

## CHAPTER 631

### PERMANENT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF RACIAL, INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL POPULATIONS

#### §25001. Commission established

The Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Tribal Populations, established by section 12004-J, subsection 19 and referred to in this chapter as "the commission," is an independent commission. The commission shall promote, implement and coordinate programs that create and improve opportunities and incorporate the goal of eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State. [PL 2021, c. 436, §4 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW). PL 2021, c. 436, §4 (AMD).

#### §25002. Membership

**1. Membership.** To the extent possible, the commission must consist of members who represent the diverse racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State. In making appointments, the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall consider and appoint residents of the State who have a knowledge of problems facing racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State, who have experience in advocacy relating to racial, indigenous and tribal populations' issues and who provide leadership in programs or activities that create and improve opportunities for racial, indigenous and tribal populations. The commission consists of the following members:

A. Members appointed by the President of the Senate:

- (1) A representative of a statewide organization promoting civil rights that has racial justice or racial equity as its primary mission;
- (2) A representative of an economic policy organization or other data-focused organization;
- (3) A representative of an organization with expertise in legal and policy matters related to public benefit programs that assists individuals with low incomes;
- (4) A faculty member of a college or university in this State specializing in the history, the culture or the civil and human rights of historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; and
- (5) A representative of organized labor with expertise in labor rights and working conditions; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

B. Members appointed by the Speaker of the House:

- (1) A representative of an immigrant or refugee rights organization;
- (2) A representative from a housing or homelessness advocacy organization;
- (3) A representative of a community development financial institution; and
- (4) A representative of a historically disadvantaged racial population of the State; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

C. Members appointed by the Governor:

- (1) A member of the public representing the faith-based community; and
- (2) A member of the public representing youth; and [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

D. Other members:

(1) A representative from each of the federally recognized Indian tribes in the State; and

(2) Any other individual agreed to by a majority of commission members. [PL 2021, c. 436, §5 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 436, §5 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW). PL 2021, c. 436, §5 (AMD).

**§25003. Term of office**

Members of the commission are appointed for 2-year terms. A member may serve multiple terms. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

Members of the commission may serve after the expiration of their terms until their successors have taken office. The Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House may terminate the membership of their respective appointees for good cause. The reason for the termination must be communicated in writing to a member whose membership is terminated. The membership of any member of the commission must be terminated if the member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings without communicating good cause to a chair of the commission. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).

**§25004. Vacancies**

A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed serves only for the remainder of that term and must be appointed by the same appointing authority. Any vacancy on the commission does not affect its powers. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).

**§25005. Chair**

The commission shall select 3 chairs from among the members of the commission. The chairs are authorized to appoint subcommittees. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).

**§25006. Department input**

The commission shall seek input from the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Education, as well as any other experts, in carrying out its duties. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).

**§25007. Duties and powers**

**1. Commission duties.** The commission shall:

A. Carry out research necessary to determine the status of historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations, including the study of income levels of and opportunities available to historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations and the

examination of quantitative and qualitative data associated with those populations regarding business ownership, household assets, debts and income, housing, employment, education, health care and access to wealth, capital and benefits; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

B. Seek public input by conducting public hearings annually to obtain information about the needs of and solutions to the problems faced by historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; and [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

C. Beginning March 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, report to the Governor and the Legislature concerning the work and interests of the commission, including a summary of public comments obtained pursuant to paragraph B. [PL 2021, c. 398, Pt. RRRR, §1 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 398, Pt. RRRR, §1 (AMD).]

**2. Commission powers.** The commission may:

A. Promote and coordinate activities on state and local levels designed to meet the problems faced by historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

B. Inform the public about the presence or absence of opportunities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

C. Conduct additional public hearings, conferences, workshops and other such meetings to obtain information about, discuss and publicize the needs of and solutions to the problems faced by historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

D. Submit to the Legislature such legislation as the commission determines appropriate for improving opportunities and eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations in the State; [PL 2021, c. 436, §6 (AMD).]

E. Advise and consult with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court and other officials of the State and the Federal Government with respect to state and federal policies, programs and other activities affecting or relating to historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations; and [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

F. Advise and consult with the Governor and the Legislature about, and assist them in improving, opportunities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous and tribal populations. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

[PL 2021, c. 436, §6 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW). PL 2021, c. 398, Pt. RRRR, §1 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 436, §6 (AMD).

#### **§25008. Meetings**

The commission shall meet at the call of the chairs not less than 4 times each year. [PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW).

#### **§25009. Administrative support**

**(REPEALED)**

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW). PL 2021, c. 436, §7 (RP).

#### **§25010. Federal and state funds**

The commission may accept funds from the Federal Government, from a political subdivision of the State or from an individual, a foundation or a corporation and may expend funds for purposes that are consistent with this chapter. Funds received under this section must be deposited in an account maintained by the commission to support the work of the commission. [PL 2021, c. 436, §8 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2019, c. 457, §2 (NEW). PL 2021, c. 436, §8 (AMD).

#### **§25011. Executive director; staff; duties**

The commission shall select an individual to serve as the executive director of the commission. The executive director shall hire appropriate staff to assist in carrying out the duties of the commission. [PL 2021, c. 436, §9 (NEW).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2021, c. 436, §9 (NEW).

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