

3344

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

January 22, 2015

Introduced by M. of A. PEOPLES-STOKES -- read once and referred to the
Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to institution of court
actions under section 297 thereof

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 9 of section 297 of the executive law, as
2 amended by section 16 of part D of chapter 405 of the laws of 1999, is
3 amended to read as follows:
4 9. Any person claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory
5 practice shall have a cause of action in any court of appropriate juris-
6 diction for damages, including, in cases of housing discrimination only,
7 punitive damages, and such other remedies as may be appropriate, includ-
8 ing any civil fines and penalties provided in subdivision four of this
9 section, unless such person had filed a complaint [hereunder] PURSUANT
10 TO THIS SECTION or with any local commission on human rights, or with
11 the superintendent pursuant to the provisions of section two hundred
12 ninety-six-a of this [chapter,] ARTICLE; provided that, where the divi-
13 sion has dismissed such complaint on the grounds of administrative
14 convenience, on the grounds of untimeliness, or on the grounds that the
15 election of remedies is annulled, such person shall maintain all rights
16 to bring suit as if no complaint had been filed with the division AND
17 MAY BRING SUCH SUIT WITHIN THREE YEARS AFTER ANY SUCH DISMISSAL FOR
18 ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE. At any time prior to a hearing before a
19 hearing examiner, a person who has a complaint pending at the division
20 may request that the division dismiss the complaint and annul his or her
21 election of remedies so that the human rights law claim may be pursued
22 in court, and the division may, upon such request, dismiss the complaint
23 on the grounds that such person's election of an administrative remedy
24 is annulled. Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of section two hundred four
25 of the civil practice law and rules, if a complaint is so annulled by

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 the division, upon the request of the party bringing such complaint
2 before the division, such party's rights to bring such cause of action
3 before a court of appropriate jurisdiction shall be limited by the stat-
4 ute of limitations in effect in such court at the time the complaint was
5 initially filed with the division. Any party to a housing discrimination
6 complaint shall have the right, within twenty days following a determi-
7 nation of probable cause pursuant to subdivision two of this section, to
8 elect to have an action commenced in a civil court, and an attorney
9 representing the division of human rights [will] SHALL be appointed to
10 present the complaint in court[,] or, with the consent of the division,
11 the case may be presented by complainant's attorney. A complaint filed
12 by the equal employment opportunity commission to comply with the
13 requirements of 42 USC 2000e-5(c) and 42 USC 12117(a) and 29 USC 633(b)
14 shall not constitute the filing of a complaint within the meaning of
15 this subdivision. No person who has initiated any action in a court of
16 competent jurisdiction or who has an action pending before any adminis-
17 trative agency under any other law of the state based upon an act which
18 would be an unlawful discriminatory practice under this article[,] may
19 file a complaint with respect to the same grievance under this section
20 or under section two hundred ninety-six-a of this article.
21 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.