

CHAPTER 363

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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363.01 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Terms.** For the purposes of this chapter, the words defined in this section have the meanings ascribed to them.

Subd. 2. [Repealed, 1965 c 586 s 6]

Subd. 3. **Board.** "Board" means the state board of human rights.

Subd. 4. **Employment agency.** "Employment agency" means a person or persons who, or an agency which regularly undertakes, with or without compensation, to procure employees or opportunities for employment.

Subd. 5. **Labor organization.** "Labor organization" means any organization that exists wholly or partly for one or more of the following purposes:

- (1) Collective bargaining;
- (2) Dealing with employers concerning grievances, terms or conditions of employment; or
- (3) Mutual aid or protection of employees.

Subd. 6. **National origin.** "National origin" means the place of birth of an individual or of any of the individual's lineal ancestors.

Subd. 7. **Person.** "Person" includes partnership, association, corporation, legal representative, trustee, trustee in bankruptcy, receiver, and the state and its departments, agencies, and political subdivisions.

Subd. 8. **Respondent.** "Respondent" means a person against whom a complaint has been filed or issued.

Subd. 9. **Unfair discriminatory practices.** "Unfair discriminatory practice" means any act described in section 363.03.

Subd. 10. **Discriminate.** The term "discriminate" includes segregate or separate and, for purposes of discrimination based on sex, it includes sexual harassment.

Subd. 10a. **Sexual harassment.** "Sexual harassment" includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining employment, public accommodations or public services, education, or housing;
- (2) submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment, public accommodations or public services, education, or housing; or
- (3) that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially

interfering with an individual's employment, public accommodations or public services, education, or housing, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment, public accommodations, public services, educational, or housing environment; and in the case of employment, the employer knows or should know of the existence of the harassment and fails to take timely and appropriate action.

Subd. 11. [Repealed, 1967 c 897 s 29]

Subd. 12. **Real property.** "Real property" includes real estate, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, corporeal and incorporeal.

Subd. 13. **Real estate broker or salesperson.** "Real estate broker or salesperson" means, respectively, a real estate broker as defined by section 82.17, subdivision 4, and a real estate salesperson as defined by section 82.17, subdivision 5.

Subd. 14. **Commissioner.** "Commissioner" means the commissioner of human rights.

Subd. 15. **Employer.** "Employer" means a person who has one or more employees.

Subd. 16. **Party in interest.** "Party in interest" means the complainant, respondent, commissioner or board member.

Subd. 17. **Hearing examiners.** "Hearing examiners" are persons admitted to practice law who are selected by the commissioner to conduct hearings.

Subd. 18. **Public accommodations.** "Place of public accommodation" means a business, accommodation, refreshment, entertainment, recreation, or transportation facility of any kind, whether licensed or not, whose goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations are extended, offered, sold, or otherwise made available to the public.

Subd. 19. **Public services.** "Public service" means any public facility, department, agency, board or commission, owned, operated or managed by or on behalf of the state of Minnesota, or any subdivision thereof, including any county, city, town, township, or independent district in the state.

Subd. 20. **Educational institutions.** "Educational institution" means a public or private institution and includes an academy, college, elementary or secondary school, extension course, kindergarten, nursery, school system and a business, nursing, professional, secretarial, technical, vocational school; and includes an agent of an educational institution.

Subd. 21. **Religious or denominational educational institutions.** "Religious or denominational educational institution" means an educational institution which is operated, supervised, controlled or sustained primarily by a religious or denominational organization, or is one which is stated by the parent church body to be and is, in fact, officially related to that church by being represented on the board of the institution, and by providing substantial financial assistance and which has certified, in writing, to the board that it is a religious or denominational educational institution.

Subd. 22. **Charging party.** "Charging party" means a person filing a charge with the commissioner or the commissioner's designated agent pursuant to section 363.06, subdivision 1.

Subd. 23. **Complainant.** "Complainant" means the commissioner of human rights after issuing a complaint pursuant to section 363.06.

Subd. 24. **Local commission.** "Local commission" means an agency of a city, county, or group of counties created pursuant to law, resolution of a county board, city charter, or municipal ordinance for the purpose of dealing with discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or familial status.

Subd. 25. **Disability.** "Disability" means any condition or characteristic that renders a person a disabled person. A disabled person is any person who (1) has a physical, sensory, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Subd. 25a. **Qualified disabled person.** "Qualified disabled person" means:

(1) with respect to employment, a disabled person who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions required of all applicants for the job in question; and

(2) with respect to services and programs, a disabled person who, with physical and program access, meets the essential eligibility criteria required of all applicants for the program or service in question.

For the purposes of this subdivision, "disability" excludes any condition resulting from alcohol or drug abuse which prevents a person from performing the essential functions of the job in question or constitutes a direct threat to property or the safety of others.

Subd. 26. **Department.** "Department" means the department of human rights.

Subd. 27. **Status with regard to public assistance.** "Status with regard to public assistance" means the condition of being a recipient of federal, state or local assistance, including medical assistance, or of being a tenant receiving federal, state or local subsidies, including rental assistance or rent supplements.

Subd. 28. **Age.** "Age" insofar as it refers to any prohibited unfair employment or education practice shall be deemed to protect only those individuals over the age of majority except for section 363.03, subdivision 5 which shall be deemed to protect any individual over the age of 25 years.

Subd. 29. **Sex.** "Sex" includes, but is not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, and disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth.

Subd. 30. **Elderly person.** "Elderly person" means a person who is at least 55 years of age.

Subd. 31. **Familial status.** "Familial status" means the condition of one or more minors being domiciled with (a) their parent or parents or the minor's legal guardian or (b) the designee of the parent or parents or guardian with the written permission of the parent or parents or guardian.

Subd. 32. **Cooperative apartment corporation.** "Cooperative apartment corporation" means a corporation or association organized under sections 308.05 to 308.18 or chapter 317, the shareholders or members of which are entitled, solely by reason of their ownership of stock or membership certificates in the corporation or association, to occupy one or more residential units in a building owned or leased by the corporation or association.

Subd. 33. **Physical access.** "Physical access" means (1) the absence of physical obstacles that limit a disabled person's opportunity for full and equal use of or benefit from goods, services, and privileges; or, when necessary, (2) the use of methods to overcome the discriminatory effect of physical obstacles. The methods may include redesign of equipment, assignment of aides, or use of alternate accessible locations.

Subd. 34. **Program access.** "Program access" means (1) the use of auxiliary aids or services to ensure full and equal use of or benefit from goods, services, and privileges; and (2) the absence of criteria or methods of administration that directly, indirectly, or through contractual or other arrangements, have the effect of subjecting qualified disabled persons to discrimination on the basis of disability, or have the effect of defeating or impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the program.

Subd. 35. **Human rights investigative data.** "Human rights investigative data" means written documents issued or gathered by the department for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting alleged or suspected discrimination.

Subd. 36. **Confidential, private, and public data on individuals and protected nonpublic data not on individuals.** "Confidential," "private," "public data on individuals," "protected nonpublic data not on individuals," and any other terms concerning the availability of human rights investigative data have the meanings given them by section 13.02 of the Minnesota government data practices act.

Subd. 37. **Closed case file.** "Closed case file" means a file containing human rights

investigative data in which an order or other decision resolving the alleged or suspected discrimination has been made or issued by the commissioner, a hearing officer, or a court, and the time for any reconsideration of or appeal from the order or decision has expired.

Subd. 38. Open case file. "Open case file" means a file containing human rights investigative data in which no order or other decision resolving the alleged or suspected discrimination has been made or issued by the commissioner, a hearing officer, or a court, or a file in which an order or other decision has been issued but the time for any reconsideration or appeal of the order or decision has either not yet expired or the reconsideration or appeal is then pending.

Subd. 39. Employee. "Employee" means an individual who is employed by an employer and who resides or works in this state. Employee includes a commission salesperson, as defined in section 181.145, who resides or works in this state.

Subd. 40. Marital status. "Marital status" means whether a person is single, married, remarried, divorced, separated, or a surviving spouse and, in employment cases, includes protection against discrimination on the basis of the identity, situation, actions, or beliefs of a spouse or former spouse.

