



Protected Classes

Protected Classes under Chapter 216 of the Iowa Code

Protected Classes	Areas of Protection				
	Employment	Housing	Public Accommodation	Education	Credit
Age	•				•
Color	•	•	•	•	•
Familial Status		•			•
Gender Identity	•	•	•	•	•
Marital Status					•
Mental Disability	•	•	•	•	
National Origin	•	•	•	•	•
Physical Disability	•	•	•	•	•
Pregnancy	•				
Race	•	•	•	•	•
Religion/Creed	•	•	•	•	•
Sex	•	•	•	•	•
Sexual Orientation	•	•	•	•	•

*Chapter 216 also prohibits Retaliation on the bases of participation and opposition.

Mission Statement

The goal of the Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission is to secure for all individuals within the City of Fort Dodge freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age or mental or physical disability in connection with employment, public accommodations, housing and credit, and thereby to protect the personal dignity of these individuals to insure their full productive capacities, to preserve the public safety, health and general welfare, and to promote the interests, rights, and privileges of individual citizens in Fort Dodge.



Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission

We exist to eliminate discrimination and to establish equality and justice for all persons within the City of Fort Dodge through civil rights enforcement, advocacy and education.





Who We Are

The Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission meets the first Wednesday of each month at 5:00 pm in the City Council Chambers. Seven volunteer members serve two year terms and are appointed by the Mayor with approval from the City Council.

Specific power and duties afforded to the Human Rights Commission include:

- To receive, investigate, and finally determine the merits of complaints alleging unfair or discriminatory practices pursuant to Municipal Code 2.16.
- To investigate and study the existence, character, causes and extent of discrimination in public accommodations, employment, apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training programs, vocational schools, extension of credit, real estate, financial transactions, and housing in this City and to attempt the elimination of such discrimination by education and conciliation.
- To hold hearings upon any complaint pursuant to this ordinance made against a person, an employer, an employment agency, or a labor organization, or the employees or members thereof, to subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance at such hearings, to administer oaths and take the testimony of any person under oath.

How the Process Works

Once a charge of discrimination has been filed with the Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission, the Respondent must submit a statement within 15 days from receipt of notice of the complaint. The Complainant will be notified and afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the Respondent's statement.

At this point, the Human Rights Director will assign three members of the Commission to serve on the investigating, fact-finding committee. These neutral fact-finders will review all information gathered. They will then do one of the following:

- Request additional information.
- Require all parties to appear at a fact-finding hearing.
- Recommend the complaint be administratively closed.
- Render a decision of no probable cause.
- Render a decision of probable cause.

If a decision of probable cause is rendered, the fact-finding committee assumes the role of a conciliation committee, whose function is to seek agreement between parties on a remedy. If the conciliation efforts fail, the next step is consideration for a public hearing.



At any point prior to a decision being rendered, parties may request mediation. This is a voluntary process which carries no-fault terms should a settlement be negotiated.

The Complainant is entitled to request a right to sue letter in District Court after 60 days from the filing date if a no probable cause finding has not been issued or a conciliation agreement has not been reached. This would close a case with the Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission.

All cases filed with the Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission are also filed with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and EEOC, if applicable.

Additional Resources

Iowa Civil Rights Commission
<https://icrc.iowa.gov/>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
<https://www.eeoc.gov/>

U.S. Dept of Housing & Urban Development
<https://www.hud.gov/>

Iowa Legal Aid
<https://www.iowalegalaid.org>

Contact Us

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Visit us on the Web:
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