

by an employer, except that "employee" does not include any person elected to public office or any person chosen by the officer to be on the officer's personnel staff, or an appointee in the policy making level or an immediate advisor with respect to the exercise of the constitutional or legal powers of the office. The exception set forth in the preceding sentence does not include employees subject to the State or local civil service laws.

(f) The term "religion" includes all aspects of religious observances and practice, as well as belief, [unless an employer demonstrates that he is unable reasonably to accommodate to an employee's or prospective employee's religious observances or practice without] EXCEPT IN THOSE CASES WHEN THE OBSERVANCE, PRACTICE, OR BELIEF CANNOT BE REASONABLY ACCOMMODATED BY AN EMPLOYER WITHOUT CAUSING undue hardship on the conduct of the employer's business.

(g) The term "physical or mental handicap" means any physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement which is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness including epilepsy, and which shall include, but not be limited to, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment or physical reliance on a seeing eye dog, wheelchair, or other remedial appliance or device; and any mental impairment or deficiency as, but not limited to, retardation or such other which may have necessitated remedial or special education and related services.

[21] 19.

(a) It is the policy of the State of Maryland to provide for fair housing throughout the State of Maryland, to all its citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, or physical or mental handicap; and to that end to prohibit discriminatory practices with respect to residential housing by any person or group of persons, in order that the peace, health, safety, prosperity and general welfare of all the inhabitants of the State may be protected and insured. This law shall be deemed an exercise of the police power of the State of Maryland for the protection of the people of the State, and shall be administered and enforced by the State of Maryland Commission on Human Relations.

(b) For purposes of this subtitle:

(1) "Dwelling" means any building, structure, or portion thereof which is occupied as, or designed or intended for occupancy as a residence by one or more families, and any vacant land which is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure, or portion thereof.

(2) "Family" includes a single individual.