History: 1955 c 516 s 3; 1961 c 428 s 1-3; 1967 c 897 s 1-9; 1969 c 975 s 1,2; 1973 c 123 art 5 s 7; 1973 c 729 s 1; 1976 c 2 s 130; 1977 c 351 s 1; 1977 c 408 s 1; 1980 c 531 s 1,2; 1982 c 492 s 1; 1982 c 619 s 2,3; 1983 c 276 s 1-4; 1Sp1985 c 13 s 320-324; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 23 s 1; 1987 c 282 s 2; 1988 c 660 s 1

363.02 EXEMPTIONS.

Subdivision 1. Employment. The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 1, shall not apply to:

- (1) The employment of any individual
 - (a) by the individual's parent, grandparent, spouse, child, or grandchild, or
 - (b) in the domestic service of any person;
- (2) A religious or fraternal corporation, association, or society, with respect to qualifications based on religion, when religion shall be a bona fide occupational qualification for employment;
- (3) The employment of one person in place of another, standing by itself, shall not be evidence of an unfair discriminatory practice;
- (4) The operation of a bona fide seniority system which mandates differences in such things as wages, hiring priorities, layoff priorities, vacation credit, and job assignments based on seniority, so long as the operation of the system is not a subterfuge to evade the provisions of this chapter;
- (5) With respect to age discrimination, a practice by which a labor organization or employer offers or supplies varying insurance benefits or other fringe benefits to members or employees of differing ages, so long as the cost to the labor organization or employer for the benefits is reasonably equivalent for all members or employees;
- (6) A restriction imposed by state statute, home rule charter, ordinance, or civil service rule, and applied uniformly and without exception to all individuals, which establishes a maximum age for entry into employment as a peace officer or firefighter.
- (7) Nothing in this chapter concerning age discrimination shall be construed to validate or permit age requirements which have a disproportionate impact on persons of any class otherwise protected by section 363.03, subdivision 1 or 5.

It is not an unfair employment practice for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization:

- (i) to require or request a person to undergo physical examination, which may include a medical history, for the purpose of determining the person's capability to perform available employment, provided (a) that an offer of employment has been made on condition that the person meets the physical or mental requirements of the job; (b) that the examination tests only for essential job-related abilities; and (c) that

the examination except for examinations authorized under chapter 176 is required of all persons conditionally offered employment for the same position regardless of disability; or

(ii) with the consent of the employee, to obtain additional medical information for the purposes of establishing an employee health record;

(iii) to administer preemployment tests, provided that the tests (a) measure only essential job-related abilities, (b) are required of all applicants for the same position regardless of disability except for tests authorized under chapter 176, and (c) accurately measure the applicant's aptitude, achievement level, or whatever factors they purport to measure rather than reflecting the applicant's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, except when those skills are the factors that the tests purport to measure; or

(iv) to limit receipt of benefits payable under a fringe benefit plan for disabilities to that period of time which a licensed physician reasonably determines a person is unable to work; or

(v) to provide special safety considerations for pregnant women involved in tasks which are potentially hazardous to the health of the unborn child, as determined by medical criteria.

Subd. 2. Housing. (1) The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 2, shall not apply to:

(a) rooms in a temporary or permanent residence home run by a nonprofit organization, if the discrimination is by sex; or

(b) the rental by a resident owner or occupier of a one-family accommodation of a room or rooms in the accommodation to another person or persons if the discrimination is by sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to require any person or group of persons selling, renting or leasing property to modify the property in any way, or exercise a higher degree of care for a person having a disability than for a person who does not have a disability; nor shall this chapter be construed to relieve any person or persons of any obligations generally imposed on all persons regardless of any disability in a written lease, rental agreement, or contract of purchase or sale, or to forbid distinctions based on the inability to fulfill the terms and conditions, including financial obligations of the lease, agreement or contract.

(2) The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 2, prohibiting discrimination because of familial status shall not be construed to defeat the applicability of any local, state or federal restrictions regarding the maximum number of occupants permitted to occupy a dwelling unit and shall not apply to:

(a) any unoccupied dwelling unit in one building of a housing complex consisting of two buildings or, in a housing complex consisting of three or more buildings, any unoccupied dwelling unit in up to one-third of all buildings in the housing complex. For the purposes of this clause, "housing complex" means a group of buildings each containing five or more units on a contiguous parcel of land owned by the same person; a building shall not be exempt from section 363.03, subdivision 2, pursuant to this clause unless the owner has filed an election to designate the building as exempt with the commissioner; an election made by an owner pursuant to this clause may not be withdrawn for purposes of designating another building in the housing complex as exempt for a period of one year from the filing of the election; or

(b) any unit in a condominium created prior to April 12, 1980, any unit in a condominium, other than a condominium converted from a residential building, created on or after April 12, 1980, and any unit in an adults-only condominium created from an existing adults-only rental building on or after April 12, 1980; or

(c) an unoccupied dwelling unit in any building in which at least a majority of the dwelling units are occupied by elderly persons or are unoccupied and available for occupancy solely by households of which at least one member is an elderly person; or

(d) any owner occupied building containing four or fewer dwelling units; or

(e) an unoccupied dwelling unit in any building which is the subject of a valid

certificate filed with the commissioner pursuant to the provisions of this clause. To be valid, a certificate must be on a form provided by the commissioner, be received by the commissioner, state that on the date that the certificate is received by the commissioner at least a majority of the dwelling units in the building are occupied by elderly persons or are unoccupied and available for occupancy solely by households of which at least one member is an elderly person, state that on the date that the certificate is received by the commissioner there is on file with the owner of the building or a specified duly authorized agent of the owner for each occupied unit relied upon in support of the certificate a signed statement by an elderly person occupying the unit on the date that the certificate is received by the commissioner that the person is an elderly person, state that for a period of 180 days following the receipt of the certificate by the commissioner the owner or duly authorized agent will preserve the signed statements of the elderly persons and will, upon request, make the statements available for inspection by the commissioner or by any local commission having jurisdiction over the building, be signed by the owner or the duly authorized agent, and be in all respects true and accurate. A valid certificate shall remain valid for a period of 180 days following the date on which it is received by the commissioner. Any owner or authorized agent who files a certificate containing statements or information that the owner or authorized agent knows or should reasonably know to be false shall be guilty of a misdemeanor;

(f) any unoccupied dwelling unit of up to one-third of the units in a building that is not part of a multibuilding complex; or

(g) any dwelling unit in a building owned by a cooperative apartment corporation, other than a building converted from a residential rental building to a cooperative apartment corporation building on or after April 12, 1980, unless that conversion was from an existing adults-only residential rental building.

Subd. 2a. Manufactured home parks. The provisions of subdivision 2, prohibiting discrimination because of familial status:

(1) do not apply to a manufactured home park the majority of whose lots are reserved by park rule to households containing at least one elderly person; and

(2) do not apply to a section or sections of a manufactured home park which are identified by park rule and do not comprise more than one-third of the lots in the park. In order to qualify for exemption under this subdivision, a park owner must comply with section 327C.02, subdivision 2, 327C.05, or 327C.07, subdivision 4, when adopting or amending a rule concerning the permitted familial status of residents or of buyers of homes offered for in park sale.

Subd. 2b. Eviction due to familial status. The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 2, prohibiting discrimination because of familial status, do not apply to eviction from, or denial of continuing tenancy in, dwelling units exempt through certification under this section, provided that (1) one year has elapsed from the commencement of the familial status and (2) six months prior written notice has been given to the tenant, unless the eviction or denial of continuing tenancy is for nonpayment of rent, damage to the premises, disturbance of other tenants, or other breach of the lease.

Subd. 3. Education. (a) It is not an unfair discriminatory practice for a religious or denominational institution to limit admission or give preference to applicants of the same religion. The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 5, relating to sex, shall not apply to a private educational institution, or branch or level of a private educational institution, in which students of only one sex are permitted to enroll. Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit an educational institution from using academic qualifications or achievements as criteria for admission or requiring from applicants information which relates to academic qualifications or achievements.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter or any law to the contrary, it is not an unfair discriminatory practice for an educational institution or a public service to operate or sponsor separate athletic teams and activities for members of each sex or to restrict membership on an athletic team to participants of one sex, if this separation or restriction meets the requirements of section 126.21.

(c) The department of human rights shall investigate all charges alleging sex discrimination in athletic programs in educational institutions and public services pursuant to the standards and requirements of section 126.21 and the procedures enumerated in this chapter.

(d) Nothing in this chapter restricts or limits the rights, procedures, and remedies available under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, United States Code, title 29, section 794, or the Education of the Handicapped Act, United States Code, title 20, sections 1401 and following.

Subd. 4. Public accommodations. The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 3, relating to sex, shall not apply to such facilities as restrooms, locker rooms, and other similar places.

Subd. 5. Disability. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any program, service, facility, or privilege afforded to a person with a disability which is intended to habilitate, rehabilitate, or accommodate that person. It is a defense to a complaint or action brought under the employment provisions of this chapter that the person bringing the complaint or action has a disability which in the circumstances and even with reasonable accommodation, as defined in section 363.03, subdivision 1, clause (6), poses a serious threat to the health or safety of the disabled person or others. The burden of proving this defense is upon the respondent.

