

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 74

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 557, "FAIR HOUSING PRACTICE", SECTION 557.05(e) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF KENT TO AMEND THE QUORUM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the Kent City Council wishes to amend Chapter 557, "Fair Housing Practice", Section 557.05(e) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Kent to amend the quorum current requirement of five (5) members to be majority of four (4) members.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Kent, Portage County, Ohio:

SECTION 1. That Council does hereby accept the amendments to Chapter 557, "Fair Housing Practice", Section 557.05(e) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Kent, per the Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein.

SECTION 2. That it is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the adoption of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council and that all deliberations of this Council, and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3. That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and welfare of the residents of this City, for which reason and other reasons manifest to this Council this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force immediately after passage.

PASSED: August 19, 2026
Date

Jack Amrhein
Jack Amrhein
Mayor and President of Council

EFFECTIVE: August 19, 2026
Date

ATTEST: Kathleen Coleman
Kathleen Coleman
Clerk of Council

I, KATHLEEN COLEMAN, CLERK OF COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF KENT, COUNTY OF PORTAGE, AND STATE OF OHIO, AND IN WHOSE CUSTODY THE ORIGINAL FILES AND RECORDS OF SAID COUNCIL ARE REQUIRED TO BE KEPT BY THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF OHIO, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF ORDINANCE No. 2026-74, ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KENT ON August 19, 2026.

Kathleen Coleman
KATHLEEN COLEMAN
CLERK OF COUNCIL
(SEAL)

Fair Housing Practice

- 557.01 Designation of policy.**
- 557.02 Definitions.**
- 557.03 Unlawful housing practices.**
- 557.04 Posting of notices.**
- 557.05 Fair Housing Board.**
- 557.06 Procedures and enforcement.**
- 557.07 Scope of Chapter.**
- 557.08 Other legal action.**

CROSS REFERENCES

Unlawful discriminatory practices see Ohio R. C. 4112.02
Interfering with civil rights see GEN. OFF. 525.13

557.01 DESIGNATION OF POLICY.

It is hereby designated to be the policy of the City to do all of the things necessary and proper to secure for all its residents their right to equal housing opportunities regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability or national origin. (Ord. 2011-13, passed 02-16-11).

557.02 DEFINITIONS.

As used in this chapter:

- (a) "Real estate agent" means any real estate broker, real estate salesperson or an agent thereof, or any person, partnership, association or corporation who for consideration sells, purchases, exchanges, rents, negotiates, offers or attempts to negotiate the sale, purchase, exchange or rental of real property or holds himself out as engaged in the business of selling, purchasing, exchanging, renting or otherwise transferring any interest in real property.
- (b) "Board" means the Fair Housing Board created by this chapter.
- (c) "Director" means the Community Development Director of the City of Kent or his/her designee and staff.
- (d) "Discrimination", "discriminating" or "discriminate" means to render any difference in treatment to any person in the sale, lease, rental or financing of a dwelling or housing unit because of a person's race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability or national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- (e) "Housings" includes any building, facility or structure or portion thereof which is used or occupied or is intended, arranged or designed to be used or occupied as the home, residence or sleeping place of one or more persons, groups or families and any vacant land offered for sale for the construction or location thereof of such building, facility or structure.
- (f) "Lending institution" means any bank, building and loan association, savings and loan association, insurance company or other persons whose business consists in whole or in part in the lending of money or guaranteeing loans.
- (g) "Person" means one or more individuals, corporations, partnerships, associations, firms, or enterprises, labor organizations, legal representatives, mutual companies, joint stock companies, trusts, unincorporated organizations, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers and fiduciaries. (Ord. 2017-22, passed 4-19-17.)

