



# City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall  
400 La Crosse Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

## Meeting Agenda

### Human Rights Commission

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Wednesday, November 13, 2024

5:15 PM

Grandad Room

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**Call to Order**

**Roll Call**

**Approval of Minutes**

**Notices and Discussion**

**Agenda Items:**

- 1      [24-0079](#)      Monthly Updates From REACH, DEI Committee, and Homelessness Coordinator  
**Attachments:** [Monthly Pathways Update](#)
  
- 2      [24-0797](#)      Discussion on outreach opportunities  
**Attachments:** [A Quick Guide to Renting in La Crosse \(English\)](#)
  
- 3      [22-1024](#)      Discussion on housing as a human right.  
**Attachments:** [The Right to Adequate Housing - Training Module](#)  
[What Does the 'Human Right to Adequate Housing' Mean?](#)  
[Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration](#)  
[Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunity for All](#)  
[City of Madison - Housing as a Human Right Resolution](#)
  
- 4      [23-1489](#)      Discussion on adding "homeless status" to protected classes.  
**Attachments:** [Municipal Code Reference on Human Rights Declaration of Policy](#)  
[Kevin Hundt Email - 7.9.2024](#)  
[Jessica Olson Email - 8.8.2024](#)  
[Draft Ordinance \(Nov 24\)](#)

**Next Meeting / Agenda Items**

**Adjournment**

*Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.*

**NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY**

*Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to [ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org](mailto:ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org), with as much advance notice as possible.*



# City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall  
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## Text File

File Number: 24-0079

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**Agenda Date:** 1/10/2024

**Version:** 1

**Status:** Agenda Ready

**In Control:** Human Rights Commission

**File Type:** Status Update

**Agenda Number:** 1



# City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall  
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## Text File

File Number: 24-0797

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**Agenda Date:** 6/12/2024

**Version:** 1

**Status:** Agenda Ready

**In Control:** Human Rights Commission

**File Type:** General Item

**Agenda Number:** 2



# City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall  
400 La Crosse Street  
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## Text File

File Number: 22-1024

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**Agenda Date:** 8/10/2022

**Version:** 1

**Status:** Agenda Ready

**In Control:** Human Rights Commission

**File Type:** General Item

**Agenda Number:** 3



# City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall  
400 La Crosse Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

## Text File

File Number: 23-1489

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**Agenda Date:** 12/13/2023

**Version:** 1

**Status:** Agenda Ready

**In Control:** Human Rights Commission

**File Type:** General Item

**Agenda Number:** 4

**Craig, Sondra**

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**From:** Kevin Hundt <kevinhundt0@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 9, 2024 8:16 PM  
**To:** ZZ City Clerk External  
**Subject:** 23-1489

**\*\*\* CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. **\*\*\***

Adding homelessness status to the list of housing discrimination classes is a good idea which should be done as soon as possible.

Kevin Hundt

From: J Olson <olsonapartments@gmail.com>  
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 10:06 PM  
To: Trane, Andrea <tranea@cityoflacrosse.org>  
Cc: Acklin, Tim <Acklint@cityoflacrosse.org>  
Subject: Legistar item 23-1489

Dear Planner Trane,

I am not sure which staff member is assigned to the Human Rights Committee, so I hope you will forward my brief comment.

If the City were to enact a provision amending local fair housing laws to include homelessness status as a protected class, the response from landlords would likely be to rely on income minimums and credit score as a surrogate to filtering out tenants with poor prospects of being successful tenants.

It feels very misguided (much like the disturbing experience I had having to deal with a misleading attorney from Wisconsin Legal Action and two tenant advocates in the room during mediation making it a 4 vs. 1 (me being the 1) scenario with my formerly homeless tenant). I have to wonder if going down this road of trying to make it illegal to require current landlord references, even if it is determined by the legal department to be somehow lawful under state law, may wind up hurting the people it's supposed to help. Especially if the impact will be a larger application fee to enable the landlord to run a credit report as a standard surrogate screening method. I think it is a lost cause to try to evade landlord screening as a solution to the current problems plaguing our community. Even if you manage to place someone in private housing, the first instance of problems will result in eviction action by the landlord. Two strikes and you're out.

You cannot force anyone into a long-term relationship with someone who is an unwilling partner.

Jessica



ORDINANCE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE to amend Sections 22-20, 22-22, 22-25(c), 22-26(2), 22-27 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse regarding the inclusion of homeless status as a protected class.

THE COMMON COUNCIL of the City of La Crosse do ordain as follows:

SECTION I: Section 22-20 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 22-20. – Definitions.

...

*Discriminate and discrimination* mean to segregate, separate, exclude or treat any person or class of persons unequally because of sex, race, color, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin or marital status of the person maintaining a household, familial status, lawful source of income, age or ancestry, physical appearance, domestic partners, political activities, homeless status, or student status. It is intended that the factors set forth herein shall be the sole basis for prohibiting discrimination.

SECTION II: Section 22-22 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 22-22. – Declaration of policy.

The practice of providing equal opportunities in housing, places of public accommodations and amusement, and City facilities without regard to sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, lawful source of income, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political activity, familial status, domestic partnership, or the fact that such person is a student as defined herein is a desirable goal of the City of La Crosse and a matter of legitimate concern to its government. Discrimination against any of La Crosse's citizens or visitors endangers the rights and privileges of all. Denial of equal opportunity in housing compels individuals and families who are discriminated against to live in dwellings below the standards to which they are entitled. Denial of equal opportunity in public accommodations subjects those discriminated against to embarrassment and creates distress and unrest within the community. Provision for adequate safeguards against such discrimination is a proper and necessary function of City government. In order that the peace, freedom, safety and general welfare of all inhabitants of the City may be protected and ensured, it is hereby declared to be the public policy of the City of La Crosse to foster and enforce to the fullest extent the protection by law of the rights of all of its inhabitants to equal opportunity to housing, the use of City facilities and places of public accommodations and amusement without regard to sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, lawful source of income, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political activity, familial status, domestic partnership, homeless status, or the fact that such person is a student as defined herein.

SECTION IV: Section 22-25(c) is hereby amended to read as follows:

(c) Representations designed to induce panic sales. No person may induce or attempt to induce any person to sell, rent or lease any dwelling by representations regarding the present or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of a particular sex, race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, domestic partnership status, lawful source of income, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs, familial status, student status, homeless status, or economic status, or by representations to the effect that such present or prospective entry will or may result in:

SECTION V: Section 22-26(2) is hereby amended to read as follows:

(2) For any person to directly or indirectly publish, circulate, display, or mail any written communication which s/he knows is to the effect that any of the facilities of any public place of accommodation or amusement will be denied to any person by reason of her/his sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, domestic partnership status, lawful source of income, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political activity, familial status, homeless status, or the fact that such person is a student as defined herein, or that the patronage of a person is unwelcome, objectionable or unacceptable for any of these reasons.

SECTION VI: Section 22-27 is hereby amended to read as follows:

It shall be an unfair discrimination practice and unlawful and hereby prohibited for any person, public official, employee, agent, agency, authority, board, commission or committee of the City of La Crosse to deny any person, the use of City facilities or otherwise discriminate against any person in the use of City facilities because of sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, domestic partnership status, lawful source of income, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political activity, familial status, homeless status, or the fact that such person is a student as defined herein.

SECTION VII: Should any portion of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this division shall not be affected.

SECTION VIII: This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

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Mitch Reynolds, Mayor

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Nikki M. Elsen, City Clerk

Passed:  
Approved:  
Published: