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**HOUSE BILL NO. 913**

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 12, 2016

A *BILL to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-2203.3, 2.2-3004, 2.2-3900 through 2.2-3903, 4.1-101.05, as it shall become effective, 15.2-853, 15.2-854, 15.2-965, 15.2-1131, 15.2-1507, 15.2-1604, 15.2-6314.1, 22.1-306, 36-96.1 through 36-96.4, 36-96.6, 37.2-707, 46.2-1503.2, 51.1-124.27, 55-248.47, 58.1-4024, and 62.1-129.1 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 2.2-2901.1, 15.2-1500.1, and 22.1-295.2, relating to prohibited discrimination in employment and housing.*

Patrons—Toscano, Boysko, Hope, Krizek, Levine, Lindsey, Lopez, Plum, Sickles and Sullivan; Senator: Ebbin

Referred to Committee on General Laws

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

1. That §§ 2.2-2203.3, 2.2-3004, 2.2-3900 through 2.2-3903, 4.1-101.05, as it shall become effective, 15.2-853, 15.2-854, 15.2-965, 15.2-1131, 15.2-1507, 15.2-1604, 15.2-6314.1, 22.1-306, 36-96.1 through 36-96.4, 36-96.6, 37.2-707, 46.2-1503.2, 51.1-124.27, 55-248.47, 58.1-4024, and 62.1-129.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 2.2-2901.1, 15.2-1500.1, and 22.1-295.2 as follows:

**§ 2.2-2203.3. Employees; employment; personnel rules.**

A. Employees of the Authority shall be employed on such terms and conditions as established by the Board. The Board shall develop and adopt personnel rules, policies, and procedures to give its employees grievance rights, ensure that employment decisions shall be based upon the merit and fitness of applicants, and prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, ~~or~~ pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.

B. Any employee of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority who is a member of any plan providing health insurance coverage pursuant to Chapter 28 (§ 2.2-2800 et seq.) shall continue to be a member of such health insurance plan under the same terms and conditions. Notwithstanding subsection A of § 2.2-2818, the costs of providing health insurance coverage to such employees who elect to continue to be members of the state employees' health insurance plan shall be paid by the Authority. Alternatively, an employee may elect to become a member of any health insurance plan established by the Authority. The Authority is authorized to (i) establish a health insurance plan for the benefit of its employees and (ii) enter into agreements with the Department of Human Resource Management providing for the coverage of its employees under the state employees' health insurance plan, provided that such agreements require the Authority to pay the costs of providing health insurance coverage under such plan.

C. Any retired employee of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority shall be eligible to receive the health insurance credit set forth in § 51.1-1400, provided the retired employee meets the eligibility criteria set forth in that section.

D. The Authority is hereby authorized to establish one or more retirement plans for the benefit of its employees (the Authority retirement plan). For purposes of such plans, the provisions of § 51.1-126.4 shall apply, mutatis mutandis. Any Authority employee who is a member of the Virginia Retirement System or other retirement plan as authorized by Article 4 (§ 51.1-125 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 51.1 (the statutory optional retirement plan) at the time the Authority retirement plan becomes effective shall continue to be a member of the Virginia Retirement System or the statutory optional retirement plan under the same terms and conditions, unless such employee elects to become a member of the Authority retirement plan. For purposes of this subsection, the "Virginia Retirement System" shall include any hybrid retirement program established under Title 51.1.

The following rules shall apply:

1. The Authority shall collect and pay all employee and employer contributions to the Virginia Retirement System or the statutory optional retirement plan for retirement and group life insurance in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1 (§ 51.1-124.1 et seq.) of Title 51.1 for any employee who elects to remain a member of the Virginia Retirement System or a statutory optional retirement plan.

2. Employees who elect to become members of the Authority retirement plan shall be given full credit for their creditable service as defined in § 51.1-124.3 and vesting and benefit accrual under the Authority retirement plan. For any such employee, employment with the Authority shall be treated as

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58 employment with any nonparticipating employer for purposes of the Virginia Retirement System or any  
59 statutory optional retirement plan.

60 3. For employees who elect to become members of the Authority retirement plan, the Virginia  
61 Retirement System or the statutory optional retirement plan, as applicable, shall transfer to the Authority  
62 retirement plan assets equal to the actuarially determined present value of the accrued basic benefits for  
63 such employees as of the transfer date. For purposes hereof, "basic benefits" means the benefits accrued  
64 under the Virginia Retirement System or under the statutory optional retirement plan based on creditable  
65 service and average final compensation as defined in § 51.1-124.3. The actuarial present value shall be  
66 determined by using the same actuarial factors and assumptions used in determining the funding needs  
67 of the Virginia Retirement System or the statutory optional retirement plan so that the transfer of assets  
68 to the Authority retirement plan will have no effect on the funded status and financial stability of the  
69 Virginia Retirement System or the statutory optional retirement plan. The Authority shall reimburse the  
70 Virginia Retirement System for the cost of actuarial services necessary to determine the present value of  
71 the accrued basic benefit of employees who transfer to an Authority retirement plan.

72 4. The Authority may provide that employees of the Authority who are eligible to participate in any  
73 deferred compensation plan sponsored by the Authority shall be enrolled automatically in such plan,  
74 unless such employee elects, in a manner prescribed by the Board of the Authority, not to participate.  
75 The amount of the deferral under the automatic enrollment and the group of employees to which the  
76 automatic enrollment shall apply shall be set by the Board, provided, however, that such employees are  
77 provided the opportunity to increase or decrease the amount of the deferral in accordance with the  
78 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

79 E. The Authority is hereby authorized to establish a plan providing short-term disability and  
80 long-term disability benefits for its employees.

81 **§ 2.2-2901.1. Employment discrimination prohibited.**

82 A. As used in this section:

83 *"Gender identity" means the gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related*  
84 *characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.*

85 *"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, or*  
86 *homosexuality.*

87 *No state agency, institution, board, bureau, commission, council, or instrumentality of the*  
88 *Commonwealth shall discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin,*  
89 *sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, sexual*  
90 *orientation, or gender identity.*

91 **§ 2.2-3004. Grievances qualifying for a grievance hearing; grievance hearing generally.**

92 A. A grievance qualifying for a hearing shall involve a complaint or dispute by an employee relating  
93 to the following adverse employment actions in which the employee is personally involved, including  
94 but not limited to (i) formal disciplinary actions, including suspensions, demotions, transfers and  
95 assignments, and dismissals resulting from formal discipline or unsatisfactory job performance; (ii) the  
96 application of all written personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations where it can be shown that  
97 policy was misapplied or unfairly applied; (iii) discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion,  
98 political affiliation, age, marital status, disability, national origin ~~or~~, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or  
99 related medical conditions, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined  
100 in § 2.2-2901.1; (iv) arbitrary or capricious performance evaluations; (v) acts of retaliation as the result  
101 of the use of or participation in the grievance procedure or because the employee has complied with any  
102 law of the United States or of the Commonwealth, has reported any violation of such law to a  
103 governmental authority, has sought any change in law before the Congress of the United States or the  
104 General Assembly, or has reported an incidence of fraud, abuse, or gross mismanagement; and (vi)  
105 retaliation for exercising any right otherwise protected by law.

106 B. Management reserves the exclusive right to manage the affairs and operations of state government.  
107 Management shall exercise its powers with the highest degree of trust. In any employment matter that  
108 management precludes from proceeding to a grievance hearing, management's response, including any  
109 appropriate remedial actions, shall be prompt, complete, and fair.

110 C. Complaints relating solely to the following issues shall not proceed to a hearing: (i) establishment  
111 and revision of wages, salaries, position classifications, or general benefits; (ii) work activity accepted by  
112 the employee as a condition of employment or which may reasonably be expected to be a part of the  
113 job content; (iii) contents of ordinances, statutes or established personnel policies, procedures, and rules  
114 and regulations; (iv) methods, means, and personnel by which work activities are to be carried on; (v)  
115 termination, layoff, demotion, or suspension from duties because of lack of work, reduction in work  
116 force, or job abolition; (vi) hiring, promotion, transfer, assignment, and retention of employees within  
117 the agency; and (vii) relief of employees from duties of the agency in emergencies.

118 D. Except as provided in subsection A of § 2.2-3003, decisions regarding whether a grievance  
119 qualifies for a hearing shall be made in writing by the agency head or his designee within five workdays

of the employee's request for a hearing. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the employee. The employee may appeal the denial of a hearing by the agency head to the Director of the Department of Human Resource Management (the Director). Upon receipt of an appeal, the agency shall transmit the entire grievance record to the Department of Human Resource Management within five workdays. The Director shall render a decision on whether the employee is entitled to a hearing upon the grievance record and other probative evidence.

E. The hearing pursuant to § 2.2-3005 shall be held in the locality in which the employee is employed or in any other locality agreed to by the employee, employer, and hearing officer. The employee and the agency may be represented by legal counsel or a lay advocate, the provisions of § 54.1-3904 notwithstanding. The employee and the agency may call witnesses to present testimony and be cross-examined.

**§ 2.2-3900. Short title; declaration of policy.**

A. This chapter shall be known and cited as the Virginia Human Rights Act.

B. It is the policy of the Commonwealth to:

1. Safeguard all individuals within the Commonwealth from unlawful discrimination ~~because on the~~ basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, ~~or~~ disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1* in places of public accommodation, including educational institutions and in real estate transactions; in employment; preserve the public safety, health and general welfare; and further the interests, rights and privileges of individuals within the Commonwealth; and

2. Protect citizens of the Commonwealth against unfounded charges of unlawful discrimination.

**§ 2.2-3901. Unlawful discriminatory practice and gender discrimination defined.**

Conduct that violates any Virginia or federal statute or regulation governing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, ~~or~~ disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1* shall be an "unlawful discriminatory practice" for the purposes of this chapter.

The terms "because of sex or gender" or "on the basis of sex or gender" or terms of similar import when used in reference to discrimination in the Code and acts of the General Assembly include because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Women affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions shall be treated the same for all purposes as persons not so affected but similar in their abilities or disabilities.

**§ 2.2-3902. Construction of chapter; other programs to aid persons with disabilities, minors and the elderly.**

The provisions of this chapter shall be construed liberally for the accomplishment of its policies. Nothing contained in this chapter shall be deemed to repeal, supersede or expand upon any of the provisions of any other state or federal law relating to discrimination ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, ~~or~~ disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1*.

Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit or alter any program, service, facility, school, or privilege that is afforded, oriented or restricted to a person because of disability or age from continuing to habilitate, rehabilitate, or accommodate that person.

In addition, nothing in this chapter shall be construed to affect any governmental program, law or activity differentiating between persons on the basis of age over the age of 18 years (i) where the differentiation is reasonably necessary to normal operation or the activity is based upon reasonable factors other than age or (ii) where the program, law or activity constitutes a legitimate exercise of powers of the Commonwealth for the general health, safety and welfare of the population at large.

Complaints filed with the Division of Human Rights of the Department of Law (the Division) in accordance with § 2.2-520 alleging unlawful discriminatory practice under a Virginia statute that is enforced by a Virginia agency shall be referred to that agency. The Division may investigate complaints alleging an unlawful discriminatory practice under a federal statute or regulation and attempt to resolve it through conciliation. Unsolved complaints shall thereafter be referred to the federal agency with jurisdiction over the complaint. Upon such referral, the Division shall have no further jurisdiction over the complaint. The Division shall have no jurisdiction over any complaint filed under a local ordinance adopted pursuant to § 15.2-965.

**§ 2.2-3903. Causes of action not created.**

A. Nothing in this chapter or in Article 4 (§ 2.2-520 et seq.) of Chapter 5 creates, nor shall it be construed to create, an independent or private cause of action to enforce its provisions, except as specifically provided in subsections B and C.

B. No employer employing more than five but less than 15 persons shall discharge any such employee on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, including lactation, *marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or*

181 *gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.* No employer employing more than five but less than 20  
182 persons shall discharge any such employee on the basis of age if the employee is 40 years of age or  
183 older. For the purposes of this section, "lactation" means a condition that may result in the feeding of a  
184 child directly from the breast or the expressing of milk from the breast.

185 C. The employee may bring an action in a general district or circuit court having jurisdiction over  
186 the employer who allegedly discharged the employee in violation of this section. Any such action shall  
187 be brought within 300 days from the date of the discharge or, if the employee has filed a complaint  
188 with the Division of Human Rights of the Department of Law or a local human rights or human  
189 relations agency or commission within 300 days of the discharge, such action shall be brought within 90  
190 days from the date that the Division or a local human rights or human relations agency or commission  
191 has rendered a final disposition on the complaint. The court may award up to 12 months' back pay with  
192 interest at the judgment rate as provided in § 6.2-302. However, if the court finds that either party  
193 engaged in tactics to delay resolution of the complaint, it may (i) diminish the award or (ii) award back  
194 pay to the date of judgment without regard to the 12-month limitation.

195 In any case where the employee prevails, the court shall award attorney fees from the amount  
196 recovered, not to exceed 25 percent of the back pay awarded. The court shall not award other damages,  
197 compensatory or punitive, nor shall it order reinstatement of the employee.

198 D. Causes of action based upon the public policies reflected in this chapter shall be exclusively  
199 limited to those actions, procedures, and remedies, if any, afforded by applicable federal or state civil  
200 rights statutes or local ordinances. Nothing in this section or § 2.2-3900 shall be deemed to alter,  
201 supersede, or otherwise modify the authority of the Division or of any local human rights or human  
202 relations commissions established pursuant to § 15.2-853 or 15.2-965.

203 **§ 4.1-101.05. (Effective July 1, 2018) Employees of the Authority.**

204 A. Employees of the Authority shall be considered employees of the Commonwealth. Employees of  
205 the Authority shall be eligible for membership in the Virginia Retirement System and participation in all  
206 health and related insurance and other benefits, including premium conversion and flexible benefits,  
207 available to state employees as provided by law. Employees of the Authority shall be employed on such  
208 terms and conditions as established by the Board. The Board shall develop and adopt policies and  
209 procedures that afford its employees grievance rights, ensure that employment decisions shall be based  
210 upon the merit and fitness of applicants, and prohibit discrimination ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color,  
211 religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, or  
212 disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.*

213 B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Authority shall give preference in hiring to  
214 employees of the former Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The Authority shall issue a written  
215 notice to all persons whose employment at the former Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control will  
216 be transferred to the Authority. The date upon which such written notice is issued shall be referred to  
217 herein as the "Option Date." Each person whose employment will be transferred to the Authority may,  
218 by written request made within 180 days of the Option Date, elect not to become employed by the  
219 Authority. Any employee of the former Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control who (i) elects not to  
220 become employed by the Authority and who is not reemployed by any department, institution, board,  
221 commission, or agency of the Commonwealth; (ii) is not offered the opportunity to transfer to  
222 employment by the Authority; or (iii) is not offered a position with the Authority for which the  
223 employee is qualified or is offered a position that requires relocation or a reduction in salary, shall be  
224 eligible for the severance benefits conferred by the provisions of the Workforce Transition Act  
225 (§ 2.2-3200 et seq.). Any employee who accepts employment with the Authority shall not be considered  
226 to be involuntarily separated from state employment and shall not be eligible for the severance benefits  
227 conferred by the provisions of the Workforce Transition Act.

228 C. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any person whose employment is  
229 transferred to the Authority as a result of this section and who is a member of any plan for providing  
230 health insurance coverage pursuant to Chapter 28 (§ 2.2-2800 et seq.) of Title 2.2 shall continue to be a  
231 member of such health insurance plan under the same terms and conditions as if no transfer had  
232 occurred.

233 D. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any person whose employment is  
234 transferred to the Authority as a result of this section and who is a member of the Virginia Retirement  
235 System or other retirement plan as authorized by Article 4 (§ 51.1-125 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title  
236 51.1 shall continue to be a member of the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized  
237 retirement plan under the same terms and conditions as if no transfer had occurred.

238 **§ 15.2-853. Commission on human rights; human rights ordinance.**

239 A county may enact an ordinance prohibiting discrimination in housing, real estate transactions,  
240 employment, public accommodations, credit and education on the basis of race, color, religion, sex,  
241 pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, age, marital status or, disability,  
242 *sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1.* The board

may enact an ordinance establishing a local commission on human rights which shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To promote policies to ensure that all persons be afforded equal opportunity;  
2. To serve as an agency for receiving, investigating, holding hearings, processing and assisting in the voluntary resolution of complaints regarding discriminatory practices occurring within the county; and

3. With the approval of the county attorney, to seek, through appropriate enforcement authorities, prevention of or relief from a violation of any ordinance prohibiting discrimination and to exercise such other powers and duties as provided in this article. However, the commission shall have no power itself to issue subpoenas, award damages or grant injunctive relief.

For the purposes of this article, "person" means one or more individuals, labor unions, partnerships, corporations, associations, legal representatives, mutual companies, joint-stock companies, trusts or unincorporated organizations.

**§ 15.2-854. Investigations.**

Whenever the commission on human rights has a reasonable cause to believe that any person has engaged in, or is engaging in, any violation of a county ordinance which prohibits discrimination ~~due to~~ *on the basis of* race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, age, marital status, ~~or~~ disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1* and, after making a good faith effort to obtain the data, information, and attendance of witnesses necessary to determine whether such violation has occurred, is unable to obtain such data, information, or attendance, it may request the county attorney to petition the judge of the general district court for its jurisdiction for a subpoena against any such person refusing to produce such data and information or refusing to appear as a witness, and the judge of such court may, upon good cause shown, cause the subpoena to be issued. Any witness subpoena issued under this section shall include a statement that any statements made will be under oath and that the respondent or other witness is entitled to be represented by an attorney. Any person failing to comply with a subpoena issued under this section shall be subject to punishment for contempt by the court issuing the subpoena. Any person so subpoenaed may apply to the judge who issued a subpoena to quash it.

**§ 15.2-965. Human rights ordinances and commissions.**

A. Any locality may enact an ordinance, not inconsistent with nor more stringent than any applicable state law, prohibiting discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations, credit, and education on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, national origin, age, marital status, ~~or~~ disability, *sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1*.

B. The locality may enact an ordinance establishing a local commission on human rights which shall have the powers and duties granted by the Virginia Human Rights Act (§ 2.2-3900 et seq.).

**§ 15.2-1131. Establishment of personnel system for city administrative officials and employees.**

Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of law, general or special, in the Cities of Norfolk, Richmond, or Virginia Beach, the city council, upon receiving any recommendations submitted to it by the city manager, may establish a personnel system for the city administrative officials and employees. Such system shall be based on merit and professional ability and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, disabilities disability, political affiliation ~~or~~, marital status, *sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1*. The personnel system shall consist of rules and regulations which provide for the general administration of personnel matters, a classification plan for employees, a uniform pay plan and a procedure for resolving grievances of employees as provided by general law for either local government or state government employees.

**§ 15.2-1500.1. Employment discrimination prohibited.**

A. As used in this section:

"Gender identity" means the gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality.

B. No department, office, board, commission, agency, or instrumentality of local government shall discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

**§ 15.2-1507. Provision of grievance procedure; training programs.**

A. If a local governing body fails to adopt a grievance procedure required by § 15.2-1506 or fails to certify it as provided in this section, the local governing body shall be deemed to have adopted a grievance procedure which is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 30 (§ 2.2-3000 et seq.) of Title

304 2.2 and any regulations adopted pursuant thereto for so long as the locality remains in noncompliance.  
305 The locality shall provide its employees with copies of the applicable grievance procedure upon request.  
306 The term "grievance" as used herein shall not be interpreted to mean negotiations of wages, salaries, or  
307 fringe benefits.

308 Each grievance procedure, and each amendment thereto, in order to comply with this section, shall  
309 be certified in writing to be in compliance by the city, town or county attorney, and the chief  
310 administrative officer of the locality, and such certification filed with the clerk of the circuit court  
311 having jurisdiction in the locality in which the procedure is to apply. Local government grievance  
312 procedures in effect as of July 1, 1991, shall remain in full force and effect for 90 days thereafter,  
313 unless certified and filed as provided above within a shorter time period.

314 Each grievance procedure shall include the following components and features:

315 1. Definition of grievance. A grievance shall be a complaint or dispute by an employee relating to  
316 his employment, including but not necessarily limited to (i) disciplinary actions, including dismissals,  
317 disciplinary demotions, and suspensions, provided that dismissals shall be grievable whenever resulting  
318 from formal discipline or unsatisfactory job performance; (ii) the application of personnel policies,  
319 procedures, rules and regulations, including the application of policies involving matters referred to in  
320 subdivision 2 (iii) below; (iii) discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, political  
321 affiliation, age, disability, national origin ~~or~~, sex, *marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical*  
322 *conditions, sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in*  
323 *§ 15.2-1500.1*; and (iv) acts of retaliation as the result of the use of or participation in the grievance  
324 procedure or because the employee has complied with any law of the United States or of the  
325 Commonwealth, has reported any violation of such law to a governmental authority, has sought any  
326 change in law before the Congress of the United States or the General Assembly, or has reported an  
327 incidence of fraud, abuse, or gross mismanagement. For the purposes of clause (iv) there shall be a  
328 rebuttable presumption that increasing the penalty that is the subject of the grievance at any level of the  
329 grievance shall be an act of retaliation.

330 2. Local government responsibilities. Local governments shall retain the exclusive right to manage  
331 the affairs and operations of government. Accordingly, the following complaints are nongrievable: (i)  
332 establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classification or general benefits; (ii) work  
333 activity accepted by the employee as a condition of employment or work activity which may reasonably  
334 be expected to be a part of the job content; (iii) the contents of ordinances, statutes or established  
335 personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations; (iv) failure to promote except where the employee  
336 can show that established promotional policies or procedures were not followed or applied fairly; (v) the  
337 methods, means and personnel by which work activities are to be carried on; (vi) except where such  
338 action affects an employee who has been reinstated within the previous six months as the result of the  
339 final determination of a grievance, termination, layoff, demotion or suspension from duties because of  
340 lack of work, reduction in work force, or job abolition; (vii) the hiring, promotion, transfer, assignment  
341 and retention of employees within the local government; and (viii) the relief of employees from duties  
342 of the local government in emergencies. In any grievance brought under the exception to clause (vi) ~~of~~  
343 ~~this subdivision~~, the action shall be upheld upon a showing by the local government that: ~~(i)~~ (a) there  
344 was a valid business reason for the action and ~~(ii)~~ (b) the employee was notified of the reason in writing  
345 prior to the effective date of the action.

346 3. Coverage of personnel.

