

**BYLAWS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The name of the Commission is Human Rights Commission, a Commission of the City of Portland.

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

The Human Rights Commission shall work to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen inter-group relationships and to foster greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in the City of Portland. In doing so, the Human Rights Commission shall be guided by the principles embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**ARTICLE III
JURISDICTION AND FUNCTIONS**

Section 1. Jurisdiction

The jurisdiction of the Commission will include all practices and incidents which affect people who live, work, study, worship, travel or play in the City of Portland. The Commission shall have jurisdiction to address such practices and incidents through education, research, advocacy and/or intervention, but shall not have civil rights enforcement authority.

Section 2. Function

The Human Rights Commission shall advocate for and take positive action toward eliminating discrimination, racism, and bigotry, strengthening inter-group relationships, and fostering greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in the City of Portland.

In doing so, the HRC will develop measurable, time specific objectives to:

1. Educate the public and policy makers on issues, needs, and diverse perspectives related to eliminating discrimination, racism, and bigotry and strengthening inter-group and interpersonal relationships and understanding.
2. Conduct research on policies, practices, systems, or issues where discrimination, racism or bigotry may be a factor in the differential treatment of specific groups of people.
3. Advocate for policies, practices, and positions that are inclusive and caring.
4. Intervene in situations where collaborative negotiation, mediation, or facilitation are reasonable resolutions to problems related to inter-group and interpersonal relations and allegations of discrimination.

In setting its priorities, the Commission shall engage a broad spectrum of community members to gather information on emerging issues and needs as they relate to human rights and inter-group relations at least once every two years.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Commission Size

The Commission shall have up to 15 members and not fewer than 11 members.

Section 2. Membership Requirements

Members must live, work, worship or be enrolled in school within the City of Portland.

Section 3. Terms

The term of office for Commissioners shall be three years, except for adjustments of shorter terms needed in order to create or maintain staggered terms. No member may serve more than two consecutive full three-year terms.

Section 4. Attendance

Commission members shall attend meetings regularly and participate actively in advisory committee meetings. Due to concerns regarding membership continuity and the need to perform the Commission's duties, if a member accumulates three (3) unexcused absences during a one year period, that person shall be recommended for removal. An unexcused absence is defined as an absence without notifying the Chair of the commission, the Chair's designated appointee, or HRC staff prior to the beginning of the Commission's regular monthly meeting.

Section 5. Removal

The Mayor may remove a member from the Commission at any time, with the recommendation of the Commission and subject to approval by the Council.

Section 6. Vacancies

Opportunities to fill vacancies on the Human Rights Commission shall be announced publicly. When a vacancy occurs, the Nominating Committee of the Human Rights Commission shall forward recommendations for nominations to the Commission for approval through the Commission's nominations process. The Commission's approved recommendations for nominations shall then be forwarded to the Mayor. The Mayor shall appoint, and the Council shall then confirm members to fill the balance of unexpired terms. Vacancies that result from expired terms shall be filled in the same manner as interim vacancies.

Section 7. Representation

Members of the Human Rights Commission shall be appointed by the Mayor so as to provide representation from a reasonably broad spectrum of the community, including factors such as: areas of expertise, advocacy experience, community involvement, profession, education, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, age, religion and geographic identification.

Section 8. No Salary

All members shall serve without compensation.

Section 9. Quorum and Action

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the currently appointed membership except that persons on approved leave of absences shall not be counted in determining a quorum. In no event shall a quorum consist of fewer than 6 members. Decision-making shall be subject to a majority vote of the Commissioners present, provided that a quorum has been established.

When one or more minority views are expressed regarding a decision, minority opinions will be duly noted. All HRC proceedings shall be publicly recorded and posted.

Section 10. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be open to the public, except as otherwise provided by law. The HRC shall hold one regular meeting a month and comply with all public notification requirements as stipulated by state law.

Section 11. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or Vice-Chair upon receipt of requests from any five (5) Commissioners. Agendas of special meetings must be posted publicly and made available to Commissioners in a manner which provides at least seventy-two (72) hours of advanced notice. Said agendas shall specify the date, time, location, and business to be transacted.

