

CHAPTER 256C

BLIND PERSONS

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256C.01 POSITION OF THE STATE WITH REGARD TO THE BLIND AND HANDICAPPED. The state of Minnesota shall encourage and enable the blind, the visually handicapped, and the otherwise physically disabled to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state and to engage in remunerative employment. The blind, the visually handicapped, and the otherwise physically disabled shall be employed by the state, its political subdivisions, the public schools, and in all other employment supported in whole or in part by public funds on the same terms and conditions as the able-bodied, unless it is shown that the particular disability prevents the performance of the work involved.

[1969 c 900 s 1; 1971 c 70 s 3]

256C.02 PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS. The blind, the visually handicapped, and the otherwise physically disabled have the same right as the able-bodied to the full and free use of the streets, highways, sidewalks, walkways, public buildings, public facilities, and other public places; and are entitled to full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of all common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles, railroad trains, motor buses, boats, or any other public conveyances or modes of transportation, hotels, lodging places, places of public accommodation, amusement, or resort, and other places to which the general public is invited, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons.

Every totally or partially blind person shall have the right to be accompanied by a guide dog in any of the places listed in section 327.095; provided that he shall be liable for any damage done to the premises or facilities by such dog.

[1969 c 900 s 2]

256C.025 HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS. Subdivision 1. Blind persons, visually handicapped persons, and other physically disabled persons shall be entitled to full and equal access, as other members of the general public, to all housing accommodations offered for rent, lease, or compensation, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons.

Subd. 2. "Housing accommodations" means any real property, 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 human beings, but shall not include any single family residence the occupants of which rent, lease, or furnish for compensation not more than one room therein.

Subd. 3. Nothing in this section shall require any person renting, leasing, or providing for compensation real property to modify his property in any way or provide a higher degree of care for a blind person, visually handicapped person, or other physically disabled person than for a person who is not physically disabled.

Subd. 4. Every totally or partially blind person who has a guide dog, or who obtains a guide dog, shall be entitled to full and equal access to all housing accommodations provided for in this section, and he shall not be required to pay extra compensation for such guide dog but shall be liable for any damage done to the premises by such guide dog.

[1971 c 70 s 1]

256C.03 BLIND PEDESTRIANS; CIVIL LIABILITY. The driver of a vehicle approaching a totally or partially blind pedestrian who is carrying a cane predominantly white or metallic in color, with or without a red tip, or using a guide dog shall bring such vehicle to a stop and give the right of way at any

intersection of any street, avenue, alley or other public highway to such blind pedestrian.

[1969 c 900 s 3; 1971 c 70 s 4]

256C.04 PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR. Each year, the governor may take suitable public notice of October 15 as white cane safety day. He may issue a proclamation in which:

- (a) he comments upon the significance of the white cane;
- (b) he calls upon the citizens of the state to observe the provisions of the white cane law and to take precautions necessary to the safety of the disabled;
- (c) he reminds the citizens of the state of the policies with respect to the disabled herein declared and urges the citizens to cooperate in giving effect to them;
- (d) he emphasizes the need of the citizens to be aware of the presence of disabled persons in the community and to keep safe and functional for the disabled the streets, highways, sidewalks, walkways, public buildings, public facilities, other public places, places of public accommodation, amusement and resort, and other places to which the public is invited, and to offer assistance to disabled persons upon appropriate occasions.

[1969 c 900 s 4]

256C.05 CRIMINAL PENALTY. Any person, or the agent of any person, firm, or corporation who denies or interferes with admittance to or enjoyment of the public facilities enumerated in section 256C.02 or housing accommodations contrary to section 256C.025, or otherwise interferes with the rights of a totally or partially blind or otherwise disabled person under section 256C.02 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

[1969 c 900 s 5; 1971 c 70 s 5]

256C.06 CITATION. Sections 256C.01 to 256C.06 shall be known and may be cited the "Minnesota White Cane Law".

[1969 c 900 s 6; 1971 c 70 s 6]