

Wisconsin

Open

Housing Law

106.50

individual is participating in a supervised drug rehabilitation program.

(h) "Discriminate" means to segregate, separate, exclude, or treat a person or class of persons unequally in a manner described in sub. (2), (2m), or (2r) because of sex, race, color, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, family status, status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, lawful source of income, age, or ancestry.

(i) "Dwelling unit" means a structure or that part of a structure that is used or intended to be used as a home, residence or sleeping place by one person or by 2 or more persons who are maintaining a common household, to the exclusion of all others.

(j) "Family" includes one natural person.

(k) "Family status" means any of the following conditions that apply to a person seeking to rent or purchase housing or to a member or prospective member of the person's household regardless of the person's marital status:

1. A person is pregnant.

2. A person is in the process of securing sole or joint legal custody, periods of physical placement or visitation rights of a minor child.

3. A person's household includes one or more minor or adult relatives.

4. A person's household includes one or more adults or minor children in his or her legal custody or physical placement or with whom he or she has visitation rights.

5. A person's household includes one or more adults or minor children placed in his or her care under a court order, under a guardianship or with the written permission of a parent or other person having legal custody of the adult or minor child.

(km) "Hardship condition" means a situation under which a tenant in housing for older persons has legal custody or physical placement of a minor child or a minor child is placed in the tenant's care under a court order, under a guardianship or with the written permission of a parent or other person having legal custody of the minor child.

(L) "Housing" means any improved property, or any portion thereof, including a mobile home as defined in s. 101.91 (10), manufactured home, as defined in s. 101.91 (2), or condominium, that is used or occupied, or is intended, arranged or designed to be used or occupied, as a home or residence. "Housing" includes any vacant land that is offered for sale or rent for the construction or location thereon of any building, structure or portion thereof that is used or occupied, or is intended, arranged or designed to be used or occupied, as a home or residence.

(m) "Housing for older persons" means any of the following:

1. Housing provided under any state or federal program that the secretary determines is specifically designed and operated to assist elderly persons, as defined in the state or federal program.

2. Housing solely intended for, and solely occupied by, persons 62 years of age or older.

3. Housing primarily intended and primarily operated for occupancy by at least one person 55 years of age or older per dwelling unit.

(mm) "Interested person" means an adult relative or friend of a member of a protected class, or an official or representative of a private agency, corporation or association concerned with the welfare of a member of a protected class.

(nm) "Member of a protected class" means a group of natural persons, or a natural person, who may be categorized because of sex, race, color, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, marital status, family status, status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, lawful source of income, age, or ancestry.

(om) "Political subdivision" means a city, village, town or county.

(q) "Relative" means a parent, grandparent, greatgrandparent, stepparent, step grandparent, brother, sister, child, stepchild,

SUBCHAPTER III

EQUAL RIGHTS PROGRAMS

106.50 Open housing. (1) INTENT. It is the intent of this section to render unlawful discrimination in housing. It is the declared policy of this state that all persons shall have an equal opportunity for housing regardless of sex, race, color, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, family status, status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, lawful source of income, age, or ancestry and it is the duty of the political subdivisions to assist in the orderly prevention or removal of all discrimination in housing through the powers granted under ss. 66.0125 and 66.1011. The legislature hereby extends the state law governing equal housing opportunities to cover single-family residences that are owner-occupied. The legislature finds that the sale and rental of single-family residences constitute a significant portion of the housing business in this state and should be regulated. This section shall be considered an exercise of the police powers of the state for the protection of the welfare, health, peace, dignity, and human rights of the people of this state.

(1m) DEFINITIONS. In this section:

(ad) "Advertise" means to publish, circulate, issue or display, or cause to be published, circulated, issued or displayed, any communication, notice, advertisement or sign in connection with the sale, financing or rental of housing.

(am) "Age", in reference to a member of a protected class, means at least 18 years of age.

(b) "Aggrieved person" means a person who claims to have been injured by discrimination in housing or believes that he or she will be injured by discrimination in housing that is about to occur.

(c) "Complainant" means a person who files a complaint alleging discrimination in housing.

(d) "Conciliation" means the attempted resolution of issues raised by a complaint or by the investigation of the complaint, through informal negotiations involving the aggrieved person, the complainant, the respondent and the department.

(e) "Condominium" has the meaning given in s. 703.02 (4).

(f) "Condominium association" means an association, as defined in s. 703.02 (1m).

(g) "Disability" means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of having such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment. "Disability" does not include the current illegal use of a controlled substance, as defined in s. 961.01 (4), or a controlled substance analog, as defined in s. 961.01 (4m), unless the

grandchild, step grandchild, greatgrandchild, first cousin, 2nd cousin, nephew, niece, uncle, aunt, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother or half sister or any other person related by blood, marriage or adoption.

(r) “Rent” means to lease, to sublease, to let or to otherwise grant for a consideration the right of a tenant to occupy housing not owned by the tenant.

(s) “Respondent” means the person accused in a complaint or amended complaint of discrimination in housing and any other person identified in the course of an investigation as allegedly having discriminated in housing.

(t) “Sexual orientation” has the meaning given in s. 111.32 (13m).

(u) “Status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking” means the status of a person who is seeking to rent or purchase housing or of a member or prospective member of the person’s household having been, or being believed by the lessor or seller of housing to be, a victim of domestic abuse, as defined in s. 813.12 (1) (am), sexual assault under s. 940.225, 948.02, or 948.025, or stalking under s. 940.32.

(1s) DEPARTMENT TO ADMINISTER. This section shall be administered by the department through its division of equal rights. The department may promulgate such rules as are necessary to carry out this section. No rule may prohibit the processing of any class action complaint or the ordering of any class-based remedy, or may provide that complaints may be consolidated for administrative convenience only.

(2) DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED. It is unlawful for any person to discriminate:

(a) By refusing to sell, rent, finance or contract to construct housing or by refusing to negotiate or discuss the terms thereof.

(b) By refusing to permit inspection or exacting different or more stringent price, terms or conditions for the sale, lease, financing or rental of housing.

(c) By refusing to finance or sell an unimproved residential lot or to construct a home or residence upon such lot.

(d) By advertising in a manner that indicates discrimination by a preference or limitation.

(e) For a person in the business of insuring against hazards, by refusing to enter into, or by exacting different terms, conditions or privileges with respect to, a contract of insurance against hazards to a dwelling.

(f) By refusing to renew a lease, causing the eviction of a tenant from rental housing or engaging in the harassment of a tenant.

(g) In providing the privileges, services or facilities that are available in connection with housing.

(h) By falsely representing that housing is unavailable for inspection, rental or sale.

(i) By denying access to, or membership or participation in, a multiple listing service or other real estate service.

(j) By coercing, intimidating, threatening or interfering with a person in the exercise or enjoyment of, or on account of his or her having exercised or enjoyed, a right granted or protected under this section, or with a person who has aided or encouraged another person in the exercise or enjoyment of a right granted or protected under this section.

(k) In making available any of the following transactions, or in the terms or conditions of such transactions for a person whose business includes engaging in residential real estate-related transactions:

1. The making or purchasing of loans or the provision of other financial assistance for purchasing, constructing, improving, repairing or maintaining housing or the making or purchasing of loans or the provision of other financial assistance secured by residential real estate.

2. Selling, brokering or appraising residential real property.

(L) By otherwise making unavailable or denying housing.

(2m) REPRESENTATIONS DESIGNED TO INDUCE PANIC SALES. No person may induce or attempt to induce a person to sell or rent housing by representations regarding the present or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person of a particular economic status or a member of a protected class, or by representations to the effect that such present or prospective entry will or may result in any of the following:

(a) The lowering of real estate values in the area concerned.

(b) A deterioration in the character of the area concerned.

(c) An increase in criminal or antisocial behavior in the area concerned.

(d) A decline in the quality of the schools or other public facilities serving the area.