Section 12. Participation by Telecommunication

At any regular or special meeting of the Human Rights Commission, Commissioners may participate by telephone or telecommunications. All participating Commissioners must be able to hear each other, have an opportunity to offer comment, enter into discussion, and make decisions collectively with each other. Members of the public who are present at the meeting shall also be provided the opportunity to hear all comments of Commissioners.

Section 13. Public Comment

All meeting agendas shall include a time when members of the public are allowed to address the Commission. Limits of time and rules for public comment shall be specified by Chair at the beginning of each meeting. Additionally, the Chair shall have discretion to limit public testimony as necessary to facilitate the orderly conduct of Commission business.

**ARTICLE V
COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Executive Committee

Human Rights Commissioners shall elect an Executive Committee consisting of Commission Officers, the Chairs of the Ongoing Committees, and the Immediate Previous Chair of the Commission. The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing agendas for Commission meetings, preparing the work plan for the Commission, and working with the Director of the Office of Equity and Human Rights to develop the Commission's annual budget. The Executive Committee is also responsible for ensuring clear and uniform communications with the media. The Chair of the Commission serves as Chair of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Ongoing Committees

The Human Rights Commission shall appoint Ongoing Committees to address regular and ongoing aspects of the Commission's work. Ongoing Committees may be added or deleted by majority vote of the Commission at any regular or special meeting.

Ongoing committees shall be comprised of members of the Human Rights Commission. Each Ongoing Committee shall elect its Chair and the Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the committee. The Chair of each Ongoing Committee is responsible for setting the date, time and

place for Committee meetings, preparing agendas, presiding over Committee meetings and reporting on the progress of the Committee at regular meetings of the Commission. The Chair of the Ongoing Committee may appoint non-voting participants to the Committee from the general public. Committee members who are non-Human Rights Commission members shall be appointed as non-voting participants of a committee unless appointed as a voting member of the committee by an action of the Commission.

An Ongoing Committee may act on behalf of the Human Rights Commission on a given matter provided that the Commission has previously granted it the authority to act on its behalf by majority vote at a special or regular meeting of the Commission. In the event an Ongoing Committee is authorized to take final action on a given matter on behalf of the Commission, public meetings requirements shall be observed by the Ongoing Committee in doing so.

Ongoing Committees shall present a work plan to the Commission. The work plan shall contain a statement of the goals and objectives for the Committee for the next fiscal year, including a statement of proposed activities with an itemized list of needed resources.

Section 3. Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces

Ad hoc (special purpose) committees and/or task forces may be created by majority vote at any regular or special meeting of the Commission. Ad hoc committees and task forces shall be formed to fulfill a specific function that can be completed in a finite period of time. Each Ad Hoc Committee and task force shall present a final report when the function is completed and the Committee or task force shall be considered dissolved at that point unless a majority of the Commission votes to continue its activities.

Ad Hoc Committees and task forces shall be chaired by members of the Human Rights Commission. The Chair of the Human Rights Commission shall appoint the Chair of each Ad Hoc Committee and task force. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee or task force is responsible for setting the date, time and place for Committee or task force meetings, preparing agendas, presiding over meetings, and reporting on the progress of the Committee or task force at regular meetings of the Commission.

Ad Hoc Committees and task forces have only the authority deemed necessary to complete their activities unless otherwise provided by a majority vote of the Commission at a regular or special meeting.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

Section 1. Titles

The officers of the Human Rights Commission shall be the Chair and Vice Chair.

Section 2. Election

The Human Rights Commission shall elect the Chair and Vice Chair to serve one year terms. Officers must be members of the Human Rights Commission. An officer may be reelected without limitation on the number of terms the officer may serve.

Section 3. Vacancy

A vacancy of any officer shall be filled not later than the second regular meeting of the Commission following the vacancy. The first regular meeting following a vacancy shall be

referred to as the Nomination Meeting. The second regular meeting following a vacancy shall be referred to as the Voting Meeting. One week prior to the Nomination Meeting, the Chair shall announce that an officer position vacancy exists. Nominations shall be sent to the Chair and the nominating period shall remain open until voting begins at the Voting Meeting. Nominations shall be closed prior to voting. Nominees shall have an opportunity to present their qualifications at the Voting Meeting prior to the beginning of voting.