Subd. 6. Age. By law or published retirement policy, a mandatory retirement age may be established without being a violation of this chapter if it is established consistent with section 181.81. Nothing in this chapter nor in section 181.81 shall prohibit employee pension and retirement plans from granting pension credit to employees over the age of 65 at a lesser rate than is granted to other employees, provided that in no event may an employee's accumulated pension credits be reduced by continued employment, and further provided that no other state or federal law is violated by the reduced rate of pension credit accrual. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit the establishment of differential privileges, benefits, services or facilities for persons of designated ages if (a) such differential treatment is provided pursuant to statute, or (b) the designated age is greater than 59 years or less than 21 years.

Subd. 7. Summer youth employment program. The provisions of section 363.03, subdivision 1, with regard to age shall not apply to the state summer youth employment program administered by the commissioner of jobs and training.

History: 1955 c 516 s 4; 1961 c 428 s 4; 1965 c 584 s 1; 1967 c 897 s 10,11; 1973 c 729 s 2; 1975 c 206 s 1; 1977 c 351 s 2-4; 1977 c 408 s 2; 1977 c 430 s 25 subd 1; 1978 c 649 s 4; 1980 c 355 s 3; 1980 c 509 s 143; 1980 c 531 s 3; 1982 c 492 s 2; 1982 c 526 art 2 s 16; 1983 c 276 s 5,6; 1983 c 301 s 198; 1984 c 608 s 3; 1Sp1985 c 14 art 9 s 75; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 23 s 2; 1987 c 129 s 1,2; 1988 c 660 s 2,3

NOTE: See also section 471.997.

363.03 UNFAIR DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES.

Subdivision 1. Employment. Except when based on a bona fide occupational qualification, it is an unfair employment practice:

(1) For a labor organization, because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or age,

(a) to deny full and equal membership rights to a person seeking membership or to a member;

(b) to expel a member from membership;

(c) to discriminate against a person seeking membership or a member with respect to hiring, apprenticeship, tenure, compensation, terms, upgrading, conditions, facilities, or privileges of employment; or

(d) to fail to classify properly, or refer for employment or otherwise to discriminate against a person or member.

(2) For an employer, because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex,

marital status, status with regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, or age,

(a) to refuse to hire or to maintain a system of employment which unreasonably excludes a person seeking employment; or

(b) to discharge an employee; or

(c) to discriminate against a person with respect to hiring, tenure, compensation, terms, upgrading, conditions, facilities, or privileges of employment.

(3) For an employment agency, because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or age,

(a) to refuse or fail to accept, register, classify properly, or refer for employment or otherwise to discriminate against a person; or

(b) to comply with a request from an employer for referral of applicants for employment if the request indicates directly or indirectly that the employer fails to comply with the provisions of this chapter.

(4) For an employer, employment agency, or labor organization, before a person is employed by an employer or admitted to membership in a labor organization, to

(a) require the person to furnish information that pertains to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability, unless, for the purpose of national security, information pertaining to national origin is required by the United States, this state or a political subdivision or agency of the United States or this state, or for the purpose of compliance with the public contracts act or any rule, regulation, or laws of the United States or of this state requiring information pertaining to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability is required by the United States or a political subdivision or agency of the United States; or

(b) cause to be printed or published a notice or advertisement that relates to employment or membership and discloses a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or age.

(5) For an employer, an employment agency or a labor organization, with respect to all employment related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, not to treat women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth, the same as other persons who are not so affected but who are similar in their ability or inability to work.

(6) For an employer with 50 or more permanent, full-time employees, an employment agency or a labor organization, not to make reasonable accommodation to the known disability of a qualified disabled person or job applicant unless the employer, agency, or organization can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the business, agency, or organization. "Reasonable accommodation" means steps which must be taken to accommodate the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified disabled person. "Reasonable accommodation" may include but is not limited to: (a) making facilities readily accessible to and usable by disabled persons; and (b) job restructuring, modified work schedules that do not reduce the total number of hours normally worked, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, and the provision of aides on a temporary or periodic basis.

In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of a business or organization, factors to be considered include:

(a) the overall size of the business or organization with respect to number of employees or members and the number and type of facilities;

(b) the type of the operation, including the composition and structure of the work force, and the number of employees at the location where the employment would occur;

(c) the nature and cost of the needed accommodation;

(d) the reasonable ability to finance the accommodation at each site of business;
and

(e) documented good faith efforts to explore less restrictive or less expensive alternatives, including consultation with the disabled person or with knowledgeable disabled persons or organizations.

A prospective employer need not pay for an accommodation for a job applicant if it is available from an alternative source without cost to the employer or applicant.

Subd. 2. Real property. It is an unfair discriminatory practice:

(1) For an owner, lessee, sublessee, assignee, or managing agent of, or other person having the right to sell, rent or lease any real property, or any agent of any of these:

(a) to refuse to sell, rent, or lease or otherwise deny to or withhold from any person or group of persons any real property because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status; or

(b) to discriminate against any person or group of persons because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status in the terms, conditions or privileges of the sale, rental or lease of any real property or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection therewith, except that nothing in this clause shall be construed to prohibit the adoption of reasonable rules intended to protect the safety of minors in their use of the real property or any facilities or services furnished in connection therewith; or

(c) in any transaction involving real property, to print, circulate or post or cause to be printed, circulated, or posted any advertisement or sign, or use any form of application for the purchase, rental or lease of real property, or make any record or inquiry in connection with the prospective purchase, rental, or lease of real property which expresses, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification, or discrimination as to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status, or any intent to make any such limitation, specification, or discrimination except that nothing in this clause shall be construed to prohibit the advertisement of a dwelling unit as available to adults-only if the person placing the advertisement reasonably believes that the provisions of this subdivision prohibiting discrimination because of familial status do not apply to the dwelling unit.

(2) For a real estate broker, real estate salesperson, or employee, or agent thereof:

(a) to refuse to sell, rent, or lease or to offer for sale, rental, or lease any real property to any person or group of persons or to negotiate for the sale, rental, or lease of any real property to any person or group of persons because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status or represent that real property is not available for inspection, sale, rental, or lease when in fact it is so available, or otherwise deny or withhold any real property or any facilities of real property to or from any person or group of persons because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status; or

(b) to discriminate against any person because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status in the terms, conditions or privileges of the sale, rental or lease of real property or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection therewith; or

(c) to print, circulate, or post or cause to be printed, circulated, or posted any advertisement or sign, or use any form of application for the purchase, rental, or lease of any real property or make any record or inquiry in connection with the prospective purchase, rental or lease of any real property, which expresses directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification or discrimination as to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status or any intent to make any such limitation, specification, or discrimination except that nothing in this clause shall be construed to prohibit the advertisement of a dwelling unit as available to adults-only if the person placing the advertisement reasonably believes that the provisions of this subdivision prohibiting discrimination because of familial status do not apply to the dwelling unit.

(3) For a person, bank, banking organization, mortgage company, insurance company, or other financial institution or lender to whom application is made for financial assistance for the purchase, lease, acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of any real property or any agent or employee thereof:

(a) to discriminate against any person or group of persons because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status of the person or group of persons or of the prospective occupants or tenants of the real property in the granting, withholding, extending, modifying or renewing, or in the rates, terms, conditions, or privileges of the financial assistance or in the extension of services in connection therewith; or

(b) to use any form of application for the financial assistance or make any record or inquiry in connection with applications for the financial assistance which expresses, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification, or discrimination as to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or familial status or any intent to make any such limitation, specification, or discrimination; or

(c) to discriminate against any person or group of persons who desire to purchase, lease, acquire, construct, rehabilitate, repair, or maintain real property in a specific urban or rural area or any part thereof solely because of the social, economic, or environmental conditions of the area in the granting, withholding, extending, modifying, or renewing, or in the rates, terms, conditions, or privileges of the financial assistance or in the extension of services in connection therewith.

(4) For any real estate broker or real estate salesperson, for the purpose of inducing a real property transaction from which the person, the person's firm, or any of its members may benefit financially, to represent that a change has occurred or will or may occur in the composition with respect to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability of the owners or occupants in the block, neighborhood, or area in which the real property is located, and to represent, directly or indirectly, that this change will or may result in undesirable consequences in the block, neighborhood, or area in which the real property is located, including but not limited to the lowering of property values, an increase in criminal or antisocial behavior, or a decline in the quality of schools or other public facilities.

(5) For a person to deny a totally or partially blind, physically handicapped, or deaf person with a service dog full and equal access to real property provided for in this section. The person may not be required to pay extra compensation for the service dog but is liable for damage done to the premises by the service dog.

Notwithstanding the provisions of any law, ordinance, or home rule charter to the contrary, no person shall be deemed to have committed an unfair discriminatory practice based upon age if the unfair discriminatory practice alleged is attempted or accomplished for the purpose of obtaining or maintaining one of the exemptions provided for a dwelling unit provided for in section 363.02, subdivision 2.