347 a. Unless otherwise provided by law, all nonprobationary local government permanent full-time and  
348 part-time employees are eligible to file grievances with the following exceptions:

349 (1) Appointees of elected groups or individuals;

350 (2) Officials and employees who by charter or other law serve at the will or pleasure of an  
351 appointing authority;

352 (3) Deputies and executive assistants to the chief administrative officer of a locality;

353 (4) Agency heads or chief executive officers of government operations;

354 (5) Employees whose terms of employment are limited by law;

355 (6) Temporary, limited term and seasonal employees;

356 (7) Law-enforcement officers as defined in Chapter 5 (§ 9.1-500 et seq.) of Title 9.1 whose  
357 grievance is subject to the provisions of Chapter 10.1 and who have elected to proceed pursuant to those  
358 provisions in the resolution of their grievance, or any other employee electing to proceed pursuant to  
359 any other existing procedure in the resolution of his grievance.

360 b. Notwithstanding the exceptions set forth in subdivision 3 a ~~above~~, local governments, at their sole  
361 discretion, may voluntarily include employees in any of the excepted categories within the coverage of  
362 their grievance procedures.

363 c. The chief administrative officer of each local government, or his designee, shall determine the  
364 officers and employees excluded from the grievance procedure, and shall be responsible for maintaining  
365 an up-to-date list of the affected positions.

4. Grievance procedure availability and coverage for employees of community services boards, redevelopment and housing authorities, and regional housing authorities. Employees of community services boards, redevelopment and housing authorities created pursuant to § 36-4, and regional housing authorities created pursuant to § 36-40 shall be included in (i) a local governing body's grievance procedure or personnel system, if agreed to by the department, board, or authority and the locality or (ii) a grievance procedure established and administered by the department, board or authority which is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 30 (§ 2.2-3000 et seq.) of Title 2.2 and any regulations promulgated pursuant thereto. If a department, board or authority fails to establish a grievance procedure pursuant to clause (i) or (ii), it shall be deemed to have adopted a grievance procedure which is consistent with the provisions of Chapter 30 (§ 2.2-3000 et seq.) of Title 2.2 and any regulations adopted pursuant thereto for so long as it remains in noncompliance.

5. General requirements for procedures.

a. Each grievance procedure shall include not more than four steps for airing complaints at successively higher levels of local government management, and a final step providing for a panel hearing or a hearing before an administrative hearing officer upon the agreement of both parties.

b. Grievance procedures shall prescribe reasonable and specific time limitations for the grievant to submit an initial complaint and to appeal each decision through the steps of the grievance procedure.

c. Nothing contained in this section shall prohibit a local government from granting its employees rights greater than those contained herein, provided such grant does not exceed or violate the general law or public policy of the Commonwealth.

6. Time periods.

a. It is intended that speedy attention to employee grievances be promoted, consistent with the ability of the parties to prepare for a fair consideration of the issues of concern.

b. The time for submitting an initial complaint shall not be less than 20 calendar days after the event giving rise to the grievance, but local governments may, at their option, allow a longer time period.

c. Limits for steps after initial presentation of grievance shall be the same or greater for the grievant than the time which is allowed for local government response in each comparable situation.

d. Time frames may be extended by mutual agreement of the local government and the grievant.

7. Compliance.

a. After the initial filing of a written grievance, failure of either party to comply with all substantial procedural requirements of the grievance procedure, including the panel or administrative hearing, without just cause shall result in a decision in favor of the other party on any grievable issue, provided the party not in compliance fails to correct the noncompliance within five workdays of receipt of written notification by the other party of the compliance violation. Such written notification by the grievant shall be made to the chief administrative officer, or his designee.

b. The chief administrative officer, or his designee, at his option, may require a clear written explanation of the basis for just cause extensions or exceptions. The chief administrative officer, or his designee, shall determine compliance issues. Compliance determinations made by the chief administrative officer shall be subject to judicial review by filing petition with the circuit court within 30 days of the compliance determination.

8. Management steps.

a. The first step shall provide for an informal, initial processing of employee complaints by the immediate supervisor through a nonwritten, discussion format.

b. Management steps shall provide for a review with higher levels of local government authority following the employee's reduction to writing of the grievance and the relief requested on forms supplied by the local government. Personal face-to-face meetings are required at all of these steps.

c. With the exception of the final management step, the only persons who may normally be present in the management step meetings are the grievant, the appropriate local government official at the level at which the grievance is being heard, and appropriate witnesses for each side. Witnesses shall be present only while actually providing testimony. At the final management step, the grievant, at his option, may have present a representative of his choice. If the grievant is represented by legal counsel, local government likewise has the option of being represented by counsel.

9. Qualification for panel or administrative hearing.

a. Decisions regarding grievability and access to the procedure shall be made by the chief administrative officer of the local government, or his designee, at any time prior to the panel hearing, at the request of the local government or grievant, within 10 calendar days of the request. No city, town, or county attorney, or attorney for the Commonwealth, shall be authorized to decide the question of grievability. A copy of the ruling shall be sent to the grievant. Decisions of the chief administrative officer of the local government, or his designee, may be appealed to the circuit court having jurisdiction in the locality in which the grievant is employed for a hearing on the issue of whether the grievance qualifies for a panel hearing. Proceedings for review of the decision of the chief administrative officer or

his designee shall be instituted by the grievant by filing a notice of appeal with the chief administrative officer within 10 calendar days from the date of receipt of the decision and giving a copy thereof to all other parties. Within 10 calendar days thereafter, the chief administrative officer or his designee shall transmit to the clerk of the court to which the appeal is taken: a copy of the decision of the chief administrative officer, a copy of the notice of appeal, and the exhibits. A list of the evidence furnished to the court shall also be furnished to the grievant. The failure of the chief administrative officer or his designee to transmit the record shall not prejudice the rights of the grievant. The court, on motion of the grievant, may issue a writ of certiorari requiring the chief administrative officer to transmit the record on or before a certain date.

b. Within 30 days of receipt of such records by the clerk, the court, sitting without a jury, shall hear the appeal on the record transmitted by the chief administrative officer or his designee and such additional evidence as may be necessary to resolve any controversy as to the correctness of the record. The court, in its discretion, may receive such other evidence as the ends of justice require. The court may affirm the decision of the chief administrative officer or his designee, or may reverse or modify the decision. The decision of the court shall be rendered no later than the fifteenth day from the date of the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the court is final and is not appealable.

#### 10. Final hearings.

a. Qualifying grievances shall advance to either a panel hearing or a hearing before an administrative hearing officer, as set forth in the locality's grievance procedure, as described below:

(1) If the grievance procedure adopted by the local governing body provides that the final step shall be an impartial panel hearing, the panel may, with the exception of those local governments covered by subdivision a (2) of this subsection, consist of one member appointed by the grievant, one member appointed by the agency head and a third member selected by the first two. In the event that agreement cannot be reached as to the final panel member, the chief judge of the circuit court of the jurisdiction wherein the dispute arose shall select the third panel member. The panel shall not be composed of any persons having direct involvement with the grievance being heard by the panel, or with the complaint or dispute giving rise to the grievance. Managers who are in a direct line of supervision of a grievant, persons residing in the same household as the grievant and the following relatives of a participant in the grievance process or a participant's spouse are prohibited from serving as panel members: spouse, parent, child, descendants of a child, sibling, niece, nephew and first cousin. No attorney having direct involvement with the subject matter of the grievance, nor a partner, associate, employee or co-employee of the attorney shall serve as a panel member.

(2) If the grievance procedure adopted by the local governing body provides for the final step to be an impartial panel hearing, local governments may retain the panel composition method previously approved by the Department of Human Resource Management and in effect as of the enactment of this statute. Modifications to the panel composition method shall be permitted with regard to the size of the panel and the terms of office for panel members, so long as the basic integrity and independence of panels are maintained. As used in this section, the term "panel" shall include all bodies designated and authorized to make final and binding decisions.

