

# BARNSTABLE COUNTY

In the Year Two Thousand and Five

## Ordinance 05-18

To establish a Barnstable County Human Rights Commission.

*BARNSTABLE COUNTY hereby ordains,*

### Section 1. Policy of Barnstable County

It is the policy of Barnstable County to promote equal opportunity for all persons in Barnstable County regardless of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, sexual or affectional preference, marital, family or military status, source of income, neighborhood or disability where unlawful discrimination exists in housing, employment, education, public accommodations, Town and County services, insurance, banking, credit, and health care. Barnstable County will not tolerate retaliation or reprisal against persons exercising or supporting the exercise of equal opportunity rights.

### Section 2. Establishment of Human Rights Commission, Membership, Term, Officers, Administration.

There is hereby established a County office to be known as the Human Rights Commission of Barnstable County (hereinafter referred to as the Commission). The first year shall be the Human Rights "pilot year" for purposes of initial implementation of this ordinance and planning for full effectuation of its purposes; there shall be a review of the Commission at the end of this first year.

The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members to be (a) nominated by the Barnstable County Health and Human Services Advisory Council, and (b) appointed by the County Commissioners. The members of the Commission shall be residents of Barnstable County and, so far as practicable, shall be selected so as to provide Countywide, culturally and economically diverse representation.

The initial appointment terms of the members shall be as follows: Three (3) members for a term of three (3) years. Two (2) members for a term of two (2) years. Two (2) members for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, each subsequent appointment to the Commission shall be for a term of three years.

No members of the Commission may serve for more than two (2) consecutive full terms. A member having served two (2) consecutive full terms must remain off the Commission for at least one (1) year before becoming eligible for reappointment. Appointments to unexpired terms shall not be counted as a full term for the person appointed. The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

The Commission shall meet each January to elect one (1) of its members as Chairperson and six (6) as Board Members, and to decide on a schedule of meetings for the year.

The Commission shall convene a fifteen (15)-member Town Representation Council consisting of a representative from each town in Barnstable County. The Towns' respective Boards of Selectmen or Town Councils may suggest representatives and the Commission may also seek suggestions for representatives from Town civic groups. The Town Representation Council's purpose shall be to serve as a liaison between the Towns and the Commission about matters relating to the elimination of discrimination and to advise the Commission about human rights and discrimination issues particular to the County's various communities. The Town Representation Council shall meet quarterly.

There shall be a Coordinator of the Commission.

The Commission may be structured within the Human Services Department for organizational purposes.

The Commission shall have available to it all the County Government resources and support available to other programs, offices, and departments that are structured as part of County Government.

Section 3. Functions, Duties, Powers.

(a) To enlist the cooperation of racial, religious, ethnic, civic, fraternal, benevolent, and private and public agencies in eliminating unlawful discrimination by cultivating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and harmonious intergroup relationships.

(b) To initiate intake, information gathering, and assessments into the existence of unlawful discrimination or harassment, retaliation or reprisal. To resolve matters of unlawful discrimination, whenever possible, through mediation.

(c) To issue such publications and such results of assessments and research, as in the Commission's judgment, will tend to promote good will and to minimize or eliminate discrimination.

(d) To provide for community awareness of possible human rights violations and to promote understanding of diverse cultures through education and community action.

(e) To make recommendations to the Massachusetts Commission on Discrimination (MCAD) to improve access and support the promotion of human rights in Barnstable County.

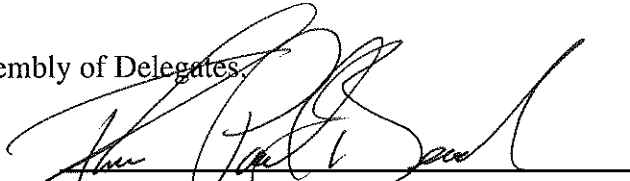
(f) To keep the Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates informed of Commission action, by periodic report upon request, and by means of an annual written summary of its work.

(g) To provide a forum at which the public is given an opportunity to discuss incidents of discrimination and to provide referrals, where appropriate, to the MCAD as well as other public and private organizations that in the Commission's judgment will assist with resolving discrimination and human rights issues.

Section 4. Construction of Ordinance

The provisions of this ordinance shall be construed liberally for the accomplishment of the purposes thereof, but nothing contained in this Chapter shall be interpreted to contravene the General Laws of the Commonwealth.

Adopted on October 5, 2005 by the Assembly of Delegates.

  
Thomas P. Bernardo Speaker

Approved by the Board of County Commissioners, 10/12/05 at, 10:15am.

    
Date Time