



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Ordinance amending the Pittsburgh Code, Title Six Conduct, Article V, Chapter 651.04 by adding the definition for the protected class of “housing status,” amending 659.03 to include “past or present housing status” as a class protected from housing discrimination as well as simplifying 659.03 by not listing each protected class in each subsection.

Sponsors: Robert Charland

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
10/1/2025	1	Mayor	Signed by the Mayor	
9/30/2025	1	City Council	Passed Finally	Pass
9/22/2025	1	Standing Committees	Affirmatively Recommended	Pass
9/16/2025	1	City Council	Read and referred	

Ordinance amending the Pittsburgh Code, Title Six Conduct, Article V, Chapter 651.04 by adding the definition for the protected class of “housing status,” amending 659.03 to include “past or present housing status” as a class protected from housing discrimination as well as simplifying 659.03 by not listing each protected class in each subsection.

The Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Amend Article V, Chapter 651.03 by adding the definition of “housing status” as follows:

(ccc) HOUSING STATUS - The actual or perceived type of housing in which an individual resides, or previously resided in, whether publicly or privately owned; or the status of not having a fixed residence, including the status of living on the streets or in a homeless shelter or similar temporary residence; or currently or formerly living in transitional, temporary, or shelter housing; or lacking a residential rental housing history in whole or in part.

Section 2. Amend Article V, Chapter 659.03 as follows:

Protected classes under this section shall include actual or perceived: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap, disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the

user, status as a victim of domestic violence, citizenship or immigration status, preferred language, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles, **and past or present housing status.**

It shall be an unlawful housing practice, except as otherwise provided in this section:

- (a) For any owner, real estate broker or any other person to refuse to sell, lease, sublease, rent, assign or otherwise transfer, or to refuse to negotiate for the sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of, the title, leasehold or other interest in any dwelling to any person, or to represent that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer when in fact it is so available, or otherwise to deny or withhold any dwelling from any person because of **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap, disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status, or actual or perceived preferred language, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles,~~ or to discriminate against, segregate or assign quotas to any person or group of persons in connection with the sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of the title, leasehold, or other interest in any dwelling or dwellings.
- (b) For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to include in the terms, conditions or privileges of any sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of any dwelling any clause, condition or restriction discriminating against or requiring any other person to discriminate against, any person in the use or occupancy of such dwelling because of **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap, disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, or actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status, or actual or perceived preferred language, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures an hairstyles.~~
- (c) For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to discriminate in the furnishing of any facilities or services for any dwelling because of **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap or disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, or actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status or actual or perceived preferred language, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.~~
- (d) For any person, including any owner or real estate broker, to publish, circulate, issue or display, or cause to be published, circulated, issued or displayed, any communication, notice, advertisement or sign of any kind relating to the sale, rental, lease, sublease, assignment, transfer or listing of a dwelling or accommodations which indicates any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based on **the actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap or disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or~~

~~disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, or actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status, or actual or perceived preferred language, or hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.~~

- (e) For any person, including any bank, banking organization, mortgage company, insurance company or other financial or lending institution, or any agent or employee thereof, engaged in whole or in part in the business of providing or arranging for appraisals and/or for financial assistance for the purchase, lease, acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of any dwelling or dwellings:
- (1) To discriminate against any person or group of persons because of **the actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap or disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, or actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status, or actual or perceived language preferred, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles,~~ of such person or group of persons or of the prospective occupants or tenants of such dwelling in the granting, withholding, extending, modifying or in the rates, terms, conditions or privileges of any such financial assistance in connection therewith; or
 - (2) To use any form of application for such financial assistance or make any record of inquiry in connection with applications for such financial assistance which indicates, directly or indirectly, any limitation, specification or discrimination as to **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap or disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user, actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence, or actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status, or actual or perceived language preferred, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles,~~ or any intent to make any such limitation, specification or discrimination.
- (f) For any real estate broker or real estate salesperson or agent, or any other person for business or economic purposes, to induce, directly or indirectly, or to attempt to induce directly or indirectly, the sale or rental or the listing for sale or rental, of any dwelling by representing that a change has occurred or will or may occur regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of an **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~particular race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, disability or handicap status, including use of assistance animals, hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles~~ of the street, block, neighborhood or area in which such dwelling is located.
- (g) For any real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person to solicit any property for sale or rental or the listing of any property for sale or rental at any time after such real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person shall have written notice that any owner or occupant of such real estate does not desire to sell such real estate, or does not desire to be solicited either by such real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person, or by any and all brokers, agents, sales

representatives or other persons. The word "solicit" means any printed matter mailed or delivered to the owner or occupant of a residential property by any real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person or any oral communication made either in person or by telephone to the owner or occupant of a residential property by any real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person which advertises the accomplishments and/or abilities of the real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person to sell homes or rent apartments or which requests or suggests that the owner or occupant list their house for sale or rent with the real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person or which offers to purchase or rent the owner's house or apartment.

