



Town of Arlington  
Office of the Town Manager

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Town Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 12, 2019  
TO: Board Members  
SUBJECT: Appointment to the Human Rights Commission

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This memo is to request the Board's approval of my appointment of Rajeev Soneja, Arlington, MA, to the Human Rights Commission, with a term expiration of 6/30/2022.

  
Town Manager

Rajeev Soneja

Arlington

September 24, 2019

**To,  
Christine Bongiorno,  
Director of Health and Human Services  
Arlington**

Ms Bongiorno,

I write to you with an intent to apply for the open position on Arlington's Human Rights Commission. I have attached my resume that lists my background as well as my life as a resident in this town.

I believe that my life experiences of having grown up in a diverse, cosmopolitan city with experiences of having lived in different countries provide my perspective and insight into the human conditions which may help address issues that arise due to prejudice and discrimination faced by marginalized people. As defined by the town's bylaw, these may be based upon but not limited to, their race, ethnicity, gender expression or identity, citizenship, age, ancestry, family/marital status, sexual orientation, disability, source of income, or military status.

As an immigrant to this country and naturalized citizen of the US, I have developed an understanding of how intricately a sense of an individual's identity and self-worth is connected to their connection to their fellow community members. If I can help address any issues that can resolve matters concerning bigotry or intolerance, I would consider myself very fortunate and capable to do so. Please accept this letter as a consideration for this position.

Thank you.  
Sincerely  
-Rajeev Soneja

# Rajeev Soneja

## Arlington MA

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### **About Me**

I work as a software engineer for a global financial services company headquartered in New York City. I have been employed at this firm for 21 years, since my arrival in the US in 1998. My prior professional experience includes working for a British telecommunications firm in the United Kingdom for 3 years, and marketing and software companies in India after graduation. I speak 3 languages – Hindi, Sindhi and English with a passing understanding of Marathi.

### **Background**

I completed my bachelor's degree in Industrial Electronics from PVPIT, Sangli in the state of Maharashtra in India. My early schooling was in my hometown Bombay, now called Mumbai, in Maharashtra. India is the world's largest democracy, comprising of many differing cultures, religions, ethnic backgrounds and indigenous communities. All these communities are well-represented in my hometown of Bombay. I attended a college that allowed me to room and study with people from all parts of the country with differing socio-economic backgrounds. This enabled me to develop a perspective that is accommodating to and empathetic for diverse opinions and viewpoints.

### **Residency in Arlington**

I have been a resident of Arlington since 2005, having become a homeowner in East Arlington with my spouse. I have a child who has been part of the Arlington public school system for the past 7 years and our family has formed roots and thrived in this community. I have involved myself within the community, volunteering for school activities at the elementary school level. Over the past 4 years, I have been a coach of teams at the Arlington soccer club, allowing me to make connections with children and parents across the different parts of the town. In the past year I have also been very involved with the Envision Arlington's Diversity Task Group - a very active and vibrant group that has enabled me to learn about various issues related to diversity and how best to help develop a resilient and diverse community. I have also been part of setting up the nascent Diversity and Inclusion parent groups at the various schools and with them helped organize a very well received event at Brackett elementary to help courageous conversations about race with children.

OFFICE OF THE SELECT BOARD

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TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
MASSACHUSETTS 02476-4908

November 4, 2019

Rajeev Soneja

Arlington, MA 02474

Re: Appointment: Human Rights Commission

Dear Rajeev:

As a matter of the standard appointment procedure, the Select Board requests that you attend a meeting of the Select Board at Town Hall, Select Board Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 730 Massachusetts Avenue, on Monday, November 18th at 7:15 p.m.

It is a requirement of the Select Board that you be present at this meeting. Your presence will give the Board an opportunity to meet and discuss matters with you about the area of activity in which you will be involved.

Please contact this office to confirm the date and time with Fran, Ashley or Lauren at the above number.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,  
SELECT BOARD

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie A. Krepelka".

Marie A. Krepelka  
Board Administrator

MAK:ls