

Chapter 64, FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PLAN
[HISTORY: Adopted by the City Council of the City of Binghamton 4-15-1985 by Ord. No. 37-85
(Ch. 5.5, §§ 5.5-16 through 5.5-21, of the 1970 Code). Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Discrimination against handicapped persons -- See Ch. 43.

§ 64-1. Program goals.

A. The goals of this chapter are:

(1) To assist minorities, elderly, and low- to middle-income individuals and families in obtaining suitable housing accommodations of their choice; and

(2) To reduce discrimination and complaints of discrimination in rentals, sales and financing of housing accommodations in the City of Binghamton based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin as prohibited by the 1968 Civil Rights Act (Title VIII) and any applicable state laws regarding discrimination.

B. The measurable objectives of the fair housing and equal opportunity program are designed to assist individuals and families in obtaining suitable housing accommodation, and to reduce discrimination and complaints of discrimination.

§ 64-2. Activities.

The City shall:

A. Placement. Provide, where possible, assistance in finding suitable rental or purchased housing by working with sellers, landlords and agents to actually place the individual or family in an acceptable apartment or home of their choice.

B. Listing service. Maintain a listing of agents, sellers, landlords and any available relocation services, which affords equal access to minorities, elderly, and low- to middle-income individuals and families.

C. Counseling. Counsel persons on the legal basis for open and fair housing opportunities, on the meaning of discrimination and how to recognize it, what to do if discrimination occurs, and the extent of available legal and administrative procedures for redress.

D. Public education. Educate residents of the City of Binghamton in Fair Housing Law, and other pertinent housing issues, through a program of general information, public speaking, public service announcements (PSAs), news letters and pamphlets; meet with the City's Division of Housing, Broome County Board of Realtors, Binghamton Public Housing Authority, local lending institutions, and other local groups concerned with housing, to define topics to be addressed through such public education.

E. Litigation. Forward to the appropriate office of the New York State Human Rights Commission and/or the United States Department of HUD cases of discriminatory selling or renting practices, including assisting parties in filling out and filing either HUD Form 903 or 903A, Housing Discrimination Complaint, and follow up to note and report on final dispositions.

F. Budget and credit management. Act as referral service to agencies involved in counseling and instruction in household and personal budgeting with particular emphasis upon undertaking and discharging indebtedness for housing; may include assistance in overcoming current or past credit difficulties.

G. Liaison. Establish liaison and working relationships with the County Board of Realtors, Binghamton Public Housing Authority, lending institutions with the City of Binghamton, community-based organizations, associations, and agencies with housing interest, code enforcement and other housing units of City government.

§ 64-3. Housing education and information.

Housing education will focus on the dissemination of the Fair Housing Law information, through public speaking, pamphlets, news letters, and public service announcements. The objectives are designed to aid and provide service to persons and families who lack the ability to fully articulate their needs and adequately accomplish their goal of adequate housing of their choice and also to recognize discrimination if it is present.

§ 64-4. Operation.

A. The Mayor of the City of Binghamton shall appoint a Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Officer whose duties shall include supervising the implementation of this chapter.

B. This officer shall meet with the Director of the Division of Housing and representatives of other housing assistance services to coordinate activities, and responsibilities of the fair housing and equal opportunity program.

C. The schedule for implementing this plan is outlined in the attached schedule for implementation, following this chapter.

§ 64-5. Evaluation.

The performance of the fair housing program will be evaluated on a periodic basis.

§ 64-6. Reporting.

A. The City of Binghamton Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Officer will submit some annual reports to the Mayor, including but not limited to:

- (1) Breakdown of work accomplished by activity set forth in § 64-2A through G.
- (2) Breakdown of funds expended by project activity set forth in § 64-2A through G.
- (3) Narrative summary of project activities with special attention to significant or unanticipated housing issues addressed.

B. In addition, the City of Binghamton Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Officer will submit to the Mayor and City Council an annual report, available as a public record, including:

- (1) Financial summary of program activity.
- (2) Narrative summary of accomplishments of program, including:
 - (a) Work completed;
 - (b) Ranking of problem issues;
 - (c) Attendance and minutes of specific meetings held with Broome County Board of Realtors, Binghamton Housing Authority, lending institutions within the City of Binghamton, community-based agencies involved with housing, code enforcement, and other housing units of City government, etc.

TENTATIVE TIME TABLE SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
CITY OF BINGHAMTON
FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PLAN

Event:

- A. City council adopts fair housing and equal opportunity plan.
- B. Mayor appoints fair housing officer.
- C. Fair housing officer develops work program.
- D. Fair housing officer coordinates fair housing activities with various groups in the community.
- E. Mayor appoints a fair housing technical advisory committee.
- F. Fair housing program under way.