(2r) DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES PROHIBITED. (b) *Types of discrimination prohibited.* In addition to discrimination prohibited under subs. (2) and (2m), no person may do any of the following:

1. Segregate, separate, exclude or treat unequally in the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny, housing to a buyer or renter because of a disability of that buyer or renter, a disability of a person residing in or intending to reside in that housing after it is sold, rented or made available or a disability of a person associated with that buyer or renter.

2. Segregate, separate, exclude or treat unequally a person in the terms, conditions or privileges of sale or rental of housing, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection with such housing, because of a disability of that person, a disability of a person residing in or intending to reside in that housing after it is sold, rented or made available or a disability of a person associated with that person.

3. Refuse to permit, at the expense of a person with a disability, reasonable modifications of existing housing that is occupied, or is to be occupied, by such a person if the modifications may be necessary to afford the person full enjoyment of the housing, except that in the case of rental housing the landlord may, where it is reasonable to do so, condition permission for a modification on the tenant’s agreement to restore the interior of the housing to the condition that existed before the modification, other than reasonable wear and tear. The landlord may not increase any customarily required security deposit. Where it is necessary to ensure that funds will be available to pay for the restorations at the end of the tenancy, the landlord may negotiate as part of a restoration agreement a requirement that the tenant pay into an interest-bearing escrow account, over a reasonable period, a reasonable amount of money not to exceed the cost of the restorations. The interest in any such account shall accrue to the benefit of the tenant. If escrowed funds are not used by the landlord for restorations, they shall be returned to the tenant.

4. Refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services that are associated with the housing, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford the person equal opportunity to use and enjoy housing, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the owner of the housing.

(bm) Animals assisting persons with disabilities. 1. If an individual’s vision, hearing or mobility is impaired, it is discrimination for a person to refuse to rent or sell housing to the individual, cause the eviction of the individual from housing, require extra compensation from an individual as a condition of continued residence in housing or engage in the harassment of the individual because he or she keeps an animal that is specially trained to lead or assist the individual with impaired vision, hearing or mobility if all of the following apply:

a. Upon request, the individual shows to the lessor, seller or representative of the condominium association credentials issued by a school recognized by the department as accredited to train animals for individuals with impaired vision, hearing or mobility.

b. The individual accepts liability for sanitation with respect to, and damage to the premises caused by, the animal.

2. Subdivision 1. does not apply in the case of the rental of owner-occupied housing if the owner or a member of his or her immediate family occupying the housing possesses and, upon request, presents to the individual a certificate signed by a physician which states that the owner or family member is allergic to the type of animal the individual possesses.

(c) *Design and construction of covered multifamily housing.* In addition to discrimination prohibited under pars. (b) and (bm) and subs. (2) and (2m), no person may design or construct covered multifamily housing, as defined in s. 101.132 (1) (d), unless it meets the standards specified in s. 101.132 (2) (a) 1. to 4. In addition, no person may remodel, as defined in s. 101.132 (1) (h), housing with 3 or more dwelling units unless the remodeled housing meets the standards specified in s. 101.132 (2) (a) 1. to 4. as required under s. 101.132 (2) (b) 1., 2. or 3., whichever is applicable.

(5m) EXEMPTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS. (a) 1. Nothing in this section prohibits discrimination based on age or family status with respect to housing for older persons.

1e. Under this paragraph, housing under sub. (1m) (m) 3. may qualify as housing for older persons only if the owner of the housing maintains records containing written verification that all of the following factors apply to the housing:

b. At least 80% of the dwelling units under sub. (1m) (m) 3. are occupied by at least one person 55 years of age or older.

c. Policies are published and procedures are adhered to that demonstrate an intent by the owner or manager to provide housing under sub. (1m) (m) 3. for persons 55 years of age or older. The owner or manager may document compliance with this subd. 1e. c. by maintaining records containing written verification of the ages of the occupants of the housing.

1m. No person may discriminate by refusing to continue renting to a person living in housing for older persons under sub. (1m) (m) 3. who is subject to a hardship condition.

2. Under this paragraph, housing may qualify as housing for older persons with respect to persons first occupying the housing on or after September 1, 1992, regardless of whether a person who had not attained the age of 62 resided in the housing on that date or regardless of whether one or more dwelling units were unoccupied on that date, if the persons who first occupy the housing on or after that date have attained the age of 62.

(b) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a person from exacting different or more stringent terms or conditions for financing housing based on the age of the individual applicant for financing if the terms or conditions are reasonably related to the individual applicant.

(c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the development of housing designed specifically for persons with disabilities and preference in favor of persons with disabilities in relation to such housing.

(d) Nothing in this section requires that housing be made available to an individual whose tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the safety of other tenants or persons employed on the property or whose tenancy would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others, if the risk of direct threat or damage cannot be eliminated or sufficiently reduced through reasonable accommodations. A claim that an individual's tenancy poses a direct threat or a substantial risk of harm or damage must be evidenced by behavior by the individual that caused harm or damage, that directly threatened harm or damage, or that caused a reasonable fear of harm or damage to other tenants, persons employed on the property, or the property. No claim that an individual's tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the safety of other persons or would result in substantial damage to property may be based on the tenant's status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking.

(dm) It is not discrimination based on status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking for a landlord to bring

an action for eviction of a tenant based on a violation of the rental agreement or of a statute that entitles the landlord to possession of the premises, unless subd. 1. or 2. applies. A tenant has a defense to an action for eviction brought by a landlord if the tenant proves by a preponderance of the evidence that the landlord knew or should have known any of the following:

1. That the tenant is a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking and that the basis for the action for eviction is conduct that related to the commission of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking by a person who was not the invited guest of the tenant.

2. That the tenant is a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, that the basis for the action for eviction is conduct that related to the commission of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking by a person who was the invited guest of the tenant, and that the tenant has done one of the following:

a. Sought an injunction under s. 813.12, 813.122, 813.123, or 813.125 enjoining the person from appearing on the premises.

b. Upon receiving notice under s. 704.17, provided a written statement to the landlord indicating that the person will no longer be an invited guest of the tenant and has not subsequently invited the person to be a guest of the tenant.

(e) It is not discrimination based on family status to comply with any reasonable federal, state or local government restrictions relating to the maximum number of occupants permitted to occupy a dwelling unit.

(em) 1. Subject to subd. 2., nothing in this section applies to a decision by an individual as to the person with whom he or she will, or continues to, share a dwelling unit, as defined in s. 101.71 (2) except that dwelling unit does not include any residence occupied by more than 5 persons.

2. Any advertisement or written notice published, posted or mailed in connection with the rental or lease of a dwelling unit under subd. 1. may not violate sub. (2) (d), 42 USC 3604 (c), or any rules or regulations promulgated under this section or 42 USC 3601 to 3619, except that such an advertisement or written notice may be for a person of the same sex as the individual who seeks a person to share the dwelling unit for which the advertisement or written notice is placed.

(f) 1. Nothing in this section prohibits an owner or agent from requiring that a person who seeks to buy or rent housing supply information concerning family status, and marital, financial, and business status but not concerning race, color, disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking, or, subject to subd. 2., age.

2. Notwithstanding subd. 1., an owner or agent may require that a person who seeks to buy or rent housing under sub. (1m) (m) 3. supply information concerning his or her age for the purpose of verifying compliance with par. (a) 1e. b.

(g) A person may not be held personally liable for monetary damages for a violation of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) if the person reasonably relied, in good faith, on the application of the exemption under this subsection relating to housing for older persons. For purposes of this paragraph, a person may show reasonable reliance, in good faith, on the application of the exemption under this subsection relating to housing for older persons only if the person shows all of the following:

1. That he or she has no actual knowledge that the housing is not or will not be eligible for the exemption.

2. That the owner of the housing has stated formally, in writing, that the housing complies with the requirements for the exemption.

(6) FAIR HOUSING ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT. (a) *Complaints.* 1. The department may receive and investigate a complaint charging a violation of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) if the complaint is filed with the department not later than one year after the alleged discrimination occurred or terminated.

2. The complaint shall include a written statement of the essential facts constituting the discrimination that is charged, and shall be signed by the complainant.