(3) When a local government elects to use an administrative hearing officer rather than a three-person panel for the final step in the grievance procedure, the administrative hearing officer shall be appointed by the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The appointment shall be made from the list of administrative hearing officers maintained by the Executive Secretary pursuant to § 2.2-4024 and shall be made from the appropriate geographical region on a rotating basis. In the alternative, the local government may request the appointment of an administrative hearing officer from the Department of Human Resource Management. If a local government elects to use an administrative hearing officer, it shall bear the expense of such officer's services.

(4) When the local government uses a panel in the final step of the procedure, there shall be a chairperson of the panel and, when panels are composed of three persons (one each selected by the respective parties and the third from an impartial source), the third member shall be the chairperson.

(5) Both the grievant and the respondent may call upon appropriate witnesses and be represented by legal counsel or other representatives at the hearing. Such representatives may examine, cross-examine, question and present evidence on behalf of the grievant or respondent before the panel or hearing officer without being in violation of the provisions of § 54.1-3904.

(6) The decision of the panel or hearing officer shall be final and binding and shall be consistent with provisions of law and written policy.

(7) The question of whether the relief granted by a panel or hearing officer is consistent with written policy shall be determined by the chief administrative officer of the local government, or his designee, unless such person has a direct personal involvement with the event or events giving rise to the grievance, in which case the decision shall be made by the attorney for the Commonwealth of the jurisdiction in which the grievance is pending.

b. Rules for panel and administrative hearings.



Unless otherwise provided by law, local governments shall adopt rules for the conduct of panel or administrative hearings as a part of their grievance procedures, or shall adopt separate rules for such hearings. Rules which are promulgated shall include, but need not be limited to the following provisions:

(1) That neither the panels nor the hearing officer have authority to formulate policies or procedures or to alter existing policies or procedures;

(2) That panels and the hearing officer have the discretion to determine the propriety of attendance at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing, and, at the request of either party, the hearing shall be private;

(3) That the local government provide the panel or hearing officer with copies of the grievance record prior to the hearing, and provide the grievant with a list of the documents furnished to the panel or hearing officer, and the grievant and his attorney, at least 10 days prior to the scheduled hearing, shall be allowed access to and copies of all relevant files intended to be used in the grievance proceeding;

(4) That panels and hearing officers have the authority to determine the admissibility of evidence without regard to the burden of proof, or the order of presentation of evidence, so long as a full and equal opportunity is afforded to all parties for the presentation of their evidence;

(5) That all evidence be presented in the presence of the panel or hearing officer and the parties, except by mutual consent of the parties;

(6) That documents, exhibits and lists of witnesses be exchanged between the parties or hearing officer in advance of the hearing;

(7) That the majority decision of the panel or the decision of the hearing officer, acting within the scope of its or his authority, be final, subject to existing policies, procedures and law;

(8) That the panel or hearing officer's decision be provided within a specified time to all parties; and

(9) Such other provisions as may facilitate fair and expeditious hearings, with the understanding that the hearings are not intended to be conducted like proceedings in courts, and that rules of evidence do not necessarily apply.

11. Implementation of final hearing decisions.

Either party may petition the circuit court having jurisdiction in the locality in which the grievant is employed for an order requiring implementation of the hearing decision.

B. Notwithstanding the contrary provisions of this section, a final hearing decision rendered under the provisions of this section which would result in the reinstatement of any employee of a sheriff's office, who has been terminated for cause may be reviewed by the circuit court for the locality upon the petition of the locality. The review of the circuit court shall be limited to the question of whether the decision of the panel or hearing officer was consistent with provisions of law and written policy.

**§ 15.2-1604. Appointment of deputies and employment of employees; discriminatory practices by certain officers; civil penalty.**

A. It shall be an unlawful employment practice for a constitutional officer:

1. To fail or refuse to appoint or hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of appointment or employment, ~~because on the basis of~~ such individual's race, color, religion, sex ~~or~~, national origin, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1; or

2. To limit, segregate, or classify his appointees, employees or applicants for appointment or employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, ~~because on the basis of~~ the individual's race, color, religion, sex ~~or~~, national origin, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

B. Nothing in this section shall be construed to make it an unlawful employment practice for a constitutional officer to hire or appoint an individual on the basis of his sex or national origin in those instances where sex or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of that particular office. The provisions of this section shall not apply to policy-making positions, confidential or personal staff positions, or undercover positions.

C. With regard to notices and advertisements:

1. Every constitutional officer shall, prior to hiring any employee, advertise such employment position in a newspaper having general circulation or a state or local government job placement service in such constitutional officer's locality except where the vacancy is to be used (i) as a placement opportunity for appointees or employees affected by layoff, (ii) as a transfer opportunity or demotion for an incumbent, (iii) to fill positions that have been advertised within the past 120 days, (iv) to fill positions to be filled by appointees or employees returning from leave with or without pay, (v) to fill temporary positions, temporary employees being those employees hired to work on special projects that

have durations of three months or less, or (vi) to fill policy-making positions, confidential or personal staff positions, or special, sensitive law-enforcement positions normally regarded as undercover work.

2. No constitutional officer shall print or publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement relating to employment by such constitutional officer indicating any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination, based on sex or national origin, except that such notice or advertisement may indicate a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on sex or national origin when sex or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification for employment.

D. Complaints regarding violations of subsection A may be made to the Division of Human Rights of the Department of Law. The Division shall have the authority to exercise its powers as outlined in Article 4 (§ 2.2-520 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 2.2.

E. Any constitutional officer who willfully violates the provisions of subsection C shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$2,000.

**§ 15.2-6314.1. Applicability of the Virginia Personnel Act and the Virginia Public Procurement Act.**

A. Employees of an authority created by a locality shall be exempt from the provisions of the Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.) if (i) the locality has personnel policies and procedures that are consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Virginia Personnel Act; and (ii) such authority adopts the locality's personnel policies and procedures. In any event, personnel actions shall be taken without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, ~~handicap~~ disability, ~~or~~ political affiliation, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 15.2-1500.1, or gender identity as defined in § 15.2-1500.1.*

B. Any authority created under this chapter shall be subject to the terms of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.). Notwithstanding the foregoing, should the United States Department of Defense place a federal area on a list of installations to be closed or realigned under the authority granted to the United States Department of Defense pursuant to the federal Defense Base Closure And Realignment Act of 1990 (United States Public Law 101-501, as amended through the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2003), and such federal area is subject to the jurisdiction of an authority created by a locality, such listing of that installation shall qualify as an "emergency" under subsection F of § 2.2-4303 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

**§ 22.1-295.2. Employment discrimination prohibited.**

A. As used in this section:

"Gender identity" means the gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality.

B. No school board or any agent or employee thereof shall discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

**§ 22.1-306. Definitions.**

As used in this article:

"Business day" means any day that the relevant school board office is open.

"Day" means calendar days unless a different meaning is clearly expressed in this article. Whenever the last day for performing an act required by this article falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the act may be performed on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

"Dismissal" means the dismissal of any teacher during the term of such teacher's contract.

"Grievance" means a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to his employment, including but not necessarily limited to: (i) disciplinary action including dismissal; (ii) the application or interpretation of: (a) personnel policies, (b) procedures, (c) rules and regulations, (d) ordinances, and (e) statutes; (iii) acts of reprisal against a teacher for filing or processing a grievance, participating as a witness in any step, meeting or hearing relating to a grievance, or serving as a member of a fact-finding panel; and (iv) complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color,  ~~creed~~ religion, political affiliation, ~~handicap~~ disability, age, national origin, ~~or~~ sex, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 22.1-295.2, or gender identity as defined in § 22.1-295.2.* Each school board shall have the exclusive right to manage the affairs and operations of the school division. Accordingly, the term "grievance" shall not include a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to (1) establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications or general benefits, (2) suspension of a teacher or nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status, (3) the establishment or contents of ordinances, statutes or personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations, (4) failure to promote, (5) discharge, layoff, or suspension from duties because of decrease in enrollment, decrease in enrollment or abolition of a particular subject or insufficient funding, (6) hiring, transfer, assignment, and retention of teachers within the school division, (7) suspension from duties in emergencies, (8) the methods, means, and personnel by which the school division's operations

are to be carried on, or (9) coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship.