557.03 UNLAWFUL HOUSING PRACTICES.

(a) It shall be an unlawful housing practice and a violation of this chapter: a) For any person or real estate agent:

- (1) To discriminate against any person in the selling, leasing, renting, assigning or otherwise transferring of any interest in housing.
- (2) To discriminate against any person by refusing to negotiate, refusing to transmit a bona fide offer, making false representations on the availability of the housing unit for inspection, sale or rental, or withdrawing from the market a housing unit which is for sale, lease, sublease or rental.
- (3) To include in the terms, conditions or privileges of any sale, lease, sublease, rental, assignment or other transfer of any housing, any clause, condition or restriction discriminating against any person the use or occupancy of such housing.
- (4) To discriminate in the furnishing of any housing facilities, repairs, improvements or services or in the terms, conditions, privileges or tenure of occupancy by any person of any housing covered by this chapter.

(b) For any lending institution:

- (1) To discriminate in lending money, guaranteeing loans, accepting a deed of trust or mortgage or otherwise making available funds for purchasing any housing or to discriminate against in the fixing of the amount, interest rate, duration or other terms, conditions or provisions of any such financial assistance.
- (2) To discriminate in the lending of money, guaranteeing loans, accepting a deed of trust or mortgage or otherwise making funds available on the basis of geographic location.

(c) For any person, real estate agent or lending institution, with respect to any prohibited act specified in this chapter, to publish, circulate or cause to be published or circulated any notice, statement listing or advertisement; to announce a policy or to make any record in connection with the prospective sale, lease, sublease, rental or financing of any housing which indicates reliance, determination or decision based on race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

(d) For any person or real estate agent to assist in, compel or coerce the doing of any act declared to be an unlawful housing practice under this chapter, or to obstruct or prevent endorsement or compliance with provisions of this chapter, or to attempt directly or indirectly to commit any act declared by this chapter to be an unlawful housing practice.

(e) For any person, real estate agent or lending institution:

- (1) To induce or attempt to induce the sale, transfer of interest or listing for sale of any housing by making representations regarding the existing or potential proximity of real property owned, used, or occupied by any person of any particular race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation by indirect or direct methods.
- (2) To make any representation to a prospective purchaser or lessee that any housing in a particular block, neighborhood or area may undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a change with respect to race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation of such block, neighborhood or area.
- (3) To induce or attempt to induce the sales or listing for sale of any housing by representing that the presence or anticipated presence of persons of any particular race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation in the block, neighborhood or area will or may result in:
 - A. The lowering of property values.
 - B. A change in the racial, color, religious, nationality or ethnic composition of the block, neighborhood or area in which the property is located.
 - C. An increase in criminal or antisocial behavior in the area.
 - D. A decline in the quality of the schools serving the area.

(f) For any person or real estate agent to cause, coerce or attempt to cause coercion against any person because such person has lawfully opposed any act or failure to act that is a violation of this chapter or has, in good faith, filed a complaint, testified, or prevented any person from complying with this chapter.

(g) To deny any person access to or membership 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 housing, or to discriminate against a person in the terms or conditions of such access, membership or participation.

(h) To do any other thing or engage in conduct which would otherwise make equal housing opportunities unavailable.

(Ord. 2017-22. passed 4-19-17.)

557.04 POSTING OF NOTICES.

Every real estate agent shall post in a conspicuous location in that portion of his/her place of business normally used by him/her for negotiating the terms of a sale or lease of housing, and each person who operates a multi unit residential building containing more than three (3) units shall post at all times when prospective tenants are being interviewed, in a conspicuous location in that portion of his/her housing business normally used by him/her for negotiating the rental of a housing unit therein, a notice which contains the following language printed in black on a light colored background, in not less than fourteen (14) point type:

"It is a violation of federal and State of Ohio fair housing laws, for any real estate agent or any person owning or managing a multi unit apartment dwelling to:

- (a) Deny housing to any person because of race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- (b) Discriminate against any person because of that person's race, color, sex, religion, military status, familial status, ancestry, disability or national origin in the terms, conditions or privileges of housing accommodations or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection therewith.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, CONTACT THE OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION OR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

Failure to comply with this section shall constitute a violation of this chapter.
(Ord. 2017-22, passed 4-19-17.)