Subd. 3. Public accommodations. It is an unfair discriminatory practice:

To deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of a place of public accommodation because of race, color, creed, religion, disability, national origin or sex. It is an unfair discriminatory practice for a taxicab company to discriminate in the access to, full utilization of or benefit from service because of a person's disability. Nothing in this subdivision requires any person to exercise a higher degree of care for a person having a disability or to modify property in any way except as required by the accessibility provisions of the state building code.

Subd. 4. Public services. It is an unfair discriminatory practice:

(1) To discriminate against any person in the access to, admission to, full utilization of or benefit from any public service because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex or status with regard to public assistance or to fail to ensure physical and program access for disabled persons unless the public service can demon-

strate that providing the access would impose an undue hardship on its operation. In determining whether providing physical and program access would impose an undue hardship, factors to be considered include:

- (a) the type and purpose of the public service's operation;
- (b) the nature and cost of the needed accommodation;
- (c) documented good faith efforts to explore less restrictive or less expensive alternatives; and
- (d) the extent of consultation with knowledgeable disabled persons and organizations.

Physical and program access must be accomplished within six months of the effective date of this section, except for needed architectural modifications, which must be made within two years of the effective date of this section.

(2) For public transit services to discriminate in the access to, full utilization of, or benefit from service because of a person's disability. Public transit services may use any of a variety of methods to provide transportation for disabled people, provided that persons who are disabled are offered transportation that, in relation to the transportation offered nondisabled persons, is:

(a) in a similar geographic area of operation. To the extent that the transportation provided disabled people is not provided in the same geographic area of operation as that provided nondisabled people, priority must be given to those areas which contain the largest percent of disabled riders. A public transit service may not fail to provide transportation to disabled persons in a geographic area for which it provides service to nondisabled persons if doing so will exclude a sizable portion of the disabled ridership;

- (b) during similar hours of operation;
- (c) for comparable fares;
- (d) with similar or no restrictions as to trip purpose; and
- (e) with reasonable response time.

Public transit services must meet these five criteria for the provision of transit services within three years of the effective date of this section.

Subd. 4a. [Repealed, 1983 c 276 s 11]

Subd. 5. **Educational institution.** It is an unfair discriminatory practice:

(1) To discriminate in any manner in the full utilization of or benefit from any educational institution, or the services rendered thereby to any person because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability, or to fail to ensure physical and program access for disabled persons. For purposes of this paragraph, program access includes but is not limited to providing taped texts, interpreters or other methods of making orally delivered materials available, readers in libraries, adapted classroom equipment, and similar auxiliary aids or services. Program access does not include providing attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

(2) To exclude, expel, or otherwise discriminate against a person seeking admission as a student, or a person enrolled as a student because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability.

(3) To make or use a written or oral inquiry, or form of application for admission that elicits or attempts to elicit information, or to make or keep a record, concerning the race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status or disability of a person seeking admission, except as permitted by rules of the department.

Subd. 6. **Aiding and abetting and obstruction.** It is an unfair discriminatory practice for any person:

(1) Intentionally to aid, abet, incite, compel, or coerce a person to engage in any of the practices forbidden by this chapter;

(2) Intentionally to attempt to aid, abet, incite, compel, or coerce a person to engage in any of the practices forbidden by this chapter;

(3) To intentionally obstruct or prevent any person from complying with the provisions of this chapter, or any order issued thereunder, or to resist, prevent, impede, or interfere with the commissioner or any of the commissioner's employees or representatives in the performance of duty under this chapter.

Subd. 7. Reprisals. It is an unfair discriminatory practice for any employer, labor organization, employment agency, public accommodation, public service, educational institution, or owner, lessor, lessee, sublessee, assignee or managing agent of any real property, or any real estate broker, real estate salesperson or employee or agent thereof to intentionally engage in any reprisal against any person because that person:

(1) Opposed a practice forbidden under this chapter or has filed a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any matter in an investigation, proceeding or hearing under this chapter; or

(2) Associated with a person or group of persons who are disabled or who are of different race, color, creed, religion, or national origin.

A reprisal includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, retaliation, or harassment. It is a reprisal for an employer to do any of the following with respect to an individual because that individual has engaged in the activities listed in clause (1) or (2): refuse to hire the individual; depart from any customary employment practice; transfer or assign the individual to a lesser position in terms of wages, hours, job classification, job security, or other employment status; or inform another employer that the individual has engaged in the activities listed in clause (1) or (2).

Subd. 8. Credit; sex discrimination. It is an unfair discriminatory practice:

(1) to discriminate in the extension of personal or commercial credit to a person, or in the requirements for obtaining credit, because of sex or marital status; or

(2) for a credit card issuer to refuse to issue a credit card to a woman under her current or former surname unless there is an intent to defraud or mislead, except that a credit card issuer may require that a woman requesting a card under a former surname open a separate account in that name. A credit card issuer may also require disclosure of any other names under which the credit card applicant may have a credit history.

Subd. 8a. Business; sex discrimination. It is an unfair discriminatory practice for a person engaged in a trade or business or in the provision of a service to refuse to do business with or provide a service to a woman based on her use of her current or former surname. It is an unfair discriminatory practice for a person to impose, as a condition of doing business with or providing a service to a woman, that a woman use her current surname rather than a former surname.

Subd. 9. Interference with pension rights. For purposes of subdivision 1 discrimination on account of age shall include acts which interfere with an employee's opportunity to acquire pension credits or pension benefits when the interference cannot be shown to have been based on just cause unrelated to the employee's status with regard to pension credits or pension benefits.

Subd. 10. Discrimination against blind, handicapped, or deaf persons prohibited. (a) It is an unfair discriminatory practice for an owner, operator or manager of a hotel, restaurant, public conveyance or other public place, to prohibit a blind, physically handicapped, or deaf person from taking a service dog into the public place or conveyance if the service dog can be properly identified as being from a recognized school for seeing eye, hearing ear, service, or guide dogs, and if the dog is properly harnessed or leashed so that the blind, physically handicapped, or deaf person may maintain control of the dog.

(b) No person shall require a blind, physically handicapped, or deaf person to make an extra payment or pay an additional charge when taking a service dog into any of the public places referred to in paragraph (a).

History: 1955 c 516 s 5; 1961 c 428 s 5; 1965 c 585 s 2; 1965 c 586 s 1; 1967 c 897

s 12-16; 1969 c 9 s 80; 1969 c 975 s 3-5; 1973 c 296 s 1; 1973 c 729 s 3; 1974 c 354 s 1; 1975 c 206 s 2-5; 1977 c 351 s 5-7; 1977 c 408 s 3; 1980 c 531 s 4; 1980 c 540 s 1,2; 1981 c 330 s 1; 1982 c 517 s 8; 1983 c 216 art 1 s 59; 1983 c 276 s 7-10; 1984 c 533 s 2,3; 1985 c 248 s 70; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 23 s 3; 1987 c 129 s 3; 1987 c 141 s 2; 1987 c 245 s 1; 1988 c 660 s 4

363.031 LIMITATIONS ON WAIVER.

Subdivision 1. **Prospective waiver prohibited.** Any provision, whether oral or written, of a lease, contract, or other agreement or instrument, which purports to be a waiver by an individual of any right or remedy provided in this chapter is contrary to public policy and void if the waiver or release purports to waive claims arising out of acts or practices which occur after the execution of the waiver or release.

Subd. 2. **Rescission of waiver.** A waiver or release of rights or remedies secured by this chapter which purports to apply to claims arising out of acts or practices prior to, or concurrent with, the execution of the waiver or release may be rescinded within 15 calendar days of its execution, except that a waiver or release given in settlement of a claim filed with the department or with another administrative agency or judicial body is valid and final upon execution. A waiving or releasing party shall be informed in writing of the right to rescind the waiver or release. To be effective, the rescission must be in writing and delivered to the waived or released party either by hand or mail within the 15-day period. If delivered by mail, the rescission must be:

- (1) postmarked within the 15-day period;
- (2) properly addressed to the waived or released party; and
- (3) sent by certified mail return receipt requested.

History: 1984 c 567 s 1; 1985 c 175 s 1

363.04 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

Subdivision 1. **Creation; commissioner.** There is established a department of human rights under the direction and supervision of a commissioner who shall be appointed by the governor under the provisions of section 15.06.

Subd. 2. **Deputy commissioner, duties.** There shall be in the department a deputy commissioner, who shall be appointed by the commissioner and shall serve at the pleasure of the commissioner. The deputy commissioner shall act for, and exercise the powers of the commissioner during the absence or disability of the commissioner or in the event of a vacancy in the office of commissioner. The deputy commissioner shall perform such functions, powers and duties as the commissioner shall prescribe from time to time.

Subd. 3. [Repealed, 1981 c 330 s 8]

Subd. 4. **Task force, membership, appeals.** The commissioner may appoint a human rights advisory task force.

