



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Newfoundland and Labrador

Activity Plan 2017-20



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www.thinkhumanrights.ca

Message from the Vice-Chair

As Vice-Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, I am pleased to present the 2017-20 Activity Plan of the Human Rights Commission.

The Human Rights Commission is categorized as a Category 3 government entity and, as such, must prepare an activity plan taking into consideration the strategic directions of the Provincial Government as communicated by the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. Those strategic directions have been taken into account.

In the absence of a Chairperson at this time, I, as Vice-Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, accept accountability for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives on behalf of the entire Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kim Mackay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kim Mackay
Vice-Chair of the Human Rights Commission

Overview

The Human Rights Commission (Commission) was established by legislation in 1971. The Commission is responsible for promoting an understanding of, acceptance of, and compliance with the provisions of the *Human Rights Act, 2010* (the Act). The Lieutenant-Governor in Council appoints commissioners, one of whom serves as Chairperson, and another who serves as Vice-Chairperson. At March 31, 2017, the Commission members were:

Kim Mackay (Vice-Chair)
Christopher Sheppard
Ray Mclsaac
John Walsh
Darlene Didham
Paul Pike
Smita Joshi

The Act makes the recognition of the inherent dignity and worth of all people, and the provision of equal rights and opportunities without discrimination, a matter of public policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Act aims to create a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community.

The Commission receives and investigates complaints of alleged discrimination or harassment under the jurisdiction of the Act. Where appropriate, the Commission tries to assist the parties in resolving their own complaint. The Commission also provides human rights information to the general public and conducts public education sessions designed to eliminate discriminatory practices.

As described in the *Estimates of the Program Expenditure and Revenue of the Consolidated Revenue Fund 2017-18*, the Human Rights Commission operates with a budget of \$825,500.

You can contact the Commission at the following:

Address: 2nd Floor, Beothuck Building
20 Crosbie Place, St. John's, NL A1B 3Y8

Phone: (709) 729-2709 or 1-800-563-5808

Email: humanrights@gov.nl.ca

Website: thinkhumanrights.ca

Twitter: @nlhumanrights using the hashtag #nlrights

Issues

The Commission continues to focus on enhancements to activities related to its core mandate: public education designed to prevent discrimination and harassment and resolving human rights complaints.

Issue 1: Public Education and Awareness

In the last planning cycle, the Commission implemented a Human Rights Award, developed a new branding logo, and began revisions to its website, which will be live in fiscal year 2017-18.

During the next three years, the Commission will focus on its strengthening its social media presence, expanding its community outreach activities and increasing access to human rights public education and awareness opportunities. The Commission currently offers free public education presentations to employers, service providers and community groups on a variety of topics. Commission employees will continue to take a proactive approach to delivering public education and awareness opportunities. The Commission will also continue to build on its community outreach activities, which will include engaging employers to avail of human rights education and awareness.

Goal # 1:	By March 31, 2020, the Human Rights Commission will have enhanced its public education and awareness activities.
Indicators:	Work towards enhancing public education and awareness activities begun
	Work towards enhancing its public education and awareness activities continued
	Progress towards enhancing public education and awareness activities assessed

Objective 1.1:	By March 31, 2018, the Human Rights Commission will have begun work towards enhancing its public education and awareness activities.
Indicators:	New website launched
	Public education and awareness activities delivered
	Community outreach activities completed

Objective 1.2:	By March 31, 2019, the Human Rights Commission will have continued work towards enhancing its public education and awareness activities.
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Objective 1.3:	By March 31, 2020, the Human Rights Commission will have assessed its progress towards enhancing public education and awareness activities.
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Issue 2: Resolving Human Rights Complaints

Over the last planning cycle, the Commission implemented: a Voluntary Resolution Process (VRP) and Commission Directed Mediation (CDM); a new intake process; case assessment plans; streamlined investigations; and, revised form letters to ensure plain language.

Over the next three years, the Commission will implement a new case management system. This will enable the generation of more timely statistics and provide the functionality to identify trends in human rights in the province. It will also provide data that will enable the identification of areas requiring improvements within the case management process. Additionally, the current information management system (TRIM) will be reviewed and updated to reflect changes in the case management process.

Once the case management system has been implemented, the Commission will be better positioned to review the Act to determine if legislative changes are required to improve information availability and efficiencies.

Goal # 2:	By March 31, 2020 the Human Rights Commission will have enhanced the case resolution process.
Indicators:	New Case Management/Information Management system implemented
	<i>Human Rights Act, 2010</i> reviewed for possible amendments
	Information available through the new case management system analyzed to ensure it is meeting the data and information needs of the commission
Objective 2.1:	By March 31, 2018, the Human Rights Commission will have implemented a new Case Management/Information Management system.
Indicators:	Case management system developed
	Case management system tested
	Case management system operationalized
Objective 2.2:	By March 31, 2019, the Human Rights Commission will have researched human rights legislative frameworks and practices in other jurisdictions to inform its work.
Objective 2.3:	By March 31, 2020, the Human Rights Commission will have analyzed information available through the new case management system to ensure it is meeting the data and information needs of the Commission.



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Further information or assistance may be obtained by contacting:

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