While these management rights are reserved to the school board, failure to apply, where applicable, the rules, regulations, policies, or procedures as written or established by the school board is grievable.

**§ 36-96.1. Declaration of policy.**

A. This chapter shall be known and referred to as the Virginia Fair Housing Law.

B. It is the policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide for fair housing throughout the Commonwealth, to all its citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*, and to that end to prohibit discriminatory practices with respect to residential housing by any person or group of persons, in order that the peace, health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of all the inhabitants of the Commonwealth may be protected and insured. This law shall be deemed an exercise of the police power of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the protection of the people of the Commonwealth.

**§ 36-96.1:1. Definitions.**

For the purposes of this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Aggrieved person" means any person who (i) claims to have been injured by a discriminatory housing practice or (ii) believes that such person will be injured by a discriminatory housing practice that is about to occur.

"Complainant" means a person, including the Fair Housing Board, who files a complaint under § 36-96.9.

"Conciliation" means the attempted resolution of issues raised by a complainant, or by the investigation of such complaint, through informal negotiations involving the aggrieved person, the respondent, their respective authorized representatives and the Fair Housing Board.

"Conciliation agreement" means a written agreement setting forth the resolution of the issues in conciliation.

"Discriminatory housing practices" means an act that is unlawful under §§ 36-96.3, 36-96.4, 36-96.5, or § 36-96.6.

"Dwelling" means any building, structure, or portion thereof, that is occupied as, or designated or intended for occupancy as, a residence by one or more families, and any vacant land that is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure, or portion thereof.

"Elderliness" means an individual who has attained his fifty-fifth birthday.

"Familial status" means one or more individuals who have not attained the age of 18 years being domiciled with (i) a parent or other person having legal custody of such individual or individuals or (ii) the designee of such parent or other person having custody with the written permission of such parent or other person. The term "familial status" also includes any person who is pregnant or is in the process of securing legal custody of any individual who has not attained the age of 18 years. For purposes of this section, "in the process of securing legal custody" means having filed an appropriate petition to obtain legal custody of such minor in a court of competent jurisdiction.

"Family" includes a single individual, whether male or female.

"Gender identity" means the gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

"Handicap" means, with respect to a person, (i) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; (ii) a record of having such an impairment; or (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment. The term does not include current, illegal use of, or addiction to a controlled substance as defined in Virginia or federal law. Neither the term "individual with handicap" nor the term "handicap" shall apply to an individual solely because that individual is a transvestite.

"Lending institution" includes any bank, savings institution, credit union, insurance company or mortgage lender.

"Person" means one or more individuals, whether male or female, corporations, partnerships, associations, labor organizations, fair housing organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations, governmental entities, legal representatives, mutual companies, joint stock companies, trusts, unincorporated organizations, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers and fiduciaries.

"Respondent" means any person or other entity alleged to have violated the provisions of this chapter, as stated in a complaint filed under the provisions of this chapter and any other person joined pursuant to the provisions of § 36-96.9.

"Restrictive covenant" means any specification in any instrument affecting title to real property that purports to limit the use, occupancy, transfer, rental, or lease of any dwelling ~~because~~ *on the basis of* race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*.

"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality.

"To rent" means to lease, to sublease, to let, or otherwise to grant for consideration the right to occupy premises not owned by the occupant.

**§ 36-96.2. Exemptions.**

A. Except as provided in subdivision A 3 of § 36-96.3 and subsections A, B, and C of § 36-96.6, this chapter shall not apply to any single-family house sold or rented by an owner, provided that such private individual does not own more than three single-family houses at any one time. In the case of the sale of any single-family house by a private individual-owner not residing in the house at the time of the sale or who was not the most recent resident of the house prior to sale, the exemption granted shall apply only with respect to one such sale within any 24-month period; provided that such bona fide private individual owner does not own any interest in, nor is there owned or reserved on his behalf, under any express or voluntary agreement, title to or any right to all or a portion of the proceeds from the sale or rental of, more than three such single-family houses at any one time. The sale or rental of any such single-family house shall be exempt from the application of this chapter only if the house is sold or rented (i) without the use in any manner of the sales or rental facilities or the sales or rental services of any real estate broker, agent, salesperson, or of the facilities or the services of any person in the business of selling or renting dwellings, or of any employee, independent contractor, or agent of any broker, agent, salesperson, or person and (ii) without the publication, posting, or mailing, after notice, of any advertisement or written notice in violation of this chapter. However, nothing herein shall prohibit the use of attorneys, escrow agents, abstractors, title companies, and other professional assistance as necessary to perfect or transfer the title. This exemption shall not apply to or inure to the benefit of any licensee of the Real Estate Board or regulant of the Fair Housing Board, regardless of whether the licensee is acting in his personal or professional capacity.

B. Except for subdivision A 3 of § 36-96.3, this chapter shall not apply to rooms or units in dwellings containing living quarters occupied or intended to be occupied by no more than four families living independently of each other, if the owner actually maintains and occupies one of such living quarters as his residence.

C. Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit a religious organization, association or society, or any nonprofit institution or organization operated, supervised, or controlled by or in conjunction with a religious organization, association or society, from limiting the sale, rental, or occupancy of dwellings that it owns or operates for other than a commercial purpose to persons of the same religion, or from giving preferences to such persons, unless membership in such religion is restricted on ~~account~~ *the basis* of race, color, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ *sexual orientation, or gender identity*. Nor shall anything in this chapter apply to a private membership club not in fact open to the public, which as an incident to its primary purpose or purposes provides lodging which it owns or operates for other than a commercial purpose, from limiting the rental or occupancy of such lodgings to its members or from giving preference to its members. Nor, where matters of personal privacy are involved, shall anything in this chapter be construed to prohibit any private, state-owned or state-supported educational institution, hospital, nursing home, religious or correctional institution, from requiring that persons of both sexes not occupy any single-family residence or room or unit of dwellings or other buildings, or restrooms in such room or unit in dwellings or other buildings, which it owns or operates.

D. Nothing in this chapter prohibits conduct against a person because such person has been convicted by any court of competent jurisdiction of the illegal manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance as defined in federal law.

E. It shall not be unlawful under this chapter for any owner to deny or limit the rental of housing to persons who pose a clear and present threat of substantial harm to others or to the dwelling itself.

F. A rental application may require disclosure by the applicant of any criminal convictions and the owner or managing agent may require as a condition of acceptance of the rental application that applicant consent in writing to a criminal record check to verify the disclosures made by applicant in the rental application. The owner or managing agent may collect from the applicant moneys to reimburse the owner or managing agent for the exact amount of the out-of-pocket costs for such criminal record checks. Nothing in this chapter shall require an owner or managing agent to rent a dwelling to an individual who, based on a prior record of criminal convictions involving harm to persons or property, would constitute a clear and present threat to the health or safety of other individuals.

G. Nothing in this chapter limits the applicability of any reasonable local, state or federal restriction regarding the maximum number of occupants permitted to occupy a dwelling. Owners or managing agents of dwellings may develop and implement reasonable occupancy and safety standards based on factors such as the number and size of sleeping areas or bedrooms and overall size of a dwelling unit so long as the standards do not violate local, state or federal restrictions. Nothing in this chapter prohibits the rental application or similar document from requiring information concerning the number, ages, sex and familial relationship of the applicants and the dwelling's intended occupants.

