grievances

1. Measures to Improve Procedures under the Preconception Care Support Project to Guarantee Citizens' Right to Health

The Preconception Care Support Project is a program that provides financial support for medical examinations to detect health issues before pregnancy at an early stage and prevent infertility and miscarriage. Eligible men and women of childbearing age can receive up to KRW 130,000 in financial support for examinations such as ultrasound examinations, hormone tests, and semen analyses at hospitals and clinics.

However, under the previous system, only individuals who applied in advance at a public health center before undergoing examinations were eligible to receive financial support. As a result, those who were unaware of the program were unable to receive financial support because they missed the application deadline, even if they had already undergone the examinations.

To address these issues, the ACRC developed the following institutional improvement measures regarding ① the application deadline for examination cost support and ② program information and guidance under the Preconception Care Support Project, and recommended their implementation to the Ministry of Health and Welfare and 17 metropolitan local governments nationwide.

The ACRC recommended revising relevant laws and ordinances to allow retroactive support for applications submitted within one year from the date of examination. Under the improved system, individuals can receive examination cost support by submitting medical records and receipts issued by hospitals or clinics, along with a medical confirmation certificate verifying that the examinations were conducted for the purpose of preparing for pregnancy. To ensure that anyone can easily apply for and receive support, the ACRC developed standardized application and medical confirmation forms.

2. Measures to Protect the Rights and Interests of Users of Prepaid Electronic Payment Means

As of the end of December 2024, the use of prepaid electronic payment means* has increased significantly, with the average daily number of transactions exceeding 33 million. Under the current system, a five-year statute of limitations applies to such balances. However, many users are unaware of this limitation period, resulting in the continued issue of long-unused balances being transferred to service providers.

* Prepaid electronic payment means: A type of electronic financial service that allows users to pay for transportation fares, goods, and other services using funds charged in advance. Examples include various transportation cards and digital payment services such as 'Pay' or 'Money' services.

※ Expired amounts due to the statute of limitations: A total of KRW 211.6 billion expired between 2021 and 2024, averaging KRW 52.9 billion per year.

To protect the rights and interests of users of prepaid electronic payment means, the ACRC developed the following improvement measures.

First, service providers are required to notify users at least three times, via email or other means, of the expiration date of the statute of limitations and encourage them to use their remaining balance, beginning one year before the statute of limitations expires. Service providers are also required to indicate the statute of limitations in standard terms and conditions, provide users with a summary consent form so that they can easily understand the relevant information, and display information on the statute of limitations on physical cards in large, bold text.

The ACRC also proposed a policy requiring service providers to periodically identify and disclose the status of unused balances for which the statute of limitations has expired and to use such funds for public interest projects.

Accordingly, these measures are expected to significantly enhance users' rights and interests by strengthening advance notifications regarding the statute of limitations for prepaid electronic payment means and establishing a foundation for protecting users' rights.

3. Improvement of Procedures for Vehicle Ownership Transfer Following Inheritance

The current Motor Vehicle Management Act stipulates that a penalty shall be imposed if an heir who inherits a vehicle fails to apply for vehicle ownership transfer within six months without a justifiable reason. Based on this provision, local governments impose penalties ranging from KRW 100,000 to KRW 500,000, depending on the length of the delay, when an heir applies for ownership transfer after the deadline.

The issue is whether it is appropriate to apply such sanctions to vehicle ownership transfers through inheritance in the same manner as to transfers by sale or gift based on the clear intentions and agreements between the transferor and transferee. A penalty imposed for a violation is a form of minor criminal punishment, and if contested, procedures such as summary trials or formal court proceedings may follow, placing a significant burden on citizens.

In practice, many heirs fail to submit the ownership transfer application within the required period due to individual circumstances, such as being unable to promptly settle the deceased's assets following the sudden death of a parent or being unable to reach an agreement on the division of inherited property because a co-heir cannot be contacted. Under the current penalty system, there are institutional limitations that make it difficult to provide heirs with sufficient opportunities to explain the circumstances of their cases.

