

Fifty-seventh  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2217

Introduced by

Senators Bercier, Christenson, Lyson, T. Mathern

Representatives Cleary, Jensen

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact two new sections to chapter 14-02.4 of the North Dakota  
2 Century Code, relating to the authority of the department of labor to receive discriminatory  
3 practices complaints; to amend and reenact sections 14-02.4-02, 14-02.4-19, 14-02.4-20,  
4 14-02.4-21, 14-02.5-02, 14-02.5-03, 14-02.5-04, 14-02.5-05, 14-02.5-07, 14-02.5-08,  
5 14-02.5-10, and 14-02.5-45 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to discriminatory  
6 practices and the authority of the department of labor; to repeal section 14-02.4-12.1 of the  
7 North Dakota Century Code, relating to discriminatory housing practices; and to provide a  
8 penalty.

9 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

10 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.4-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12 **14-02.4-02. Definitions.** In this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise  
13 requires:

- 14 1. "Age" insofar as it refers to any prohibited unfair employment or other practice  
15 means at least forty years of age.
- 16 2. "Court" means the district court in the judicial district in which the alleged  
17 discriminatory practice occurred.
- 18 3. "Department" means the division of human rights within the department of labor.
- 19 4. "Disability" means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or  
20 more major life activities, a record of this impairment, or being regarded as having  
21 this impairment.
- 22 ~~4.~~ 5. "Discriminatory practice" means an act or attempted act which because of race,  
23 color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, status with  
24 regard to marriage or public assistance, or participation in lawful activity off the

1 employer's premises during nonworking hours results in the unequal treatment or  
2 separation or segregation of any persons, or denies, prevents, limits, or otherwise  
3 adversely affects, or if accomplished would deny, prevent, limit, or otherwise  
4 adversely affect, the benefit of enjoyment by any person of employment, labor  
5 union membership, ~~housing accommodations, property rights,~~ public  
6 accommodations, public services, or credit transactions. The term "discriminate"  
7 includes segregate or separate and for purposes of discrimination based on sex, it  
8 includes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual  
9 advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other  
10 verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- 11 a. Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition,  
12 either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining employment, public accommodations  
13 or public services, or education, ~~or housing;~~
- 14 b. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual  
15 is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment, public  
16 accommodations or public services, education, or housing; or
- 17 c. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially  
18 interfering with an individual's employment, public accommodations, public  
19 services, or educational ~~or housing~~ environment; and in the case of  
20 employment, the employer is responsible for its acts and those of its  
21 supervisory employees if it knows or should know of the existence of the  
22 harassment and fails to take timely and appropriate action.

23 ~~5.~~ 6. "Employee" means a person who performs services for an employer, who employs  
24 one or more individuals, for compensation, whether in the form of wages, salaries,  
25 commission, or otherwise. "Employee" does not include a person elected to public  
26 office in the state or political subdivision by the qualified voters thereof, or a person  
27 chosen by the officer to be on the officer's political staff, or an appointee on the  
28 policymaking level or an immediate advisor with respect to the exercise of the  
29 constitutional or legal powers of the office. Provided, "employee" does include a  
30 person subject to the civil service or merit system or civil service laws of the state  
31 government, governmental agency, or a political subdivision.

- 1       ~~6-~~ 7. "Employer" means a person within the state who employs one or more employees  
2                   for more than one quarter of the year and a person wherever situated who  
3                   employs one or more employees whose services are to be partially or wholly  
4                   performed in the state.
- 5       ~~7-~~ 8. "Employment agency" means a person regularly undertaking, with or without  
6                   compensation, to procure employees for an employer or to procure for employees  
7                   opportunity to work for an employer and includes any agent of the person.
- 8       ~~8-~~ 9. "Labor organization" means a person, employee representation committee, plan in  
9                   which employees participate, or other organization which exists solely or in part for  
10                  the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes,  
11                  wages, rates of pay, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment.
- 12      ~~9-~~ 10. "National origin" means the place of birth of an individual or any of the individual's  
13                  lineal ancestors.
- 14      ~~10-~~ 11. "Otherwise qualified person" means a person who is capable of performing the  
15                  essential functions of the particular employment in question.
- 16      ~~11-~~ 12. "Person" means an individual, partnership, association, corporation, limited liability  
17                  company, unincorporated organization, mutual company, joint stock company,  
18                  trust, agent, legal representative, trustee, trustee in bankruptcy, receiver, labor  
19                  organization, public body, public corporation, and the state and a political  
20                  subdivision and agency thereof.
- 21      ~~12-~~ 13. "Public accommodation" means every place, establishment, or facility of whatever  
22                  kind, nature, or class that caters or offers services, facilities, or goods to the  
23                  general public for a fee, charge, or gratuity. "Public accommodation" does not  
24                  include a bona fide private club or other place, establishment, or facility which is by  
25                  its nature distinctly private; provided, however, the distinctly private place,  
26                  establishment, or facility is a "public accommodation" during the period it caters or  
27                  offers services, facilities, or goods to the general public for a fee, charge, or  
28                  gratuity.
- 29      ~~13-~~ 14. "Public service" means a public facility, department, agency, board, or commission  
30                  owned, operated, or managed by or on behalf of this state, a political subdivision  
31                  thereof, or a public corporation.