**§ 36-96.3. Unlawful discriminatory housing practices.**

A. It shall be an unlawful discriminatory housing practice for any person:

1. To refuse to sell or rent after the making of a bona fide offer or to refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny, a dwelling to any person ~~because~~ *on the basis of* race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, ~~or~~ familial status, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*;

2. To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in the connection therewith to any person ~~because~~ *on the basis of* race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, ~~or~~ familial status, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*;

3. To make, print, or publish, or cause to be made, printed, or published any notice, statement, or advertisement, with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling that indicates any preference, limitation, or discrimination or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination ~~based on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*. The use of words or symbols associated with a particular religion, national origin, sex, ~~or~~ race, *sexual orientation, or gender identity* shall be prima facie evidence of an illegal preference under this chapter which shall not be overcome by a general disclaimer. However, reference alone to places of worship including, but not limited to, churches, synagogues, temples, or mosques in any such notice, statement or advertisement shall not be prima facie evidence of an illegal preference;

4. To represent to any person ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity* that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, or rental when such dwelling is in fact so available;

5. To deny any person access to membership in 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 against such person in the terms or conditions of such access, membership, or participation ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*;

6. To include in any transfer, sale, rental, or lease of housing, any restrictive covenant that discriminates ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity* or for any person to honor or exercise, or attempt to honor or exercise any such discriminatory covenant pertaining to housing;

7. To induce or attempt to induce to sell or rent any dwelling by representations regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of a particular race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, *sexual orientation, or gender identity*;

8. To refuse to sell or rent, or refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise discriminate or make unavailable or deny a dwelling because of a handicap of (i) the buyer or renter, (ii) a person residing in or intending to reside in that dwelling after it is so sold, rented or made available, or (iii) any person associated with the buyer or renter; *or*

9. To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith because of a handicap of (i) that person, (ii) a person residing in or intending to reside in that dwelling after it was so sold, rented or made available, or (iii) any person associated with that buyer or renter.

B. For the purposes of this section, discrimination includes: (i) a refusal to permit, at the expense of the handicapped person, reasonable modifications of existing premises occupied or to be occupied by any 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's agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted; (ii) a refusal to make reasonable accommodations in rules, practices, policies, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford such person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling; or (iii) in connection with the design and construction of covered multi-family dwellings for first occupancy after March 13, 1991, a failure to design and construct dwellings in such a manner that:

1. The public use and common use areas of the dwellings are readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons;

2. All the doors designed to allow passage into and within all premises are sufficiently wide to allow passage by handicapped persons in wheelchairs; and

3. All premises within covered multi-family dwelling units contain an accessible route into and through the dwelling; light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats, and other environmental controls are in accessible locations; there are reinforcements in the bathroom walls to allow later installation of grab bars; and there are usable kitchens and bathrooms such that an individual in a wheelchair can maneuver about the space. As used in this subdivision the term "covered multi-family dwellings" means buildings

consisting of four or more units if such buildings have one or more elevators and ground floor units in other buildings consisting of four or more units.

C. Compliance with the appropriate requirements of the American National Standards for Building and Facilities (commonly cited as "ANSI A117.1") or with any other standards adopted as part of regulations promulgated by HUD providing accessibility and usability for physically handicapped people shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subdivision B 3.

D. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to invalidate or limit any Virginia law or regulation which requires dwellings to be designed and constructed in a manner that affords handicapped persons greater access than is required by this chapter.

**§ 36-96.4. Discrimination in residential real estate-related transactions; unlawful practices by lenders, insurers, appraisers, etc.; deposit of state funds in such institutions.**

A. It shall be unlawful for any person or other entity, including any lending institution, whose business includes engaging in residential real estate-related transactions, to discriminate against any person in making available such a transaction, or in the terms or conditions of such a transaction, or in the manner of providing such a transaction, ~~because on the basis of~~ race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, ~~sexual orientation, or gender identity~~. It shall not be unlawful, however, for any person or other entity whose business includes engaging in residential real estate transactions to require any applicant to qualify financially for the loan or loans for which such person is making application.

B. As used in this section, the term "residential real estate-related transaction" means any of the following:

1. The making or purchasing of loans or providing other financial assistance (i) for purchasing, constructing, improving, repairing, or maintaining a dwelling or (ii) secured by residential real estate; or

2. The selling, brokering, insuring or appraising of residential real property. However, nothing in this chapter shall prohibit a person engaged in the business of furnishing appraisals of real property to take into consideration factors other than race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, ~~sexual orientation, or gender identity~~.

C. It shall be unlawful for any state, county, city, or municipal treasurer or governmental official whose responsibility it is to account for, to invest, or manage public funds to deposit or cause to be deposited any public funds in any lending institution provided for herein which is found to be committing discriminatory practices, where such findings were upheld by any court of competent jurisdiction. Upon such a court's judicial enforcement of any order to restrain a practice of such lending institution or for said institution to cease or desist in a discriminatory practice, the appropriate fiscal officer or treasurer of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof which has funds deposited in any lending institution which is practicing discrimination, as set forth herein, shall take immediate steps to have the said funds withdrawn and redeposited in another lending institution. If for reasons of sound economic management, this action will result in a financial loss to the Commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions, the action may be deferred for a period not longer than one year. If the lending institution in question has corrected its discriminatory practices, any prohibition set forth in this section shall not apply.

**§ 36-96.6. Certain restrictive covenants void; instruments containing such covenants.**

A. Any restrictive covenant and any related reversionary interest, purporting to restrict occupancy or ownership of property on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status, ~~or~~ handicap, ~~sexual orientation, or gender identity~~, whether heretofore or hereafter included in an instrument affecting the title to real or leasehold property, are declared to be void and contrary to the public policy of the Commonwealth.

B. Any person who is asked to accept a document affecting title to real or leasehold property may decline to accept the same if it includes such a covenant or reversionary interest until the covenant or reversionary interest has been removed from the document. Refusal to accept delivery of an instrument for this reason shall not be deemed a breach of a contract to purchase, lease, mortgage, or otherwise deal with such property.

C. No person shall solicit or accept compensation of any kind for the release or removal of any covenant or reversionary interest described in subsection A. Any person violating this subsection shall be liable to any person injured thereby in an amount equal to the greater of three times the compensation solicited or received, or \$500, plus reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred.

D. A family care home, foster home, or group home in which individuals with physical handicaps, mental illness, intellectual disability, or developmental disability reside, with one or more resident counselors or other staff persons, shall be considered for all purposes residential occupancy by a single family when construing any restrictive covenant which purports to restrict occupancy or ownership of real or leasehold property to members of a single family or to residential use or structure.

**§ 37.2-707. Employment and qualifications of directors of state facilities.**

The Commissioner shall employ a director for each state facility who shall be skilled in facility

management and administration and who shall meet requirements that may be determined by the Commissioner. However, the director need not be a physician.

Any director of a state facility employed or reemployed by the Commissioner after July 1, 2002, may be employed as a classified employee or under a contract that specifies the terms and conditions of employment, including compensation, benefits, duties and responsibilities, performance standards, evaluation criteria, and contract termination and renewal provisions. The length of employment contracts shall be two years, with provisions for annual renewals thereafter based on the performance of the incumbent. Any director of a state facility employed by the Commissioner before July 1, 1999, may elect to continue his current employment status subject to the provisions of the Virginia Personnel Act, Chapter 29 (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.) of Title 2.2, or he may choose to be employed under a contract. Any director of a state facility employed under an employment contract shall be exempt from the Virginia Personnel Act, yet he shall remain subject to the provisions of the State Grievance Procedure (§ 2.2-3000 et seq.). Personnel actions under this exemption shall be taken without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, ~~or~~ political affiliation, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.*

Each director shall be responsible to the Commissioner or his designee for the safe, efficient, and effective operation of his state facility. Each director shall take any actions consistent with law necessary to ensure that his facility complies with all applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, policies, and agreements. The Commissioner shall evaluate the performance of each director of a state facility at least annually.

