



BY-LAWS OF THE FORT WORTH HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

PREAMBLE

The By-laws set forth herein are hereby adopted for the purpose of providing an organizational framework and rules of procedure to the end that this Commission may better serve the purposes for which it has been established.

ARTICLE I AUTHORITY FOR THE BY-LAWS

The By-laws set forth herein are promulgated in accordance with and by virtue of Chapter 17, Article II, Section 17-16 through Section 17-21 of Fort Worth Ordinance No. 5802 as amended.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE OF COMMISSION

The Human Relations Commission shall serve as the duly constituted instrumentality of the City Council of Fort Worth for the purpose of providing a means by which all residents and persons subject to its jurisdiction may be assured equal enjoyment of all rights, privileges and remedies of the protection of their person, property, livelihood and freedoms, and equal opportunity and freedom to pursue their respective aspirations, to enjoy the benefits of their individual labors, and to equally share in the common benefits of society without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, age, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation, transgender, gender identity or gender expression.

ARTICLE III POWERS AND DUTIES

The Commission shall have such powers and duties as established by the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Worth and as may be delegated by the City Council and the City Manager. The powers and duties include:

Section 1.

To advise and consult with the City Council and the City Manager on matters involving discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, disability, age, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation, transgender, gender identity or gender expression. (Ordinance No. 5802, as amended, Section 17-18)

Section 2.

To recommend to the City Council and the City Manager measures designed to eliminate prejudice and discrimination. (Ordinance No. 5802, as amended, Section 17-18)

Section 3.

To promote and encourage communications between and cooperation of all groups interested in bettering community relations. (Ordinance No. 5802, as amended, Section 17-18)

Section 4.

To ensure that the Public Policy and ordinances of the City of Fort Worth as stated in Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Fort Worth are enforced as prescribed in the said ordinances.

Section 5.

To appoint, evaluate and discharge an Administrator, whose appointment shall be subject to the review of the City Manager and the approval of the City Council. Employees of the Commission shall be employees of the City, and as such shall be governed by the personnel rules of the City and the classification and compensation plan for City employees. (Ordinance No. 5802, as amended, Section 17-20)

- A. The Administrator shall be responsible for carrying out the programs of the Human Relations Commission under the policies and directives of the Commission and shall give staff leadership to all meetings of the Commission. The Administrator attends all Full Commission and Executive Committee meetings, but does not have a vote. The Administrator (or a staff member so designated by the Administrator) shall give staff leadership to all the Committees of the Commission.
- B. The Administrator shall be delegated responsibility for the employment, supervision and removal of professional and clerical staff, in accordance with the City of Fort Worth's Personnel Rules and Regulations.
- C. The Administrator (or a staff member so designated by the Administrator) shall record Commission meetings by audio recorder and a designated staff member shall transcribe the minutes from the recording. The approved original of all such minutes shall be kept by the Administrator of the Commission (or a staff member so designated by the Administrator) under that person's care, custody and control and shall be available for inspection and copying in accordance with the City's Public Information Requests policies and guidelines. The Administrator (or a staff member so designated by the Administrator) shall ensure written notification to all Commissioners of all regular or special called meetings of the Commission and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Commission or Chairperson.
- D. Certain other specified duties or responsibilities of the Commission as defined in the Code of Ordinances of The City of Fort Worth may be delegated by the Commission to its Administrator.

ARTICLE IV COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

Section 1. Appointment.

The Commission shall be composed of eleven Members, inclusive of the Commission Chairperson, appointed by the City Council on an at-large basis. The Commission may recommend to the City Council persons to be appointed to the Commission. Any citizen of the City of Fort Worth, who meets the criteria as set forth in Article IV, Section 3, may seek appointment to the Human Relations Commission.

Section 2. Term of Office.

Each Member of the Commission shall be appointed to serve a term of two (2) years; provided, however, those Members appointed to odd-numbered places shall serve terms that expire in an odd numbered year and Members appointed to even-numbered places shall serve terms that expire in an even numbered year. No Member shall serve more than three (3) consecutive two-year terms, and the terms of current Members shall be counted toward the limit on the number of terms to be served. Any member having served three (3) consecutive two-year terms shall be eligible for reappointment two (2) years after the expiration of the third term. (Ordinance No. 5802, as amended, Section 17-17)

Section 3. Criteria for Appointment.

Members of the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission shall be sworn to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America and the State of Texas and the Charter of the City of Fort Worth and shall serve without compensation Each Member shall also meet the following criteria:

- A. Residency: Applicants and current Commission Members shall live within the city limits of Fort Worth.
- B. Conflicts: No current City of Fort Worth employee, elected official or person with a contract for provision of goods or services with the City of Fort Worth may serve on the Commission. No former City of Fort Worth employee, elected official or person having contracted, worked or served on behalf of the City of Fort Worth during the previous twelve (12) months may serve on the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission.
- C. Qualifications: The Fort Worth Human Relations Commission shall evaluate the potential contribution that each applicant may make if appointed. Guiding factors include:
 - 1. Desire to perform public service.
 - 2. Experience in the community and on other boards, commissions and committees.
 - 3. Special knowledge and experience with community and human relations issues, yet with the ability to represent the interests of the community as a whole, and not of persons or a group with a special interest.

Section 4. Removal.

If any Member of the Commission has unexcused absences from three (3) consecutive Full Commission meetings or presence at less than 75% of the Full Commission meetings in a twelve-month period, that Commission Member shall be removed from the Commission.

The Commission may, by resolution duly adopted, upon affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members, recommend to City Council removal from office, with cause, any Member of the Commission.

ARTICLE V TERM OF COMMISSION

The term of the Commission shall be continuing and the anniversary date shall be the thirtieth day of September of each year.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS OF COMMISSION

Section 1. Officers of Commission.

The Officers of the Commission shall be a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, these Officers to be elected from the membership of the Commission.

Section 2. Election.

The Commission shall, at its first meeting every October, elect a Chairperson (Chair) and Vice Chairperson (Vice Chair) from among its appointed Commissioners.

Section 3. Officer Vacancy.

Vacancies for Chairperson or Vice Chairperson created by any reason shall be filled for the unexpired term by election held at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

Section 4. Duties and Responsibilities.

- A. Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Commission and Executive Committee; shall have the authority to determine the method of appointment, whether by Chair appointment, appointment by motion, or ballot election to all Standing Committees; shall have the authority to designate persons to Ad Hoc Committees; shall be responsible for all the general administration of the Commission's affairs, and the implementation of its recommendations, resolutions and policies before the public; and shall have, hold and exercise such powers and perform such duties as provided for herein or by the Executive Committee.
- B. Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson, in the absence or upon the resignation, removal or disability of the Chairperson, shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chairperson and shall perform such other duties as the Commission, Executive Committee or Chairperson may from time to time prescribe.

Section 5. Removal.

The Commission may, by resolution duly adopted, upon affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members, remove from office, with cause, any Officer of the Commission.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. General.

The Members of the Commission shall control and direct all of the duties and responsibilities of the Commission and shall have, hold and exercise all rights, powers and privileges not otherwise delegated to the officers and Committees of the Commission. The Commission shall establish Standing Committees and such other Committees as necessary to perform the Commission's duties.

Section 2. Standing Committees.

The Standing Committees of the Commission are: Executive, Employment, Housing, Diversity and Inclusion, Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities and Administrator's Evaluation Committee. Each Commissioner shall serve on at least one Standing Committee.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities.

The duties and responsibilities of the Standing Committees are as follows:

- A. The Executive Committee shall be primarily responsible for overseeing the operation of the Commission, including, but not limited to the following:
 1. Coordinate the activities of the Standing Committees and the interchange of information between the Commission and the Committees.
 2. Direct and oversee the goals and objectives and policies of the Commission.
 3. Address new areas of concern for the Commission not specifically delegated to Committees.
 4. Review all budgetary matters, including, but not limited to (a) annual budget, (b) Commissioner training and travel expenditures, (c) organizational memberships, (d) expenses for special meetings and events of the Commission, and (d) contractual obligations of the Commission.
 5. Receipt and review of Commissioner application(s) for consideration of appointment to the Commission. The Executive Committee shall present the proposed slate of Commissioner candidate(s), along with their recommendation(s), to the full Commission for consideration. The final recommendation(s) of the Commission will then be forwarded to the Human Relations Administrator and then routed per City of Fort Worth Administrative Regulation: *Nomination of At-Large Members for Certain Boards, Commissions, and Committees.*
 6. Review the recommendation of the Administrator's Evaluation Committee and submit a report of the results to the Commission.
 7. Act on behalf of the Commission in emergency situations between meetings; reporting such action at the next Commission meeting for review or action.
 8. Act for the Commission when specifically authorized by the Commission.

- B. The Employment Committee shall be primarily responsible for those areas of Commission interest including, but not limited to the general provision of Equal Employment Opportunities for all citizens as well as ensuring Equal Employment Opportunities through the administration of the Equal Employment Ordinance of Fort Worth and shall, subject to the Commission's approval and the provisions of the Equal Employment Ordinance provide education to employers and initiate such other actions as deemed appropriate.

The Employment Committee shall meet on a regular basis, or on an as-needed basis, at the discretion of the Employment Committee Chair. The Chair of the Employment Committee shall be responsible for setting the date, time and place for Committee meetings, preparing agendas, presiding over the Committee meeting and reporting back on the work of the Committee to the full Fort Worth Human Relations Commission.

