

Article IX. The Commission on the Status of Women.

Sec. 2-100. Declaration of policy establishment of commission.

The board of supervisors of the county of Sonoma declares that it is the policy of the county to take affirmative action to eliminate the practice of discrimination and prejudice on account of gender in the areas of housing, education, community services, and related fields. In order to promote this policy there is established pursuant to and in accordance with applicable law a Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women (hereinafter referred to as "commission").

Sec. 2-101. Membership - Terms - Attendance.

- (a) Membership. The commission shall consist of fifteen (15) members appointed and confirmed by the board of supervisors. Three (3) commissioners shall be appointed by each district supervisor to represent the five (5) supervisorial districts of the county. In making its appointments, the board of supervisors may consider recommendations submitted by the commission on the status of women.
- (b) Terms. Each commissioner shall have a term of two (2) years, and until her or his respective successor is appointed and qualified, except that the terms of the first commissioners shall be staggered so that the term of seven (7) commissioners shall expire in one (1) year and the term of eight (8) commissioners shall expire in two years. The first appointees shall draw lots at the first meeting of the commission to determine the term of each initial commissioner.

Subsequent appointments shall be made and any vacancies shall be filled for a term of two (2) years by the board of supervisors. The commission may make recommendations on subsequent appointments and the filling of vacancies.

There is no limitation upon the number of terms for which a commissioner may be appointed.

- (c) Attendance. Commissioners are expected to attend at least seven (7) of the eleven (11) Regular Commission meetings held in a twelve (12) month calendar period, January through December. A report may be made to the appointing supervisors whenever a commissioner fails to attend at least two thirds of the regular meetings during any twelve (12) month period. Furthermore, commissioners shall give an officer or and the commission's staff prior notice if they cannot attend a regular meeting. The appointing supervisor may remove the commissioner for failure to comply with the attendance requirement.

Sec. 2-102. Meetings - Brown Act - Quorum.

- (a) Meetings. The Commission shall meet at least once each calendar month, except December, at a regularly established time and place.
- (b) Brown Act. The Commission shall comply with all of the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code Sections 54950, et seq.)
- (c) Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the duly appointed Commissioners who are not on a Leave of Absence. Commission action may be taken only by a majority vote of those present within the quorum. A majority of the duly appointed commissioners shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Sec. 2-103. Compensation and reimbursement.

Commissioners shall serve without compensation, but may receive reimbursement for authorized, reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses incurred on official duty with prior approval of the commission.

Sec. 2-104. Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the commission shall be as follows:

- (a) To study and research by means of meetings, conferences, public hearings, or other appropriate means, conditions which demonstrate discrimination or prejudice because of gender;
- (b) To consult and cooperate with the board of supervisors, and federal, state, city and other public agencies; and to refer, if requested to the proper governmental agencies any matters already in the jurisdiction of their existing powers, with the intent that duplication of efforts should be avoided; provided however, that the commission shall not engage in lobbying or advocacy activities before any branch of the federal or state governments without the prior advice and consent of the board of supervisors;
- (c) To prepare and disseminate information in the field of gender discrimination and prejudice and to advise and counsel the residents of the county, the board of supervisors, the county executive and departments and agencies of the county, state and federal governments on matters involving the needs of women and relating to discrimination and prejudice on account of gender;
- (d) To initiate its own inquiries into the needs and problems of women, and of practices of discrimination and instances of prejudice against any person because of gender, and to seek to resolve such matters through consultation, conciliation and advice; provided, however that the commission shall not investigate or adjudicate individual complaints of gender discrimination;
- (e) To recommend to the board of supervisors necessary procedures, programs or legislation to promote and insure equal rights and opportunities for women;
- (f) To provide to the board of supervisors minutes of all commission meetings and, upon request, reports of its activities; and
- (g) Subject to the approval of the county executive, to request of any county department information, services, facilities and any other assistance for the purposes of furthering the objective of this chapter;
- (h) With the consent of the board of supervisors, to solicit and accept funding support as well as donations of funds and/or services from any source in order to carry out the powers and duties outlined herein, as permitted by law. The commission shall use the standard county budget process.
- (i) The commission is authorized to enter into contracts for goods and/or services consistent with the commission's work plan and budget and subject to approval by the director of human resources. The commission shall use the standard county purchasing procedure(s), and the director of human resources (or his/her designee) shall have the authority to sign such documents on behalf of the commission.

Sec. 2-105. Officers—Organization—Work plan and budget—Bylaws.

- (a) Officers. The commission shall select annually from its membership a chair and a vice-chair and an officer-at-large.

- (b) Organization. The commission may designate standing or ad hoc committees, individual commissioner appointments (e.g., coordinators and liaisons) and/or task forces for the purpose of carrying out any of the functions and duties of the commission.
- (c) Work plan and budget. ~~At least biennially, t~~he commission shall draft a work plan and budget for the purpose of conducting the business of the commission. ~~The work plan and budget, which~~ shall be approved by the county executive and the board of supervisors ~~prior to start of each fiscal year~~.
- (d) Bylaws. The commission is authorized to adopt bylaws to govern its operations, consistent with this ordinance. The commission's bylaws and all amendments are subject to review and approval by the director of human resources and the county executive.

Sec. 2-106. Staff - Volunteers, consultants and community resources.

- (a) Staff. Staff for the commission shall be appointed by the director of the human resources department of the county.
- (b) Volunteers, consultants and community resources. The commission may engage such services of volunteer workers and consultants without salary as it finds necessary. The commission may utilize such other community resources as it finds appropriate to its functions.