

Borough of Stroudsburg



MONROE COUNTY

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

ORDINANCE NO. 1027

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1: ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT; PART 3: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, TO ADD THE STROUDSBURG BOROUGH HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The BOROUGH COUNCIL of Stroudsburg Borough hereby ENACTS and ORDAINS as follows:

Human Relations Commission shall be added to the Borough Code of Ordinances under Chapter 1, Part 3, Section G, adding the following:

G. Human Relations Commission.

§ 1-381 Creation of Commission.

That there is hereby created a commission known as the Human Relations Commission of the Borough of Stroudsburg.

§ 1-382 Purpose.

1. The purpose of the commission is to ensure that all persons, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, sex, height, weight, religion, ancestry, genetic information, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, use of guide or support animals and/or mechanical aids enjoy the full benefits of citizenship and are afforded equal opportunities for employment, housing and the use of public accommodations, and to have equal access to post-secondary educational institutions. Specifically, a business, person, or employer is not permitted to deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of goods, services, housing, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations on the basis of any protected characteristic. A business is not permitted to exclude, refuse to provide services, offer lesser services, or disadvantage a person because of any of the characteristics protected by the

ordinance. Additionally, a business may not advertise or post a sign indicating that it discriminates based on these protected characteristics.

2. It is hereby declared to be the public policy of Stroudsburg Borough to foster the employment of all individuals in accordance with their fullest capacities regardless of actual or perceived race, color, sex, height, weight, religion, ancestry, genetic information, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, use of guide or support animals and/or mechanical aids, and to safeguard their right to obtain and hold employment without such discrimination, to assure equal opportunities to all individuals and to safeguard their rights to public accommodation and to secure housing accommodation and commercial property without regard to actual or perceived race, color, sex, height, weight, religion, ancestry, genetic information, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, use of guide or support animals and/or mechanical aids, and to have equal access to postsecondary educational institutions without regard to actual or perceived race, color, sex, height, weight, religion, ancestry, genetic information, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, use of guide or support animals and/or mechanical aids.
3. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as supporting or advocating any particular doctrine, position, point of view, lifestyle, or religious view. To the contrary, it is the intention of this chapter that all persons be treated fairly and equally, and it is the express intent of this chapter to guarantee fair and equal treatment under the law to all people of the Borough.
4. This chapter shall be deemed an exercise of the police power of the Stroudsburg Borough for the protection of the public welfare, prosperity, health, and peace of the Stroudsburg community.

§ 1-383 Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection.

1. **BOROUGH:** The Borough of Stroudsburg, County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
2. **BOROUGH COUNCIL:** The Borough Council of Stroudsburg Borough.
3. **DISCRIMINATION:** Any discriminatory act(s) taken by any person, employer, employment agency, labor organization or public accommodation on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, sex, height, weight, religion, ancestry, genetic information, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, use of guide or support animals, and/or mechanical aids.

4. **DISCRIMINATORY ACTS:** All acts defined in the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act as unlawful discriminatory practices. The fact that the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act would not define a practice as unlawful when that practice is taken on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or marital status shall not exempt such practice from being considered a discriminatory act under this chapter.
5. **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:** Those post-secondary programs defined as educational institutions pursuant to the Pennsylvania Fair Educational Opportunities Act, 24 P.S. § 5001, et seq.
6. **GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION:** Self-perception, or perception by others, as male or female, and shall include an individual's appearance, behavior, or physical characteristics, that may be in accord with, or opposed to, one's physical anatomy, chromosomal sex, or sex assigned at birth, and shall include, but is not limited to, persons who are undergoing or have completed sex reassignment, are transgendered or gender variant.
7. **GENETIC INFORMATION:** That information which is defined as genetic information in the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C.A. § 2000ff.
8. **EMPLOYEE:** Does not include any individuals who, as a part of their employment, reside in the personal residence of the employer.
9. **EMPLOYER:** Any person who employs one or more employees, including the Borough, its departments, boards and commissions, and any other government agency within its jurisdiction.
10. **ORDINANCE:** This chapter, which shall also be known as the "Anti-Discrimination Ordinance."
11. **PERSON:** Any natural person, fraternal, civic or other membership organization, corporation, general or limited partnership, proprietorship, limited liability company, or similar business organization, including the Borough, its departments, boards and commissions, and other for-profit and nonprofit organizations.
12. **SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** Actual or perceived homosexuality, heterosexuality, and/or bisexuality.
13. **PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION:** An accommodation, recreation, refreshment, entertainment, or transportation facility of any kind, whether licensed or not, whose goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations are extended, offered, sold, solicited, or otherwise made available to the general public, including loans, or is listed in Section 4(l) of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 43 P.S. § 954(l), but shall not include any accommodations which are in their nature distinctly private.

