



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: WS 19-56, Version: 1

WORKSHOP ITEM - *Robert Fiske, Community Standards Director*

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION ORDINANCE (SOBER LIVING HOMES)

The Council has been reviewing a proposed reasonable accommodation ordinance that would create the process for a private provider to operate a single family home as a multi-person *sober living homes* consistent with the Fair Housing Amendment Act. The Act directs that individuals recovering from addiction are federally protected as a disability group and therefore should receive reasonable accommodations from cities for their lodging and addiction support. Blaine, like several other cities, defines “family” in City Code as not more than four (4) unrelated individuals; sober living home providers are requesting the ability to have more than four unrelated individuals in a home. As the Act requires cities to provide a process for these requests staff has drafted a proposed code amendment to the Rental Licensing program that would establish an application process with neighborhood notice and action by the City Council. Each license request would be evaluated based on outlined criteria and include written notice of a public hearing to all property owners within 350 feet of the property.

A question was raised at the last workshop regarding the ability to conduct background investigations on sober living home license applicants. While the Act does not allow for different requirements for sober living home license applicants than rental dwelling license applicants, the earlier addition that requires any provider to be a member of the Minnesota Association of Sober Homes may address this question as the organization promotes successful management of such residences through code of ethics criteria and standards of living verified through independent inspections. Staff is also recommending amendments to Section 18-509 relating to hearings for rental licensing actions to include hearings conducted by an independent hearing officer on behalf of the Council, similar to other license proceedings and consistent with sober living home recommendations.

Staff is bringing the item forward for Council input; first reading will be held later at the regular Council meeting.