- (1) All written correspondence hereunder shall be by certified mail, return receipt requested. The owner or occupant shall provide the Commission a true and correct copy of the written notice to the real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person at the time such notice is given. The notice may be by individual letter or by petition. The notice is effective upon receipt by the real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person.
 - (2) The Commission on its own motion or on appeal by the broker, agent, sales representative or other person after notice and public hearing, may declare any notice null and void if it finds such notice discriminates against any such real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person.
 - (3) All notices are void after one (1) year unless renewed within thirty (30) days of the expiration date.
 - (4) The provisions of this subsection (g) shall not be applicable to any person who has placed their home for sale.
- (h) For any real estate broker, agent, sales representative or other person to solicit the owner or occupant of a dwelling located within a nonsolicitation area. The Commission may designate an area as a nonsolicitation area for a period of up to one (1) year upon making written findings based on substantial evidence introduced at a public hearing that practices made unlawful by subsection (f) hereof are causing or are likely to cause blockbusting or panic selling within the area.
- (1) The Commission may extend one (1) or more times the designation of a nonsolicitation area for a period of one (1) year upon making written findings based on substantial evidence introduced at a public hearing that practices made unlawful by subsection (f) hereof are continuing to occur. The public hearing on any extension shall be held not more than thirty (30) days before the day on which the designation or earlier extension is scheduled to expire. The Commission may by this same procedure, at any time, terminate the designation of a nonsolicitation area, or extension of any such designation made pursuant to this subsection (h).
 - (2) The Commission shall promptly announce by legal notice each designation or extension made pursuant to this subsection (h), describing the area to which it applies by reference to named streets and/or landmarks. Any designation or extension shall take effect upon completion of the publication required for legal notice.
 - (3) The Commission shall maintain and make available to all interested persons a listing of

designated nonsolicitation areas.

(4) The Commission may, in accordance with the provisions of this Article, attempt to reach a nonsolicitation agreement with real estate brokers, agents, sales representatives or other persons doing business within a specified geographical area.

(5) The word "solicit" shall have the same meaning as set forth in subsection (g) hereof.

(Ord. 15-1979, eff. 5-29-79)

(i) For any person to deny access, membership or participation in any multiple listing service, real estate brokers' organization or other service, organization or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings, or to discriminate in the terms or conditions of such access, membership or participation, on account of **actual or perceived protected class identity or status** ~~race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, handicap or disability or use of support animals because of the handicap or disability of the user hairstyles and protective and cultural hair textures and hairstyles.~~

(j) Nothing in this Article shall bar any religious or sectarian institution or organization, or any charitable or educational organization which is operated, supervised or controlled by or in connection with a religious or sectarian organization, or any bona fide private or fraternal organization from limiting admission to or giving preference with respect to the sale, rental, or occupancy of any dwelling which the subject organization or entity owns or operates for other than commercial purposes to persons of the same religion or sect, or to members of such private or fraternal organization, or from making such selection as is calculated by such organization to promote the religious or sectarian principles or the aims, purposes or fraternal principles for which it is established or maintained, unless membership in such religion is restricted on account of race, color or national origin.

(k) For purposes of this Section only, discrimination on the basis of handicap or disability also includes:

(1) A refusal to permit, at the expense of the handicapped person, reasonable modifications of existing premises occupied or to be occupied by such person if such modifications may be necessary to afford such person full enjoyment of the premises, except that, in the case of a rental, the landlord may, where it is reasonable to do so, condition permission for a modification on the renter agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted;

(2) A refusal to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services, when the accommodations may be necessary to afford the person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling; or

(3) In connection with the design and construction of covered multifamily dwellings for first occupancy after March 13, 1991, a failure to design and construct those dwellings in a manner that:

A. The public use and common use portions of the dwelling are readily accessible to and

usable by handicapped persons;

- B. All the doors designed to allow passage into and within all premises within the dwellings are sufficiently wide to allow passage to handicapped persons in wheelchairs; and
- C. All premises within the dwelling contained the following features of adaptive design:
 - 1. An accessible route into and through the dwelling;
 - 2. Light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats, and other environmental controls in accessible locations;
 - 3. Reinforcements in bathroom walls to allow later installation of grab bars; and
 - 4. Usable kitchens and bathrooms so that an individual in a wheelchair can maneuver about the space.
- D. Compliance with the appropriate requirements of the American National Standard for buildings and facilities providing accessibility and usability for physically handicapped people, commonly cited as "ANSI A117.1-1996" satisfies the requirements of Section 659.03(k)(3)C. above.
- E. Discriminatory housing practices filed pursuant to subsection (k)(3) hereof but occurring prior to the effective date of subsection (k)(3) hereof shall be referred to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for processing and disposition.
- F. Nothing in this subsection requires that a dwelling be made available to an individual whose tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or whose tenancy would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others.