Furthermore, the determination of ‘justifiable reasons’ for waiving penalties is currently left to the discretion of each local government. Therefore, it is necessary to provide specific criteria and examples of such ‘justifiable reasons’ to ensure consistent administration and prevent confusion among local governments.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport replace the current ‘penalty’ with an ‘administrative fine’ only for violations of the obligation to register vehicle ownership transfers resulting from inheritance. The ACRC also recommended establishing specific guidelines on ‘justifiable reasons’ under which penalties or administrative fines may not be imposed.

Furthermore, as many heirs are unaware of their obligation to register the transfer of vehicle ownership following the death of a vehicle owner, the ACRC recommended revising the current ‘Notification on Procedures for Vehicle Ownership Transfer Following Inheritance’ (Notice of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport) to expand the recipients of such notifications from the ‘deceased’s address’ to include the heirs.

Section 2. Enhancing Public Safety

1. Measures to Improve the Driver’s License Management System

While traffic accidents caused by elderly drivers or drivers with significantly impaired physical or cognitive abilities, regardless of age, continue to occur frequently, concerns have been raised that the current system is insufficient to effectively manage these so-called ‘high-risk drivers.’ Accordingly, the ACRC recommended the following measures to the relevant ministries to improve the driver’s license management system from a comprehensive perspective.

First, holders of driver’s licenses are required to undergo periodic aptitude tests. However, in the case of Class 2 ordinary driver’s licenses, license renewal is currently permitted without a separate physical examination until the holder reaches the age of 70.



Also, individuals suspected of having physical disabilities or mental illnesses are classified as subjects of Occasional Aptitude Tests and are required to undergo separate examinations. However, the process can take up to 13 months to complete, indicating the need for institutional improvements.

The ACRC recommended that the Korean National Police Agency establish a computerized system to enable real-time management of individuals subject to Occasional Aptitude Tests and shorten the time required to complete such tests as much as possible.

In addition, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Health and Welfare allow medical institutions, during national health examinations conducted every one to two years, to provide guidance to individuals who are suspected of having cognitive decline or whose physical abilities, such as vision, have significantly deteriorated below the required standards, advising them to undergo Occasional Aptitude Tests or providing information on the driver's license surrender system.

Second, transportation workers aged 65 or older are required to undergo qualification maintenance tests every three years or every year. However, the current tests have been criticized as lacking effectiveness due to their limited ability to distinguish drivers with reduced abilities, and to the fact that individuals can repeatedly retake the tests even after failing thereby rendering the system virtually ineffective.

The ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport improve the system by adjusting the difficulty level of the tests and limiting the number of retakes allowed.

Third, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport establish safety standards specifying the performance requirements and evaluation methods for advanced safety devices, such as systems that automatically activate the brakes when obstacles are detected in front of or behind a vehicle, even if the accelerator pedal is pressed.

In addition, the ACRC recommended that the Korean National Police Agency expand the introduction of a conditional driver's license system that restricts the driving areas or hours of drivers with impaired cognitive abilities. The ACRC also recommended expanding incentives for individuals who voluntarily surrender their driver's licenses, with a focus on actual drivers and very elderly drivers.

2. Measures to Improve Driving Environments in Road Tunnels

As of July 2024, there are 3,809 road tunnels nationwide. However, as advances in construction technology have led to longer tunnels and increased driving distances within tunnels, public concerns over safety have continued to grow. In fact, the fatality rate of traffic accidents occurring in tunnels is 3.3 deaths per 100 accidents, which is more than twice the overall traffic accident fatality rate of 1.4 deaths per 100 accidents.

In response, the ACRC developed the following improvement measures to enhance the driving environment in road tunnels.

First, the ACRC recommended strengthening management of tunnel facilities and lighting systems by introducing measures such as setting a mandatory tunnel cleaning frequency (at least twice a year), distributing facility maintenance checklists, and establishing a service life for LED lighting fixtures. In addition, the ACRC recommended incorporating provisions into relevant guidelines requiring the installation of facilities to prepare for adverse weather conditions, such as brine spray systems and heating cable systems, at tunnel entrances and exits.

