



THE STATE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alaska State Commission for Human Rights issues updated LGBTQ+ workplace guidance

October 11, 2023 (Anchorage, Alaska) – The Alaska State Commission for Human Rights published its updated LGBTQ+ employment discrimination guide earlier today. The guide, based on a similar federal document, contains current information on federal and state law for both employers and LGBTQ+ employees. It reflects the Commission’s policy to investigate workplace sexual discrimination complaints when an employer forces a transgender employee to use a bathroom, locker room, or shower not of the employee’s gender identity, and when an employee is subjected to pronouns or a name that is inconsistent with the employee’s gender identity, because these actions could constitute and/or contribute to a hostile work environment. As required by state statute, the guidance document was reviewed by the Department of Law for legal accuracy.

“The various guidance documents we started putting out two years ago proved to be very popular during outreach events, particularly with small businesses and human resources professionals,” said Robert W. Corbisier, the Commission’s Executive Director. “We hope this document provides some answers to help an employer create policies that will avoid drawing a human rights complaint, as well as informing LGBTQ+ employees what their rights are to be free from workplace discrimination,” he added.

The Commission is a quasi-independent/quasi-judicial state agency that aims to prevent and eliminate discrimination and support Alaskans by investigating and prosecuting complaints when people face discrimination in the workplace, places of public accommodation, housing, credit and financing, and government practices. The Commission consists of seven volunteers who are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the legislature for rotating five-year terms. The Commission consists of Chairperson Zackary Gottshall (Anchorage), Vice Chairperson Mae Marsh (Fairbanks), William Craig (Sitka), Rebecca Carrillo (Juneau), Jessie Ruffridge (Soldotna), Lonzo Henderson (Anchorage), and Shiela Cernich (Anchorage).

Commission staff is available for assistance directly to the business community, either through speaking engagements to organizations, reviewing non-discrimination policies and procedures, and providing copies of its guidance documents, which are also available on its website: <https://humanrights.alaska.gov/human-rights-commission-annual-reports/>

For more information about the agency, please visit <https://humanrights.alaska.gov>. To talk about discrimination experiences directly to an investigator, call (800)-478-4692 or (907)-274-4692.