

Jim Crow Laws: Alabama

[Close](#)

Enacted 27 Jim Crow segregation laws between 1865 and 1965: including six each against miscegenation and desegregated schools. A 1915 health care segregation law prevented white nurses from caring for black male patients. Unlike other former Confederacy states, no laws were enacted during the Reconstruction period barring segregation. Miscegenation violations carried the harshest penalties. Violators could be sentenced to the penitentiary for two to seven years of hard labor. After the Brown decision, six segregation laws were passed, including a Birmingham city ordinance requiring segregated public accommodations and recreational areas.

1865: Miscegenation [Constitution]

Stated that it was the duty of the general assembly to periodically enact laws prohibiting intermarriage between whites and blacks, or with persons of mixed blood, and to establish penalties.

1865: Miscegenation [Constitution]

Stated that it was the duty of the general assembly to periodically enact laws prohibiting intermarriage between whites and blacks, or with persons of mixed blood, and to establish penalties.

1867: Miscegenation [State Code]

Set penalties for intermarriage and cohabitation between blacks and whites. Penalties: Confinement in the penitentiary at hard labor between two and seven years. Those who issued the license or performed such a ceremony could be fined from \$100 to \$1,000, or imprisoned for six months, or both.

1875: Education [Constitution]

Separate schools to be provided for the children of citizens of African descent

1878: Education [Statute]

Repeated separate school requirement of 1875 Constitution.

1891: Railroads [Statute]

Railroads to provide equal but separate accommodations for the white and colored races, providing two or more passenger cars for each passenger train, or by dividing the passenger cars by partitions so as to create separate accommodations. Conductors were given authority to assign passengers to the proper car. Law did not apply to white or colored passengers entering the state upon railroads who purchased their tickets in another state where a similar law was not in force. Penalties: Persons who attempted to ride in the wrong railroad car would be fined \$100. Railroad companies that failed to enforce the law would be fined up to \$500; conductors could be fined as much as \$100.

1901: Miscegenation [Constitution]

Declared that the legislature could never pass any law authorizing or legalizing "any marriage between any white person and a Negro, or descendant of a Negro."

1901: Education [Constitution]

Separate schools to be provided for white and colored children. No child of either race to be permitted to attend a school of the other race.

1907: Miscegenation [State Code]

Restated 1867 constitutional provision prohibiting intermarriage and cohabitation between whites and blacks. Penalties remained the same. A political code adopted in the same year defined the term "Negro" to include "mulatto," which was noted as "persons of mixed blood descended from a father or mother from Negro ancestors, to the fifth generation inclusive, though one ancestor of each generation may have been a white person." Note: This code added two additional generations to the original 1867 definition of what constituted a "Negro" person.

1911: Jails [Statute]

Unlawful for any sheriff or jailer "to confine in the same room or apartment of any jail or prison white and Negro prisoners."

1915: Health Care [Statute]

White female nurses were prohibited from caring for black male patients.

1927: Education [State Code]

All schools to be segregated by race.

1928: Miscegenation [State Code]

Miscegenation declared a felony.

1928: Race classification [State Code]

Classified all persons with any Negro blood as colored.

1928: Public accommodations [State Code]

Forbid the use by members of either race of toilet facilities in hotels and restaurants which were furnished to accommodate persons of the other race.

1940: Miscegenation [State Code]

Prohibited intermarriage and cohabitation between whites and blacks or the descendant of any Negro. Penalty: Imprisonment in the penitentiary for two to seven years. Ministers and justices of the peace faced fines between \$100 and \$1,000 and could be imprisoned in the county jail for up to six months.

1940: Prisons [State Code]

Unlawful to chain together white and black convicts or allow them to sleep together.

1940: Railroads [State Code]

Code commanded that separate waiting rooms be provided for blacks and whites as well as equal but separate accommodations on railroad cars. Did not apply to passengers entering Alabama from another state that did not have similar laws.

1940: Education [State Code]

County Boards of Education to provide free separate schools for white and colored children.

1945: Public Carriers [Statute]

Required separate waiting rooms and ticket windows for the white and colored races as well as separate seating on buses. Penalty: Misdemeanor carrying a fine of \$500.

1945: Voting Rights [Constitution]

Established voting qualifications to include being able to read and write, understand and explain any article of the U.S. Constitution. Elector had to be employed for the greater part of the 12 months preceding registration.

1955: Public Carrier [Statute]

Called for segregation on public transportation.

1956: Public accommodation [City Ordinance]

The city of Huntsville, Ala., passed a municipal ordinance that set aside one day a week when Negroes could use the municipal golf course.

1956: Recreation [City Council Resolution]

The Huntsville, Ala., City Council passed a resolution that made it unlawful for white and blacks to play cards, dice, dominoes, checkers, pool, billiards, softball, basketball, baseball, football, golf, or track together. Also applied to swimming pools and beaches.

1956: Public Carriers [City Ordinance]

Birmingham, Ala., acted to "reaffirm, reenact and continue in full force and effect" ordinances which prescribed segregated seating on city buses to prevent "incidents, tensions and disorder."

1957: Education [State Code]

No child compelled to attend schools that are racially mixed.

1957: Public accommodations and recreation [State Code]

Political subdivisions may alienate recreational facilities if approved by referendum.

1963: Public accommodations and recreation [City Ordinance]

Repeated portions of Birmingham's city code which had prohibited interracial recreation and had required separation of the races in restaurants and places of entertainment, and separate bathrooms for black and white employees.