

44-1003. Human rights commission; membership; organization compensation and expenses staff. (a) There is hereby created the Kansas human rights commission. The commission shall consist of seven members, two of whom shall be representative of industry, two of whom shall be representative of labor, one of whom shall be a person authorized to practice law in this state, one of whom shall be a representative of the real estate industry, and one of whom shall be appointed at large, to be known as commissioners. No more than four members of the commission shall be from the same political party. Members of the commission shall be appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the senate as provided in K.S.A. 75-4315b and amendments thereto. Except as provided by K.S.A. 46-2601 and amendments thereto, no person appointed to the commission shall exercise any power, duty or function as a member of the commission until confirmed by the senate. One member shall be designated by the governor as chairperson and shall preside at all meetings of the commission and perform all the duties and functions of chairperson.

(b) The commission may designate one member to act as chairperson during the absence or incapacity of the chairperson, and, when so acting, the member designated shall have and perform all the duties and functions of the chairperson of the commission.

(c) Except as provided by subsection (d), the term of office of each member of the commission shall be four years and until a successor is confirmed. Any member chosen to fill a vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be appointed for the unexpired term of the member's predecessor.

(d) The terms of members who are serving on the commission on the effective date of this act shall expire on January 15, of the year on which such member's term would have expired under the provisions of this section prior to amendment by this act. Thereafter, members shall be appointed for terms of four years and until their successors are appointed and confirmed.

(e) A majority of the current members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business of the commission, except as otherwise provided in this section. Vacancies on the commission shall not impair the right of the remaining members to exercise all the powers of the commission.

(f) Members of the Kansas human rights commission attending meetings of the commission, or attending a subcommittee meeting thereof authorized by the commission, shall be paid compensation, subsistence allowances, mileage and other expenses as provided in K.S.A. 75-3223 and amendments thereto.

(g) The commission shall employ a full-time executive director who shall be in the unclassified service under the Kansas civil service act and who shall receive an annual salary fixed by the commission, with the approval of the governor. The commission shall employ such professional staff and full or part-time legal, stenographic and clerical assistants as necessary to carry out the provisions of this act and shall fix the amount of their compensation. The commission also may employ or may contract for the services of qualified hearing examiners to conduct hearings. In addition, the commission may employ or may contract for the services of qualified hearing examiners pro tem when necessitated by the incapacity or disqualification of the other hearing examiners. All hearing examiners shall be admitted to practice law before the supreme court of Kansas. The appointment and compensation of legal counsel, except those members of the legal staff serving as hearing examiners, shall be approved by the attorney general.

(h) On July 1, 1991, the commission on civil rights shall become the Kansas human rights commission. The Kansas human rights commission shall be a continuation of the commission on civil rights and members and employees of the commission on civil rights shall continue as members and employees of the Kansas human rights commission. All rules and regulations and orders of the commission on civil rights shall be deemed rules and regulations and orders of the Kansas human rights commission. All properties, moneys, appropriations, rights and authorities vested in the commission on civil rights shall be vested in the Kansas human rights commission. Whenever the commission on civil rights, or words of like effect, is referred to or designated by any statute, contract or other document, such reference or designation shall be deemed to apply to the Kansas human rights commission.

History: L. 1953, ch. 249, § 3; L. 1961, ch. 248, § 3; L. 1965, ch. 323, § 3; L. 1967, ch. 284, § 1; L. 1970, ch. 192, § 8; L. 1972, ch. 194, § 3; L. 1974, ch. 348, § 18; L. 1975, ch. 264, § 2; L. 1978, ch. 198, § 1; L. 1978, ch. 308, § 49; L. 1982, ch. 347, § 20; L. 1991, ch. 148, § 3; L. 1992, ch. 116, § 28; L. 1995, ch. 247, § 1; L. 1996, ch. 250, § 1; July 1.