14. **LODGING:** Any establishment or provider of hotel, motel, room-share, or bed and breakfast accommodations.
15. **REFRESHMENTS:** Any eating and drinking establishment, including but not limited to, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, food trucks, diners, lunch stands, bakeries, coffee shops, snack shops, wineries, and breweries.
16. **ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION:** Any establishment where the public may be provided facilities or services for the purpose of recreation or entertainment, including but not limited to, dance halls, ice or roller skating rinks, adventure services, movie theaters, concert halls, billiard halls, sports facilities, museums, sports and entertainment venues, campgrounds, pools, bowling alleys, shooting ranges, rock climbing facilities, and art galleries.
17. **TRANSPORTATION FACILITY:** Any private provider of transportation services, including but not limited to, taxi cabs, taxi companies, pedi cabs, carriages, bicycle vendors, or ride-sharing services.
18. **BUSINESS:** Any commercial establishment or person offering goods or services to the public, including but not limited to, professional services, property repairs, retail stores, medical facilities, gyms, and banks.

To the extent words and phrases appearing in this chapter are not expressly defined herein, the meaning of this chapter shall be construed consistently with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

§ 1-384 Unlawful Practices.

1. Discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations, or access to educational institutions is prohibited under this chapter.
2. Advertisements or signs indicating that a business discriminates based on characteristics protected under this ordinance are prohibited under this chapter.
3. Prohibiting a transgender person from using the restroom, locker room, or changing facility consistent with the gender identified or expressed by that person is prohibited under this chapter. Note that the ordinance does NOT require the elimination of separate men's and women's facilities, and does not require a business to provide new or special restroom facilities. A business may object to a non-transgender person seeking to use a restroom or changing facility for a false reason, may require persons who do not have the protected characteristics of gender identity or gender expression to use the appropriate restroom or changing facility, and may file a trespassing complaint with the police if the person does not comply; such enforcement is not deemed to be discrimination under the ordinance. Pennsylvania indecent exposure laws remain valid in all restrooms and changing facilities within the Borough.

4. Retaliation against any individual because such individual has opposed any practice forbidden by this chapter, or because such individual has made a charge, testified or assisted in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing under this chapter is prohibited under this chapter.
5. Aiding, abetting, inciting, compelling or coercing the doing of any act declared by this chapter to be an unlawful practice, or obstructing or preventing any person from complying with the provisions of this chapter is prohibited under this chapter.

§ 1-385 Exceptions.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, exceptions shall be granted to the following:

1. To a private religious corporation or association, not supported in whole or in part by governmental appropriations, to refuse to hire or employ an individual on the basis of religion.
2. To a private religious educational institution or private educational institution operated, supervised, or controlled by a religious institution or organization which gives preference to applicants of the same religion.
3. With respect to age only, to the sale, rental or lease of housing accommodations meeting the requirements of federal, state or local housing programs for senior citizens, or accommodations otherwise intended, advertised, designed or operated, bona fide, for the purpose of providing housing accommodations for persons 50 years of age or older.
4. With respect to gender only, to a private educational institution which now or hereafter provides an education to only persons of one gender.
5. To any action regulated by a governmental entity or agency where a person's qualification is expressly limited by statute, charter, ordinance or policy as otherwise provided by law.

§ 1-386 Establishment of Human Relations Commission.

1. Pursuant to 43 P.S. § 962.1 of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, there is hereby established a Human Relations Commission in and for Stroudsburg Borough (hereinafter referred to as the "Stroudsburg Human Relations Commission" or the "Commission").
2. The Stroudsburg Human Relations Commission shall consist of no fewer than five and no more than seven members, who shall serve overlapping terms of three years each. At all times there shall be an odd number of members. All members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Borough Council. The Commission may elect up to three non-voting, ex officio members to broaden the diversity that serves on the Commission. Members shall be residents of the Borough or individuals who work full-time within Stroudsburg Borough. No voting member of the Stroudsburg Human Relations Commission shall hold

any office in any political party. Members of the Stroudsburg Human Relations Commission shall serve without salary but may be paid expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, as approved by Borough Council. Paid staff may be hired, as approved by Borough Council, to assist in the performance of the duties of the Commission.