3. The complaint may be filed by an aggrieved person, by an interested person, by the department of workforce development under par. (b) or, if the complaint charges a violation of sub. (2r) (c), by the department of safety and professional services. The department of workforce development shall, upon request, provide appropriate assistance in completing and filing complaints.

4. The department shall serve notice on the aggrieved person acknowledging the filing of the complaint and advising the complainant of the time limits and choice of forums provided under this subsection and the right to bring a private civil action under sub. (6m).

5. Upon the filing of an initial, amended, final or supplemental complaint, the department shall promptly serve a copy of the complaint upon the respondent, except where testing may be conducted. The initial complaint shall be served before the commencement of the investigation by the department, except where testing may be conducted. The notice shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice to the respondent shall include a written statement from the department directing the respondent to respond in writing to the allegations in the complaint within 20 days after the date of the notice and further stating that, if the respondent fails to answer the complaint in writing, the department will make an initial determination as to whether discrimination has occurred based only on the department's investigation and the information supplied by the complainant.

6. The department may dismiss the complaint if the complainant fails to respond to the department within 20 days from the date of mailing of any correspondence from the department concerning the complaint, if the department's correspondence requests a response and if the correspondence is sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the complainant.

(b) *Powers and duties of department.* The department of workforce development and its duly authorized agents may hold hearings, subpoena witnesses, take testimony and make investigations as provided in this subsection. The department of workforce development may test and investigate for the purpose of establishing violations of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) and may make, sign and file complaints alleging violations of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r). In addition, the department of safety and professional services may make, sign and file complaints alleging violations of sub. (2r) (c). The department of workforce development shall employ examiners to hear and decide complaints of discrimination under this section, and to assist in the administration of this section. The examiners may make findings and issue orders under this subsection. The department of workforce development shall develop and implement an investigation manual for use in conducting investigations under par. (c).

(c) *Investigation and finding of probable cause.* 1. The department shall investigate all complaints that allege a violation of this section and that are filed within the time specified under par. (a). The department may subpoena persons or documents for the purpose of investigation. If during an investigation it appears that the respondent has engaged in discrimination against the complainant which is not alleged in the complaint, the department may advise the complainant that the complaint should be amended. If the complaint is amended, the department shall also investigate the allegations of the amended complaint.

2. At the conclusion of the investigation of the allegations, the department shall make a determination as to whether probable cause exists to believe that discrimination has occurred or is about to occur. In making a determination of probable cause, the department shall consider whether the facts concerning the alleged discrimination are sufficient to warrant the initiation of a civil action. If the department determines that probable cause exists, the department shall immediately issue a charge on behalf of the aggrieved person and refer the charge to the attorney general. If

the attorney general concurs in the department's determination of probable cause, the attorney general shall represent the aggrieved person at the hearing under par. (f) or, if an election is made under subd. 2m., shall commence a civil action in the name of the state on behalf of the aggrieved person under sub. (6m).

2m. Service of copies of the charge shall be made on the complainant, the respondent, and the aggrieved person by certified mail, return receipt requested. When a charge is filed, a complainant, a respondent, or an aggrieved person on whose behalf the complaint was filed may elect to have the claims asserted in that charge decided in a civil action under sub. (6m) in lieu of a hearing under par. (f). The election shall be made no later than 20 days after the receipt by the electing person of service of the charge, along with information about how to make the election. If an election is made, the person making the election shall give notice of doing so to the department and to all other complainants and respondents to whom the charge relates. The department shall notify the aggrieved persons that an election is made.

3. No charge may be issued regarding alleged discrimination after the beginning of the trial of a civil action commenced by the aggrieved party under sub. (6m) or 42 USC 3613, seeking relief with respect to that discriminatory act.

4. If the department initially determines that there is no probable cause to believe that discrimination occurred as alleged in the complaint, it may dismiss those allegations. The department shall, by a notice to be served with the determination, notify the parties of the complainant's right to appeal the dismissal of the claim to the secretary for a hearing on the issue by a hearing examiner. Service of the determination shall be made by certified mail, return receipt requested. If the hearing examiner determines that no probable cause exists, that determination is the final determination of the department and may be appealed under par. (j).

(d) *Temporary judicial relief.* At any time after a complaint is filed alleging discrimination in violation of sub. (2), (2m), or (2r), the department may request the attorney general to file a petition in the circuit court for the county in which the act of discrimination allegedly occurred or for the county in which a respondent resides or transacts business, seeking a temporary injunction or restraining order against the respondent to prevent the respondent from performing an act that would tend to render ineffectual an order that the department may enter with respect to the complaint, pending final determination of proceedings under this section. On receipt of the department's request, the attorney general shall promptly file the petition.

(e) *Conciliation.* 1. Upon the filing of a complaint alleging discrimination in violation of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r), the department may endeavor to eliminate the discrimination by conference, conciliation and persuasion. The department shall notify the parties that conciliation services are available.

2. Conciliation efforts may be undertaken by the department during the period beginning with the filing of the complaint and ending with the dismissal of the complaint under par. (c) 4. or the issuance of a charge under par. (c) 2.

3. If conciliation resolves the dispute, a written conciliation agreement shall be prepared which shall state all measures to be taken by each party. The agreement may provide for dismissal of the complaint if the dismissal is without prejudice to the complainant's right to pursue the complaint against any respondent who fails to comply with the terms of the agreement. The agreement shall be signed by the respondent, the complainant and the aggrieved person and is subject to approval by the department. A conciliation agreement entered into under this subdivision is a public record and is subject to inspection under s. 19.35, unless the parties to the agreement request that the record be exempt from disclosure and the department finds that disclosure is not required to further the purposes of this section.

4. Whenever the department has reasonable cause to believe that a respondent has breached a conciliation agreement, the

department shall refer the matter to the attorney general with a recommendation that a civil action be filed for enforcement of the agreement.

(f) *Hearing procedures.* 1. After the department issues a charge under par. (c) 2., the department shall serve the charge, along with a written notice of hearing, specifying the nature and acts of discrimination which appear to have been committed, and requiring the respondent to answer the charge at a hearing before an examiner. The notice shall specify a time of hearing, not less than 10 days after service of the charge, and a place of hearing within the county in which the violation is alleged to have occurred.

2. If an election is not made under par. (c) 2m., the hearing shall be conducted by a hearing examiner. If the attorney general has concurred in the department's determination of probable cause under par. (c) 2., the aggrieved person on whose behalf the charge was issued shall be represented by the attorney general. Any other person who is aggrieved, with respect to the issues to be determined at the hearing, may be represented by private counsel.

3. The department, the attorney general, or a party's attorney of record may issue a subpoena to compel the attendance of a witness or the production of evidence. A subpoena issued by an attorney shall be in substantially the same form as provided in s. 805.07 (4) and shall be served in the manner provided in s. 805.07 (5). The attorney shall, at the time of issuance, send a copy of the subpoena to the hearing examiner who is responsible for conducting the hearing.

4. The testimony at the hearing shall be recorded by the department. Discovery shall be conducted as expeditiously and inexpensively as possible, consistent with the need of all parties to obtain relevant evidence. The hearing under this paragraph shall be conducted as expeditiously and inexpensively as possible, consistent with the needs and rights of the parties to obtain a fair hearing and a complete record. The burden of proof is on the party alleging discrimination.

5. If after the hearing the examiner finds by a fair preponderance of the evidence that the respondent has violated sub. (2), (2m) or (2r), the examiner shall make written findings and order the respondent to take actions that will effectuate the purpose of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r), and may order other penalties, damages and costs as provided in pars. (h) and (i). The department shall serve a certified copy of the final findings and order on the aggrieved party, the complainant and the respondent. The order shall have the same force as other orders of the department and be enforced as provided in this subsection except that the enforcement of the order is automatically stayed upon the filing of a petition for review under par. (j).

6. If the examiner finds that the respondent has not engaged in discrimination as alleged in the complaint, the department shall serve a certified copy of the examiner's findings on the aggrieved party, the complainant and the respondent together with an order dismissing the complaint. If the complaint is dismissed, costs in an amount not to exceed \$100 plus actual disbursements for the attendance of witnesses may be assessed against the department in the discretion of the department.