1        14.    ~~"Real estate broker" and "real estate salesman" mean a real estate broker and real~~  
2            ~~estate salesman as defined in section 43-23-06.1.~~

3        15.    ~~"Real property" means a right, title, interest in or to the possession, ownership,~~  
4            ~~enjoyment, or occupancy of a parcel of land, building situated thereon, or portion of~~  
5            ~~the building.~~

6    46. 15.    "Reasonable accommodations" means accommodations by an employer that do  
7            not:

- 8            a.    Unduly disrupt or interfere with the employer's normal operations;  
9            b.    Threaten the health or safety of the individual with a disability or others;  
10          c.    Contradict a business necessity of the employer; or  
11          d.    Impose undue hardship on the employer, based on the size of the employer's  
12               business, the type of business, the financial resources of the employer, and  
13               the estimated cost and extent of the accommodation.

14 47. 16.    "Sex" includes, ~~but is not limited to,~~ pregnancy, childbirth, and disabilities related to  
15            pregnancy or childbirth.

16 48. 17.    "Status with regard to public assistance" means the condition of being a recipient  
17            of federal, state, or local assistance, including medical assistance, or of being a  
18            tenant receiving federal, state, or local subsidies, including rental assistance or  
19            rent supplements.

20        **SECTION 2.** Two new sections to chapter 14-02.4 of the North Dakota Century Code  
21 are created and enacted as follows:

22        **Duties and powers of department.** The department shall receive and investigate  
23 complaints alleging violations of this chapter. The department may adopt rules necessary to  
24 implement this chapter. Within the limits of legislative appropriations, the department shall  
25 foster prevention of discrimination under this chapter through education for the public,  
26 employers, providers of public accommodations or services, and commercial lenders on the  
27 rights and responsibilities provided under this chapter and ways to respect those protected  
28 rights. The department shall emphasize conciliation to resolve complaints. The department  
29 shall publish in even-numbered years a written report recommending legislative or other action  
30 to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The department shall conduct studies relating to the  
31 nature and extent of discriminatory practices in this state.

**Complaints - Probable cause - Administrative hearing.**

1. The department shall investigate complaints of alleged discriminatory practices. An aggrieved person may file a complaint with the department alleging the discriminatory practice. The department may file a complaint. A complaint must be in writing and in the form prescribed by the department.
2. The department shall determine from the facts whether probable cause exists to believe that a discriminatory practice has occurred. If the department determines that no probable cause exists to believe that a discriminatory practice has occurred, the department shall promptly dismiss the complaint.
3. If the department determines that probable cause exists to believe that a discriminatory practice has occurred and is unable to resolve the complaint through informal negotiations or conciliation, the department shall provide for an administrative hearing in the manner provided in chapter 28-32 on the complaint.

**SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.4-19 of the 1999 Supplement to the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-02.4-19. Actions - Limitations.** Any person claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory practice with regard to public services or public accommodations in violation of this chapter may file a complaint of discriminatory practices with the department or may bring an action in the district court in any the judicial district in the state in which the unlawful practice is alleged to have been committed; or in the district in which the records relevant to such practice are maintained and administered, or in the judicial district in which the person would have worked or obtained credit obtained public accommodations or services were it not for the alleged discriminatory act within ~~three years~~ one hundred eighty days of the alleged act of wrongdoing. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by a any discriminatory practice other than public services or public accommodations in violation of this chapter ~~with regard to an employer's discriminatory practice~~ may bring file a complaint of ~~discriminating employment practices under this chapter to~~ discriminatory practice with the department of labor or may bring an action in the district court in the judicial district in which the unlawful practice is alleged to have been committed, in the district in which the records relevant to the practice are maintained and administered, or in the district in which the person would have worked or obtained credit were it not for the alleged discriminatory act within three hundred days of the alleged act of