Subd. 4a. **Terms; compensation; removal; vacancies.** The expiration, membership terms, compensation, removal of members, and filling of vacancies on the task force shall be as provided in section 15.059.

Subd. 5. [Repealed, 1983 c 260 s 68]

Subd. 6. [Repealed, 1976 c 134 s 79]

Subd. 7. [Repealed, 1976 c 337 s 3]

Subd. 8. [Repealed, 1976 c 337 s 3]

Subd. 9. **Departmental organization.** Subject to other provisions of this chapter, the commissioner shall have the powers granted by section 15.06 to organize the department.

Subd. 10. **Continuity in operations.** In exercising the functions, powers and duties conferred on and transferred to the commissioner by Laws 1967, chapter 897, the commissioner shall give full consideration to the need for operational continuity of the functions transferred.

History: 1955 c 516 s 6; 1961 c 428 s 6; 1965 c 586 s 2; 1967 c 897 s 17; 1969 c 975

s 6,7; 1969 c 1129 art 8 s 14; 1973 c 729 s 4; 1976 c 134 s 68,69; 1977 c 305 s 38; 1977 c 444 s 17-19; 1983 c 260 s 60,61

363.05 DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER.

Subdivision 1. Formulation of policies. The commissioner shall formulate policies to effectuate the purposes of this chapter and shall:

(1) exercise leadership under the direction of the governor in the development of human rights policies and programs, and make recommendations to the governor and the legislature for their consideration and implementation;

(2) establish and maintain a principal office in St. Paul, and any other necessary branch offices at any location within the state;

(3) meet and function at any place within the state;

(4) employ attorneys, clerks, and other employees and agents as the commissioner may deem necessary and prescribe their duties;

(5) to the extent permitted by federal law and regulation, utilize the records of the department of jobs and training of the state when necessary to effectuate the purposes of this chapter;

(6) obtain upon request and utilize the services of all state governmental departments and agencies;

(7) adopt suitable rules for effectuating the purposes of this chapter;

(8) issue complaints, receive and investigate charges alleging unfair discriminatory practices, and determine whether or not probable cause exists for hearing;

(9) subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony, and require the production for examination of any books or papers relative to any matter under investigation or in question;

(10) attempt, by means of education, conference, conciliation, and persuasion to eliminate unfair discriminatory practices as being contrary to the public policy of the state;

(11) develop and conduct programs of formal and informal education designed to eliminate discrimination and intergroup conflict by use of educational techniques and programs the commissioner deems necessary;

(12) make a written report of the activities of the commissioner to the governor each year and to the legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year;

(13) accept gifts, bequests, grants or other payments public and private to help finance the activities of the department;

(14) create such local and statewide advisory committees as will in the commissioner's judgment aid in effectuating the purposes of the department of human rights;

(15) develop such programs as will aid in determining the compliance throughout the state with the provisions of this chapter, and in the furtherance of such duties, conduct research and study discriminatory practices based upon race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, familial status, or other factors and develop accurate data on the nature and extent of discrimination and other matters as they may affect housing, employment, public accommodations, schools, and other areas of public life;

(16) develop and disseminate technical assistance to persons subject to the provisions of this chapter, and to agencies and officers of governmental and private agencies;

(17) provide staff services to such advisory committees as may be created in aid of the functions of the department of human rights;

(18) make grants in aid to the extent that appropriations are made available for that purpose in aid of carrying out duties and responsibilities; and

(19) cooperate and consult with the commissioner of labor and industry regarding the investigation of violations of, and resolution of complaints regarding section 363.03, subdivision 9.

In performing these duties, the commissioner shall give priority to those duties in clauses (8), (9), and (10) and to the duties in section 363.073.

Subd. 2. Enforcement and effect of subpoena. (a) Disobedience of a subpoena issued by the commissioner pursuant to subdivision 1 shall be punishable in like manner as a contempt of the district court in proceedings instituted upon application of the commissioner made to the district court of the county where the alleged unfair discriminatory practice in connection with a charge made by a charging party or a complaint filed by the commissioner has occurred or where the respondent resides or has a principal place of business.

(b) It is not a violation of rights conferred by chapter 13 or any other statute related to the confidentiality of government data for an agency to provide data or information under a subpoena issued by the commissioner under this section.

History: 1955 c 516 s 7; 1961 c 428 s 7; 1967 c 299 s 9; 1967 c 897 s 18; 1969 c 567 s 3; 1969 c 975 s 8; 1969 c 1129 art 10 s 2; 1971 c 24 s 45; 1973 c 254 s 3; 1973 c 729 s 5; 1974 c 406 s 70; 1977 c 351 s 8; 1977 c 408 s 4; 1977 c 430 s 25 subd 1; 1980 c 531 s 5; 1985 c 248 s 70; 1Sp1985 c 13 s 325; 1Sp1985 c 14 art 9 s 75; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 375 s 2

363.06 GRIEVANCES.

Subdivision 1. Actions. Any person aggrieved by a violation of this chapter may bring a civil action as provided in section 363.14, subdivision 1, clause (a), or may file a verified charge with the commissioner or the commissioner's designated agent. A charge filed with the commissioner must be in writing on a form provided by the commissioner and signed by the charging party. The charge must state the name of the person alleged to have committed an unfair discriminatory practice and set out a summary of the details of the practice complained of. The commissioner may require a charging party to provide the address of the person alleged to have committed the unfair discriminatory practice, names of witnesses, documents, and any other information necessary to process the charge. The commissioner may dismiss a charge when the charging party fails to provide required information. The commissioner within ten days of the filing shall serve a copy of the charge and a form for use in responding to the charge upon the respondent personally or by mail. The respondent shall file with the department a written response to the charge within 20 days of receipt of the charge. If the respondent fails to respond within 30 days after service of the charge, and service was consistent with rule 4 of the rules of civil procedure, the commissioner, on behalf of the complaining party, may bring an action for default in district court pursuant to rule 55.01 of the rules of civil procedure.

Subd. 2. Charge, issuance by commissioner. Whenever the commissioner has reason to believe that a person is engaging in an unfair discriminatory practice, the commissioner may issue a charge stating in statutory language an alleged violation of a particular section of section 363.03.

Subd. 3. Time for filing claim. A claim of an unfair discriminatory practice must be brought as a civil action pursuant to section 363.14, subdivision 1, clause (a), filed in a charge with a local commission pursuant to section 363.116, or filed in a charge with the commissioner within one year after the occurrence of the practice. The running of the one-year limitation period is suspended during the time a potential charging party and respondent are voluntarily engaged in a dispute resolution process involving a claim of unlawful discrimination under this chapter, including arbitration, conciliation, mediation or grievance procedures pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or statutory, charter, or ordinance provisions for a civil service or other employment system. A potential respondent who participates in such a process with a potential charging party before a charge is filed or a civil action is brought shall notify the department and the charging party in writing of the participation in the process and the date the process commenced and shall also notify the department and the charging party of the ending date of the process. A respondent who fails to provide this notification is barred from raising the defense that the statute of limitations has run unless one year plus a period of time equal to the suspension period has passed.

Subd. 4. Inquiry into charge. (1) Consistent with clause (7), the commissioner shall promptly inquire into the truth of the allegations of the charge. The commissioner shall make an immediate inquiry when a charge alleges actual or threatened physical violence. The commissioner shall also make an immediate inquiry when it appears that a charge is frivolous or without merit and shall dismiss those charges.

The commissioner shall give priority to investigating and processing those charges, in the order below, which the commissioner determines have the following characteristics:

- (a) there is evidence of irreparable harm if immediate action is not taken;
- (b) there is evidence that the respondent has intentionally engaged in a reprisal;
- (c) a significant number of recent charges have been filed against the respondent;
- (d) the respondent is a government entity;
- (e) there is potential for broadly promoting the policies of this chapter; or
- (f) the charge is supported by substantial and credible documentation, witnesses, or other evidence.

The commissioner shall inform charging parties of these priorities and shall tell each party if their charge is a priority case or not.

On other charges the commissioner shall make a determination within 12 months after the charge was filed as to whether or not there is probable cause to credit the allegation of unfair discriminatory practices, and

(2) If the commissioner determines after investigation that no probable cause exists to credit the allegations of the unfair discriminatory practice, the commissioner shall, within ten days of the determination, serve upon the charging party and respondent written notice of the determination. Within ten days after receipt of notice, the charging party may request in writing, on forms prepared by the department, that the commissioner reconsider the determination. The request shall contain a brief statement of the reasons for and new evidence in support of the request for reconsideration. At the time of submission of the request to the commissioner, the charging party shall deliver or mail to the respondent a copy of the request for reconsideration. The commissioner shall either reaffirm or reverse the determination of no probable cause within 20 days after receipt of the request for reconsideration, and shall within ten days notify in writing the charging party and respondent of the decision to reaffirm or reverse.