(g) *Time limitations.* 1. The department shall commence proceedings with respect to a complaint before the end of the 30th day after receipt of the complaint.

2. The department shall investigate the allegations of the complaint and complete the investigation not later than 100 days after receipt of the complaint. If the department is unable to complete the investigation within 100 days, it shall notify the complainant and respondent in writing of the reasons for not doing so.

3. The department shall make final administrative disposition of a complaint within one year after the date of receipt of a complaint, unless it is impracticable to do so. If the department is unable to do so, it shall notify the complainant and respondent in writing of the reasons for not doing so.

(h) *Damages and penalties.* 1. If the hearing examiner finds that a respondent has engaged in or is about to engage in a discriminatory act prohibited under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r), the hearing examiner shall promptly issue an order for such relief as may be appropriate, which may include economic and noneconomic damages suffered by the aggrieved person, regardless of whether he or she intervened in the action, and injunctive or other equitable relief. The hearing examiner may not order punitive damages.

2. In addition to any damages ordered under subd. 1., the hearing examiner may assess a forfeiture against a respondent who is not a natural person in an amount not exceeding \$10,000, unless the respondent who is not a natural person has been adjudged to have committed any prior discriminatory act under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r). If a respondent who is not a natural person has been adjudged to have committed one other discriminatory act under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) during the preceding 5-year period, based on the offense date of the prior discriminatory act, the hearing examiner may assess a forfeiture in an amount not exceeding \$25,000. If a respondent who is not a natural person has been adjudged to have committed 2 or more prior discriminatory acts under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) during the preceding 7-year period, based on the offense date of the prior discriminatory act, the hearing examiner may assess a forfeiture in an amount not exceeding \$50,000.

3. In addition to any damages ordered under subd. 1., the administrative law judge may assess a forfeiture against a respondent who is a natural person in an amount not exceeding \$10,000, unless the respondent who is a natural person has been adjudged to have committed any prior discriminatory act under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r). If a respondent who is a natural person has been adjudged to have committed one other prior discriminatory act under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) based on an offense date that is before September 1, 1992, the administrative law judge may assess a forfeiture in an amount not exceeding \$25,000. If a respondent who is a natural person has been adjudged to have committed 2 or more prior discriminatory acts under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) based on an offense date that is before September 1, 1992, the administrative law judge may assess a forfeiture in an amount not exceeding \$50,000.

(i) *Attorney fees and costs.* The hearing examiner may allow a prevailing complainant, including the state, reasonable attorney fees and costs. The state shall be liable for those fees and costs if the state is a respondent and is determined to have committed a discriminatory act under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r).

(j) *Judicial review.* Within 30 days after service upon all parties of an order or determination of the department under this subsection, the respondent, the complainant or the aggrieved party may appeal the order or the determination to the circuit court for the county in which the alleged discrimination took place by the filing of a petition for review. The court shall review the order or determination as provided in ss. 227.52 to 227.58.

(6m) *CIVIL ACTIONS.* (a) Any person alleging a violation of sub. (2), (2m), or (2r), including the attorney general on behalf of an aggrieved person, may bring a civil action for injunctive relief, for damages, including punitive damages, and, in the case of a prevailing plaintiff, for court costs and reasonable attorney fees.

(b) An action commenced under par. (a) may be brought in the circuit court for the county where the alleged violation occurred or for the county where the person against whom the civil complaint is filed resides or has a principal place of business, and shall be commenced within one year after the alleged violation occurred or terminated. The one-year statute of limitations under this paragraph shall be tolled while an administrative proceeding with respect to the same complaint is pending.

(c) The court may issue a permanent or temporary injunction or restraining order to assure the rights granted by this section. The court may order other relief that the court considers appropriate, including monetary damages, actual and punitive, a forfeiture

as provided in sub. (6) (b) and costs and fees as provided in sub. (6) (i).

(d) If the attorney general has reasonable cause to believe that any person is engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination in violation of sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) or that any person has been denied any of the rights granted under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r), and such denial raises an issue of general public importance, the department of justice may commence a civil action.

(8) DISCRIMINATION BY LICENSED OR CHARTERED PERSONS. (a) If the department finds reasonable cause to believe that an act of discrimination has been or is being committed in violation of this section by a person taking an action prohibited under sub. (2), (2m) or (2r) and that the person is licensed or chartered under state law, the department shall notify the licensing or chartering agency of its findings and may file a complaint with such agency together with a request that the agency initiate proceedings to suspend or revoke the license or charter of such person or take other less restrictive disciplinary action.

(b) Upon filing a complaint under par. (a), the department shall make available to the appropriate licensing or chartering agency all pertinent documents and files in its custody, and shall cooperate fully with such agency in the agency's proceedings.

History: 1971 c. 185 s. 1; 1971 c. 228 s. 42; 1971 c. 230; 1971 c. 307 s. 51; Stats. 1971 s. 101.22; 1975 c. 94, 275, 421, 422; 1977 c. 29; 1977 c. 418 s. 929 (55); 1979 c. 110; 1979 c. 177 s. 85; 1979 c. 188, 221, 355; 1981 c. 112, 180; 1981 c. 391 s. 210; 1983 a. 27, 189; 1985 a. 238, 319; 1987 a. 262; 1989 a. 47 ss. 2 to 5, 8 to 11; 1989 a. 94, 106, 139, 359; 1991 a. 295, 315; 1993 a. 27; 1995 a. 27 s. 3687; Stats. 1995 s. 106.04; 1995 a. 225; 1995 a. 448 ss. 66, 68; 1997 a. 112, 237, 312; 1999 a. 82 ss. 38 to 74; Stats. 1999 s. 106.50; 1999 a. 150 s. 672; 1999 a. 162; 2001 a. 30 s. 108; 2001 a. 109; 2005 a. 25; 2007 a. 11; 2009 a. 95; 2011 a. 32, 258.

NOTE: 1991 Wis. Act 295, which affected this section, contains extensive legislative council notes.

Cross-reference: See also ch. DWD 220, Wis. adm. code.

"Harassment" under sub. (2) (f) includes sexual harassment as defined in s. 111.32 (13). Sexual harassment injures the tenant's dignity and civil rights, and those injuries are compensable. *Chomiccki v. Wittekind*, 128 Wis. 2d 188, 381 N.W.2d 561 (Ct. App. 1985).

A violation of sub. (2) (d) requires that an ordinary reader find that an advertisement suggests a particular class is preferred or "dispreferred." *Milwaukee Fair Housing Council v. LIRC*, 173 Wis. 2d 199, 496 N.W.2d 159 (Ct. App. 1992).

The state, in administering the fair housing act, may not order a zoning board to issue a variance based on characteristics unique to the landowner rather than the land. *County of Sawyer Zoning Board v. Department of Workforce Development*, 231 Wis. 2d 534, 605 N.W.2d 627 (Ct. App. 1999), 99-0707.

To establish a disability under this section, the complainant must show: 1) that he or she has an actual impairment, a record of impairment, or is regarded as having an impairment; and 2) that the impairment, whether real or perceived, is one that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or is regarded by the respondent as substantially limiting one or more major life activities. *Kitten v. DWD*, 2002 WI 54, 252 Wis. 2d 561, 644 N.W.2d 649, 00-3562.

The Wisconsin open housing law permits, but does not require, the department to receive and process class action complaints of housing discrimination. 70 Atty. Gen. 250.

The insurer of an apartment had a duty to defend an owner and manager for liability under this section. *Gardner v. Romano*, 688 F. Supp. 489 (E. D. Wis. 1988).

Federal rent vouchers are not clearly within the meaning of "lawful source of income." *Knapp v. Eagle Property Management Corp.* 54 F.3d 1272 (1995).

Closing the Door on Cohabitants Under Wisconsin's Open Housing Law. *Neuman*. 1995 WLR 965.