Next, the ACRC recommended establishing a legal basis for installing landscape lighting, such as rainbow lighting, for visual guidance and standardizing the types and volume levels of warning sounds for auditory guidance. The ACRC also recommended expanding the application of section speed enforcement systems to tunnels longer than 3 km.

In addition, the ACRC recommended strengthening fire response measures through



the provision of fire blankets* and the installation of cooling systems, and standardizing emergency broadcasting procedures for providing accident information and evacuation guidance in the event of fires or other emergencies.

* Fire blanket: A device designed to extinguish incipient fires by covering a vehicle to cut off the oxygen supply.

These measures are expected to enhance driver safety by strengthening the management of safety at road tunnel facilities and improving accident response systems.

3. Measures to Facilitate Road Travel for Emergency Motor Vehicles

Drivers are required to yield to emergency motor vehicles* to ensure their right of way. However, cases continue to occur where drivers are either unsure how to yield properly or fail to make way despite being aware of the requirement. In addition, traffic accidents involving fire engines while responding to emergencies or transporting patients frequently occur at intersections and other locations.

* Emergency motor vehicles: As defined in Article 2, Subparagraph 22 of the Road Traffic Act, these refer to vehicles used for their original emergency purposes, such as fire engines, ambulances, and blood supply vehicles.

While penalties for obstructing or interfering with the passage of emergency motor vehicles have been continuously strengthened, concerns have been raised regarding their lack of effectiveness. Accordingly, the ACRC recommended revising the criteria for acts of hindering the dispatch of a fire engine* to allow for progressively higher administrative fines based on the cumulative number of violations. In addition, the ACRC recommended establishing a legal basis under the Road Traffic Act for imposing penalty points on individuals who violate the duty to yield to emergency motor vehicles.

* Acts of hindering the dispatch of a fire engine: Acts of failing to yield the right of way to a fire engine, cutting in front of or blocking a fire engine, and other acts that impede the dispatch of a fire engine.

In addition, to address the low level of awareness regarding how to yield to emergency motor vehicles, the ACRC recommended increasing the number of related questions on

the written driver's license examination and adding questions on the criteria for sanctions applicable to violations. The ACRC also recommended establishing relevant institutional bases, such as ordinances and annual plans, to enable continuous cooperation between central and local governments in promoting public awareness campaigns.

Lastly, the ACRC recommended establishing support and cooperation foundations, including ordinances, for the Emergency Motor Vehicle Traffic Signal Preemption System*, which has been proven to reduce fire engine dispatch times. It also recommended establishing a basis for support at the central government level for areas where the system is insufficiently implemented.

* Emergency Motor Vehicle Traffic Signal Preemption System: A system that temporarily modifies traffic signal patterns to prioritize emergency motor vehicles, allowing them to pass through intersections without stopping and ensuring their rapid and safe passage.

Through these institutional improvement recommendations, it is expected that the general public and drivers will actively cooperate in yielding to emergency motor vehicles. Furthermore, these measures are expected to create a safer road environment for emergency motor vehicles and ensure public safety by enabling timely arrival at incident scenes.

Section 3. Protection of Vulnerable Groups

1. Measures to Improve the Scope and Methods for Issuing Parking Tags for Spaces Reserved for Persons with Disabilities

Currently, 'Parking Tags for Spaces Reserved for Persons with Disabilities' (hereinafter referred to as 'parking tags') are issued only for one vehicle owned or leased by a person with a walking disability or by a family member living with them as defined under the Civil Act. As a result, persons with walking disabilities who use taxis, vehicles from car-sharing services, or other vehicles on a temporary basis are unable to use spaces reserved for persons with disabilities (hereinafter referred to as 'reserved parking spaces'). In particular, persons with walking disabilities who do not own a vehicle due to financial constraints

or other reasons cannot obtain parking tags despite having a walking disability, raising concerns regarding equity in access to reserved parking spaces.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Health and Welfare shift the issuance criteria to a 'person-centered' approach, allowing vehicles carrying persons with walking disabilities to use spaces reserved for persons with disabilities.