A decision by the commissioner that no probable cause exists to credit the allegations of an unfair discriminatory practice shall not be appealed to the court of appeals pursuant to section 363.072 or sections 14.63 to 14.68.

(3) If the commissioner determines after investigation that probable cause exists to credit the allegations of unfair discriminatory practices, the commissioner shall serve on the respondent and the respondent's attorney if the respondent is represented by counsel, by first class mail, a notice setting forth a short plain written statement of the alleged facts which support the finding of probable cause and an enumeration of the provisions of law allegedly violated. If the commissioner determines that attempts to eliminate the alleged unfair practices through conciliation pursuant to subdivision 5 have been or would be unsuccessful or unproductive, the commissioner shall issue a complaint and serve on the respondent, by registered or certified mail, a written notice of hearing together with a copy of the complaint, requiring the respondent to answer the allegations of the complaint at a hearing before an administrative law judge at a time and place specified in the notice, not less than ten days after service of said complaint. A copy of the notice shall be furnished to the charging party and the attorney general.

(4) If, at any time after the filing of a charge, the commissioner has reason to believe that a respondent has engaged in any unfair discriminatory practice, the commissioner may file a petition in the district court in a county in which the subject of the complaint occurs, or in a county in which a respondent resides or transacts business, seeking appropriate temporary relief against the respondent, pending final

determination of proceedings under this chapter, including an order or decree restraining the respondent from doing or procuring an act tending to render ineffectual an order the commissioner may enter with respect to the complaint. The court shall have power to grant temporary relief or a restraining order as it deems just and proper, but no relief or order extending beyond ten days shall be granted except by consent of the respondent or after hearing upon notice to the respondent and a finding by the court that there is reasonable cause to believe that the respondent has engaged in a discriminatory practice. Except as modified by this section, the Minnesota rules of civil procedure shall apply to an application, and the district court shall have authority to grant or deny the relief sought on conditions as it deems just and equitable. All hearings under this section shall be given precedence as nearly as practicable over all other pending civil actions.

(5) If a lessor, after engaging in a discriminatory practice defined in section 363.03, subdivision 2, clause (1)(a), leases or rents a dwelling unit to a person who has no knowledge of the practice or of the existence of a charge with respect to the practice, the lessor shall be liable for actual damages sustained by a person by reason of a final order as provided in this section requiring the person to be evicted from the dwelling unit.

(6) In any complaint issued under this section, the commissioner may seek relief for a class of individuals affected by an unfair discriminatory practice occurring on or after a date 300 days prior to the filing of the charge from which the complaint originates.

(7) The commissioner may adopt policies to determine which charges are processed and the order in which charges are processed based on their particular social or legal significance, administrative convenience, difficulty of resolution, or other standard consistent with the provisions of this chapter.

(8) The chief administrative law judge shall adopt policies to provide sanctions for intentional and frivolous delay caused by any charging party or respondent in an investigation, hearing, or any other aspect of proceedings before the department under this chapter.

Subd. 4a. Emergency rules. The commissioner may adopt emergency rules pursuant to chapter 14 to carry out the purposes of this section. Emergency and permanent rules adopted pursuant to this subdivision apply to cases pending before the commissioner on the date of adoption.

Subd. 5. Attempts to eliminate unfair practices. The commissioner, in complying with subdivision 4, shall endeavor to eliminate the unfair discriminatory practice through education, conference, conciliation and persuasion at the place where the practice occurred, or the respondent resides or has a principal place of business.

Subd. 6. Publication of accounts of cases. The commissioner may publish an account of a case in which the complaint has been dismissed or the terms of settlement of a case that has been voluntarily adjusted. Except as provided in other sections of this chapter, the commissioner shall not disclose any information concerning efforts in a particular case to eliminate an unfair discriminatory practice through education, conference, conciliation and persuasion.

Subd. 7. [Repealed, 1976 c 301 s 5]

Subd. 8. Access to documents. The commissioner shall provide the respondent with a copy of the charge. The charging party or the party's representative may review the answer of the respondent to the charge submitted pursuant to subdivision 1. The department shall make these documents available to the charging party.

History: 1955 c 516 s 8; 1961 c 428 s 8; 1965 c 586 s 3; 1967 c 897 s 19; 1969 c 975 s 9,10; 1973 c 729 s 6-8; 1976 c 301 s 1,2; 1979 c 156 s 1; 1980 c 540 s 3; 1981 c 330 s 2-5; 1981 c 364 s 1; 1982 c 424 s 130; 1983 c 247 s 143; 1983 c 301 s 199,200; 1984 c 567 s 2,3; 1984 c 640 s 32; 1Sp1985 c 13 s 326; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 375 s 3,4; 1988 c 660 s 5,6

363.061 ACCESS TO CASE FILES.

Subdivision 1. General provisions. Notwithstanding section 13.39, and except as provided in section 363.06, subdivisions 6 and 8, the availability of human rights investigative data to persons other than department employees is governed by this section.

Subd. 2. Access to open files. (a) Human rights investigative data on an individual, with the exception of the name and address of the charging party and respondent, factual basis of the allegations, and the statute under which the action is brought, contained in an open case file is classified as confidential. The name and address of the charging party and respondent, factual basis of the allegations, and the statute under which the action is brought are classified as public data unless the commissioner determines that release of the data would be detrimental to the investigative and enforcement process.

(b) Human rights investigative data not on an individual contained in an open case file is classified as protected nonpublic data.

(c) Notwithstanding this subdivision, the commissioner may make human rights investigative data contained in an open case file accessible to a person, government agency, or the public if access will aid the investigative and enforcement process.

Subd. 3. Access to closed files. (a) Human rights investigative data on an individual contained in a closed case file is classified as private, with the exception of the following documents: the name and address of the charging party and respondent, factual basis of the allegations, and the statute under which the action is brought, the part of the summary of the investigation that does not contain identifying data on an individual other than the complainant or respondent, and the commissioner's memorandum determining whether probable cause has been shown.

(b) Human rights investigative data not on an individual contained in a closed case file is classified as nonpublic.

(c) Notwithstanding this subdivision, the commissioner may make human rights investigative data contained in a closed case file inaccessible to the charging party or the respondent in order to protect medical or other security interests of the parties or third persons.

Subd. 4. Charging party access. Data comprised of materials and documentation provided by a charging party that is part of an open or closed case file is accessible to the charging party in accordance with section 13.04, subdivision 3. The charging party may consent to the release of the data to the charging party's attorney or other legal representative.

History: *1Sp1985 c 13 s 327; 1988 c 670 s 13*

363.07 [Repealed, 1967 c 897 s 29]

363.071 HEARINGS.

Subdivision 1. Conduct of hearings. A complaint issued by the commissioner shall be heard as a contested case, except that the report of the administrative law judge shall be binding on all parties to the proceeding and if appropriate shall be implemented by an order as provided for in subdivision 2. The hearing shall be conducted at a place designated by the commissioner, within the county where the unfair discriminatory practice occurred or where the respondent resides or has a principal place of business. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with sections 14.57 to 14.62, and is subject to appeal in accordance with sections 14.63 to 14.68.

Subd. 1a. Hearings 180 days after charge. At any time after 180 days from the filing of a charge, if there has been neither a finding of probable cause nor of no probable cause, the charging party may file a request with the commissioner to appear at a hearing on the party's own behalf or through a private attorney. The amount of time during which a case is involved in significant settlement negotiations, is being investigated by another enforcement agency under a work sharing agreement, or has been

referred to mediation or to a local human rights commission for no fault grievance processing is not counted in computing the 180 days. Tolling of the time during settlement negotiations requires written approval of the charging party or the party's attorney. The right of a charging party to file a request for hearing does not apply in cases that have been certified as complex by the commissioner within 60 days of the filing of the charge. A case may not be certified as complex unless it involves multiple parties or issues, presents complex issues of law or fact, or presents substantially new issues of law in the discrimination area. Within five days of certifying a case as complex, the commissioner shall give notice of the certification to the charging party and the respondent. The commissioner shall make a determination of probable cause or no probable cause within one year of the filing of a case in which the time has not been counted or a case certified as complex. Upon receipt of the request, the commissioner shall review the documents and information held in the department's files concerning the charge and shall release to the charging party and respondent all documents and information that are accessible to the charging party and respondent under sections 13.01 to 13.87. The commissioner shall forward the request for hearing to the office of administrative hearings, which shall promptly set the matter for hearing. If the charging party prevails at this hearing, the administrative law judge may require the respondent to reimburse the charging party for reasonable attorney's fees.