- C. The Housing Committee shall be primarily responsible for those areas of Commission interest including, but not limited to, the general provision of safe, sanitary, and adequate housing as well as equal access to housing for all citizens through the administration of the Fair Housing Ordinance for Fort Worth and shall, subject to the Commission's approval and the provisions of the Fair Housing Ordinance, initiate such other actions deemed appropriate. The composition of the Housing Committee shall include only duly appointed Commission Members of the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission. The Chair of the Housing Committee also serves as the Chair of the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission's Hearing Panel which is given the responsibility to hear and make recommendations regarding complaints of discrimination in accordance with the Hearing Panel procedures and the City of Fort Worth's Fair Housing ordinance or applicable federal law.

The Housing Committee shall meet on a regular basis, or on an as-needed basis, at the discretion of the Housing Committee Chair. The Chair of the Housing Committee shall be responsible for setting the date, time and place for Committee meetings, preparing agendas, presiding over the Committee meeting and reporting back on the work of the Committee to the full Fort Worth Human Relations Commission.

- D. The Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities shall be primarily responsible for those areas of Commission interest including, but not limited to, disability concerns including accessibility and accommodations, and shall, subject to the Commission's approval identify activities to promote equal opportunity for Fort Worth disabled residents, provide education on disability topics, and initiate such other actions as deemed appropriate. The Chair of the Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities shall be responsible for setting the date, time and place for Committee meetings, preparing agendas, presiding over the Committee meetings and reporting back on the work of the Committee to the full Fort Worth Human Relations Commission.

- E. The Committee on Diversity and Inclusion shall be primarily responsible for those areas of Commission interest including, but not limited to, diversity and inclusion, and shall, subject to the Commission's approval identify activities to celebrate Fort Worth's rich culture and diversity by creating opportunities for dialogue, promoting equity and inclusion, providing education on diversity topics to both City employees and residents and initiate such other actions as deemed appropriate. The Chair of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion shall be responsible for setting the date, time and place for Committee meetings, preparing agendas,

presiding over Committee meetings and reporting back on the work of the Committee to the full Fort Worth Human Relations Commission.

- F. The Administrator's Evaluation Committee shall consist of the Chair of the Commission and the respective Chairs of the other Standing Committees. Any Committee recommendation shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Other Committees.

- A. Additional Standing Committees. The Commission may, by resolution duly adopted upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members, authorize the establishment of such additional Standing Committees for such purposes and with such powers as shall be set out in the resolution authorizing the establishment of such Committee.
- B. Ad Hoc Committees. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed as necessary by the Commission Chairperson. The purpose and scope of Ad Hoc Committees shall be determined by the Commission Chairperson. The Commission Chairperson may dissolve any Ad Hoc Committee at any time.

Section 5. Abolition of Standing Committees.

The Commission may, by resolution duly adopted upon affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members, rescind its authorization of any Standing Committee as is now or may hereafter be authorized.

Section 6. Composition of Committees.

- A. Executive Committee The Executive Committee shall be composed of all Commission Officers, Chairpersons of Standing Committees, and the immediate past Chairperson of the Commission, if still a Commission appointee.
- B. Standing Committees. Unless otherwise specified in Section 3: Duties and Responsibilities, all Standing Committees shall be composed of a minimum of one Commission Member appointed by the Commission Chairperson. Additional members of standing committees may include additional Commission members, as well as members from the Fort Worth community, who have an interest in the mission of the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission's purpose and mission.

Section 7. Term of Office-Committee Members.

Each committee member shall be appointed to serve for a term of one year. Committee members may be re-appointed on a year-to-year basis not to exceed six consecutive years.

ARTICLE VIII RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section 1. Commission Meetings.

- A. Regular and Special Called Meetings. Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held at such times and places as determined by the Commission and as specified in the posted agenda.

Special called meetings may, upon proper notice, be held at any time and may be called by the Chairperson, or at the request of a quorum of Commission Members.

- B. Notices. Notices of regular and special called Commission meetings shall be given by or at the direction of the Administrator as follows:
1. Notices of the Commission meeting shall be given to the Commission Chairperson and Commission Members whose term of office shall not have expired, and those Commission Members who shall have been appointed by the City Council for the next ensuring term of office. Such notice shall be written and posted for public notice at least three days prior to date of meeting, and shall state the time, place and purpose thereof.
 2. Notice of regular monthly meetings shall be written and posted at least three days prior to date of meeting, stating the time and place thereof, and stating any matter to be acted upon by the Commission requiring the affirmative vote by a majority or more of the Commission Members.
 3. Notice of special called meetings shall be given in compliance with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- C. Quorum. A majority of all Members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum. The Chairperson shall be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.
- D. City Manager. The City Manager or a representative designated by the City Manager may attend all Commission meetings, make recommendation to the Commission and shall have the right to take part in all discussions of the Commission, but shall have no vote.
- E. Open Meetings- Recess. All official meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public. All special called meetings are subject to the 72-hour posting provision under the Texas Open Meetings Act. Any meeting of the Commission may be recessed to a later time, provided that no recess shall be for a longer period than until the next regular meeting.
- F. Transitional Meetings. Outgoing Committee Chairpersons and incoming Committee Chairpersons shall meet at a mutually agreeable time, as soon after the appointment of the incoming Committee Chairperson as possible, to provide for the exchange of information and smooth transition.