3. One of the Commission's members shall be appointed as the Chairperson of the Commission by Borough Council. The Chairperson will be responsible for setting Commission meetings, coordinating with the Stroudsburg Borough regarding received complaints and answers, and generally ensuring that the duties of the Commission are fulfilled. The Chairperson may delegate responsibility for Commission duties to specific Commissioners or to paid staff, if applicable.
4. Borough Council hereby grants to the Human Relations Commission all of the powers necessary to the execution of its duties (as set forth below), provided that those powers shall not exceed those exercised by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

§ 1-387 Procedures; Expanded Procedures.

1. Filing a complaint.
 - A. Any person(s) claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful practice may make, sign and file a verified complaint alleging violations of this chapter, which shall include the following information:
 - (1) The name and address of the aggrieved person(s);
 - (2) The name and address of the person(s) alleged to have committed the prohibited practice;
 - (3) A concise statement of the facts, including pertinent dates, constituting the alleged discriminatory practice;
 - (4) If applicable, the address and a description of the dwelling unit or property involved; and
 - (5) Such other information as may be required by the Borough.
 - B. Complaints may be filed in person at the Borough office or by mailing such complaints to the Borough office or to the Chairperson of the Human Relations Commission. All complaints must be received by the Borough office or by the Human Relations Commission within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination to be considered timely.
 - C. The Borough office shall convey all original complaints received to the Chairperson of the Human Relations Commission within 10 days of the office's receipt of such complaints.

2. Notification and answer.

A. Within 30 days of its receipt of a complaint, the Human Relations Commission shall:

- (1) Send a copy of the complaint to the person(s) charged with a discriminatory practice [the "respondent(s)"]; and
- (2) Send a notice to the person(s) aggrieved, informing them that the complaint has been received. If the complaint alleges discrimination on a basis prescribed under federal or state law, the notice sent to the person(s) aggrieved shall also inform them of the right to file with the state Human Relations Commission and/or with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

B. The respondent(s) shall file a written verified answer to the complaint within 60 days of receipt of the complaint. An answer to a complaint may be filed in the same manner as an original complaint. If the answer is filed with the Borough office, it shall be conveyed by the Borough to the Chairperson of the Human Relations Commission within 10 days of the Borough office's receipt thereof. The Commission shall promptly send a copy of the answer to the person(s) aggrieved.

3. Fact-finding conference.

A. After the answer has been received, the Commission shall, within 60 days, invite the parties to voluntarily participate in a fact-finding conference concerning the dispute. The parties shall respond to the invitation to participate in a fact-finding conference within 30 days of being invited to participate.

B. If the parties agree to participate in a fact-finding conference, the parties shall meet with a Commission member at a location mutually agreeable to the parties within 30 days of the agreement to participate. Each party will be invited at the fact-finding conference to present evidence and documents relevant to the complaint. The fact-finding conference will not be a public event, and no record of the conference will be created, excepting the findings of fact detailed in Subsection 3(c).

C. The parties shall notify the Commission of whether the fact-finding conference resulted in a resolution of the complaint. In the event the complaint is resolved, the Commission shall notify the parties that the complaint has been dismissed. In the event the complaint is not resolved through the fact-finding conference, then the Commissioner, within 30 days, shall prepare findings of fact and a conclusion as to whether the Commissioner finds probable cause that an unlawful practice has occurred.

4. Disposition of the complaint. Provided the Commission has not elected under Subsection 5 of this section to use expanded procedures, and if the complaint

is not resolved through the fact-finding conference, the Commission shall, at the second Commission meeting following the fact-finding conference, consider the findings prepared by the Commissioner who conducted the fact-finding conference. The Commission shall accept or reject the findings by public vote. The Commission shall provide the parties with the findings of fact and conclusion, shall notify the parties of the outcome of the vote, and this notice shall also indicate that the person aggrieved has a right to pursue the matter in court by filing a lawsuit.