106.52 Public places of accommodation or amusement. (1) DEFINITIONS. In this section:

(a) "Complainant" means a person who files a complaint alleging a violation of sub. (3).

(b) "Conciliation" has the meaning given in s. 106.50 (1m) (d).

(c) "Disability" has the meaning given in s. 106.50 (1m) (g).

(cm) "Fitness center" means an establishment, whether operated for profit or not for profit, that provides as its primary purpose services or facilities that are purported to assist patrons in physical exercise, in weight control, or in figure development. "Fitness center" does not include an organization solely offering training or facilities in an individual sport or a weight reduction center, as defined in s. 100.177 (1) (e).

(d) "Lodging establishment" means any of the following:

1. A bed and breakfast establishment, as defined in s. 254.61 (1).
2. A hotel, as defined in s. 254.61 (3).
3. A tourist rooming house, as defined in s. 254.61 (6).

4. A campground.

(e) 1. "Public place of accommodation or amusement" shall be interpreted broadly to include, but not be limited to, places of business or recreation; lodging establishments; restaurants; taverns; barber, cosmetologist, aesthetician, electrologist, or manicuring establishments; nursing homes; clinics; hospitals; cemeteries; and any place where accommodations, amusement, goods, or services are available either free or for a consideration, subject to sub. 2.

2. "Public place of accommodation or amusement" does not include a place where a bona fide private, nonprofit organization or institution provides accommodations, amusement, goods or services during an event in which the organization or institution provides the accommodations, amusement, goods or services to the following individuals only:

- a. Members of the organization or institution.
- b. Guests named by members of the organization or institution.
- c. Guests named by the organization or institution.

(f) "Respondent" means the person accused in a complaint or amended complaint of committing a violation of sub. (3).

(fm) "Service animal" means a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is individually trained or is being trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, including the work or task of guiding a person with impaired vision, alerting a person with impaired hearing to intruders or sound, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

(g) "Sexual orientation" has the meaning given in s. 111.32 (13m).

(2) DEPARTMENT TO ADMINISTER. The department shall administer this section through its division of equal rights. The department may promulgate such rules as are necessary to carry out this section. No rule may prohibit the processing of any class action complaint or the ordering of any class-based remedy, and no rule may provide that complaints may be consolidated for administrative convenience only.

(3) PUBLIC PLACE OF ACCOMMODATION OR AMUSEMENT. (a) No person may do any of the following:

1. Deny to another or charge another a higher price than the regular rate for the full and equal enjoyment of any public place of accommodation or amusement because of sex, race, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry.

1m. Deny to an adult or charge an adult a higher price than the regular rate for the full and equal enjoyment of a lodging establishment because of age, subject to s. 125.07.

2. Give preferential treatment to some classes of persons in providing services or facilities in any public place of accommodation or amusement because of sex, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry.

3. Directly or indirectly publish, circulate, display or mail any written communication which the communicator knows is to the effect that any of the facilities of any public place of accommodation or amusement will be denied to any person by reason of sex, race, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry or that the patronage of a person is unwelcome, objectionable or unacceptable for any of those reasons.

3m. Directly or indirectly publish, circulate, display or mail any written communication which the communicator knows is to the effect that any of the facilities of a lodging establishment will be denied to an adult because of age, subject to s. 125.07.

4. Refuse to furnish or charge another a higher rate for any automobile insurance because of race, color, creed, disability, national origin or ancestry.

5. Refuse to rent, charge a higher price than the regular rate or give preferential treatment, because of sex, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, regarding the use of any private facilities commonly rented to the public.

(am) 1. Subject to subs. 2., 3., and 4., no person may do any of the following:

a. Refuse to permit entrance into, or use of, or otherwise deny the full and equal enjoyment of any public place of accommodation or amusement to a person with a disability or to a service animal trainer because the person with a disability or the trainer is accompanied by a service animal.

b. Charge a person with a disability or a service animal trainer a higher price than the regular rate, including a deposit or surcharge, for the full and equal enjoyment of any public place of accommodation or amusement because the person with a disability or the trainer is accompanied by a service animal.

c. Directly or indirectly publish, circulate, display, or mail any written communication that the communicator knows is to the effect that entrance into, or use of, or the full and equal enjoyment of any of the facilities of the public place of accommodation or amusement will be denied to a person with a disability or a service animal trainer because the person with a disability or the trainer is accompanied by a service animal or that the patronage of a person with a disability or a service animal trainer is unwelcome, objectionable, or unacceptable because the person with a disability or the trainer is accompanied by a service animal.

2. The prohibitions specified in subd. 1. apply to a service animal trainer only if the animal accompanying the service animal trainer is wearing a harness or a leash and special cape. Subdivision 1. does not prohibit a person who is accompanied by an animal from being asked whether the animal is a service animal that is required because of a disability or is an animal that is being trained to be a service animal and does not prohibit a service animal trainer from being required to produce a certification or other credential issued by a school for training service animals that the animal is being trained to be a service animal. Subdivision 1. prohibits a person with a disability from being required to produce documentation of his or her disability or a certification or other credential that the animal is trained as or is being trained to be a service animal.

3. A person may exclude a service animal from a public place of accommodation or amusement if accommodation of the service animal would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the accommodations, amusement, goods, or services provided or would jeopardize the safe operation of the public place of accommodation or amusement. If a service animal must be separated from the person whom the service animal is accompanying, it is the responsibility of that person to arrange for the care and supervision of the service animal during the period of separation.

4. A public place of accommodation or amusement shall modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit the full and equal enjoyment of the public place of accommodation or amusement by a person with a disability or a service animal trainer who is accompanied by a service animal. Those policies, practices, and procedures shall ensure that a person with a disability or a service animal trainer who is accompanied by a service animal is not separated from the service animal, that the service animal is permitted to accompany the person with a disability or the service animal trainer to all areas of the public place of accommodation or amusement that are open to the general public, and that the person with a disability or the service animal trainer is not segregated from other patrons of the public place of accommodation or amusement.

(b) Nothing in this subsection prohibits separate dormitories at higher educational institutions or separate public toilets, showers, saunas and dressing rooms for persons of different sexes.

(c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits separate treatment of persons based on sex with regard to public toilets, showers, saunas and dressing rooms for persons of different sexes.

(d) Nothing in this subsection prohibits a domestic abuse services organization, as defined in s. 995.67 (1) (b), from providing separate shelter facilities, private home shelter care, advocacy, counseling or other care, treatment or services for persons of dif-

ferent sexes or from providing for separate treatment of persons based on sex with regard to the provision of shelter facilities, private home shelter care, advocacy, counseling or other care, treatment or services for persons of different sexes.

(e) Nothing in this section prohibits a fitness center whose services or facilities are intended for the exclusive use of persons of the same sex from providing the use of those services or facilities exclusively to persons of that sex, from denying the use of those services or facilities to persons of the opposite sex, or from directly or indirectly publishing, circulating, displaying, or mailing any written communication to the effect that the use of those services or facilities will be provided exclusively to persons of the same sex and will be denied to persons of the opposite sex.

(4) INVESTIGATION AND REVIEW OF CLAIMS, PUBLIC PLACES. (a) *Claims filed with department.* 1. The department may receive and investigate a complaint charging a violation of sub. (3) if the complaint is filed with the department no more than 300 days after the alleged act prohibited under sub. (3) occurred. A complaint shall be a written statement of the essential facts constituting the act prohibited under sub. (3) charged, and shall be verified.

2. In carrying out this subsection, the department and its duly authorized agents may hold hearings, subpoena witnesses, take testimony and make investigations as provided in this chapter. The department, upon its own motion, may test and investigate for the purpose of establishing violations of sub. (3), and may make, sign and file complaints alleging violations of sub. (3), and initiate investigations and studies to carry out the purposes of this subsection and sub. (3).

3. The department shall employ such examiners as are necessary to hear and decide complaints of acts prohibited under sub. (3) and to assist in the effective administration of this subsection. The examiners may make findings and orders under this subsection.

