



## Promoting & Protecting Human Rights

**The Yukon Human Rights Commission promotes human rights in the Yukon Territory and investigates cases of discrimination under the Human Rights Act. It is independent of government and works to resolve complaints in a way that improves human rights for all Yukoners.**

### Yukon Human Rights Commission

101-9010 Quartz Road  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2Z5

Phone: 867-667-6226

Toll Free: 800-661-0535

Fax: 867-667-2662

e-mail: [humanrights@yhrc.yk.ca](mailto:humanrights@yhrc.yk.ca)

[www.yhrc.yk.ca](http://www.yhrc.yk.ca)

**Large-print version available**

"Going to Potlatch" courtesy Jim Logan

### Yukon Human Rights Commission



**Human Rights are everyone's rights!**

## The Yukon Human Rights Commission

### Who We Are

The Yukon Human Rights Commission was established in 1987 to administer the Yukon *Human Rights Act*. Independent of government, the Commission is made up of three to five volunteers appointed by the territorial legislature. The Commission's five-person staff handles inquiries on human rights issues in general and deals with complaints of discrimination. Staff also provide training and educational resources to schools, the public, community groups, and employers.

### The Role of the Commission

A key mandate of the Commission is to resolve situations of discrimination. Staff review, investigate, and look for ways to resolve complaints. If the complaint can't be resolved by staff, the Commissioners will either dismiss it, refer it for settlement, or send it to the Human Rights Board of Adjudication for hearing.

The Commission is also responsible for promoting human rights awareness, including educational activities and work with employers and community groups.

### Human Rights Complaints

A person who believes they have experienced discrimination under the Yukon *Human Rights Act* may discuss the matter confidentially with Commission staff. If the matter is outside our jurisdiction, we may be able to refer the inquirer to another appropriate body. We will also do what we can to support informal resolution of the problem. We may also accept and process a formal human rights complaint, which must be made within six months from when the discrimination occurred.

### For more information...

Contact us for more information on your rights and responsibilities under the *Human Rights Act*. Detailed fact sheets are available on many issues mentioned in this pamphlet. If you feel you have experienced discrimination, we can provide information on your rights and help you access the complaint process. If you are an employer seeking to make your workplace discrimination-free, we can advise you on effective policies and practices. Or if you are looking for more information in general on human rights, call us, drop in at our office, or visit our website.

# Human Rights in the Yukon



## ***If I've been discriminated against, what can I do?***

If you feel that you have experienced discrimination covered by the Yukon *Human Rights Act*, you may file a complaint. Contact us for a confidential interview; Commission staff will help you review your options.

## ***I'm an employer; what are my obligations?***

Employers have a variety of rights and responsibilities in making sure human rights are respected in the workplace. We can help with information on matters such as hiring, personnel policies, and accommodating employees with disabilities.

## ***How much does it cost?***

There is no charge for any of our services.

## ***What else does the Commission do?***

Contact us about the training and educational resources we offer schools, the public, community groups, and employers.

## **The Human Rights Act**

Since 1987, the Yukon *Human Rights Act* has been working to promote and protect human rights in the Territory. The *Act's* Bill of Rights enshrines basic freedoms for all Yukoners and establishes the Human Rights Commission to investigate and resolve discrimination complaints. Recognizing the need for human rights awareness, the *Act* also charges the Commission with promoting education and research designed to eliminate discrimination.

## **What the Act covers**

The *Act* prohibits discrimination in the areas of employment, public services, membership in unions and other occupational groups, tenancy, and public contracts. Covered by the *Act* are any such activities which come under territorial jurisdiction. This includes most employment situations and public services in the Territory. However, activities regulated by federal law such as broadcasting and employment with the Government of Canada are covered by the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

## **Prohibited Grounds**

In the Yukon, it's illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of several

grounds specified in the *Act*:

- Ancestry, including colour or race
- National origin
- Ethnic or linguistic background/origin
- Religion or creed
- Age
- Sex, including pregnancy
- Sexual orientation
- Physical or mental disability
- Criminal charges or criminal record
- Political belief, association, or activity
- Marital or family status
- Source of income
- Actual or presumed association with any of the grounds listed above.

## **What is Discrimination?**

It's illegal to treat individuals or groups differently on the basis of one of the *Act's* prohibited grounds. Refusing to promote an employee because of his or her nationality is an example of this kind of *direct* dis-

crimination. But also illegal are practices which in effect discriminate against a disadvantaged group. Called *systemic* or *adverse effect* discrimination, such practices might include job requirements that effectively eliminate all female applicants.

Harassment based on any of the prohibited grounds is also considered discrimination.

## **Exceptions**

Some practices that would otherwise be discriminatory are specifically excluded by the *Act*. These include membership in some types of organizations, and situations where there is reasonable cause for treating some individuals differently. Also excluded are affirmative action and special programs designed specifically to reduce or prevent the disadvantage suffered by groups covered by the *Act's* prohibited grounds.

YUKON  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

101-9010 Quartz Road  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2Z5

Phone: 867-667-6226  
Toll Free: 800-661-0535  
Fax: 867-667-2662  
e-mail: [humanrights@yhrc.yk.ca](mailto:humanrights@yhrc.yk.ca)  
[www.yhrc.yk.ca](http://www.yhrc.yk.ca)