Section 2. Conduct Of Commission Meetings.

- A. Order of Business
1. The order of business of each meeting shall be as contained in the agenda prepared by the Chairperson. The agenda shall be a listing by topic of subjects to be considered by the Commission and shall be delivered to each Member of the Commission not later than the Monday preceding the Tuesday meeting to which it pertains.

2. The agenda shall provide a time when the Chairperson or any Commission Member may bring before the Commission any business that should be acted upon or considered by the Commission. Such matters need not be stated in great detail, but shall inform the Commission Members of the substance of all action to be considered.
 3. Any person desiring to place a subject on the Commission's agenda shall advise the Commission of that fact at least six (6) calendar days prior to the meeting at which the subject is to be considered.
 4. All agendas shall provide a time of not more than three (3) minutes per person when the general public may address the Commission.
- B. Call of Meeting to Order. The Presiding Officer shall call the meeting to order at the time stated in the notice for such meeting providing there is a quorum present.
- C. Deliberations of Commission.
1. Subject to the provisions of state law, any rule stated in Section 2, Article VIII, may be temporarily suspended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members present. The vote on any such suspension shall be taken by yeas and nays and entered in the minutes of the meeting.
 2. The Chairperson shall rule on all points of order, subject to the right of any Member to appeal to the Commission. If any appeal is taken, the question shall be "Shall the decision of the Chairperson be sustained?"
 3. All questions submitted for a vote shall contain only one subject. If two or more points are involved, any Member may require a division, if the questions reasonably admit of a division. The Chairperson shall state all questions submitted for a vote and announce the results. A roll call vote shall be taken upon the request of any Commission Member present.
 4. Any Member desiring to speak shall be recognized by the Chairperson, and shall confine any remarks to the subject under consideration or to be considered. No Member shall be allowed to speak more than once on any subject until every Member wishing to speak shall have spoken
- D. Voting
1. Except in those instances where a greater number of affirmative votes are specified, any other provisions to the contrary notwithstanding, approval of every resolution or motion shall require the affirmative vote of at least a quorum of the Commission Members.
 2. The yeas and nays shall be taken upon passage of all motions and resolutions and entered in the minutes of the meeting.
 3. In the event that one nominee is proposed for election to any Commission office, voting shall be by secret ballot and the ballots shall be counted by the Administrator, or a

representative designated by the Administrator who shall inform the Chairperson only of the nominee elected.

Section 3. Meetings Of Committee.

Unless otherwise provided, all Committees shall meet at the call of their respective Chairperson at such times and places and with such degree of regularity and formality as shall be determined by such Committees, providing such meetings comply with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Section 4. Committee Rules Of Procedure.

Committees need not formally adopt written rules of procedure but may do as subject to the approval of a majority of the Committee Members; it being expressly provided, however, that no Committee shall conduct or otherwise hold any kind of formal hearing or accusatory of adversary proceeding without having first adopted specific written rules of procedure approved by the Commission.

**ARTICLE IX
INTERPRETATION**

Any ambiguity in, conflict between, or interpretation of any on the provisions of these By-laws shall be reconciled and construed in a manner which will most nearly give effect to the general intents and purposes expressed herein. All such questions shall be referred to the Executive Committee for its recommendation to the Commission; and if necessary or appropriate, the Commission shall, by resolution duly adopted on the affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission Members, set forth such interpretation or construction hereof as shall fully dispose of such question as may be raised. These By-laws may be amended upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission Members at any regular or special called meeting of the Commission, provided the proposed amendment or alteration be contained in the notice of such regular or special called meeting.

**ARTICLE X
SEVERABILITY**

If any article, section or provision of the by-laws shall be held void, ineffective or invalid, the holding of such article, part of a section of any specific provision to be void ineffective or invalid for any cause whatsoever shall in no way affect the validity of the remaining articles, sections and provisions of these By-laws, which shall remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Amendments to the Fort Worth Human Relation Commission’s Bylaws were approved by a majority vote of Fort Worth Human Relations Commissioners present at its monthly meeting on June 28, 2016.

Damon Blakeley, Fort Worth Human Relations Commission Chair