



Legislation Text

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ORDINANCE NO. 220752

Amending Chapter 38, Code of Ordinances, by repealing Section 38-43. Powers and Duties and Section 38-65. Incident Reports and enacting in lieu thereof new sections of like number and subject matter to expand the Kansas City Human Rights Commission's task force powers to include investigation of bias incidents, including review of police incident reports.

WHEREAS, the 2022 Annual Report of the City's Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity department (CREO) found 91 bias crime incidents recorded by the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD) over 2020-21; and

WHEREAS, approximately 44% of these bias crime incidents involved a victim who was black; and

WHEREAS, approximately 44% of these bias crime incidents involved physical violence and 29% involved harassment; and

WHEREAS, Kansas City has seen an increase in bias crimes against faith-based and LGBTQ+ communities and the City recommits itself to standing against hate in all forms; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KANSAS CITY:

Section 1. That Chapter 38, Code of Ordinances, is hereby amended by repealing Sections 38-43 and 38-65 and enacting, in lieu thereof, new sections of like number and subject matter to read as follows:

**Sec. 38-43. Powers and duties.**

(a) The commission may adopt rules of procedure consistent with Chapters 213 and 536, RSMo, and this chapter.

(b) The commission shall prepare an annual report to be presented to the mayor and council concerning the conditions of minority groups in the city, with special reference to discrimination, civil rights, human relations, hate group activity, bias crimes and bias practices and attitudes among institutions and individuals in the community. The report may also include other social and economic factors that influence conditions of minority groups, as well as the causes of these conditions and the effects and implications to minority groups and the entire city. In preparation for the report the commission may conduct hearings and conduct whatever other research is necessary. The report shall include appropriate recommendations to the mayor and the council.

(c) The commission shall form task forces as follows:

(1) The commission shall form task forces including: youth, business, media, education, law enforcement, religion, labor, LGBTQ+, metropolitan area cooperation, bias incident, and others

as may be deemed appropriate.

(2) One member of each task force may be appointed from each councilmanic district, that member to be agreed upon jointly by the councilmembers from that district. Councilmembers may recommend additional members as appropriate.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (c)(2) of this section, the chairperson of the commission shall appoint the chairs and members of the task forces.

(a) For the bias incident task force, the chairperson shall engage law enforcement, community groups, and other stakeholders in the metropolitan area to serve as members.

(4) The task forces shall consist of no more than 15 members except where the commission chairperson specifically approves additional members.

(5) The task forces will assist the commission in the preparation of the commission's annual report to the mayor and council.

(d) The commission is empowered to investigate hate group activity and incidents of bias crimes and work with law enforcement agencies and others to implement programs and activities to combat hate group activity and bias crimes.

(e) The commission may seek information from any and all persons, agencies and businesses, in both the public and private sectors, to identify and investigate problems of discrimination and bias as they affect the citizens of the city either directly or indirectly.

(f) The commission may cooperate with public and private educational institutions at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels to foster better human relations among the citizens of the city and within the metropolitan Kansas City area.

(g) The commission may work with civil rights organizations, community organizations, law enforcement agencies, school districts and others to collect and review data relating to patterns of discrimination, bias crimes, hate group activity, and general issues of civil and human rights.

(h) The commission may conduct studies, assemble pertinent data, implement educational programs and organize training materials for use by the commission to assist civil and human rights agencies, neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, law enforcement agencies, labor unions and businesses and others to prevent discrimination.

(i) The commission may serve as an advocate to prevent discrimination and bias crimes.

(j) The commission chairperson may appoint such committees from its membership or other citizens to fully effectuate the purpose of this chapter.

(k) The commission is empowered to hold hearings regarding issues of general or specific civil and human rights affecting the citizens of the city, to review decisions of hearing examiners appointed by the city to hear charges of violations of Chapter 213, RSMo, to administer oaths, and to take the testimony of any person under oath.