In addition, considering the increasing employment rate of persons with disabilities in central and local governments, the ACRC recommended implementing a pilot project to allow parking tags to be issued for government-use vehicles and gradually expanding the measure to public institutions after reviewing the results of the pilot project.

Meanwhile, to prevent the improper use of spaces reserved for persons with disabilities and address cases that fall outside the scope of the current parking tag management system, the ACRC recommended explicitly stipulating the obligation to return parking tags in relevant laws and regulations and establishing a legal basis for imposing sanctions, such as administrative fines, in cases of intentional failure to return them.

Furthermore, the ACRC recommended establishing validity periods for parking tags issued for vehicles operated by facilities for persons with disabilities.

2. Customized Care Support for Persons with Developmental Disabilities: Improving Quality of Life and Protecting Rights

Currently, there are approximately 260,000 persons with developmental disabilities in Korea, and more than 70% of them require lifelong assistance from others. However, in reality, it is mostly their elderly parents, rather than the state, who provide the support that sustains their daily lives, with mothers in particular taking on the primary caregiving role.

Based on the principle that genuine human rights begin not with treating everyone equally, but with recognizing differences and providing choices tailored to individual needs, and

that persons with developmental disabilities should be guaranteed the right to remain in care facilities, the right to live in the community, and the right to make their own choices about their lives, the ACRC developed the following measures for institutional improvement.

First, the ACRC recommended introducing a Supported Decision-Making (SDM) system, under which SDM experts with specialized training assist persons with severe developmental disabilities in making decisions when needed, as they may have difficulty communicating and clearly expressing their wishes.

In particular, the ACRC recommended establishing standards to ensure that the opinions of medical specialists and behavioral development experts who have observed the person with a developmental disability over an extended period are taken into account when making significant decisions, such as admission to a facility or relocation to independent living housing.

In addition, the ACRC recommended expanding the designation of hub hospitals and behavioral development centers by dividing the country into five regions.

Furthermore, the ACRC proposed various housing models to ensure the right of persons with developmental disabilities to choose their housing and recommended establishing a system that guarantees their right to freely change their type of housing after residing in a particular housing arrangement for a certain period.

Finally, to strengthen the professionalism and transparency of care services, the ACRC recommended measures to improve service quality through regular external audits and user satisfaction surveys. It also recommended converting advocacy agencies for persons with disabilities* into public institutions directly operated by the central or local governments so that human rights violations against persons with developmental disabilities can be addressed more promptly and responsibly.

* Advocacy agencies for persons with disabilities: An agency established under the Act on Welfare of Persons with Disabilities to promptly discover, protect, and treat abused persons with disabilities and to prevent abuse against them.

3. Regulatory Improvements to the Prior Approval System for Rare Disease Drugs

For patients with ultra-emergency rare diseases, the 'critical window' for treatment is a matter of life and death. In particular, for conditions such as atypical hemolytic uremic syndrome (aHUS), treatment must be initiated within two to three days to save the patient's life. Missing this period may result in the need for lifelong kidney dialysis or, in severe cases, death.

Drugs used to treat aHUS are designated as 'drugs subject to prior review,' meaning that prior approval must be obtained to qualify for National Health Insurance coverage. The official review process alone takes at least two weeks, and when accounting for internal hospital administrative procedures, the actual time until treatment administration becomes significantly longer.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended institutional improvement measures to relevant agencies, including measures to drastically shorten the review period, so that patients' lives are not endangered by delays in the mandatory prior approval review process despite the availability of effective treatments. The key measures are as follows.

First, life-threatening 'ultra-emergency rare diseases' will be designated and managed separately, and prior approval reviews for patients with these diseases will be processed through a fast-track review system, with results notified within 48 hours of submission.

Second, to ensure that the prior approval review process is conducted more quickly and transparently, a 'Rare Disease Drug Review Committee (tentative name)' will be established within the Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service (HIRA), with participation from external experts, including leading specialists in each disease area and representatives of patient organizations. Measures will also be introduced to significantly simplify the previously complex application documents required for prior approval reviews.

