

**CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 142

September 9, 2019

TO: All Departments, Boards, Agencies and Commissions

FROM: Gilbert Montaña, Chief Administrative Officer



SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONS INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

I. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this memorandum is to set forth an internal process to provide equitable resolutions for Human Relations complaints against the City of New Orleans, its Contractors and other enforcement agencies. The policy is intended to prevent practices of discrimination or harassment against any person based on employment, race, age, marital status, creed, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, political beliefs and religious beliefs.

II. DEFINITIONS.

1. **Complaint** - A statement or expression, verbally or in writing, of discontent regarding an action or offense.
2. **Complainant** - A person who files a complaint, whether verbal or written. The person(s) who utilizes this process.
3. **Discriminatory Practices** - Making or showing unfair, or prejudicial distinctions between different categories of people, in decision-making relative to housing, employment or public accommodations.
4. **Public Entity** - Any state and any agency or authority thereof, any parish, city or town and any other political subdivision of the state, any public body politic and corporate, or any regional entity that serves a public purpose.
5. **Mediation** - A fair and efficient process between two or more parties to help resolve disputes and reach an amicable agreement.

III. PERSONS ENTITLED TO PROTECTION.

All persons within the City of New Orleans are entitled to fair and equal employment opportunities and to the full and equal accommodations, facilities, advantages and privileges of any place of public accommodation, regardless of the race, age, marital status, creed, color, sex, handicap, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin, political beliefs or religious beliefs.

Eligible Complaints:

Below are some examples of eligible complaints:

Discrimination on the basis of:

- Employment (hiring, referring for hire, promotions and training)
- Housing
- Use of public accommodation facilities
- Race
- Religion
- National Origin
- Ancestry
- Age
- Political beliefs
- Religious beliefs

The eligible complaints are not limited to the above complaints.

IV. INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

STEPS:

1. A complainant who believes that they have been discriminated against by a city employee, department or contractor may file an internal complaint with the Human Relations Commission for the City of New Orleans. Once the initial complaint is filed, it will be evaluated for validity. If it is determined that the complaint is an invalid complaint, the complaint will be officially closed and dismissed. A formal notification will be forwarded to the complainant. All notifications will be kept in the Human Relations Commission Office.
2. If the complaint is determined to be valid the following internal complaint process will occur:

- A. The complainant will be notified that an investigation is being done. A written statement from the complainant will be taken and the relevant department or contractor will be notified within five (5) days of receipt of complaint.
- B. After review of the statement and other relevant documentation, the Human Relations Commission will offer an informal mediation.
- C. If the complaint is resolved by mediation, a notice of closure will be sent to the complainant and all relevant parties.
- D. If the complaint is not resolved, or the mediation is declined at the discretion of the Administration, a conference will be scheduled with the relevant department(s) and the Chief Administrative Office with Human Relations Commission staff present.
- E. The relevant department or Chief Administrative Office will then perform an internal investigation.
- F. Once the investigation is completed, the findings will be forwarded to the Human Relations Commission within 60 days. An extension is available, if necessary.
- H. Human Relations Commission will review the findings and issue a written response to the complainant within 30 days.

VI. INQUIRIES:

Questions related to this policy may be addressed to the Human Relations Commission at (504) 658-4942.

GAM/PMRC/rth