



## PROPOSED UPDATES TO SPOKANE’S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

### **Background:**

The Spokane City Council enacted Spokane’s *Law Against Discrimination* in 1999. Exception for the entire recodification of the Spokane Municipal Code in 2007 little has changed in the City’s prohibitions on discrimination since then. Members of the City Council felt that updates and changes were needed, to address repeated claims from the community that certain discriminatory practices were not addressed in the City code. Unchecked discrimination can have a tremendous adverse impact on the quality of life of Spokane’s residents and visitors. In some cases, allowing repeated discrimination to occur without taking action can adversely affect our economy, by giving the impression that Spokane is not a safe, welcoming, compassionate place to live, work, and play.

This proposal revises the Spokane Municipal Code to create a new logical division for the collection of various human rights protections, updates existing policy, and provides the public with ways to address claims of human rights abuses and discriminatory practices. All sections of city code which currently exist in disparate locations would be collected within a single, unified title of the Spokane Municipal Code, a new Title 18. This proposal would repeal various sections and simultaneously re-enact them in, in some cases, updated form, within Title 18. You can find these proposed revisions in the following locations within the proposed ordinance:

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|---|---------|
| • Spokane’s Law Against Discrimination  | Page 3  |
| • Protections for Refugees  | Page 6  |
| • Complaint Process   | Page 7  |
| • Updates to Non-Discrimination in Employment Practices   | Page 9  |
| • Non-Discrimination in Housing Practices, amended to add legal source of income source of income to the list of impermissible discrimination | Page 11 |
| • Safeguards on the Use of Surveillance Equipment   | Page 12 |
| • Protections for Homeless People   | Page 14 |
| • Protections for Persons with Disabilities   | Page 15 |
| • Police Practices – Bias-Free Policing   | Page 17 |
| • Protections for Religious Communities   | Page 18 |
| • Public Redress and Appeals  | Page 18 |

### **Stakeholder Input and Next Steps:**

We have been talking about this ordinance and taking input on its provisions over the past five months. In that effort, we have engaged the Mayor, the City Administrator, the City Attorney, the City’s office of Multicultural Affairs, the Spokane Human Rights Commission, as well as over thirty other key community partners and organizations, such as:

- Spokane County Human Rights Task Force
- Spokane Landlords Association
- Spokane Tenants Union
- Spokane Housing Authority
- Center for Justice
- Inland Northwest Business Association
- Washington State Human Rights Commission

The City Council will hold a public hearing and consider whether to adopt the proposed ordinance on Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM.

Please contact Councilwoman Karen Stratton at [kstratton@spokanecity.org](mailto:kstratton@spokanecity.org) or (509) 625-6712 with any questions.