

Profile

The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13) governs the City's use of the information contained in this application. Some of the information sought in this application is private data under the Act. The requested information will be used by the appointing authority to carry out the City's official appointment responsibilities. You are not required to provide any information. However, failure to answer the application questions may cause the appointing authority to reject your application. The majority of items contained in this application are public, including name, address, employment, skills, training and experience, and are therefore available to anyone requesting it. The remaining items on the application form are classified as private. The private data is available only to you and to other persons in the City who, because of work assignments, reasonably require access to the information.

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity: Submitted

Christopher _____ Smith _____
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Email Address

Select Your Ward

Ward 2

Select Your District

District 17 - Downtown

Street Address

City

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Suite or Apt

State

Postal Code

Interests & Experiences

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative _____
Employer

Congregational Organizer _____
Job Title

Why are you interested in serving on a board or committee?

As a resident, I am glad to see that our City has a Human Rights department to address discrimination and inequities. As an organizer that works directly with faith communities that are addressing homelessness, housing discrimination, and systematic racism, I've experienced first-hand how these barriers perpetuate white supremacy not only in Saint Paul, but throughout the state of Minnesota.

What skills/training or experience do you possess for the committee(s) for which you seek appointment?

I am currently pursuing a Master of Advocacy and Political Leadership at Metro State, much of my coursework entails developing and advocating for public policy. Moreover, I have more than a decade of experience of community involvement working on political and issue campaigns as well as serving on community committees.

Upload a Resume

Question applies to Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity

The Saint Paul HREEO Commission seeks candidates with strong community involvement experience. Briefly describe your background that relates to the purpose and work of the Human Rights Commission. Include details of work and involvement in human rights and all work that might contribute to the mission of the Human Rights Commission.

As a Saint Paul resident, I have been involved with local policy-making. I've helped organize a grassroots organization to advocate for the recently adopted Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) ordinance in the City of Saint Paul. The purpose of this ordinance will benefit all workers in the City, but more importantly will help the most marginalized groups. Single mothers from communities of color, disproportionately have more than one low-wage job that does not offer earned benefits such as paid-time-off to take care of their child when they are sick, and often have to choose whether to take care of their child or keep their job. Without ESST the cycle of women staying in abusive relationships and continuing the cycle of poverty through low-wage jobs. Through studying and advocating for equitable public policies, I believe I am a good fit for the Human Rights Commission.

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What do you see as crucial issues facing our community, and briefly explain why?

Through my public policy project in my Masters program, I am currently developing a city ordinance that will address gentrification for the City of Saint Paul. Much of my research was through the advice and expertise in Saint Paul's HREEO department. I believe affordable housing is the most crucial issue that faces our City. Nearly 100,000 households in the Twin Cities metro area pay more than half of their income. More than 20,000 of these families fall into homelessness each year. Gentrification will likely speed up the process where people will be "priced out" or forced out of their communities. A recent study from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the U of M, found that most of the communities of color in Saint Paul are currently going through gentrification or will be gentrified in the coming years.

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Please describe your present and past community involvement which are applicable such as voluntary, social, city, church, school, business, and professional. Include dates of involvement, and any offices or leadership positions held.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, Congregational Organizer, 2018 FairVote Minnesota, Board Member, 2017- Present Saint Paul DFL, At-Large Director, 2017 - Present TakeAction Minnesota, Political Committee Member, 2017 - Present Westminster Presbyterian Church, Board of Deacons, 2011 - 2014 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Community Partners Grants Committee, 2011 - 2014

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As part of your duties as a HREEO Commissioner you may be called to serve on a panel regarding fair housing issues. Please describe your experience, if any, working on fair housing issues? Note: lack of experience will not preclude applicants from serving.

I have not served on a panel regarding fair housing issues.

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List any skills, knowledge, or perspectives that would serve the Human Rights Commission's ability to meet its mission and further the work of its committees.

As a person of color and a resident, I could offer a perspective of equitable changes the City of Saint Paul would need to make in order to attract and retain people of color to our city. As an organizer, I am constantly hearing about concerns, fears, and anxieties, communities face, which would keep the commission abreast on emerging issues.

Demographics

Ethnicity

African American

Gender

Male

12/26/1972

Date of Birth