

§ 2.52 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

Subd. 1. *Establishment of Commission.* There is hereby established within the city a Human Rights Commission.

Subd. 2. *Purpose.* It shall be the public policy of the Austin Human Rights Commission to secure for all citizens equal opportunity in all areas protected by the state's human rights statute and all amendments and to work consistently to improve the human rights climate of the City of Austin and to assist the State Department of Human Rights in implementing the Minnesota State Act against Discrimination.

Subd. 3. *Composition.* A Human Rights Commission is hereby established consisting of nine members.

Subd. 4. *Officers.* The Commission shall elect a Chair, Vice Chair and a Secretary from its members. The Commission may choose to elect two Co-Chairs in place of a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Commission. The Vice Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair and perform duties delegated by the Chair. The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings and proceedings of the Commission. In the Secretary's absence, or in the event of a temporary vacancy in the position, one will be appointed by the Chair.

Subd. 5. *Meetings.* The Commission shall meet in regular session at least once each quarter at a time and place selected by the vote of its members. The Chair or any two members of the Commission shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Commission. Written notice of special meetings shall be given to all members setting forth the purpose of the special meeting and no other matters shall be considered at the meeting without the unanimous consent of all members present. Five members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum to transact business. Each member of the Commission, including the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, shall have one vote on all Commission matters acted upon by the Commission.

Subd. 6. *Rules and procedures.* The Commission shall adopt rules to govern its meetings and procedures, which rules shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this section or the City Code. These rules may be amended from time to time, but only upon notice to all members will the proposed amendments be considered at a specified meeting.

Subd. 7. *Duties and responsibilities.* In fulfillment of its purpose, the Commission's duties and responsibilities shall be to:

- A. Adopt by-laws and rules for the conduct of its affairs including the election, assumption of duties and definition of responsibilities of officers and committees;
- B. Enlist the cooperation of other groups, governmental agencies, organizations and individuals in the community concerned with human rights;

- C. Encourage and support functions and programs within the city to promote citizen awareness and provide citizen education of civil and human rights;
- D. Promote and publicize the role and activities of the Commission;
- E. Advise and make recommendations to the Mayor, the Council and other governmental agencies within the city on civil and human rights issues. Further, act in an advisory capacity with respect to planning or operation of any city department on issues of civil and human rights and to recommend the adoption of specific policies or actions as are needed to provide for full equal opportunity in the community; and
- F. Develop, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, such programs of formal and informal education as will assist in the implementation of the State Human Rights Act, and to provide for the Commission's assumption of leadership in recognizing and resolving potential problem areas in the community.

Subd. 8. *Limitations.* Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to limit the right of any person to file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, or to limit the right of any person controlled or affected to a hearing of the facts and issues in any court having jurisdiction of cases involving discriminatory practice. Furthermore, nothing in this section shall be construed to require that the city's Human Rights Commission agree to sit in mediation on any dispute which might be the subject of no-fault grievance procedures, The Human Rights Commission here constituted for the city, accordingly, shall possess the right at its sole discretion, to refer any complaint brought to the city's Human Rights Commission hereunder to the investigation of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.