

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	January 6, 2025
Action Required:	Review proposed amendments to the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance and consider for adoption after first reading or after second reading during the January 21, 2025, Council meeting.
Presenter:	Todd Niemeier, Director of Human Rights
Staff Contacts:	Todd Niemeier, Director of Human Rights
Title:	Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance - proposed amendments (1 of 2 readings)

Background

Per the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance, Code of the City of Charlottesville, Chapter 2, Article XV, Sec. 2-433.(d), it is the role of the Human Rights Commission to seek a Fair Employment Practices Agency (FEPA) workshare agreement with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and a Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) workshare agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct investigations of employment and housing discrimination on their behalf, and enter into such agreement(s) subject to approval of City Council upon a finding that the agreement(s) would be in the best interest of the City.

Discussion

The proposed amendments incorporate feedback from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of General Counsel, Fair Housing Enforcement Division. HUD has reviewed the attached draft and confirmed that the proposed changes satisfy the requirement of substantial equivalence to federal fair housing law, a prerequisite for FHAP interim certification.

The included presentation summarizes the major changes to the ordinance generally and section by section. The attached ordinance includes all the detailed changes with proposed new content underlined and content suggested for removal stricken through.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

The HRC and OHR are tasked with addressing unlawful discrimination at both the individual and systemic level. By working to dismantle unlawful discrimination, the HRC and OHR help to ensure that opportunities in employment, housing, public accommodation, credit, and private education are available to all, thereby promoting equity and an excellent quality of life in our community and helping to make Charlottesville a place where everyone thrives.

The HRC and OHR's work aligns with the following goals and objectives in the strategic plan adopted September 5, 2023:

- Economic Prosperity
- Housing
- Organizational Excellence
- Partnerships
- Public Safety

Community Engagement

The proposed ordinance amendments were presented, discussed, and adopted for recommendation to City Council during the Human Rights Commission's regular meeting on December 19, 2024. This meeting was publicly noticed, the meeting was open to the public with two opportunities for public comment, and the agenda packet was posted on the City website and remains available to the public.

Budgetary Impact

The proposed amendments to the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance create no immediate budgetary impacts within fiscal year 2025. Should fair housing investigation caseloads increase over time beyond current staff capacity, the OHR may request additional personnel.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council adopt the proposed amendments to the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance.

Alternatives

Adoption of the proposed amendments to the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance is a required next step for pursuit for FHAP interim certification.

Attachments

1. 20241218 Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance - B&W
2. 20241218 CHRO Presentation