

**BYLAWS
OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF NORMAN**

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Article I – Identification and Purpose

Section 1. Name

The Name of this commission shall be the Norman Human Rights Commission (“Commission”).

Section 2. Purpose and Authority

The Commission shall have the power and duty to:

- (1) To study problems of discrimination in any or all fields of human relations and to encourage fair treatment and mutual understanding among all residents; and to combat those misconceptions, prejudices and stereotypes that tend to prevent individuals from reaching their full potential as human beings;
- (2) To hold such meetings as the Commission may deem necessary or proper to assist in carrying out its functions;
- (3) Recommend legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all persons regardless of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, or marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex;
- (4) To appoint subcommittees to concern themselves with specific human rights problems;
- (5) To serve as a residents' advisory committee for the purpose of coordinating, studying and making reports concerning resident involvement in human rights matters;
- (6) To perform such other duties as may be assigned to it from time to time by the City Council;
- (7) To provide and promote education and awareness of the rights provided in this Code, to receive written complaints of discrimination and retaliation in violation of this Code, and to seek satisfactory resolution of such complaints according to the procedures her
- (8) einafter set forth;
- (9) To institute and conduct educational and other programs to promote the equal rights of all persons regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, or marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex, and to promote understanding among all persons and groups;
- (10) To cooperate with interested residents, private agencies, and the agencies of local, state, and federal governments in the promotion of human rights;
- (11) To issue publications and reports of investigations and research in the field of human rights, and to cooperate with and accept grants from public and private agencies, including foundations and institutions of higher learning engaged in similar research;
- (12) To assist in the enforcement of fair employment practices in City contracts;
- (13) To monitor the policies and procedures of all agencies, trusts, departments, and commissions of the City of Norman for the compliance with the laws of the City of Norman, the State of Oklahoma and of the United States promoting human rights;
- (14) To adopt bylaws, rules and regulations for the conduct of the Commission's business;
- (15) To keep an open, public record of its resolutions, transactions, minutes, and determinations; and

- (16) To create and fill such offices as it may determine are necessary for the performance of its functions.

Article II – Members of the Commission

Section 1. Membership

The Commission shall be made up of nine persons. To be eligible, members shall, at the time of their appointment:

- (1) Be residents of the City;
- (2) Be appointed with sole reference to their fitness and ability to perform those duties required of them;
- (3) Not be members of the immediate family of any elected City official;
- (4) Not be a full-time City employee;
- (5) Not be a member of any other appointive board or commission referenced in this chapter except that potential members of the Economic Development Advisory Board shall not be disqualified from service on that Board due to service on other Boards or Commissions of the City of Norman.
- (6) Not be confirmed by the Council in the same meeting in which that member is nominated, unless the presiding officer otherwise obtains the unanimous consent of the Council.

Section 2. Term of Appointment

Members shall serve three-year terms and continue in office during their term until such time that:

- (1) Their term expires and their successor has been appointed and qualifies;
- (2) They die;
- (3) They resign;
- (4) They are removed from office by majority action of Council;
- (5) They attain status as a nonresident of the City;
- (6) They are hired as a full-time employee of the City; or
- (7) They absent themselves from three (3) consecutive regular meetings, and such absences are shown by the official minutes of that board or commission.

Section 3. Oath of Public Office

Upon taking office all Commissioners must sign an Ethics Pledge acknowledging receipt and understanding of the City of Norman's Ethics Policy and express a willingness to abide by it.

Section 4. Resignation

The resignation of a Commissioner shall be in writing to the Chair of the Commission and to the appointed City Staff Member.

Section 5. Liaison Assignments

Liaison assignments are determined by the full Commission. Through this process individual commissioners may be assigned to act as liaisons from the Commission to other city boards, committees or commissions. Liaisons will give a verbal report to the Commission each meeting based on their notes from meeting attendance. Liaisons officially represent the Human Rights Commission at these meetings and will act as a conduit of information between the commissions, however the liaison must seek whole

Commission input on any issues concerning official Human Rights Commission positions towards topics or policies encountered as part of their liaison duties.

Article III – Officers

Section 1. Officers

The Officers of the Commission shall be the Chair and the Vice-Chair.

Section 2. Officers' Term of Appointment

The term of appointment for the Chair and the Vice-Chair shall be for one (1) year from the date of the first regular meeting of the calendar year. Officers are not subject to term limits, provided that their reappointment is approved each year by a consenting vote of a quorum of the Commission.