4. If the department finds probable cause to believe that any act prohibited under sub. (3) has been or is being committed, the department may endeavor to eliminate the act by conference, conciliation and persuasion. If the department determines that such conference, conciliation and persuasion has not eliminated the alleged act prohibited under sub. (3), the department shall issue and serve a written notice of hearing, specifying the nature and acts prohibited under sub. (3) which appear to have been committed, and requiring the person named, in this subsection called the "respondent", to answer the complaint at a hearing before an examiner. The notice shall specify a time of hearing, not less than 10 days after service of the complaint, and a place of hearing within the county in which the violation of sub. (3) is alleged to have occurred. The attorney of record for any party may issue a subpoena to compel the attendance of a witness or the production of evidence. A subpoena issued by an attorney must be in substantially the same form as provided in s. 805.07 (4) and must be served in the manner provided in s. 805.07 (5). The attorney shall, at the time of issuance, send a copy of the subpoena to the appeal tribunal or other representative of the department responsible for conducting the proceeding. The testimony at the hearing shall be recorded by the department. In all hearings before an examiner, except those for determining probable cause, the burden of proof is on the party alleging an act prohibited under sub. (3). If, after the hearing, the examiner finds by a fair preponderance of the evidence that the respondent has violated sub. (3), the examiner shall make written findings and order such action by the respondent as will effectuate the purpose of this subsection and sub. (3). The department shall serve a certified copy of the examiner's findings and order on the respondent and complainant. The order shall have the same force as other orders of the department and shall be enforced as provided in this subsection, except that the enforcement of the order is automatically stayed upon the filing of a petition for review with the commission. If the examiner finds that the respondent has not engaged in an act prohibited under sub. (3) as alleged in the complaint, the department shall serve a certified copy of the examiner's findings on the complainant and the

respondent together with an order dismissing the complaint. If the complaint is dismissed, costs in an amount not to exceed \$100 plus actual disbursements for the attendance of witnesses may be assessed against the department in the discretion of the department.

5. At any time after a complaint is filed, the department may file a petition in the circuit court for the county in which the act prohibited under sub. (3) allegedly occurred, or for the county in which a respondent resides or transacts business, seeking appropriate temporary relief against the respondent, pending final determination of proceedings under this subsection, including an order or decree restraining the respondent from performing an act tending to render ineffectual an order the department may enter with respect to the complaint. The court may grant such temporary relief or restraining order as the court deems just and proper.

(b) *Petition for review.* 1. A respondent or complainant who is dissatisfied with the findings and order of the examiner under par. (a) may file a written petition with the department for review by the commission of the findings and order.

2. The commission shall either reverse, modify, set aside or affirm the findings and order in whole or in part, or direct the taking of additional evidence. Such action shall be based on a review of the evidence submitted. If the commission is satisfied that a respondent or complainant has been prejudiced because of exceptional delay in the receipt of a copy of any findings and order it may extend the time another 21 days for filing the petition with the department.

3. On motion, the commission may set aside, modify or change any decision made by the commission, at any time within 28 days from the date thereof if it discovers any mistake therein, or upon the grounds of newly discovered evidence. The commission may on its own motion, for reasons it deems sufficient, set aside any final decision of the commission within one year from the date thereof upon grounds of mistake or newly discovered evidence, and remand the case to the department for further proceedings.

4. If no petition is filed within 21 days from the date that a copy of the findings and order of the examiner are mailed to the last-known address of the respondent and complainant, the findings and order shall be considered final.

(c) *Judicial review.* Within 30 days after service upon all parties of an order of the commission under par. (b), the respondent or complainant may appeal the order to the circuit court for the county in which the alleged act prohibited under sub. (3) took place by the filing of a petition for review. The respondent or complainant shall receive a new trial on all issues relating to any alleged act prohibited under sub. (3) and a further right to a trial by jury, if so desired. The department of justice shall represent the commission. In any such trial the burden shall be to prove an act prohibited under sub. (3) by a fair preponderance of the evidence. Costs in an amount not to exceed \$100 plus actual disbursements for the attendance of witnesses may be taxed to the prevailing party on the appeal.

(d) *Penalty.* 1. A person who willfully violates sub. (3) or any lawful order issued under this subsection shall, for the first violation, forfeit not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000.

2. A person adjudged to have violated sub. (3) within 5 years after having been adjudged to have violated sub. (3), for every violation committed within the 5 years, shall forfeit not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$10,000.

3. Payment of a forfeiture under this paragraph shall be stayed during the period in which an appeal may be taken and during the pendency of an appeal under par. (c).

(e) *Civil actions.* 1. A person, including the state, alleging a violation of sub. (3) may bring a civil action for appropriate injunctive relief, for damages including punitive damages and, in the case of a prevailing plaintiff, for court costs and reasonable

attorney fees. The attorney general shall represent the department in an action to which the department is a party.

2. An action commenced under this paragraph may be brought in the circuit court for the county where the alleged violation occurred, or for the county where the person against whom the civil complaint is filed resides or has a principal place of business, and shall be commenced within one year after the alleged violation occurred.

3. The remedies provided for in this paragraph shall be in addition to any other remedies contained in this subsection.

Cross-reference: See also LIRC, Wis. adm. code.

(5) **DISCRIMINATION BY LICENSED OR CHARTERED PERSONS.** (a) If the department finds probable cause to believe that an act has been or is being committed in violation of sub. (3) and that the person who committed or is committing the act is licensed or chartered under state law, the department shall notify the licensing or chartering agency of its findings and may file a complaint with such agency together with a request that the agency initiate proceedings to suspend or revoke the license or charter of such person or take other less restrictive disciplinary action.

(b) Upon filing a complaint under par. (a), the department shall make available to the appropriate licensing or chartering agency all pertinent documents and files in its custody, and shall cooperate fully with such agency in the agency's proceedings.

History: 1971 c. 185 s. 1; 1971 c. 228 s. 42; 1971 c. 230; 1971 c. 307 a. 51; Stats. 1971 s. 101.22; 1975 c. 94, 275, 421, 422; 1977 c. 29; 1977 c. 418 s. 929 (55); 1979 c. 110; 1979 c. 177 s. 85; 1979 c. 188, 221, 355; 1981 c. 112, 180; 1981 c. 391 s. 210; 1983 a. 27, 189; 1985 a. 238, 319; 1987 a. 262; 1989 a. 47 ss. 2 to 5, 8 to 11; 1989 a. 94, 106, 139, 359; 1991 a. 295, 315; 1993 a. 27; 1995 a. 27 s. 3687; Stats. 1995 s. 106.04; 1995 a. 225; 1995 a. 448 ss. 66, 68; 1997 a. 112, 237, 312; 1999 a. 82 ss. 75 to 92, 102 to 105; Stats. 1999 s. 106.52; 1999 a. 186; 2003 a. 23; 2005 a. 155; 2005 a. 354 ss. 1 to 4, 6; 2007 a. 97; 2011 a. 190.

NOTE: 1991 Wis. Act 295, which affected this section, contains extensive legislative council notes.

Cross-reference: See also ch. DWD 221, Wis. adm. code.

A newspaper's classified advertising section was not subject to the public accommodations act. *Hatheway v. Gannett Satellite Network*, 157 Wis. 2d 395, 459 N.W.2d 873 (Ct. App. 1990).

Section 106.04 (9) (a) 2. [now sub. (3) (a) 2.] prohibits price differentials or discounts based on the categories specified in the statute. Offering free drinks to women, and not men, is prohibited regardless of whether other promotions offer preferential treatment to men. *Novak v. Madison Motel Associates*, 188 Wis. 2d 407, 525 N.W.2d 123 (Ct. App. 1994).

In order to allege prohibited discrimination in public accommodations, an allegation that the defendant was not a private nonprofit organization was not required in the complaint. *Barry v. Maple Bluff Country Club*, 221 Wis. 2d 707, 586 N.W.2d 182 (Ct. App. 1998), 97-0736.