1 wrongdoing. ~~Any person claiming to be aggrieved by a discriminatory practice in violation of~~  
2 ~~this chapter with regard to public accommodations or services may bring an action in the district~~  
3 ~~court in any district in the state in which the unlawful practice is alleged to have been~~  
4 ~~committed, or in the judicial district in which the person would have obtained public~~  
5 ~~accommodations or services were it not for the alleged discriminatory act within one hundred~~  
6 ~~eighty days of the alleged act of wrongdoing. The period of limitation for bringing an action in~~  
7 ~~the district court is tolled while the complaint is pending with the department.~~

8 **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.4-20 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
9 amended and reenacted as follows:

10 **14-02.4-20. Relief.** If the department, as the result of an administrative hearing, or the  
11 court determines that the respondent has engaged in or is engaging in an unlawful a  
12 discriminatory practice, the department or the court may enjoin the respondent from engaging  
13 in such the unlawful practice and order such appropriate relief as will be appropriate, which  
14 ~~may include, but is not limited to,~~ temporary or permanent injunctions, actual damages,  
15 equitable relief, and backpay limited to no more than two years from the date the complainant  
16 ~~has complaint was filed a sworn charge with the equal employment opportunity commission or~~  
17 ~~filed the complaint in the state department or the court.~~ Interim earnings or amounts earnable  
18 with reasonable diligence by the person ~~or persons~~ discriminated against ~~shall operate to~~  
19 reduce the backpay otherwise allowable. In any action or proceeding under this chapter the  
20 court may grant, ~~in its discretion,~~ the prevailing party a reasonable attorney's fee as part of the  
21 costs. If the court finds that the complainant's allegation of a discriminatory practice is false  
22 and not made in good faith, the court shall order the complainant to pay court costs and  
23 reasonable attorney's fees incurred by the respondent in responding to the allegation.

24 **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.4-21 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
25 amended and reenacted as follows:

26 ~~**14-02.4-21. Optional mediation by department of labor -- Relief -- Appeals --**~~  
27 **Records exempt.** ~~The department of labor may receive complaints of discriminating~~  
28 ~~employment practices under this chapter and may investigate the complaints to determine if~~  
29 ~~there is probable cause to believe the complaint is meritorious and, if so, attempt to obtain~~  
30 ~~voluntary compliance with this chapter's employment requirements through informal advice,~~  
31 ~~negotiation, or conciliation. This chapter does not prohibit a person from filing, or require a~~

1 ~~person to file, a complaint with the department of labor before using the provisions of this~~  
2 ~~chapter.~~ A complaint received by the department and information obtained during any  
3 investigation conducted under this ~~section~~ chapter are exempt from section 44-04-18 before  
4 the institution of any judicial proceedings or administrative hearing relating to the complaint  
5 under this chapter. The ~~commissioner~~ department may disclose to the complainant or the  
6 respondent, ~~or attorneys for the complainant or respondent,~~ information obtained under this  
7 ~~section~~ during an investigation if ~~deemed~~ determined necessary by the ~~commissioner~~  
8 department for securing an appropriate resolution of a complaint. ~~Any record or information~~  
9 ~~held by the department of labor pursuant to an agreement with any federal agency for the~~  
10 ~~enforcement of fair employment practices is exempt from section 44-04-18, and the~~ The  
11 ~~department of labor~~ may disclose to federal officials information obtained under this ~~section~~  
12 chapter if ~~appropriate to carry out the enforcement of fair employment practices pursuant to the~~  
13 necessary for the processing of complaints under an agreement with the agency. The  
14 ~~department of labor~~ may not disclose anything said or done as part of the informal negotiation  
15 or conciliation efforts relating to a complaint under this ~~section~~ chapter.

16 **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-02 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
17 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

18 **14-02.5-02. Sale or rental.**

- 19 1. A person may not refuse to sell or rent, after the making of a bona fide offer, refuse  
20 to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or in any other manner make unavailable or  
21 deny a dwelling to an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, disability,  
22 age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public  
23 assistance.
- 24 2. A person may not discriminate against an individual in the terms, conditions, or  
25 privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling or in providing services or facilities in  
26 connection with a sale or rental of a dwelling because of race, color, religion, sex,  
27 disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or  
28 public assistance.
- 29 3. This section does not prohibit discrimination against an individual because the  
30 individual has been convicted under federal law or the law of any state of the illegal  
31 manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance.

1           **SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-03 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
2 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

3           **14-02.5-03. Publication.** A person may not make, print, or publish or effect the  
4 making, printing, or publishing of a notice, statement, or advertisement that is about the sale or  
5 rental of a dwelling and that indicates any preference, limitation, or discrimination or the  
6 intention to make a preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex,  
7 disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public  
8 assistance.

