

# **Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (Public Act No. 19-117)**

Sec. 105. Section 2-127 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2019*):

(a) There is established a Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity which shall be part of the Legislative Department. The commission shall focus on issues affecting each of the following underrepresented and underserved populations: Women, children and the family, elderly persons, African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Latinos and Puerto Ricans. The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall constitute a successor to the Commission on Equity and Opportunity and the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, in accordance with the provisions of subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, and subsection (f) of section 4-38d and section 4-38e.

(b) The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall consist of an advisory board, an executive committee and six subcommissions. On and after July 1, 2019, the advisory board shall consist of the following members:

(1) Three members appointed by a joint appointment of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the central region of the state;

(2) Three members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, provided at least two of such members shall also be from the northeastern region of the state;

(3) Three members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the southeastern region of the state;

(4) Three members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom has

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experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs;

(5) Three members appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs;

(6) Three members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the northwestern region of the state;

(7) Three members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom has experience in the field of African-American affairs, one of whom has experience in the field of Asian Pacific-American affairs and one of whom has experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the southwestern region of the state.

(8) Three members appointed by a joint appointment of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the central region of the state;

(9) Three members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the northeastern region of the state;

(10) Three members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the southeastern region of the state;

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- (11) Three members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons;
  - (12) Three members appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons;
  - (13) Three members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the northwestern region of the state;
  - (14) Three members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning women, one of whom has expertise in issues concerning children or the family and one of whom has expertise in issues concerning elderly persons, provided at least one of such members shall also be from the southwestern region of the state; and
  - (15) Two members appointed by the Joint Committee on Legislative Management, who have experience in equity and culturally responsive leadership, who shall serve as chairpersons of the advisory board and executive committee, except that the former chairpersons of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors and the Commission on Equity and Opportunity serving on June 30, 2019, shall be deemed appointed to serve as the chairpersons of the board of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity until June 30, 2021. Other than said chairpersons, the term of any members appointed prior to July 1, 2019, to serve on either the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors or the Commission on Equity and Opportunity and whose term has not expired as of June 30, 2019, shall expire on June 30, 2019.
- (c) All initial appointments to the board, other than appointments made pursuant to subdivision (15) of subsection (b) of this section, shall be made not later than July 31, 2019, and the term of such initial members shall terminate on June 30, 2021, regardless of when the initial appointment was made. The chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the board.

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- (d) Members of the advisory board appointed on or after July 1, 2019, shall serve for two-year terms. Members shall continue to serve until their successors are appointed. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. Any vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term except as provided in subdivision (15) of subsection (b) of this section. The members of the board shall serve without compensation, but shall, within the limits of available funds, be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties.
- (e) (1) The advisory board shall be organized into an executive committee and six subcommissions with members to be designated by the chairpersons of the advisory board: (A) One subcommission to advise on policies affecting members of the African-American population, (B) one subcommission to advise on policies affecting members of the Asian Pacific-American population, (C) one subcommission to advise on policies affecting members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population, (D) one subcommission to advise on policies affecting women, (E) one subcommission to advise on policies affecting children and family, and (F) one subcommission to advise on policies affecting elderly persons. Each subcommission shall select a chairperson from among its members. (2) The executive committee shall be comprised of the chairpersons of the advisory board and the chairpersons of each of the six subcommissions. The chairpersons of the advisory board shall serve as the chairpersons of the executive committee and the chairpersons of the subcommissions shall serve as vice-chairpersons of the executive committee. The executive committee shall meet no less than bimonthly, and at special meetings called by one or both of the chairpersons. The chairpersons of the executive committee shall establish standing committees and designate the chairperson of each standing committee, which shall include, but not be limited to, committees on equity, opportunity, communications, civic engagement and programs.
- (f) A majority of the advisory board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business of the board. A majority of the membership of a subcommission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business of such subcommission. The advisory board shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the chairpersons or a majority of the board. Any appointed member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the board or of a subcommission or who fails to attend fifty per cent of all meetings of the board or its subcommissions held during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the board.

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(g) The commission shall have no authority over staffing or personnel matters. There shall be an executive director of the commission. The executive director and any necessary staff shall be employed by the Joint Committee on Legislative Management, which shall have authority over the hiring, termination and performance review of the executive director and any staff.

Sec. 106. Section 2-128 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2019*):

(a) The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall:

(1) Focus its efforts on the following quality of life desired results for women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state: That all such persons are (A) healthy, safe and achieve educational success; (B) free from poverty; and (C) free from discrimination;

(2) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster progress in achieving the desired results described in subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such recommendations shall, when applicable, include, but need not be limited to: (A) Systems innovations, model policies and practices which embed two-generational practice in program, policy and systems change on the state and local levels, in accordance with section 17b-1121; (B) strategies for reducing family poverty, promoting parent leadership and family civics; (C) the promotion of youth leadership opportunities that keep youth engaged in the community; and (D) strategies and programs that address equitable access, impede bias, and narrow the opportunity gap for women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state. Such recommendations may include other state and national best practices, and recommendations on federal funding maximization;

(3) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, review and comment, as necessary, on any specific proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General Assembly;

(4) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, advise the General

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Assembly concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that affect women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state;

- (5) Gather and maintain, as necessary, current information regarding women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state that can be used to better understand the status, condition, and contributions of such groups. Such information, as appropriate and pertinent to the desired results delineated in subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall be included in the annual report submitted in accordance with subsection (b) of this section and shall be made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request;
  - (6) Maintain liaisons between women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state and government agencies, including the General Assembly; and
  - (7) Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of and address critical issues for women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state.
- (b) Not later than January first, annually, the executive director of the commission shall submit a status report, organized by subcommission, concerning its efforts in promoting the desired results listed in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.
- (c) The Commission on Equity and Opportunity may: (1) Request, and shall receive, from any state agency such information and assistance as the commission may require; (2) use such funds as may be available from federal, state or other sources and may enter into contracts to carry out the purposes of the commission; (3) utilize voluntary and uncompensated services of private individuals, state or federal agencies and organizations as may, from time to time, be offered and needed; (4) recommend policies to federal agencies and political subdivisions of the state relative to women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state; (5) accept any gift, donation or bequest for the purpose of performing the duties of the commission; (6) hold public hearings; (7) establish task forces or standing committees, as

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necessary, to perform the duties of the commission; (8) adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, as it may deem necessary to carry out the duties of the commission; and (9) inform leaders of business, education, state and local governments and the communications media of the nature and scope of the problems faced by women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state.

(d) The executive director of the commission may enter into any agreement with a state agency for the purpose of maximizing the receipt of federal funds by such state agency, provided such state agency shall utilize any federal funds received as a result of such agreement to perform those statutory duties of such agency that relate to the commission's duties. The commission may accept that portion of federal funds received by any such state agency as a result of any such agreement which federal law otherwise permits to be received by the commission.

Sec. 107. Section 2-129 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2019*):

(a) Wherever the terms "Commission on Women, Children and Seniors" are used in any public or special act of the 2019 regular session, the term "Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, Equity and Opportunity" shall be substituted in lieu thereof. Wherever the terms "Commission on Equity and Opportunity" are used in any public or special act of the 2019 regular session, the term "Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity" shall be substituted in lieu thereof.

(b) The Legislative Commissioners' Office shall, in codifying the provisions of this section, make such technical, grammatical and punctuation changes as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.