

ORDINANCE NO. 6695

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON, DIRECTING THE REVISION OF CITY ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS TO USE NON-GENDERED PRONOUNS AND AMENDING SECTION 1.04.020 OF THE AUBURN CITY CODE

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn has a long history of promoting equality and non-discrimination including but not limited to: provision of health care coverage to domestic partners (Ord. 6156); reaffirming its commitment to inclusiveness (Res. 5284); and adopting several provisions of the City's Personnel Policies; and,

WHEREAS, RCW 35.21.500(1) authorizes codification of ordinances, including but not limited to "...modernizing and clarifying the language of such ordinances, but without changing the meaning of any such ordinance;" and,

WHEREAS, City staff in recent years has been drafting ordinances and policies to be non-gendered where a specific gender is not necessary to the meaning of the ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, staff recommends updating existing code and policies where practicable to make pronouns non-gendered where appropriate.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON, DO ORDAIN as follows:

Section 1. It is the intent of the City Council that City documents, including but not limited to legislation and administrative policies, be written in a way that does not refer to gender unless it is necessary to do so in the context of the document. To the extent practicable, existing plans and policies should be rewritten when those plans or policies are updated.

Section 2. As provided for in RCW 35.21.500(1), staff is authorized and directed to have the City's published municipal code, as well as plans and administrative regulations, modernized by changing gendered pronouns to non-gendered terms when doing so does not change the meaning of the regulatory provision.

Section 3. Section 1.04.020 of the Auburn City Code is amended to read as follows:

1.04.020 Grammatical interpretation.

The following grammatical rules shall apply in the ordinances of the city:

A. ~~Gender. The masculine gender includes the feminine and neuter genders.~~

B. ~~Singular and Plural. The singular number includes the plural and the plural includes the singular.~~

~~C. Tenses. Words used in the present tense include the past and the future tenses and vice versa, unless manifestly inapplicable.~~

~~D. Use of Words and Phrases. Words and phrases not specifically defined shall be construed according to the context and approved usage of the language. (Ord. 6298 § 1, 2010; Ord. 2905 § 2, 1976.)~~

Section 4. Implementation. The Mayor is authorized to implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out the directions of this legislation.

Section 4. Severability. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance, or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 5. Effective date. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force five days from and after its passage, approval and publication as provided by law.

INTRODUCED: OCT 15 2018
PASSED: OCT 15 2018
APPROVED: OCT 15 2018

Nancy Backus
NANCY BACKUS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Shawn Campbell
Shawn Campbell, MMC, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Steven L. Gross
Steven L. Gross, City Attorney

Published: October 13, 2018 Seattle Times