

NOTICE OF CHANGES TO ALBERTA'S HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION



The Government of Alberta has amended the province's human rights legislation. Here are some of the changes that are effective as of October 1, 2009:

1. Alberta's human rights legislation is now named *Alberta Human Rights Act*.
2. Alberta Human Rights Commission is the new name of the commission.
3. Effective October 1, 2009, sexual orientation is written in as a protected ground under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. Between April 2, 1998 and October 1, 2009, sexual orientation had been "read in" as a protected ground under Alberta's human rights legislation.
4. The definition of marital status is now "the state of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated or living with a person in a conjugal relationship outside marriage." Previously, the word "state" was "status," and the word "person" was followed by "of the opposite sex."
5. The Chief Commissioner is now called the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals.
6. Human rights panels are now called human rights tribunals.

One amendment will take effect on September 1, 2010. It requires school boards to provide notice to parents or guardians of students in certain teaching situations involving subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation. On written request from a parent or guardian, it also requires a teacher to exclude a student from certain teaching situations involving this subject matter.

The Alberta Human Rights Commission has developed an information sheet titled *Amendments to Alberta's human rights legislation*, which offers a more detailed list of the changes. You can access the information sheet through the "Human rights legislation amendments" quick link at www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca. You can also request a copy of the information sheet from the Commission. See page 2 for contact information.

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is in the process of updating its publications and website to reflect the amendments to the legislation. In the meantime, if you are reading a Commission publication dated before October 1, 2009, please note that the amendments have not yet been incorporated into the publication. If you are visiting the Commission website, you will see a "date created" or "date revised" notation at the bottom of any pages created or revised on or after October 1, 2009. If a page does not have a notation, it has not been updated to reflect the amendments.

Contact us

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is an independent commission of the Government of Alberta. Our mandate is to foster equality and reduce discrimination. We provide public information and education programs, and help Albertans resolve human rights complaints.

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To call toll-free within Alberta, dial 310-0000 and then enter the area code and phone number.

For province-wide free access from a cellular phone, enter *310 (for Rogers Wireless) or #310 (for Telus and Bell), followed by the area code and phone number. Public and government callers can phone without paying long distance or airtime charges.

TTY service for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

780-427-1597 Edmonton

403-297-5639 Calgary

Toll-free within Alberta 1-800-232-7215

E-mail humanrights@gov.ab.ca

Website www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca

Please note: A complaint must be made to the Alberta Human Rights Commission within one year after the alleged incident of discrimination. The one-year period starts the day after the date on which the incident occurred. For help calculating the one-year period, contact the Commission.

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Upon request, the Commission will make this publication available in accessible multiple formats. Multiple formats provide access for people with disabilities who do not read conventional print.