

Number 19.1 - HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Effective Date: March 1, 1996

Applicable To: All classified employees, as well as exempt, appointed, and temporary, and applicants for employment, with the Executive Branch of the State of Vermont.

Issued By: Department of Personnel

PURPOSE

These procedures explain the role of the Human Rights Commission.

DUTIES AND JURISDICTION

The Human Rights Commission consists of five members who are appointed by the Governor of Vermont. Through public education, the Commission's role is to increase awareness of the importance of full civil and human rights for each person in the State of Vermont. The Commission will determine if there are existing practices of discrimination that exist which detract from the enjoyment of full civil and human rights, and will make recommendations designed to protect those rights.

The Commission has jurisdiction to investigate and enforce complaints of unlawful employment discrimination, in violation of Vermont's Fair Employment Practices Act (21 VSA 495, et. seq.) when the person bringing the complaint is an employee of a State agency, and when the complaint alleges discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, place of birth, age, or physical or mental disability. In addition, the Commission also has jurisdiction to investigate and enforce complaints of unlawful employment discrimination for State employees, when the complaint alleges a violation of Vermont's Maternity and Family Leave Act (21 VSA 470, et. seq.) or Workers' Compensation discrimination (21 VSA 710).

(In addition, the Commission enforces Vermont's civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in the sale or rental of housing and in places of public accommodation, i.e. governmental offices, stores, restaurants, schools, etc.).

COMPLAINTS

A person who believes that (s)he has been subject to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint with the Commission. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission will make efforts to resolve the matter by informal means. The commission will conduct an investigation to determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that unlawful discrimination has occurred. If

reasonable grounds are found, the Commission can file a lawsuit and seek relief for aggrieved individuals as well as injunctive relief and a civil penalty.

For further information contact:

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