Subd. 2. Determination of discriminatory practice. The administrative law judge shall make findings of fact and conclusions of law, and if the administrative law judge finds that the respondent has engaged in an unfair discriminatory practice, the administrative law judge shall issue an order directing the respondent to cease and desist from the unfair discriminatory practice found to exist and to take such affirmative action as in the judgment of the administrative law judge will effectuate the purposes of this chapter. The order shall be a final decision of the department. The administrative law judge shall order any respondent found to be in violation of any provision of section 363.03 to pay a civil penalty to the state. This penalty is in addition to compensatory and punitive damages to be paid to an aggrieved party. The administrative law judge shall determine the amount of the civil penalty to be paid, taking into account the seriousness and extent of the violation, the public harm occasioned by the violation, whether the violation was intentional, and the financial resources of the respondent. Any penalties imposed under this provision shall be paid into the general fund of the state. In all cases where the administrative law judge finds that the respondent has engaged in an unfair discriminatory practice, the administrative law judge shall order the respondent to pay an aggrieved party, who has suffered discrimination, compensatory damages in an amount up to three times the actual damages sustained. In all cases, the administrative law judge may also order the respondent to pay an aggrieved party, who has suffered discrimination, damages for mental anguish or suffering and reasonable attorney's fees, in addition to punitive damages in an amount not more than \$8,500. Punitive damages shall be awarded pursuant to section 549.20. In any case where a political subdivision is a respondent, the total of punitive damages awarded an aggrieved party may not exceed \$8,500 and in that case if there are two or more respondents the punitive damages may be apportioned among them. Punitive damages may only be assessed against a political subdivision in its capacity as a corporate entity and no regular or ex officio member of a governing body of a political subdivision shall be personally liable for payment of punitive damages pursuant to this subdivision. In addition to the aforesaid remedies, in a case involving discrimination in

(a) employment, the administrative law judge may order the hiring, reinstatement or upgrading of an aggrieved party, who has suffered discrimination, with or without back pay, admission or restoration to membership in a labor organization, or admission to or participation in an apprenticeship training program, on-the-job training program, or other retraining program, or any other relief the administrative law judge deems just and equitable.

(b) housing, the administrative law judge may order the sale, lease, or rental of the housing accommodation or other real property to an aggrieved party, who has suffered discrimination, or the sale, lease, or rental of a like accommodation or other real

property owned by or under the control of the person against whom the complaint was filed, according to terms as listed with a real estate broker, or if no such listing has been made, as otherwise advertised or offered by the vendor or lessor, or any other relief the administrative law judge deems just and equitable.

The administrative law judge shall cause the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and order to be served on the respondent personally, on the charging party by registered or certified mail, and shall furnish copies to the attorney general and the commissioner.

Subd. 3. Dismissal of hearing. If the administrative law judge makes findings of fact, conclusions of law, and an order in favor of the respondent, the order shall be a final decision of the department.

Subd. 4. Respondents subject to state licensing or regulatory power. In the case of a respondent which is subject to the licensing or regulatory power of the state or any political subdivision or agency thereof, if the administrative law judge determines that the respondent has engaged in a discriminatory practice, and if the respondent does not cease to engage in such discriminatory practice, the commissioner may so certify to the licensing or regulatory agency. Unless such determination of discriminatory practice is reversed in the course of judicial review, a final determination is binding on the licensing or regulatory agency. Such agency may take appropriate administrative action, including suspension or revocation of the respondent's license or certificate of public convenience and necessity, if the agency is otherwise authorized to take such action.

Subd. 5. Public contracts. In the case of a respondent which is a party to a public contract, if the administrative law judge determines that the respondent has engaged in a discriminatory practice, the commissioner may so certify to the contract letting agency. Unless the finding of a discriminatory practice is reversed in the course of judicial review, a final determination is binding on the contract letting agency and the agency may take appropriate administrative action, including the imposition of financial penalties or termination of the contract, in whole or in part, if the agency is otherwise authorized to take the action.

Subd. 6. Subpoenas. After the issuance of a complaint pursuant to section 363.06, subdivision 4, a charging party or a respondent may request that the administrative law judge issue subpoenas requiring the presence of witnesses or the production for examination of books or papers not privileged and relevant to any matter in question at the hearing.

History: 1967 c 897 s 20; 1969 c 975 s 11-13; 1973 c 729 s 9; 1976 c 301 s 3; 1980 c 540 s 4; 1981 c 364 s 2; 1983 c 301 s 201; 1984 c 567 s 4,5; 1985 c 248 s 56; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 375 s 5; 1988 c 660 s 7

363.072 DISTRICT COURT, REVIEW ORDERS OF PANEL OR EXAMINER.

Subdivision 1. Appeal. The commissioner or a person aggrieved by a final decision of the department reached after a hearing held pursuant to section 363.071 may seek judicial review in accordance with chapter 14. The attorney general shall represent on appeal, a charging party who prevailed at a hearing authorized by section 363.071, subdivision 1a, if the charging party requests representation within ten days after receipt of the petition for appeal.

Subd. 2. Review procedure. The judicial review proceedings shall be in accordance with chapter 14.

History: 1967 c 897 s 21; 1973 c 729 s 10; 1977 c 408 s 5; 1982 c 424 s 130; 1983 c 247 s 144,145; 1984 c 567 s 6

363.073 CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE FOR PUBLIC CONTRACTS.

Subdivision 1. Scope of application. No department or agency of the state shall receive, enter into, or accept any bid or proposal for a contract nor execute any contract for goods, services, or the performance of any function, or any agreement to transfer funds for any reason in excess of \$50,000 with any person having more than 20 full-time

employees in Minnesota at any time during the previous 12 months, unless the person has an affirmative action plan for the employment of minority persons, women, and the disabled that has been approved by the commissioner of human rights. Receipt of a certificate of compliance issued by the commissioner shall signify that a person has an affirmative action plan that has been approved by the commissioner. A certificate shall be valid for a period of two years.

Subd. 2. Revocation of certificate. Certificates of compliance may be suspended or revoked by the commissioner if a holder of a certificate has not made a good faith effort to implement an affirmative action plan that has been approved by the commissioner. If a contractor does not effectively implement an affirmative action plan approved by the commissioner pursuant to subdivision 1, or fails to make a good faith effort to do so, the commissioner may refuse to approve subsequent plans submitted by that firm or business.

Subd. 3. Revocation of contract. A contract awarded by a department or agency of the state may be terminated or abridged by the department or agency because of suspension or revocation of a certificate based upon a contractor's failure to implement or make a good faith effort to implement an affirmative action plan approved by the commissioner under this section. If a contract is awarded to a person who does not have a contract compliance certificate required under subdivision 1, the commissioner may void the contract on behalf of the state.

Subd. 4. Technical assistance. In the case of a contractor whose certificate of compliance has been suspended, the commissioner shall provide technical assistance that may enable the contractor to be recertified within 90 days after the contractor's certificate has been suspended.

History: 1969 c 975 s 19; 1974 c 527 s 1; 1981 c 326 s 1; 1981 c 356 s 377; 1Sp1981 c 4 art 3 s 14; art 4 s 33; 1988 c 660 s 8,9

363.074 RULES FOR CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE.

The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement section 363.073 specifying the criteria used to review affirmative action plans and the standards used to review implementation of affirmative action plans. A firm or business certified to be in compliance with affirmative action requirements of a local human rights agency or the federal government shall be deemed to be in compliance with section 363.073 upon submission to the commissioner of an affirmative action plan approved by a local human rights agency or the federal government and amendments to the plan which are necessary to address the employment of disabled persons protected by section 363.03, subdivision 1.

History: 1981 c 326 s 2

363.075 EMERGENCY RULES.

The commissioner shall have authority to promulgate emergency rules pursuant to chapter 14 to carry out the purposes of section 363.073.

History: 1981 c 326 s 3; 1982 c 424 s 130; 1984 c 640 s 32

363.08 [Repealed, 1967 c 897 s 29]

363.09 [Repealed, 1967 c 897 s 29]

363.091 ENFORCEMENT.

When a respondent fails or refuses to comply with a final decision of the department, the commissioner may file with the court administrator of district court in the judicial district in which the hearing was held a petition requesting the court to order the respondent to comply with the order of the department. Thereupon the court shall issue an order to show cause directed to the respondent why an order directing compliance should not be issued. If the panel or examiner has ordered an award of damages pursuant to section 363.071, the court shall enter judgment on the order or

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modified order in the same manner as in the case of an order of the district court, as provided in section 546.27.

History: 1967 c 897 s 22; 1969 c 975 s 14; 1973 c 729 s 11; 1Sp1986 c 3 art 1 s 82; 1988 c 660 s 10

363.10 [Repealed, 1982 c 501 s 26; 1983 c 247 s 219]

363.101 UNFAIR DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE A MISDEMEANOR.

In addition to all other remedies provided under this chapter, every person who commits an unfair discriminatory act as set forth in section 363.03, subdivision 3, or aids, abets, incites, compels, or coerces another to do so, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History: 1969 c 975 s 18

363.11 CONSTRUCTION.

The provisions of this chapter shall be construed liberally for the accomplishment of the purposes thereof. Nothing contained in this chapter shall be deemed to repeal any of the provisions of the civil rights law or of any other law of this state relating to discrimination because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or national origin or familial status; but, as to acts declared unfair by sections 363.03 and 363.123, the procedure herein provided shall, while pending, be exclusive.

