



## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

**TO:** Providence City Council Members  
**FROM:** Andi Wheeler, Executive Director of the Providence Human Relations Commission  
**DATE:** July 8, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** Providence Human Relations Commission Bylaws Amendment

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In accordance with the current Providence Human Relations Commission bylaws, the Providence Human Relations Commission transmits amended bylaws for the purposes of being received by the Providence City Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andi Wheeler".

Andi Wheeler  
Executive Director  
Providence Human Relations Commission

IN CITY COUNCIL  
JUL 15 2021

READ  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.  
*Ima L. Masterson* CLERK

ACTING

# **PROVIDENCE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

## **Bylaws**

**These By-laws shall supersede all previous By-laws, Rules, or Regulations of the Commission.**

### **Article I                      Name**

The name of the Commission shall be Providence Human Relations Commission ("PHRC" or, herein, "the Commission") as established by the City of Providence Home Rule Charter Article XI Section 1103.

### **Article II                      Purpose**

The purpose of the Providence Human Relations Commission is to enforce laws of equal opportunity for all Providence residents, to build mutual understanding and respect among the city's diverse populations and to safeguard the right to be free from discrimination in housing, education, employment, credit practices and public accommodation. Each resident should be protected regardless of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, marital status, disability, age or country of ancestral origin.

### **Article III                      Membership**

There shall be thirteen (13) Commissioners appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council. Employees of the city (defined as any individual other than an elected official or an independent contractor, receiving compensation for services performed for the city) may exist as a maximum ratio of 5:8 on the Commission as a whole at the time of the appointment, where up to five (5) members are City employees, with the remaining eight (8) members being members from the community.

#### Section 1

Commissioners serve without compensation, except for reasonable expenses incurred on Commission business.

#### Section 2

All appointments to the Commission shall be for a term of three (3) years. No member of the Commission shall continue in office after his or her term expires without being reappointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.

### Section 3

In the event of the death, resignation or removal of any member, a successor shall be appointed by the mayor, with approval of the City Council, to serve for the unexpired period of the term for which such member had been appointed.

### Section 4

Commissioners of the PHRC should reflect the broad diversity of the City of Providence.

### Section 5

If a potential individual conflict of interest is brought to the attention of the Commission, the individual commissioner in question should apply for an advisory opinion from the Rhode Island State Ethics Commission. Conflict of interests may include but are not limited to:

- An example where the Commissioner might reasonably expect that their official conduct will directly result in a financial benefit to the Commissioner, their family, business associates, employers, or businesses that the Commissioner represents

## **Article IV                      Executive Committee**

### Section 1

The Executive Committee shall consist of the following positions:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary

### Section 2

Terms of the executive committee shall be two (2) years beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and ending June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### Section 3:

In the event of the death, resignation, or removal of any member of the Executive Committee, an election shall be held for the vacancy, to serve for the unexpired period of the term for which the prior member had been elected. Should the elected member of such an election hold another position within the Executive Committee (e.g. if the Vice-Chairperson is elected to replace a vacant Chairperson seat), a subsequent election will occur to fill that vacancy.

## **Article V                      Duties of the Executive Committee**

### Section 1

The Chairperson shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the Commission.
- Serve as an Ex-Officio member of all committees.

- Have the power to call an emergency meeting when necessary.
- Serve as the spokesperson for the Commission, unless he/she chooses to appoint a designee.

## Section 2

The Vice-Chairperson shall:

- Assume and perform the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

## Section 3

- The secretary approves minutes transcribed by the Executive Director or designated staff.
- The secretary shall ensure that minutes are accurately recorded and distributed to the commissioners no later than two (2) weeks prior to the next meeting.
- In the absence of the Executive Director or designated staff the secretary is responsible for taking notes and distributing the minutes to the commissioners.

## Section 4

The Executive Committee, as a whole, shall:

- Establish standing committees and appoint committee members.

# **Article VI Election of Executive Committee**

## Section 1

A nominating committee consisting of three (3) active commissioners shall be appointed by the Chairperson to coordinate the election procedures.

## Section 2

The nominating committee shall meet in March of each year. The nominating committee shall present candidates to the full commission in May.

## Section 3

The PHRC shall nominate and elect candidates from its membership during its monthly meeting in June. To be elected to the executive committee, candidates must receive the majority of votes of those present at the meeting.

# **Article VII Committees**

## Section 1

In order to facilitate the PHRC's activities, there may be various committees, including but not limited to:

- Anti-Racism Committee
- Outreach and Education Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Hearings and Arbitration Committee

- Policy Committee

## Section 2

### Ad Hoc Committees

The Executive Committee shall establish committees and advisory councils for the length of time necessary to accomplish a stated purpose with vote and approval from the whole commission.

## **Article VIII                      Official Meetings**

### Section 1

The PHRC shall hold regular monthly meetings to discuss and address the organization's business.

### Section 2

The Commissioners by majority vote can make a decision to recommend to the Mayor removal of any Commissioner who has more than three (3) unexcused absences and/or any member who does not attend a minimum of five (5) meetings per calendar year from their start date.

### Section 3

A quorum for the official conduct of business shall consist of a majority of active and serving members.

### Section 4

In the absence of a quorum, issues on the agenda may be discussed but not voted on until the next meeting at which a quorum exists.

### Section 5

If items on the agenda are discussed without a quorum, the minutes should reflect the following:

- Quorum was not reached
- Points of discussion
- Non-binding consensus, if any

### Section 6

Robert's Rules of Order shall be used to govern the parliamentary procedure of the PHRC wherever these By-laws are silent.

## **Article IX                      Amendments**

### Section 1

Any member of the Commission may propose to the membership at a regular meeting a motion, in writing, containing a proposed amendment to these by-laws.

### Section 2

The Chairperson shall refer 'proposed amendments to these by-laws to the By-Laws Committee for consideration. The By-Laws Committee shall consider the motion and report on it to the membership at the next regular meeting. Approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at the meeting shall be required for amendment.

### Section 3

Whenever an amendment has been proposed, the members of the PHRC shall be notified of the proposed amendment at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which a vote may be taken.