Section 3. General Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Commission. The Chair shall perform all duties incident to the office of Chair such other duties as may be prescribed elsewhere in the Commission Bylaws or as may be assigned by the Commission or which are otherwise necessary or incidental to the office.

Section 4. General Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice-Chair

In the absence or disability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall perform temporarily all duties of the Chair, and when so acting shall have all the powers, of, and be subject to all restrictions upon, the Chair.

Section 5. Nominations and Elections

During the first meeting of the calendar year, nominations for the Chair position will be taken from the floor. Any Commissioner is eligible to be nominated (or to nominate him/herself). The same process shall then be followed for taking Vice-Chair nominations. Officers shall be elected by a concurring vote of a quorum.

Section 6. Vacancies of Office

In the event that an officer position becomes vacant, a new officer shall be elected to that position at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The elected officer shall serve the remainder of the term until the next regular election.

Article IV – Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Commission shall meet at least six (6) times per year at a date and time as set by the Commission in the Meeting Schedule. A City Staff Member shall file the Meeting Schedule with the City Clerk's Office by December 15th of each year. Changes to the meeting schedule may be made by a concurring vote of a quorum.

Section 2. Special Meetings

A special meeting to address specific matters may be called by the request of three (3) Commissioners, the Chair, or the Mayor. Prior notice of any special meeting must comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Section 3. Noticing Meetings

The Commission and all Sub-Committees of the Commission shall follow the provisions of the Open Meeting Act (25 O.S. § 301 et seq.) when posting meeting notices and agendas.

Section 4. Cancellation of Meetings

The Chair or assigned City Staff Member may cancel a regular or special meeting if they are made aware that a quorum of the body will not be present. Notices of continued, rescheduled, or cancelled meetings shall conform to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Section 5. Quorum

The presence of a majority of Commissioners (five members) shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct a meeting or to transact or initiate any action or business of the commission. When a quorum fails to attend a scheduled meeting or the Commission loses a quorum because of the departure of some members, the Commission may take the following actions: (1) fix the time to which to adjourn; (2) adjourn the meeting; (3) recess the meeting; or (4) take measures to secure quorum. Any other action taken by the Commission while it does not have a quorum is void.

Section 6. Agenda

A City Staff Member shall prepare the agenda with the help of the Chair. Agenda items may be added at the request of the Chair or by request from three (3) Commissioners. A City Staff Member will take steps to post the agenda in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 7. Voting and Abstention

A concurring vote of a quorum shall be necessary to initiate or transact any action or business of the commission. Each Commissioner shall have only one (1) vote. The Commission shall take action on items on the agenda by roll call vote, voice vote, or by a show of hands. The minutes shall reflect how each Commissioner voted on each item.

Section 8. Commissioner's Code of Ethics

Commissioners are held to high ethical standards outlined in the City of Norman's Ethics Policy for City Council, Boards, Commissions, and Committees of the City of Norman. Any questions regarding the Ethics Policy should be directed towards the City Attorney's Office.

Section 9. Public comment

The Commission encourages public comment on agenda items during a time set aside for public comment. Public comment is limited to Norman residents unless prior approval is obtained by the Chair. The Chair may limit the total time allowed for public comment and the amount of time each speaker is given to speak, provided that no speaker is given less than two (2) minutes to speak.

Article V – Complaints

Section 1. Purpose

It is the purpose of the Commission to advance the policy of the City of Norman concerning civil rights as articulated in Chapter 7 of the Norman City Code by reviewing, discussing, and considering human rights complaints.

Section 2. Submitting a Complaint

A person claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory practice or act of retaliation (hereinafter referred to as the Complainant) may file in the City Clerk's Office a written complaint on a form approved by the City of Norman Human Rights Commission. The written complaint stating that a discriminatory practice has occurred shall set forth the facts upon which the complaint is based and shall include the name, mailing address, electronic mail address, and telephone number of the Complainant and the person(s) or entity against whom the allegations are made (hereinafter referred to as the Respondent) as well as the location, date, and description of the alleged violation of this chapter. The complaint must be filed within ninety (90) days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurs. Reasonable accommodations to assist in the filing of complaints shall be provided to individuals with disabilities upon request in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the City's Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility and Inclusion Statement.

Section 3. Service

A copy of the complaint shall be promptly furnished to the Respondent along with a notice of the date and time of the Commission meeting at which the complaint will be heard.

Section 4. Response to Complaint

The Respondent may file a written response to the complaint with the City Attorney's Office. Response to the Complaint must be provided at least three (3) business days prior to the date of the Commission's administrative review of the complaint.