Finally, to reduce the burden on patients living outside the capital region who must travel to tertiary hospitals in Seoul to receive a diagnosis for rare diseases, the ACRC proposed that the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) expand the designation of specialized medical institutions in these areas in the short term and establish a ‘plan to differentiate the functions and roles of hospitals’ in the long term by strengthening diagnostic and treatment capabilities.

4. Measures to Support Benefits for Foster Families with Several Children

‘Family foster care’ is a system under which children who cannot be raised by their biological parents due to circumstances such as the parents’ death, disappearance, or abuse are entrusted, for a certain period, to families that meet the criteria prescribed by the Child Welfare Act, rather than being placed in child welfare facilities.

While the central and local governments have been expanding public utility benefits for households with several children as part of efforts to address the crisis of declining birth rates, foster families that are actually raising children in their care have often been excluded from these benefits.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended that relevant agencies include foster children within the scope of “children” eligible for the following benefits for households with several children: ① discounts on electricity bills for households with several children, ② fare discounts for KTX and SRT members with several children, and ③ parking fee discounts at airports for households with several children.

In addition, the ACRC recommended improving related systems or websites so that foster families can conveniently apply for discounts and submit supporting documents online, and establishing promotional plans to ensure greater awareness of these benefits.



Section 4. Addressing Low Birthrate

1. Proposal to Improve Bar Exam Eligibility to Protect the Maternity Rights of Women During Pregnancy and Childbirth

Since its enactment in 2009, Article 7 of the current National Bar Examination Act has restricted the eligibility to take the exam to ‘five attempts within five years’ after graduation from law school, while recognizing only the ‘fulfillment of military service obligations’ as the sole exception to this examination period.

As a result, examinees may be forced to delay or forgo pregnancy and childbirth in order to take the exam within the limited number of attempts available to them.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended amending Article 7 of the National Bar Examination Act to explicitly stipulate that, in cases of childbirth, a period of one year shall be excluded from the five-year period for taking the examination.

※ However, to minimize concerns over fairness among examinees, the total period excluded from the five-year period is limited to one year, even in cases where more than one child is born.

Through this institutional improvement recommendation, it is expected that a reasonable amendment to the law will be made to harmonize the constitutional values of maternity protection and equality of opportunity for those preparing for the bar examination.

2. Measures to Improve Housing Finance Loan Programs for Newlywed Couples

The number of couples delaying marriage registration for more than one year after their wedding has been increasing significantly due to the so-called ‘marriage penalty,’ whereby they lose eligibility for housing finance support programs or face higher interest rates upon registering their marriage.

※ Marriage Penalty: Institutional disadvantages resulting from marriage and marriage registration.

Currently, the combined income eligibility threshold for government-backed housing finance loan programs for newlywed couples is set at a level far below twice the individual income threshold. As a result, there have been repeated cases in which couples are denied loans after marriage because their combined income causes them to be classified as high-income earners.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport improve the system by adjusting the combined income and asset requirements for the *Beotimmok* and *Didimdol* loan programs to better reflect the reality that dual-income households have become increasingly common, and by easing regulations on loan extensions to provide practical support for newlywed couples.

In addition, the ACRC sought to eliminate disadvantages arising during the loan extension review process and transform the system from one that creates a ‘marriage penalty’ into one that provides ‘childbirth and parenting incentives.’

It is expected that these institutional improvements will address the contradiction whereby policies intended to support families instead discourage marriage, and help newlywed couples start their married lives with greater stability and confidence.

Section 5. Support for Youth

1. Measures to Reduce Job-Seeking Burdens for Graduates of Overseas Educational Institutions

As of April 2024, 126,981 Korean nationals were studying abroad at higher education institutions, such as universities and graduate schools, to pursue diverse learning opportunities and gain new experiences. In general, job seekers who graduated from overseas educational institutions were required to submit academic documents verified through Apostille certification* or consular notarization, along with Korean translations, when applying to public institutions or registering as private academy instructors. As

a result, they had no choice but to rely on private agencies and certified administrative agents specializing in foreign language translation, which impose significant burdens on them in terms of cost and time.

* Apostille Certification: A procedure for certifying the authenticity of documents for official use in another country. It involves obtaining certification from the competent government authority of the country in which the educational document was issued, such as a certificate of enrollment or an academic transcript.