557.05 FAIR HOUSING BOARD.

(a) The Fair Housing Board shall consist of seven (7) members, appointed by Council, who shall be qualified electors of the City. Board members shall not hold any elected public office at the municipal, county, state or federal level at any time while a member of the Board and shall not be employed by the City, but he/she may be employed by the county, State or federal government. Any duly appointed Board member who is a candidate for any public office shall be automatically disqualified from further membership on the Board. The day the Board member files petitions with the Portage County Board of Elections shall be the date of the disqualification.

(b) The Board members shall be appointed by Council with one member also being a member of the Kent Board of Health. Of the members first appointed, one shall hold office for a term of one (1) year; one for a term of two (2) years; and the other for a term of three (3) years; and their successors shall be appointed for terms of three (3) years. All vacancies shall be filled by appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(c) The Board shall elect one of its members as chairman and one as vice chairman. The chairman shall preside over all meetings and sign the minutes of all actions taken by the Board relating to fair housing. In the absence of the chairman, the vice chairman shall act as chairman.

(d) Council may remove a member of the Board from office by an affirmative vote of at least two thirds (2/3) of the Council only after having first given to such member a written copy of the charges against him/her and an opportunity to be publicly heard in person or by counsel in his/her own defense and any such removal shall be final.

(e) Five (5) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business thereof. A vacancy on the Board shall not impair the right of the other members to exercise all the power of the Board.

(f) Each member of the Board shall serve without salary.

(g) The Board is charged with the following responsibilities to implement the stated policy of this chapter:

- (1) To inform all persons bringing complaints to the Board of their right to seek criminal or civil relief through the courts.
- (2) May initiate or corroborate complaints of unlawful housing practices.
- (3) To refer any incidence of an alleged violation of fair housing law to the City of Kent designated fair housing provider agency for consideration and review. The Board may collaborate with the designated fair housing provider agency to facilitate a voluntary meeting between the person(s) reporting the alleged fair housing violation and the person(s) identified as the alleged violator(s) in an attempt to resolve the issue.
- (4) To ensure information concerning any housing discrimination complaints filed with the State of Ohio through the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and/or filed with the federal government through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are reported in the City of Kent Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report and make the report available to Council, the City Manager and the public on an annual basis.
- (5) To recommend to the City Manager, when it deems necessary, educational and other programs designed to promote the purpose stated in this chapter.

- (6) To adopt rules and procedures for the conduct of its business, and for the administration and enforcement of this chapter.
- (7) To do such other acts that are necessary and proper in order to perform.
(Ord. 2014-47. Passed 6-18-14.)

557.06 PROCEDURES AND ENFORCEMENT.

Those duties with which it is charged under the terms of this chapter, including reviewing and recommending actions needed to address perceived fair housing impediments included in the most current City of Kent Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice report.

Nothing shall prohibit the Board from consulting and meeting with real estate agents or representatives of lending institutions in matters regarding educational or other programs, to further the purpose of this chapter.

- (a) Any person subjected to an alleged unlawful housing practice and brings the allegation to the attention of the Board, shall be referred to the City of Kent's designated fair housing provider agency for consideration and review.
- (b) The Law Director is hereby authorized to pursue appropriate legal action for the enforcement of this chapter or other fair housing laws as necessary.
(Ord. 2011-13, passed 02-16-11)

557.07 SCOPE OF CHAPTER.

The provision of this chapter shall apply to all housing located within territorial limits of the City. (Ord. 2011-13, passed 02-16-11)

557.08 OTHER LEGAL ACTION.

Nothing contained in this chapter shall prevent any person from exercising any right or seeking any remedy to which he/she might otherwise be entitled or from filing any complaint with any other agency or court of law or equity (Ord. 2011-13, passed 02-16-11).