There is an 8-point test for determining whether an organization is an exempt bona fide private nonprofit organization under sub. (1) (e) 2., the most important of the factors being whether membership in the organization is truly selective. *Barry v. Maple Bluff Country Club, Inc.* 2001 WI App 108, 244 Wis. 2d 86, 629 N.W.2d 24, 00-1178.

The defendant doctor and clinic in this case wrongly implied that defendants in s. 106.52 actions must be physical places of accommodation themselves rather than the individuals or corporations who run them. *Rose v. Cabece*, 727 F. Supp. 2d 728 (2010).

106.54 Division of equal rights. (2) The division shall encourage and assist local units of government in guaranteeing all persons an equal opportunity for housing.

(3) All gifts, grants, bequests and devises to the division for its use are valid and shall be used to carry out the purposes for which made and received.

(4) The division shall review complaints of discrimination against public employees exercising their rights with respect to occupational safety and health matters, under s. 101.055 (8).

(5) The division shall receive complaints of discharge, retaliation or discrimination under s. 16.009 (5) (d), 46.90 (4) (b), 50.07 (3) (b), or 55.043 (1m) (c) and shall process the complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(6) The division shall receive complaints under s. 146.997 (4) (a) of disciplinary action taken in violation of s. 146.997 (3) and shall process the complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(7) The division shall receive complaints under s. 321.65 (7) (b) 1. or 2. and shall process the complaints in the same manner

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that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(8) The division shall receive complaints under s. 321.66 (5) and shall process the complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(8m) The division shall receive complaints under s. 103.88 (5) and shall process the complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(9) The division shall receive complaints under s. 49.197 (6) (d) or 49.845 (4) (d) and shall process the complaints in the same manner that employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(10) (a) The division shall receive complaints under s. 995.55 (6) (b) and shall process the complaints in the same manner as employment discrimination complaints are processed under s. 111.39.

(b) The division shall receive complaints under s. 995.55 (6) (c) and shall process the complaints in the same manner as housing discrimination complaints are processed under s. 106.50.

History: 1971 c. 185 ss. 1, 7; Stats. 1971 s. 101.222; 1977 c. 29; 1981 c. 360; 1983 a. 398; 1989 a. 47; 1995 a. 27 s. 3689; Stats. 1995 s. 106.06; 1997 a. 27, 131; 1999 a. 82 s. 93; Stats. 1999 a. 106.54; 1999 a. 176 s. 1; 2001 a. 26; 2005 a. 388; 2007 a. 200; 2009 a. 56, 76, 140; 2011 a. 260 s. 80; 2013 a. 208.

106.56 Postsecondary education: prohibition against discrimination on basis of physical condition or developmental disability. (1) Subject to sub. (3), no school, university or other institution offering courses or programs in postsecondary education or vocational training which is supported wholly or in part by public funds may refuse to admit any person to any school, institution, course or program or any curricular or extracurricular activity, or may otherwise discriminate against any person, solely on the basis of physical condition or developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5).

(2) If admission to any such school, university, institution, program or course requires that a prospective enrollee take a standardized aptitude examination and the prospective enrollee is unable to take such an examination under standard conditions because of physical condition or developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5), the school, university or institution shall make a good-faith effort to modify the examination conditions in a manner which will permit the prospective enrollee to demonstrate aptitude. The failure of any school, university or institution to make such a good-faith effort is discrimination within the meaning of this section.

(3) The prohibition against discrimination under sub. (1) does not apply to:

(a) Courses, programs or activities involving the handling or operation of hazardous substances, machines or appliances if there is no feasible way in which the physical safety of the disabled student or of other persons can be adequately protected; or

(b) The admission of a person who does not meet the minimum physical standards which are reasonably necessary for a particular course, program or activity. The school, university or other institution has the burden of proving that such minimum physical standards are reasonably necessary.

(4) (a) The department shall receive and investigate complaints charging discrimination or discriminatory practices in particular cases, and publicize its findings with respect thereto. The department has all powers provided under s. 111.39 with respect to the disposition of such complaints. The findings and orders of examiners may be reviewed as provided under s. 106.52 (4) (b).

(b) Findings and orders of the commission under this section are subject to review under ch. 227. Upon such review, the department of justice shall represent the commission.

History: 1975 c. 275, 421; 1977 c. 29; 1977 c. 418 s. 929 (55); 1979 c. 221; 1981 c. 334 s. 25 (2); 1991 a. 295; 1995 a. 27 s. 3690; Stats. 1995 s. 106.07; 1999 a. 82 ss. 94 to 99; Stats. 1999 s. 106.56.

Cross-reference: See also LIRC, Wis. adm. code.

106.57 Postsecondary education; accessible instructional material for students with disabilities. (1) **DEFINITIONS.** In this section:

(a) "Alternative format" means Braille, large print texts, audio recordings created with the use of text-to-speech technology, electronic formats used with screen reader devices or other assistive technology, or digital talking books that are required by a student with a disability to make instructional material accessible to the student.

(b) "Electronic format" means a computer file or other digital medium embodying instructional material that can be made into an alternative format or that is capable of serving as an alternative format, if used with a screen reader device or other assistive technology.

(c) "Institution of higher education" means an institution or college campus within the University of Wisconsin System, a technical college within the technical college system, or a private, nonprofit institution of higher education that is a member of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

(d) "Instructional material" means a textbook or other material written and published in print format primarily for use by students in postsecondary instruction that is required or essential to the success of a student with a disability in a course of study in which the student is enrolled, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the person specified in sub. (2) (b) who requests that material in alternative format or electronic format under sub. (2) (a).

(e) "Maintain the structural integrity" means to include all of the information provided in the original instructional material, including the text of sidebars; the table of contents; chapter headings and subheadings; footnotes; indexes; glossaries; bibliographies; nontextual elements, such as pictures, illustrations, graphs, charts, and screenshots; and any other data that are pertinent to the instructional material, when that original instructional material is provided in alternative format or electronic format.

(f) "Publisher" means a person that is in the business, whether for profit or not for profit, of selling instructional material in which the person owns or controls some or all of the copyright. "Publisher" does not include a person that is a member of a nationwide exchange network that facilitates and supports the delivery of instructional material in alternative format to students with disabilities, if that material is delivered to those students through that network within 7 working days after a request for that material is made.

(g) "Student with a disability" means a student enrolled in an institution of higher education who is blind or visually impaired, or who has a specific learning disability or other physical condition that prevents the student from using instructional material in standard print format, and who needs reasonable accommodations to read.

(h) "Writing" includes facsimile transmission or electronic mail.

(2) **REQUEST FOR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL IN ALTERNATIVE OR ELECTRONIC FORMAT.** (a) Except as provided in this paragraph, an institution of higher education, on behalf of a student with a disability, may request a publisher to provide instructional material in alternative format or electronic format by submitting to the publisher a request that complies with par. (b) and with any additional requirement imposed by the publisher under par. (c). An institution of higher education may not request a publisher to provide instructional material under this paragraph if the instructional material in the particular format needed by the student is commercially available from the publisher of the material.

(b) A request under par. (a) for instructional material in alternative format or electronic format shall be prepared and signed by the coordinator of services for students with disabilities at the institution of higher education or by another employee of the institution of higher education who is responsible for providing ser-

vices or accommodations for students with disabilities or for monitoring compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12101 to 12213, or the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 701 to 796L, on behalf of the institution of higher education, shall provide notice to the publisher of the publisher's duties under this section, and shall certify all of the following:

1. That a copy of the instructional material in standard format has been purchased for use by a student with a disability by the student or by the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled. The institution of higher education shall keep records sufficient to verify that a separate copy of instructional material in standard format has been purchased for each student with a disability for whom instructional material in alternative format or electronic format is requested under par. (a), and a publisher has the right to inspect, or receive copies of, those records that relate to instructional material published by the publisher.

2. That the student is a student with a disability.

3. That the instructional material is for use by the student with a disability in connection with a course at the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled.

4. Whether the institution of higher education has in its possession a copy of the instructional material in electronic format and, if so, whether that copy is capable, if used with assistive technology, of serving as an alternative format suitable for the needs of the student with a disability or of being converted, using generally available technology, into the particular alternative format needed by the student.