History: 1955 c 516 s 13; 1973 c 729 s 12; 1977 c 351 s 9; 1980 c 531 s 6

363.114 JURISDICTION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONS.

If a county or group of counties creates a local commission, the commission does not have jurisdiction over any part of the county that is within the jurisdiction of a local commission created by city charter or municipal ordinance.

History: 1Sp1985 c 13 s 328

363.115 REFERRAL TO LOCAL COMMISSION.

The commissioner, whether or not a charge has been filed under this chapter, may refer a matter involving discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, creed, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, age, or familial status to a local commission for study and report.

Upon referral by the commissioner, the local commission shall make a report and make recommendations to the commissioner and take other appropriate action within the scope of its powers.

History: 1967 c 897 s 24; 1973 c 729 s 13; 1977 c 351 s 10; 1980 c 531 s 7

363.116 TRANSFER TO COMMISSIONER.

A local commission may refer a matter under its jurisdiction to the commissioner.

The charging party has the option of filing a charge either with a local commission or the department. Notwithstanding the provisions of any ordinance or resolution to the contrary, a charge may be filed with a local commission within 300 days after the occurrence of the practice. The exercise of such choice in filing a charge with one agency shall preclude the option of filing the same charge with the other agency. At the time a charge comes to the attention of a local agency, the agency or its representative shall inform the charging party of this option, and of the party's rights under Laws 1967, chapter 897.

Where this chapter provides additional protections and remedies not provided for under a local antidiscrimination ordinance, the local commission shall advise a party bringing a charge under a local ordinance of those additional protections and remedies and of the option to file a charge under this chapter.

The term "local commission" as used in this section has the same meaning given the term in section 363.115.

History: 1967 c 897 s 25; 1984 c 567 s 7; 1Sp1985 c 13 s 329; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 129 s 4

363.117 WITHDRAWAL FROM A LOCAL COMMISSION.

Notwithstanding the provisions of any law or ordinance to the contrary, a person who has filed a charge with a local commission may bring a civil action as provided in section 363.14 at the following times:

(a) Within 45 days after the local commission has determined that there is no probable cause to credit the allegations contained in the charge; or

(b) After 45 days from the filing of the charge if a hearing has not been held or if the local commission has not entered into a conciliation agreement to which the charging party is a signator. The charging party shall notify the local commission of an intention to bring a civil action, which shall be commenced within 90 days of giving the notice.

A charging party bringing a civil action shall mail by registered or certified mail a copy of the summons and complaint to the local commission and upon their receipt the local commission shall terminate all proceedings before the local commission relating to the charge. No charge shall be filed or reinstituted with the local commission after a civil action relating to the same unfair discriminatory practice has been brought unless the civil action has been dismissed without prejudice.

History: 1981 c 330 s 7; 1986 c 444

363.12 DECLARATION OF POLICY.

Subdivision 1. It is the public policy of this state to secure for persons in this state, freedom from discrimination;

(1) In employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status in regard to public assistance and age;

(2) In housing and real property because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance and familial status;

(3) In public accommodations because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex and disability;

(4) In public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability and status in regard to public assistance; and

(5) In education because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance and age. Such discrimination threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this state and menaces the institutions and foundations of democracy. It is also the public policy of this state to protect all persons from wholly unfounded charges of discrimination. Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted as restricting the implementation of positive action programs to combat discrimination.

Subd. 2. The opportunity to obtain employment, housing, and other real estate, and full and equal utilization of public accommodations, public services, and educational institutions without such discrimination as is prohibited by this chapter is hereby recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Subd. 3. The department of human rights under the control of the commissioner of human rights is the successor of the state commission against discrimination as it existed immediately prior to July 1, 1967.

Subd. 4. If any provision of Laws 1967, chapter 897 or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect the other provisions or applications of Laws 1967, chapter 897 which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of Laws 1967, chapter 897 are severable.

History: 1955 c 516 s 1; 1961 c 428 s 16; 1967 c 897 s 26; 1969 c 975 s 15,16; 1973 c 729 s 14,15; 1977 c 351 s 11; 1980 c 531 s 8

363.121 DEPARTMENT ATTORNEY.

The attorney general shall be the attorney for the department. When a matter has been referred to the attorney general by the commissioner after a finding of probable cause or for the purpose of interim relief, communications between members of the attorney general's office and charging parties or members of a class formed pursuant to section 363.06, subdivision 4, clause (6), are privileged as would be a communication between an attorney and a client.

History: 1967 c 897 s 27; 1988 c 660 s 11

363.122 [Repealed, 1978 c 793 s 98]**363.123 VIOLATION OF ACT.**

It shall be a violation of Laws 1973, chapter 729 for any person furnishing credit service to discriminate against any person who is the recipient of federal, state or local public assistance, including medical assistance, or who is a tenant receiving federal, state or local housing subsidies, including rental assistance or rent supplements, solely because the individual is such a recipient.

History: 1973 c 729 s 16

363.13 CITATION.

This chapter shall be known as the Minnesota human rights act.

History: 1955 c 516 s 2; 1961 c 428 s 17; 1973 c 729 s 17

363.14 COURT ACTIONS, SUITS BY PRIVATE PARTIES, INTERVENTION, DISTRICT COURT JURISDICTION, ATTORNEY'S FEES, AND COSTS.

Subdivision 1. **Court actions, suits by private parties, intervention.** (a) The commissioner or a person may bring a civil action seeking redress for an unfair discriminatory practice directly to district court. In addition, a person may bring a civil action:

(1) within 45 days after the commissioner has dismissed a charge because it is frivolous or without merit, because the charging party has failed to provide required information, because the commissioner has determined that further use of department resources is not warranted, or because the commissioner has determined that there is no probable cause to credit the allegations contained in a charge filed with the commissioner;

(2) within 45 days after the commissioner has reaffirmed a determination of no probable cause if the charging party requested a reconsideration of the probable cause determination; or

(3) after 45 days from the filing of a charge pursuant to section 363.06, subdivision 1, if a hearing has not been held pursuant to section 363.071 or if the commissioner has not entered into a conciliation agreement to which the charging party is a signator. The charging party shall notify the commissioner of an intention to bring a civil action, which shall be commenced within 90 days of giving the notice.

(b) If the commissioner has issued both probable cause and no probable cause determinations on separate issues in the same charge, the charging party may, if a hearing is held, require that all matters be heard at the hearing or may bring a civil action for the no probable cause charges at the same time as the probable cause charges under the rules and time frames that govern the probable cause charges.

(c) A charging party bringing a civil action shall mail by registered or certified mail a copy of the summons and complaint to the commissioner, and upon their receipt the commissioner shall terminate all proceedings in the department relating to the charge. No charge shall be filed or reinstituted with the commissioner after a civil action relating to the same unfair discriminatory practice has been brought unless the civil action has been dismissed without prejudice.

(d) Upon application by the complaining party to the district court at a special term and under circumstances the court deems just, the court may appoint an attorney for the person and may authorize the commencement of the action without payment of fees, costs, or security.

(e) Upon timely application, the court may permit the department to intervene in a civil action brought pursuant to this section upon certification that the case is of general public importance.

Subd. 2. District court jurisdiction. Any action brought pursuant to this section shall be filed in the district court of the county wherein the unlawful discriminatory practice is alleged to have been committed or where the respondent resides or has a principal place of business.

Any action brought pursuant to this chapter shall be heard and determined by a judge sitting without a jury.

If the court finds that the respondent has engaged in an unfair discriminatory practice, it shall issue an order directing appropriate relief as provided by section 363.071, subdivision 2.

Subd. 3. Attorney's fees and costs. In any action or proceeding brought pursuant to this section the court, in its discretion, may allow the prevailing party a reasonable attorney's fee as part of the costs.

History: 1973 c 729 s 18; 1976 c 301 s 4; 1977 c 455 s 85; 1978 c 793 s 74; 1981 c 330 s 6; 1984 c 567 s 8,9; 1986 c 444; 1988 c 660 s 12,13

363.15 NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COMMISSIONER.

In any case that is appealed to the supreme court or the court of appeals in which an issue is raised under this chapter, the party raising the issue shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal on the commissioner. The clerk of the appellate courts may not accept a notice of appeal or other papers, documents, or briefs from any party in an action involving this chapter without proof of service of the papers, documents, or briefs upon the commissioner.

History: 1988 c 660 s 14