5. Option of the Commission to elect for expanded procedures. The Commission shall have the authority to elect to adopt expanded procedures as set forth in Subsections 6 through 13 of this section subject to approval by the Borough Council and appropriation of funding for such procedures. A majority of Commission members must vote in favor of adopting expanded procedures in order for such procedures to be adopted. In the event that such procedures are adopted, they must, while in effect, be applied to all complaints that are not resolved through a fact-finding conference. If the Commission has adopted expanded procedures, it may also, by majority vote and in its sole discretion, eliminate such procedures.
6. Expanded procedures: dismissal or non-dismissal of the complaint. If the fact-finding conference was successful in resolving the complaint, the Commission shall follow the procedures set forth in Subsection 3(c) of this section for dismissing the complaint. If the fact-finding conference was not successful in resolving the complaint, the Commission shall not dismiss the complaint but shall instead undertake the procedures set out in Subsections 7 through 13 of this section.
7. Expanded procedures: investigation. The Commission shall, in a timely fashion, investigate the allegations of discrimination set forth in the complaint. The Commission may, in the conduct of such investigation, issue subpoenas to any person charged with an unlawful practice to furnish information, records or other documents, or to give sworn testimony, as necessary to assist in its investigation.
8. Expanded procedures: finding of no cause. If it shall be determined after the Commission's investigation that there is no basis for the allegations of the complaint, the Commission shall cause to be issued and served upon the parties written notice of such determination. This notice shall inform the person aggrieved that he/she has the right to pursue the matter in court by filing a lawsuit.
9. Expanded procedures: conciliation. If the Commission, after investigation, determines that probable cause exists for the allegations of the complaint, the Commission shall immediately endeavor to eliminate the unlawful practice complained of by persuasion, conference, and conciliation.

10. Expanded procedures: public hearing.

- A. If the Commission, in its discretion, finds it is not possible to eliminate the unlawful practices by persuasion, conference, or conciliation, the Commission shall cause to be issued and served a written notice, together with a copy of the complaint, which informs the respondent that the respondent must answer the charges of such complaint at a hearing before the Commission at a time and place to be specified in such notice.
- B. The Commission may designate one or more of its members to preside at such a hearing or it may, at its election, conduct such hearing en banc.
- C. At the public hearing, the case in support of the complaint shall be presented to the Commission by pro bono counsel, by Commission staff or by the Borough Solicitor. The case in support of the complaint may instead be presented by the complainant's attorney, if the complainant is represented. Both the complainant and the respondent may appear at the hearing with or without counsel and provide testimony. In addition, both the complainant and the respondent may introduce the testimony of additional witnesses and may submit documentary evidence. The Commission and the parties shall not be bound by the strict rules of evidence at the hearing.

11. Expanded procedures: findings. If upon all the evidence at the hearing the Commission shall find that a respondent has engaged in or is engaging in any unlawful discriminatory practice as defined in this chapter, the Commission shall state its findings of fact and shall issue and cause to be served on such respondent an order requiring such respondent to cease and desist from such unlawful discriminatory practice and to take such additional action as the Commission deems appropriate. The Commission shall have the authority to order any remedies available to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

12. Expanded procedures: finding of no discrimination. If upon all the evidence the Commission shall find that a respondent has not engaged in any unlawful discriminatory practice, the Commission shall state its findings of fact and shall issue and cause to be served on the parties an order dismissing the complaint as to such respondent.

13. The determination as to whether a business does or does not provide a place of public accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis by the Human Relations Commission in reviewing a complaint.


§ 1-388 Private Right of Action and Non-Limitation of Remedies.

1. Any person(s) aggrieved by a violation of this chapter shall have a right of action in the Monroe County Court of Common Pleas or any other court of competent jurisdiction and may recover for each violation the following remedies:
 - A. Back pay, front pay and other actual damages, as those remedies are defined in the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and case law interpreting the same;
 - B. Emotional distress damages;
 - C. Exemplary damages;
 - D. Reasonable attorney's fees and court costs; and
 - E. Such other relief, including injunctive relief, as the court may deem appropriate.
2. The right of action created by this chapter may be brought upon receipt by the aggrieved person(s) of notice that the Commission has dismissed the complaint or, if no such notice is received, after one year from the date of the filing of the complaint. If the person aggrieved has received notice that the Commission has dismissed the complaint, an action under this chapter must be brought by the aggrieved person within one year from the date of receipt of said notice or it will be barred. Equitable principles such as waiver, estoppel and equitable tolling shall apply to the time limitations for the filing of any complaint or other pleading under this chapter.
3. Nothing in this chapter limits the right of an aggrieved person to recover under any other applicable law or legal theory.


ORDAINED AND ENACTED this 2nd day of May 2017.



Ken Lang, Borough Council President

ATTEST:


Brian S. Bond, Borough Manager

APPROVED:


Tarah Probst, Mayor

(Seal)

