

AFFA Press Release
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Charleston City Council Extends Nondiscrimination to Include Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

(Charleston SC) Today the Charleston City Council passed ordinances expanding the city's existing policy prohibiting discrimination in housing to include age, sexual orientation and gender identity. The council also passed a public accommodations ordinance prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The ordinances were presented to the mayor's office in August by members of Charleston's Alliance For Full Acceptance (AFFA), SC Stonewall Democrats, SC Log Cabin Republicans, American Civil Liberties Union and South Carolina Equality—who had successfully introduced similar ordinances in Columbia SC.

Charleston is the second municipality in the state to pass comprehensive human rights ordinances in housing and public accommodations that include sexual orientation and gender identity. Council Member Gary White said, "It's a step forward in the right direction in making sure that we are not discriminating against anyone."

"The passing of these ordinances is consonant with Charleston's historic reputation as one of America's friendliest cities and a place that is welcoming to all people," said Victoria Middleton, Executive Director of the ACLU South Carolina Office. "And they also affirm the constitutional principles shared by all Americans of non-discrimination and equality under the law."

Charleston joins a number of other cities in the south with comprehensive anti-discrimination ordinances including Charleston WV, New Orleans LA, Atlanta GA, Covington KY and Columbia SC .