9           **SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-04 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
10 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

11           **14-02.5-04. Inspection.** A person may not represent to an individual because of race,  
12 color, religion, sex, disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to  
13 marriage or public assistance that a dwelling is not available for inspection for sale or rental  
14 when the dwelling is available for inspection.

15           **SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-05 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
16 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

17           **14-02.5-05. Entry into neighborhood.** A person may not, for profit, induce or attempt  
18 to induce another to sell or rent a dwelling by representations regarding the entry or prospective  
19 entry into a neighborhood of an individual of a particular race, color, religion, sex, disability,  
20 age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public assistance.

21           **SECTION 10. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-07 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
22 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

23           **14-02.5-07. Residential real estate-related transaction.** A person whose business  
24 includes engaging in residential real estate-related transactions may not discriminate against  
25 an individual in making a real estate-related transaction available or in the terms or conditions  
26 of a real estate-related transaction because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, familial  
27 status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public assistance. A residential real  
28 estate-related transaction is the selling, brokering, or appraising of residential real property or  
29 the making or purchasing of loans or the provision of other financial assistance to purchase,  
30 construct, improve, repair, maintain a dwelling, or to secure residential real estate. For the  
31 purposes of this section, a person is in the business of selling residential real property if within



1 the preceding twelve months, the person has participated as principal in three or more  
2 transactions involving the sale of any dwelling or any interest in a dwelling or has participated  
3 as agent, other than in the sale of the person's own personal residence, in providing sales  
4 facilities or sales services in two or more transactions involving the sale of any dwelling or any  
5 interest in a dwelling.

6 **SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-08 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
7 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **14-02.5-08. Brokerage services.** A person may not deny an individual access to, or  
9 membership or participation in, a multiple-listing service, real estate brokers' organization, or  
10 other service, organization, or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings, or  
11 discriminate against an individual in the terms or conditions of access, membership, or  
12 participation in the organization, service, or facility because of race, color, religion, sex,  
13 disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public  
14 assistance.

15 **SECTION 12. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-10 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
16 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

17 **14-02.5-10. Religious organization, private club, and appraisal exemption.**

- 18 1. This chapter does not prohibit a religious organization, association, or society or a  
19 nonprofit institution or organization operated, supervised, or controlled by or in  
20 conjunction with a religious organization, association, or society from limiting the  
21 sale, rental, or occupancy of dwellings that it owns or operates for other than a  
22 commercial purpose to individuals of the same religion or giving preference to  
23 persons of the same religion, unless membership in the religion is restricted  
24 because of race, color, or national origin.
- 25 2. This chapter does not prohibit a private club that is not in fact open to the public  
26 and that, as an incident to its primary purpose, provides lodging that it owns or  
27 operates for other than a commercial purpose from limiting the rental or occupancy  
28 of the lodging to its members or from giving preference to its members, unless  
29 membership in the club is restricted because of race, color, or national origin.
- 30 3. This chapter does not prohibit a person engaged in the business of furnishing  
31 appraisals of real property from considering in those appraisals factors other than

1 race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status  
2 with respect to marriage or public assistance.

3 **SECTION 13. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-02.5-45 of the 1999 Supplement to the North  
4 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

5 **14-02.5-45. Intimidation or interference - Penalty.**

6 1. A person commits an offense if the person, without regard to whether the person is  
7 acting under color of law, by force or threat of force, intentionally intimidates or  
8 interferes with an individual:

9 a. Because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, familial  
10 status, national origin, or status with respect to marriage or public assistance  
11 and because the individual is or has been selling, purchasing, renting,  
12 financing, occupying, or contracting or negotiating for the sale, purchase,  
13 rental, financing, or occupation of any dwelling or applying for or participating  
14 in a service, organization, or facility relating to the business of selling or  
15 renting dwellings; or

16 b. Because the individual is or has been or to intimidate the individual from  
17 participating, without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex,  
18 disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to  
19 marriage or public assistance, in an activity, service, organization, or facility  
20 described by subdivision a; affording another individual opportunity or  
21 protection to so participate; or lawfully aiding or encouraging other individuals  
22 to participate, without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex,  
23 disability, age, familial status, national origin, or status with respect to  
24 marriage or public assistance, in an activity, service, organization, or facility  
25 described in subdivision a.

26 2. It is a discriminatory practice to coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with any  
27 individual in the exercise or enjoyment of, or on account of the individual having  
28 exercised or enjoyed, or on account of the individual having aided or encouraged  
29 any other individual in the exercise or enjoyment of, any right granted or protected  
30 by this chapter.

31 3. An offense under subsection 1 of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

1           **SECTION 14. REPEAL.** Section 14-02.4-12.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
2 repealed.