(l) Based upon its hearings or those held by its hearing examiners, the commission shall issue such findings as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. If the commission finds that a respondent has engaged in an unlawful discriminatory practice as defined in Chapter 213, RSMo, the commission shall issue and cause to be served on the respondent an order requiring the respondent to cease and desist from the unlawful discriminatory practice. The order shall require the respondent to take such affirmative action or award such relief as in the commission's judgment will implement the purposes of this chapter and of Chapter 213, RSMo, including but not limited to the assessment of civil penalties, reinstatement, back pay, making available the dwelling or public accommodation, actual damages, or any other relief that is deemed appropriate and which is consistent with Chapter 213, RSMo.

(m) Should the respondent also be a city contractor, upon complaint by the civil rights and equal opportunity department and after hearing duly held, the commission shall make findings of fact and conclusions of law; and when it finds a breach of conditions of any contract or franchise wherein compliance with this chapter is assured, it shall make an order specifying the terms and conditions under which any contract or franchise will be continued in force, or in the alternative shall order the cancellation, termination or suspension of such contract or franchise, or order that such contractor or franchise holder be ineligible to receive any city contract or franchise for a period of one year.

(n) The chairperson may appoint hearing review panels composed of not less three persons to review hearings conducted by a hearing examiner regarding violations of Chapter 213, RSMo. Panels shall be appointed on a rotating basis to ensure that all commission members have an opportunity to review recommended findings of the hearing examiner. Any member of the commission who has a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest regarding an issue to be heard by the commission will not participate in the proceedings regarding that issue.

(o) The commission is empowered to hold hearings, upon complaint of an aggrieved party or upon an investigation by the director to determine whether the owner, operator, agent or an employee of a business or facility within a redevelopment area is using a prohibited dress code. Based upon its hearings, or those held by its hearing examiners, the commission shall issue such findings as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. If the commission finds that the owner, operator or employee of such a business or facility has used, or is using, a prohibited dress code, and, therefore, has engaged in an unlawful discriminatory practice as defined in Chapter 213, RSMo, or in Section 38-113, the commission shall issue and cause to be served on the owner, operator, agent or employee an order requiring the owner, operator or employee to cease and desist from the use of the prohibited dress code. The order may also require the owner, operator, agent or employee to take further affirmative action or award such relief as in the commission's judgment will implement the purposes of this chapter and of Chapter 213, RSMo, including but not limited to the assessment of civil penalties, making access available to those individuals denied access to the public accommodation because of the use of a prohibited dress code, actual damages, or any other relief that is deemed appropriate and which is consistent with Chapter 213, RSMo, and Chapter 38 [http://library.municode.com/HTML/10156/level2/PTIICOOR\\_CH38HURE.html](http://library.municode.com/HTML/10156/level2/PTIICOOR_CH38HURE.html)>, Code of Ordinances.

(p) The commission shall study, advise and make other recommendations for legislation, policies, procedures and practices of the city, other businesses entities, and other public entities as are consistent with the purposes of this chapter.

### **Sec. 38-65. Incident reports.**

(a) Whenever any police officer has identified a victim of an alleged bias crime or city ordinance violation, the police department of the city shall, to the extent known, supply the name, address and telephone number of the victim to the director, together with other relevant information concerning the victim. Whenever any police officer has identified an incident that does not constitute a crime or city ordinance violation the officer will refer the victim to the director. The director shall establish a telephone line for citizens to call to report incidents of possible bias incidents that are not crimes or city ordinance violations.

(b) The purposes of this reporting are to permit the director to:

- (1) Contact the victim for the purpose of offering to help the victim deal with the police department, prosecutors and other interested agencies, and to help secure any other support which may be available to the victim;
- (2) Determine whether the incident is related to a pattern of discrimination, or if, due to bias-related tensions in the area where the incident occurred, further incidents are likely to occur if remedial action is not taken; and
- (3) Make such reports available to the human rights commission's bias incident task force without disclosing confidential information.

(c) The commission's bias incident task force shall file a quarterly report with the Mayor and City Council containing a description of incidents, whether such incidents were isolated or a pattern, the location of incidents to include council district, and recommendations.

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Approved as to form and legality:

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Eluard Alegre  
Associate City Attorney