



Legislative Summary

0-10-26

Reducing the Human Relations Commission Membership

The City of Annapolis Office of Law created this summary for the use of Annapolis City Council members during their consideration of the legislation.

Bill Summary

Ordinance 10-26 updates Section 2.48.140 of the City Code by reducing the membership of the Human Relations Commission from fifteen to nine members. It also clarifies and reformats the terms of office and the staggering of terms, adds an explicit rule for a meeting quorum, and establishes a transition period. During this transition, existing members will complete their current terms while the Commission downsizes to the new membership level through attrition and voluntary early departures.

Background

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) is a City board established under Title 2 of the City Code to address human relations concerns in the City of Annapolis.

Under current § 2.48.140, the HRC consists of fifteen members, each appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority of the City Council.

Members serve three-year terms beginning July 1st of the year of appointment, and terms are staggered so that no more than five expire in any one year. The current code does not contain an explicit quorum provision for the Commission.

This ordinance was introduced by Alderwoman Contee to change the Commission to a more workable membership level and to add operational clarity, including an explicit quorum rule and updated staggering language proportionate to the new nine-member body.



Legislative Information

Introduced by: Alderwoman Diesha Contee

Code Section Amended: § 2.48.140 (Composition)

Effective Date: Upon passage. The nine-member limit takes effect when the Commission has been reduced to nine members through attrition.

DETAILS

Ordinance 10-26 repeals and reenacts § 2.48.140 (Composition) with amendments. The principal changes are as follows:

Membership Reduction.

The HRC membership is reduced from 15 to nine residents, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority of the City Council. The qualifications for membership (demonstrated interest and experience in human relations matters) are unchanged.

Terms and Staggering – Updated.

The three-year term is retained. The bill updates the staggering rule so that no more than three members' terms expire in any given year (down from five under the current code, proportionate to the smaller body). Minor language updates clarify that terms begin on July 1 of the year of appointment and continue until a successor is appointed and qualified.

Quorum Rule – New.

A new quorum provision establishes that the HRC's quorum shall be a majority of seated members. This is a new addition designed to keep the Commission operational during the transition period, when the number of seated members may fluctuate.

Transition Period (Section II).

The nine-member cap does not take effect immediately upon passage. Instead, the cap activates once the Commission has been reduced to nine members through natural attrition. However, the HRC is expected to have nine or fewer members upon adoption.

During the transition *if needed*: (1) the Mayor shall not appoint new members except to fill a vacancy when seated membership falls below nine; (2) the Mayor may encourage members to voluntarily end their terms early or take other voluntary steps to accelerate the reduction; and (3) the quorum provision of § 2.48.140.3 applies based on the total number of members then seated on the Commission. Existing members are not involuntarily removed.