First, the ACRC recommended that certain public institutions ease document submission requirements by accepting copies of academic credentials that have already undergone Apostille certification or consular notarization for recruitment processes where academic qualifications are not a prerequisite.

In addition, while many public institutions have required recently issued documents (such as those issued within three months of the job announcement), the ACRC recommended allowing documents with little likelihood of change, such as graduation certificates, to remain acceptable for a longer period, for example, one year or more from the date of issuance, thereby reducing the burden on job seekers.

2. Measures to Extend the Recognition Period for Language Proficiency Scores in the Selection of Language Specialist Military Personnel

Currently, most foreign language proficiency tests limit the validity of test scores to two years. As a result, job seekers are required to retake these costly tests every two years, paying examination fees ranging from KRW 50,000 to KRW 300,000 each time.

To ease this burden, the government extended the recognition period for language proficiency scores used in national civil service recruitment from two years to five years in 2021.

In line with this policy change, each branch of the military also extended the recognition period for language proficiency scores to five years for the recruitment of interpreter officers. However, the two-year recognition period remained in place for the selection of language specialists, KATUSA personnel, and certain military officers.

To address this inconsistency, the ACRC recommended that the Military Manpower Administration and the headquarters of each military branch extend the recognition period for language proficiency scores to five years for the selection of language specialists and certain military officers.

Section 6. Livelihood Recovery Support

1. Measures to Enhance the Reasonableness and Transparency of Funeral Hall Usage Fees

Due to Korea's cultural emphasis on showing respect and reverence for the deceased, as well as the unique nature of funeral services, problems such as excessive charges and the coercion of bereaved families into purchasing funeral goods have persistently occurred during funeral arrangements.

Accordingly, the ACRC pursued institutional improvements to develop effective measures from the perspective of the public.

First, to prevent the coercion of bereaved families into purchasing funeral goods and enable stronger enforcement against violations, the ACRC recommended that provisions concerning restrictions on bringing outside food into funeral halls be incorporated into the Standard Terms and Conditions for Funeral Halls. It also recommended that local governments nationwide establish and implement regular inspection plans for funeral halls within their jurisdictions.

In addition, the ACRC recommended improving the criteria for charging facility usage fees at funeral halls. To address civil petitions regarding the reuse of funeral wreaths, it recommended that the Standard Terms and Conditions for Funeral Halls clearly stipulate that the right to dispose of funeral wreaths belongs to the bereaved family and that their prior consent must be obtained before any disposal. It also recommended that the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs require all funeral wreaths to display whether they are reused, along with seller information.

Section 7. Improvement of Living Convenience

1. Measures to Simplify Class 1 Driver's License Renewal Procedures for Overseas Residents

Since 2013, the Korean National Police Agency, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has provided driver's license renewal and reissuance services at overseas diplomatic missions in 71 countries to improve convenience for Korean nationals residing abroad. However, Class 1 ordinary driver's licenses have been excluded from these services because their renewal requires a mandatory regular aptitude test. As a result, Korean nationals residing abroad who hold Class 1 ordinary driver's licenses have continued to experience difficulties renewing their licenses through overseas diplomatic missions.

To address this inconvenience, domestic regulations allow a medical certificate issued by a medical institution to be accepted in lieu of the driver's license aptitude test. However, this exception does not apply to medical certificates issued by overseas medical institutions. Consequently, Korean nationals residing abroad for extended periods have faced difficulties, including the cancellation of their licenses when the renewal period expires.

Accordingly, the ACRC recommended allowing medical certificates issued by reputable overseas medical institutions to be accepted in lieu of the driver's license aptitude test, just as medical certificates issued by domestic medical institutions are. At the same time, to prevent the misuse of overseas medical certificates, the ACRC recommended amending Article 45(2) of the Enforcement Decree of the Road Traffic Act to limit eligible countries to those designated by the Commissioner General of the Korean National Police Agency and to permit only medical certificates issued by medical institutions in those countries to be accepted in lieu of the aptitude test.

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Anti-Corruption &
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