

CITY OF TOPEKA



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION BY LAWS

Adopted by the Commission: February 5, 2007

Amended: November 5, 2007; July 7, 2008; August 4, 2008; February 7, 2011, October 2013

CITY OF TOPEKA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION BYLAWS

The bylaws, which follow, supersede all previous editions.

The Topeka Human Relations Commission is a nine member Board of Commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission will:

- (1) Support efforts to eliminate prejudice because of race, religion, creed, color, sex, disability, national origin or ancestry, age, sexual orientation or gender identity and further goodwill among all people of the city; and promote goodwill, cooperation and conciliation within the city.
- (2) Promote and facilitate Town Hall meetings and public forums on issues of interest and concern to the residents of Topeka.
- (3) Participate in outreach activities and public education.
- (4) Partner with groups that share similar goals.
- (5) By February 1 of each year, prepare and submit an annual report to the city and the city council of the commission's activities, identifying issues and problem areas within the Topeka community and, after reviewing the performance of the commission during the year, propose any modifications to this chapter that would improve the effectiveness of the commission and better fulfill the antidiscrimination policies of the city.
- (6) Impose, as grounds for disqualification, failure to attend four (4) commission meetings in one (1) calendar year or failure to attend three (3) consecutive commission meetings in one (1) calendar year. In the case of death, incapacity, resignation or disqualification of any member of the commission, vacancies shall be filled in accordance with City of Topeka Code section 2.05.010.
- (7) If a commissioner is unable to attend any commission meeting, he or she shall notify the chair and staff prior to the meeting.

ETHICS

The City of Topeka's Ordinance, which establishes ethical standards of conduct, is hereby adopted by reference.

OPEN MEETINGS

Meetings of the THRC are subject to the provisions of the Kansas Open Meetings Act.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The commission shall meet at such times and such places as it may agree upon. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by a majority of the commission.

MEETING PROCEDURE

The commission will conduct its meetings pursuant to “Robert’s Rules of Order.” Ordinarily a quorum is a majority of the entire membership of the Human Relations Commission. However, in the event that not all positions are filled, four (4) members of the Human Relations Commission shall constitute a quorum and be necessary to convene a meeting and conduct business of the commission.

No Human Relations Commission member shall vote in absentia. HRC members must be physically present at the time a vote is called in order for the HRC member to vote.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting in November of each year, or as soon thereafter as practicable. The Chair and Vice Chair will serve a one-year term, to start immediately upon election.

TERM LIMITS

The Chair and Vice Chair may serve multiple terms, but not consecutively. Each term of office will not exceed one year.

VACANCY OF CHAIR

In the event that the Chair is unable to fulfill the duties of office, the Vice Chair will assume the duties of the Chair.

VACANCY OF COMMISSIONER

In the event that a sitting commissioner is unable to complete their term of appointment, the Chair will notify the Mayor and request a replacement. The appointed replacement will serve out the un-expired term.

COMPENSATION AND REMOVAL

Members shall serve without compensation. A commissioner may resign at anytime by notification to the Chair. Removal for cause shall include, but not be limited to, the following reasons: failure to attend four (4) commission meetings in one (1) calendar year or failure to attend three (3) consecutive commission meetings in one (1) calendar year. In the case of death, incapacity, resignation or disqualification of any member of the commission, vacancies shall be filled in accordance with City of Topeka Code section 2.05.010.

DISCLAIMER

When an individual commissioner addresses the public and/or media, the commissioner must indicate whether or not that which is being said reflects his/her own views or the views of the commission. In order to speak on behalf of the commission, the individual commissioner needs prior approval from the commission, by majority vote. Otherwise, the individual commissioner

must make a disclaimer and identify what he/she says applies only to the individual commissioner.

CONFIDENTIALITY.

Commissioners will not disclose the evidence contained in any case file, to the public, unless under subpoena of a proper legal authority or with the permission of the commission's attorney or the city attorney.

CHANGE IN BY LAWS.

Any change in the bylaws of the Topeka Human Relations Commission will require a majority vote of the commission.