

ORDINANCE NO.

FILE OF CITY COUNCIL

BILL NO. 74 - 2025

August 20, 2025

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Chapter 27 DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION of the City's Code relating to the initial appointments of the commission.

SECTION ONE: Chapter 27, Discrimination and Human Relations Commission, shall have the following provisions and read as follows under the Human Relations Commission:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A. The Allentown Human Relations Commission was established pursuant to 43 P.S. §962.1 of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, by Ordinance No. 2024 - , and may be referred to as the "City of Allentown Human Relations Commission" or the "Commission".

B. The Commission shall be composed of volunteers and shall consist of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than thirteen (13) members. The members shall serve terms of three (3) years each, with the initial terms for one third of the members being one (1) year, one third being two (2) years and the remainder being three (3) years. At all times there shall be an odd number of members. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. Members of the Commission shall be residents of Allentown, individuals working in Allentown, or business owners who operate within Allentown. Members of the Commission may not be elected officers in any political party.

The Mayor shall have 30 days after the effective date of this ordinance to submit members of the initial board to Allentown City Council for approval. The terms of the appointments shall be staggered terms based on the initial appointments with one third of the members serving (1) year thereafter able to seek reappointment, one third serving two (2) years thereafter able to seek reappointment, and the remainder of members serving the full three (3) year term thereafter able to seek reappointment. If the Mayor does not

appoint new Human Relations Commissioners within thirty (30) days, City Council shall appoint a sufficient number of Commissioners to constitute a quorum.

C. Members of the Commission shall serve without salary but may be paid expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, as approved by the Commission.

D. The Commission is hereby vested with the authority to administer and enforce the City of Allentown Human Relations Ordinance and shall be given sufficient administrative and legal support from the City to carry out its powers and duties.

E. Any Commission member missing three (3) meetings in a row or missing more than three (3) meetings in a twelve (12) month period will be deemed as having resigned their position as Human Relations Commissioner, and the remainder of their term will be filled by appointment in accordance with this section.

F. If the number of Human Relations Commissioners serving on the Commission drops below seven (7) because of resignation or lack of attendance, additional Human Relations Commission members shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council, within sixty (60) days. If the Mayor does not appoint new Human Relations Commissioners within sixty (60) days of the Commission dropping below seven (7) members, City Council shall appoint sufficient Commissioners to ensure the Human Relations Commission has seven (7) members.

G. The Commission may select up to three (3) additional non-voting, ex-officio members to broaden the diversity that serves and advises the Commission. Such ex-officio members will not be counted toward the seven (7) member Commission minimum, will not count toward establishing a quorum and shall serve for no more than three (3) years.

H. The Commission shall select one (1) of its members as the Chair of the Commission, one (1) as Vice Chair, and one (1) as Secretary.

I. The Chair of the Human Relations Commission will be responsible for setting Commission meetings, coordinating with the Office of Human Resources regarding received complaints and answers, and generally ensuring that the duties of the Commission are fulfilled. The Chair may delegate responsibility for Commission duties to specific Commissioners or to paid staff. The Vice Chair will serve as Chair when the Chair is otherwise unavailable in emergency situations. The Commission Secretary shall coordinate minute-taking at meetings which may be done by paid staff or a Commissioner. Meetings may be recorded to assist with the preparation of the minutes.

J. A voting quorum of the Commission will be no less than half of the currently serving Commission members and may be no less than four (4) Commissioners.

K. Meetings of the Commission shall be duly advertised and conducted in accordance with the Pennsylvania Open Meetings Law.

L. Should the City of Allentown be designated as a respondent in a complaint of discrimination, the Commission may retain outside legal counsel to handle such complaint in its entirety on behalf of the Commission. Outside legal counsel shall be required to agree to all the City's standard terms and conditions, including insurance requirements. Notice of the engagement shall be provided to the Board of Commissioners in writing.

SECTION TWO: Pursuant to Section 218 of the Home Rule Charter and by the affirmative vote of six of its seven members the fourteen-day period between introduction and passage this ordinance is hereby eliminated.

SECTION THREE: Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance shall be determined to be unlawful, invalid, void or unenforceable, then that provision shall be considered severable from the remaining provisions of this Ordinance which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION THREE: This ordinance shall become effective 10 days after final passage.