(c) A publisher may require a request under par. (a) to also be accompanied by a statement signed by the student or, if the student is a minor, the student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian agreeing to all of the following:

1. That the student will use the instructional material in alternative format solely for his or her own educational purposes.

2. That the student will not copy or distribute the instructional material in alternative format for use by others.

(3) **PROVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL IN ALTERNATIVE OR ELECTRONIC FORMAT.** (a) In response to a request under sub. (2) (a), on behalf of a student with a disability, for instructional material in alternative format or electronic format, a publisher shall do one of the following:

1. Provide to the requester a copy of the instructional material in alternative format by delivering a computer disk or file.

2. Provide to the requester access to the instructional material in alternative format by providing an Internet password or by providing that access in any other appropriate matter.

3. Provide to the requester a copy of the instructional material in electronic format.

4. At its option, grant to the institution of higher education permission to convert the instructional material into the particular alternative format needed by the student with a disability.

5. If the publisher believes that it is unable to act under subd. 1. to 4. because the publisher does not own or control some or all of the copyright in the instructional material, provide to the requester the name of the person that, to the best of the publisher's knowledge, is able to fulfill the request.

(b) Within 7 days after receipt of a request under sub. (2) (a), a publisher shall respond to the request by providing to the requester one of the following notices in writing:

1. A notice advising the requester as to which of the actions under par. (a) 1. to 3. the publisher intends to take.

2. If the request indicates that the institution of higher education has in its possession a copy of the instructional material in electronic format and that the copy is capable of serving as an alternative format suitable for the needs of the student with a disability or of being converted into the particular alternative format needed by the student, a notice advising the requester that the publisher intends to take none of the actions under par. (a) 1. to 3. If this subdivision applies, the publisher may grant permission to

convert the instructional material into alternative format as provided in par. (a) 4.

3. If the publisher does not possess a copy of the instructional material in alternative format or electronic format or if the publisher does not possess technology that will maintain the structural integrity of the instructional material, a notice advising the requester that the publisher intends to take none of the actions under par. (a) 1. to 3. If this subdivision applies, the publisher may grant permission to convert the instructional material into alternative format as provided in par. (a) 4.

4. If the publisher believes that it is unable to act under par. (a) 1. to 4. because the publisher does not own or control some or all of the copyright in the instructional material, notice of the name of the person that, to the best of the publisher's knowledge, is able to fulfill the request.

(c) 1. If the publisher provides notice under par. (b) 1. that the publisher intends to provide a copy of the instructional material in electronic format as provided in par. (a) 3., the publisher shall provide the material in that format no later than 7 days after providing that notice.

2. If the publisher provides notice under par. (b) 1. that the publisher intends to provide a copy of the instructional material in alternative format as provided in par. (a) 1. or to provide access to the instructional material in alternative format as provided in par. (a) 2., the publisher shall provide the material in that format or provide that access no later than 14 days after providing that notice.

(d) Instructional material provided by a publisher in alternative format or electronic format shall meet all of the following requirements:

1. To the extent possible, maintain the structural integrity of the original instructional material, except that this requirement does not apply to nontextual instructional material unless the publisher possesses technology that will maintain the structural integrity of the nontextual instructional material. If the publisher does not have technology that will maintain the structural integrity of the original instructional material, the publisher shall so notify the institution of higher education under par. (b) 3. and may grant permission to the institution of higher education to convert the instructional material into alternative format as provided in par. (a) 4.

2. Be compatible with an assistive technology that is suitable for the needs of the student with a disability or, if the student needs an embossed Braille version of the instructional material, be compatible with commonly used Braille translation software.

3. Include corrections and revisions that have been generally published with respect to the instructional material.

(e) 1. Subject to subd. 2., an institution of higher education may create an alternative format of instructional material for which a request has been made under sub. (2) if any of the following apply:

a. The publisher provides a copy of the instructional material in electronic format under par. (a) 3.

b. The publisher grants permission to convert the instructional material into alternative format as provided in par. (a) 4.

c. The publisher responds to the request as provided in par. (b) 2.

d. The publisher does not respond to the request as required under par. (b).

e. The publisher does not fulfill the request as provided in par. (c) 1. or 2.

2. An institution of higher education may not create an alternative format of instructional material if the instructional material in the particular alternative format needed by a student with a disability is commercially available from the publisher of the material.

(f) A publisher that sells instructional materials for use by students enrolled in institutions of higher education shall provide the name and contact information of its office or employee who is des-

igned to handle requests under sub. (2) (a) to the persons specified in sub. (2) (b) for those institutions. A publisher may provide that information either by posting that information on its Internet site or by providing that information in writing to those persons. If a publisher fails to provide that information, a person specified in sub. (2) (b) may request that information, or may request instructional material under sub. (2) (a), by sending the request to the publisher at the address of the publisher's principal place of business, directed to the attention of the publisher's rights and permissions department.

(g) Nothing in this subsection may be construed to require a publisher to incur an investment that the publisher cannot reasonably recoup. If a publisher has not previously produced a digital version of fully typeset and edited instructional material, including instructional material produced through a method that does not require the creation of a digital file, the publisher may condition its provision of the instructional material in alternative format or electronic format on payment of reasonable compensation for the expense of creating that format.

(4) USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN ALTERNATIVE OR ELECTRONIC FORMAT. (a) 1. Subject to subs. 2. and 3., if an institution of higher education has in its possession a copy of instructional material in alternative format or electronic format that has been provided by a publisher under sub. (3) (c) or an alternative format of instructional material that has been created by the institution of higher education under sub. (3) (e), the institution of higher education shall satisfy all subsequent requests for instructional material in that format from its own students without requesting the publisher to provide that material and may, if requested, provide instructional material in that format to another institution of higher education for use by a student of that other institution.

2. An institution of higher education that satisfies a request for or provides instructional material under subd. 1. shall, for each student for whom the instructional material is provided, provide to the publisher the information specified in sub. (2) (b) 1. to 4. and the statement specified in sub. (2) (c).

3. An institution of higher education may not satisfy a request for or provide instructional material under subd. 1. if the institution receives notice that an alternative format or an electronic format of the instructional material in the same specifications is commercially available from the publisher of the material.

(b) An institution of higher education in possession of a copy of instructional material in alternative format or electronic format

that has been provided by a publisher under sub. (3) (c) or an alternative format of instructional material that has been created by the institution of higher education under sub. (3) (e) shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that the format is not distributed to any 3rd parties, except as permitted under par. (a) 1. or (c), and shall, to the extent possible, maintain in effect all copy-protection measures embedded in the alternative format or electronic format by the publisher.

(c) An institution of higher education may contract with a 3rd party to assist the institution in creating an alternative format of instructional material as permitted under sub. (3) (e) or as otherwise permitted by the publisher. If an institution of higher education contracts with a 3rd party under this paragraph, the contract shall provide all of the following:

1. That the electronic format from which the alternative format is created may not be further distributed by the 3rd party.

2. That any alternative format made from the electronic format may be provided only to the institution.

3. That all files provided by the institution to the 3rd party shall be returned to the institution.

4. That the 3rd party may not retain, and must destroy, any copies of its work product, including any interim work files.

5. That both the institution and the publisher shall have the power to enforce the contractual provisions specified in subs. 1. to 4.

(d) If an institution of higher education permits a student with a disability to directly use an electronic format version of instructional material, the disc or file of the electronic format version shall be copy protected, or the institution of higher education shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that the student does not copy or distribute the electronic format version in violation of the federal Copyright Act, 17 USC 101 to 1332.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any use of instructional materials that would constitute an infringement of copyright under the federal Copyright Act, 17 USC 101 to 1332.

History: 2011 a. 124.

106.58 Discrimination in education prohibited. No child may be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to any public school or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of sex, race, religion or national origin.

History: 1975 c. 94; 1995 a. 27 s. 3691; Stats. 1995 s. 106.08; 1999 a. 82 s. 100; Stats. 1999 s. 106.58.