Section 5. Conciliation

Prior to the Commission's administrative review of the complaint, the City Attorney, the Commission Chair, and/or their designees may contact the Complainant and the Respondent to attempt facilitation of mediation or other informal resolution of the complaint. If the complaint is resolved prior to the administrative review date, administrative review of the complaint may be cancelled.

Section 6. Complaint Consideration by the Commission

The Commission shall review, discuss, and consider the complaint, response, and the information provided during the administrative review and then make a recommendation as to the merits of the complaint and whether further action is warranted.

Both the Complainant and the Respondent may appear at the administrative review in person with or without an attorney and/or additional witnesses and present information for the Commission's consideration, including, but not limited to, documents, photographs, or any other information in support of the allegations in the complaint. Each party should provide advanced copies to the City Attorney's Office of any materials to be presented to the Commission at least three (3) business days prior to the Commission's administrative review of the Complaint.

During the administrative review of the complaint, each party will be given adequate time to present relevant information to the Commission concerning the complaint. The Chair of the Commission shall facilitate the proceedings to ensure that they proceed in an orderly manner.

If the Commission determines by majority vote that the complaint is unfounded, that further action is not warranted, or that the issue has been resolved, it shall dismiss the complaint. If by a majority vote of the Commission, it is determined that further action is warranted, the Commission shall provide a copy of the

complaint, the response, and any other supporting information along with a written recommendation to the City Attorney for further investigation and, if appropriate, further action.

Section 7. Role of the City Attorney's Office

Upon receipt of the Complaint, an initial review of the complaint shall take place by the City Attorney's Office to determine whether the Commission has jurisdiction over the Complaint.

Upon referral of the complaint by the Commission, the City Attorney's Office shall have discretion to take appropriate, further action, if deemed necessary. Such action includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) Referral of the Complainant to other local, state, or federal entities;
- (2) Mediation of the matter between the involved parties;
- (3) Prosecution of the Respondent in Municipal Court;
- (4) Filing of injunctive relief in state or federal district court; or
- (5) Determination that no further action should be taken.

Section 8. Confidentiality

All information and documentation received are subject to the requirements and exceptions contained in the Open Records Act. All Commission meetings, including those in which the Commission conducts administrative reviews of complaints submitted, are governed by the Open Meeting Act.

Article VI – Subcommittees

Section 1. Creation of Subcommittees

The Commission may create subcommittees as deemed necessary to meet the goals or mission of the Commission. Creation of a subcommittee is effective upon a concurring vote of a quorum of the Commission.

Section 2. Subcommittee Guidelines

The Commission shall adopt and revise from time to time guidelines governing the function and operation of each subcommittee, the responsibilities of Community Members, Commissioners, and City Staff Members.

Section 3. Function and Operation of Subcommittees

Each subcommittee shall meet at regularly scheduled times and places as outlined in the subcommittee's guidelines. All meetings shall be conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act and these Commission By-Laws. Advisory Committees may not form subcommittees or other bodies without the approval of the Commission Chair.

Section 4. Recruitment and Appointments

Each subcommittee shall be chaired by a Commissioner. Procedures for the election of the Chair of each subcommittee will be the same as the election of the Chair of the Commission. The Commission shall determine the process for recruitment and appointment of subcommittee members.

Section 5. Subcommittee Actions

All subcommittee actions shall represent recommendations to the Commission and shall be subject to approval of the Commission as a whole. Recommendations of the subcommittee may be based on a consensus where such exists or on the presentation of the majority and minority points of view. All subcommittee

recommendations or reports shall be brought to the Commission for approval through the subcommittee chair or the person they designate.

Article VII Staff Support

Section 1. Appointment

The City manager may, within their discretion, furnish one or more City Staff Members to assist the Commission or the Commission's subcommittees.

Section 2. Minutes

A City Staff Member shall distribute minutes of the previous meeting with the agenda for the next meeting to all members the week before the meeting date in electronic format unless an alternative format is requested in advance.

Section 3. Annual Report

A City Staff Member shall submit an annual report to City Council containing a summary of all action taken by the Commission during the annual period. The report shall contain a record of all complaints filed and their resolution.

Article VIII Approval of Bylaws and Amendments

The bylaws of the Commission may be modified, amended, or repealed by a concurring vote of a quorum of the Commission. Proposed amendments must be in writing and provided to each member of the Commission and to all assigned City Staff Members prior to the next scheduled meeting upon which discussion of the amendment can occur.