Whenever any act required by law to be performed by a director employed hereunder constitutes the practice of medicine, as defined in § 54.1-2900, and the director is not a licensed physician, the act shall be performed by a licensed physician designated by the director.

**§ 46.2-1503.2. State Personnel and Public Procurement Acts not applicable.**

A. The Executive Director and all staff employed by the Board shall be exempt from the Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.) of Title 2.2. Personnel actions under this exemption shall be taken without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, handicap ~~or~~, political affiliation, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.*

B. The Board and the Executive Director shall be exempt from the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.) of Title 2.2.

**§ 51.1-124.27. Employees of the Retirement System.**

The officers and employees of the Virginia Retirement System shall be exempt from the provisions of § 2.2-1202.1 and of the Virginia Personnel Act (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.). Personnel actions shall be taken without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, ~~handicap or~~ disability, political affiliation, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.*

**§ 55-248.47. Sale or lease of manufactured home by owner.**

A. As used in this section:

"Gender identity" means the gender-related identity, appearance, or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

"Sexual orientation" means an individual's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality.

B. The landlord shall not unreasonably refuse or restrict the sale or rental of a manufactured home located in his manufactured home park by a tenant. The landlord shall not prohibit the manufactured home owner from placing a "for sale" sign on or in his home except that the size, placement, and character of all signs are subject to the rules and regulations of the park. Prior to selling or leasing the manufactured home the tenant shall give notice to the landlord, including, but not limited to, the name of the prospective vendee or lessee if the prospective vendee or lessee intends to occupy the manufactured home in that manufactured home park. The landlord shall have the burden of proving that his refusal or restriction regarding the sale or rental of a manufactured home was reasonable. The refusal or restriction of the sale or rental of a manufactured home based exclusively or predominantly on the age of the home shall be considered unreasonable. Any refusal or restriction ~~because~~ on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, familial status, elderliness, handicap, ~~or~~ sex, *sexual orientation, or gender identity* shall be conclusively presumed to be unreasonable.

**§ 58.1-4024. Employees of the Department.**

Employees of the Department shall be exempt from the provisions of the Virginia Personnel Act, Chapter 29 (§ 2.2-2900 et seq.) of Title 2.2. Personnel actions shall be taken without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, handicap ~~or~~, political affiliation, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as*

919 defined in § 2.2-2901.1.

920 **§ 62.1-129.1. Employees; employment; personnel rules; health insurance; retirement plans.**

921 A. Employees of the Authority shall be employed on such terms and conditions as established by the  
922 Authority. The Board of Commissioners of the Authority shall develop and adopt personnel rules,  
923 policies, and procedures to give its employees grievance rights, ensure that employment decisions shall  
924 be based upon the merit and fitness of applicants, and prohibit discrimination ~~because on the basis of~~  
925 race, religion, color, sex, ~~or~~ national origin, *pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital*  
926 *status, sexual orientation as defined in § 2.2-2901.1, or gender identity as defined in § 2.2-2901.1.*

927 B. The Authority shall issue a written notice to its employees regarding the Authority's status. The  
928 date upon which such written notice is issued shall be referred to herein as the "option date." Each  
929 employee may, by written request made within 180 days of the option date, elect not to become  
930 employed by the Authority. Any employee of the Virginia Port Authority who: (i) elects not to become  
931 employed by the Authority and who is not reemployed by any other department, institution, board,  
932 commission or agency of the Commonwealth; (ii) is not offered the opportunity to remain employed by  
933 the Authority; or (iii) is not offered a position with the Authority for which the employee is qualified or  
934 is offered a position that requires relocation or a reduction in salary, shall be eligible for the severance  
935 benefits conferred by the provisions of the Workforce Transition Act (§ 2.2-3200 et seq.). Any employee  
936 who accepts employment with the Authority shall not be considered to be involuntarily separated from  
937 state employment and shall not be eligible for the severance benefits conferred by the Workforce  
938 Transition Act.

939 C. Any employee of the Authority who is a member of any plan providing health insurance coverage  
940 pursuant to Chapter 28 (§ 2.2-2800 et seq.) of Title 2.2, shall continue to be a member of such health  
941 insurance plan under the same terms and conditions. Notwithstanding subsection A of § 2.2-2818, the  
942 costs of providing health insurance coverage to such employees who elect to continue to be members of  
943 the state employees' health insurance plan shall be paid by the Authority. Alternatively, an employee  
944 may elect to become a member of any health insurance plan established by the Authority. The Authority  
945 is authorized to: (i) establish a health insurance plan for the benefit of its employees and (ii) enter into  
946 agreements with the Department of Human Resource Management providing for the coverage of its  
947 employees under the state employees' health insurance plan, provided that such agreement requires the  
948 Authority to pay the costs of providing health insurance coverage under such plan.

949 D. Any retired employee of the Authority shall be eligible to receive the health insurance credit set  
950 forth in § 51.1-1400 provided the retired employee meets the eligibility criteria set forth in that section.

951 E. Any Authority employee who is a member of the Virginia Retirement System or other retirement  
952 plan as authorized by Article 4 (§ 51.1-125 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 51.1, shall continue to be a  
953 member of the Virginia Retirement System or other authorized retirement plan under the same terms and  
954 conditions. Alternatively, such employee may elect to become a member of the retirement program  
955 established by the Authority for the benefit of its employees pursuant to § 51.1-126.4. The following  
956 rules shall apply:

957 1. The Authority shall collect and pay all employee and employer contributions to the Virginia  
958 Retirement System or other such authorized retirement plan for retirement and group life insurance in  
959 accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1 (§ 51.1-124.1 et seq.) of Title 51.1 for any employee who  
960 elects to remain a member of the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized retirement plan.

961 2. Employees who elect to become members of the alternative retirement plan established by the  
962 Authority pursuant to § 51.1-126.4 shall be given full credit for their creditable service as defined in  
963 § 51.1-124.3, and vesting and benefit accrual under the retirement plan. For any such employee,  
964 employment with the Authority shall be treated as employment with any nonparticipating employer for  
965 purposes of the Virginia Retirement System or other retirement plan authorized pursuant to Article 4  
966 (§ 51.1-125 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 51.1.

967 3. For employees who elect to become members of the alternative retirement plan established by the  
968 Authority, the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized plan shall transfer to the alternative  
969 retirement plan established by the Authority, assets equal to the actuarially determined present value of  
970 the accrued basic benefits as of the transfer date. For purposes hereof, the "basic benefits" means the  
971 benefits accrued under the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized retirement plan based on  
972 creditable service and average final compensation as defined in § 51.1-124.3. The actuarial present value  
973 shall be determined by using the same actuarial factors and assumptions used in determining the funding  
974 needs of the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized retirement plan so that the transfer of  
975 assets to the alternative retirement plan established by the Authority will have no effect on the funded  
976 status and financial stability of the Virginia Retirement System or other such authorized retirement plan.  
977 The Authority shall reimburse the Virginia Retirement System for the cost of actuarial services  
978 necessary to determine the present value of the accrued basic benefit of employees who transfer to an  
979 Authority retirement plan.

980 4. The Authority may provide that employees of the Authority who are eligible to participate in the



981 deferred compensation plan sponsored by the Authority shall be enrolled automatically in such plan,  
982 unless such employee elects, in a manner prescribed by the Board, not to participate. The amount of the  
983 deferral under the automatic enrollment and the group of employees to which the automatic enrollment  
984 shall apply shall be set by the Board; provided however, that such employees are provided the  
985 opportunity to increase or decrease the amount of the deferral in accordance with the Internal Revenue  
986 Code of 1986, as amended.

**INTRODUCED**

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