Section 4. Chair

The Chair of the Commission shall be elected by majority vote of the Commission and shall:

1. Set dates and times for regular-and special meetings of the Commission.
2. Prepare items for meetings of the Commission and ensure meetings are noticed according to law.
3. Preside over meetings of the Commission and adhere to Robert's Rules of Order
4. Sign routine Commission correspondence or delegate staff to sign correspondence on behalf of the Chair.
5. Represent the Commission to private and public organizations, including City Council.
6. Appoint a Commission member to represent the Commission in the event the Chair and Vice Chair are unavailable.

Section 5. Vice Chair

The Vice-Chairperson of the Commission shall be elected by majority vote of the Commission and shall exercise the duties and responsibilities of the Chair of the Commission when the Chair is unable to exercise them or requests the Vice-Chairperson to act on his or her behalf.

Section 6. Removal of Officers

The Chair or Vice-Chair may be removed from their positions by a majority vote of the Commission.

ARTICLE VII COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION GATHERING

Section 1. Conducting Investigations

The Commission may authorize staff to conduct investigations of complaints or to make inquiries into any field which the Commission believes will aid in fulfilling its general purposes.

The Commission may authorize an Ongoing Committee, an Ad Hoc Committee, or a task force to conduct inquiries and to invite testimony in any field which it believes will aid in effectuating its general purpose. The Commission may authorize staff or individual commissioners to take action during the course of an investigation by means of conciliation, education, and persuasion to alleviate tensions or conflict among or between diverse groups of people in Portland.

Section 2. Conducting Public Hearings

Public hearings may be authorized by the Commission to inquire into any field that will aid in fulfilling its general purposes. Generally, a public hearing is approved as the result of a

recommendation to the Commission following an inquiry or investigation by a Committee, task force, or staff.

The Commission may hold public hearings independently or in cooperation with any other public or private organization. The Commission may also authorize one of its Committees or task forces to hold public hearings on behalf of the Commission.

The Chair of the Commission, Committee, or task force holding the public hearing is responsible for setting the date, time and place for the hearing; and for presiding over the hearing. Hearings shall be posted publicly in a manner which provides at least seventy-two (72) hours of advanced notice.

Staff shall be present at the public hearing to assist the orderly progression of speakers to the designated speaker's area and to assist in recording the proceedings.

Section 3. Representation Before Media and Other Entities

The Commission's Executive Committee shall ensure that the views of the Commission as a whole are presented clearly and uniformly before the media and other entities. The Executive Committee shall designate a lead spokesperson to represent the Commission on Commission matters. Spokespersons shall be selected based on their experience or interest in the emerging issue. All designated spokespersons shall report back to the Executive Committee regarding their communications with the media and other entities. In addition, Committee Chairs may be designated by the Committee they represent to speak on committee work, and shall report back to their committees and to the Executive Committee regarding their communications with the media and other entities. Commission members are encouraged to promote the work of the Commission by attending public events and discussing the existence and mission of the Commission. In doing so, Commission members who have not been designated as a Commission spokesperson may not speak or act on behalf of the Commission.

Service on the Commission does not prohibit members from speaking in an individual capacity or participating in government as members of the general public. In so doing, Commissioners shall clarify that they are speaking or acting in their individual capacity and not on behalf of the Commission.

ARTICLE VIII AFFILIATIONS AND LIAISON ACTIVITIES

Section 1. Affiliation

The Commission may affiliate with other organizations that share similar purposes or that seek to support the efforts of the Commission. However, no other organization can represent the views of the Commission on any issue without prior authorization being granted at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

Section 2. Liaison

The Commission may authorize a Commissioner or staff person to act as liaison with other private or public organizations. The liaison can explain the purpose and activities of the Commission, but cannot commit the Commission to any action without first receiving authorization from the Commission at a regular or special meeting.

**ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS OF BYLAWS**

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed, and new Bylaws adopted, by the Human Rights Commission by majority vote, if a quorum is present. Prior to the adoption of the amendment, each Commissioner shall be given at least two days notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be considered, and the notice shall state that one of the purposes of the meeting is to consider a proposed amendment to the Bylaws and shall contain a copy of the proposed amendment.

This is to certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Bylaws of the Human Rights Commission.

By: _____
Chair, Human Rights Commission

Adopted on: September 4, 2013