(l) For purposes of this Section only, discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived status as a victim of domestic violence also includes:

- (1) A refusal by a landlord to permit a tenant to terminate a rental agreement and vacate the dwelling without penalty, fees, acceleration of rent, or other charges if all the following apply:
 - A. The tenant provides written notice to the landlord that the tenant is a victim of domestic violence and that, due to an inciting incident, the tenant is requesting to terminate the lease on a date to be agreed upon by the tenant and the landlord, or, in the event of a disagreement, on a date that is at least fifteen (15) days from date of notice.
 - B. The tenant provides one of the following to the landlord:
 - 1. A copy of a protective order issued under 23. Pa.C.S. Ch. 61 (relating to protection from abuse for the tenant).
 - 2. A copy of a protective order issued under 42 Pa.C.S. §.62A07.
 - 3. A copy of a criminal complaint from a law enforcement agency that is related to the inciting incident.

4. A copy of documentation signed by a third-party service provider showing that the tenant has sought assistance related to domestic violence from the provider. Qualifying documents can be provided by:
 - (A). A licensed health care services provider.
 - (B). A licensed mental health services provider.
 - (C). A licensed social worker.
 - (D). A victim advocate or victim service provider.
 - C. The inciting incident occurred not longer than ninety (90) days before the tenant provided written notice to the landlord under paragraph (l)(1)(A). The landlord may waive the deadline specified under this paragraph.
 - D. The tenant vacates the premises. Upon vacation of the premises, the tenant shall not be liable for future rent or other charges and shall not incur any penalties, fees, acceleration of rents, or other charges due to the early lease termination.
- (2) A refusal to change the locks upon the written request of a tenant who is a survivor of domestic violence.
 - A. Upon the written request of a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, a landlord shall change the locks to all entrance doors to the tenant's unit within five (5) business days; provided, that if the responsible party of domestic violence is a tenant in the same dwelling at the tenant who makes the request, the tenant who makes the request shall provide the landlord with a copy of a protective order issued under 23.Pa.C.S. Ch. 61 or Ch. 62 where the order grants exclusive possession or where the order is silent as to the exclusive possession of the dwelling unit to the tenant who made the request. If the responsible party of the domestic violence is not, or is no longer, a tenant in the same dwelling unit as the tenant who makes the request, no documentation of the domestic violence shall be required.
 - B. The landlord shall pay the cost of changing the locks. No later than forty-five (45) days after the landlord provides the survivor of domestic violence who makes the request with documentation of the cost of changing the locks, the survivor of domestic violence shall reimburse the landlord for such cost and any associated fee; provided, that the fee shall not exceed the fee imposed on any other tenant for changing the locks under any other circumstances.
 - C. Upon receipt of a copy of the court order pursuant to subsection A of this section, unless the court orders that the responsible party be allowed to return to the unit for some purpose, the landlord shall not provide the responsible party with keys to the unit or otherwise permit the responsible party access to the unit or to property within the unit.
 - D. This section shall not be construed to relieve the responsible party of any obligation under a lease agreement or any other liability to the landlord.

- (m) For any person to coerce, intimidate, threaten or interfere with any person in the exercise or enjoyment of, or on account of the individual having exercised or enjoyed, or on account of the individual having aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise of enjoyment of, any right granted or protected under this Section or any rule or regulation of the Human Relations Commission.
- (n) Exceptions to unlawful housing practices.
 - (1) Nothing in this Section shall limit the authority of the landlord, owner, agent, or other person operating or managing the premises to evict a tenant who is the victim of domestic violence for any violation of the lease other than one (1) premised on the act or acts of violence in question against such tenant, provided that, in determining whether to evict, the landlord, owner, agent, or other person operating or managing the premises does not apply a more demanding standard than that applied to other tenants who are not victims of domestic or sexual violence.
 - (2) Nothing in this Section shall limit the authority of any court to evict an abuser under the Pennsylvania Protection from Abuse Act, Act of December 19, 1990, P.L. 1240, No. 206, § 2 (23 Pa. C.S. § 6101 et seq.).
 - (3) Citizenship and immigration status protections are not applicable in federally-funded housing programs, including mortgage programs regulated by the federal department of Housing and Urban Development, when the applicant is determined to be an ineligible non-citizen or not part of an eligible non-citizen family.
 - (4) Nothing in this Section shall prohibit lawful prosecution pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1324.
- (o) Discriminate against any person because they have opposed any practice forbidden by this Article or because they have made a complaint or testified or assisted in any manner in any investigation or proceeding under this Article.