

References:



Rights and safeguards: A guide for self-advocates, Community Living BC.

Canadian charter of rights and freedoms. Plain language version. Found at: <http://www.efc.ca/pages/law/charter/charter.text.html>

Human rights program: Your guide to the Canadian charter of rights and freedoms. Found at: http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/pdp-hrp/canada/guide/index_e.cfm

Human right in british columbia. BC Ministry of Attorney General. Found at: www.ag.gov.bc.ca/human-rights-protection/pdfs/Harassment.pdf

10 steps to being an effective advocate. Found at: <http://www.advocacyla.org>

Policy manual. Community Connections Support Services.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to the people served by Community Connections and to their support workers and home share providers who contributed to the development of this booklet.

If, reading this, you found it helpful, please feel free to share it with others. If you have any suggestions for future editions, please contact Brian at Community Connections Support Services.

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2018.02.28
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Community Connections Support Services

275 Rutland Road North
Kelowna, BC V1X 3B1
t: 250.491.2907
f: 250.491.2920

15B View Street
Nelson, BC V1L 2T9
e: mail@commconn.ca
w: <https://commconn.ca>

RPO PO Box 20004
Tamarack Mall
Cranbrook, BC V1C 6K5
toll free: 1-888-491-2907



Your Rights and Responsibilities



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Your Rights...

We put together this package to describe your rights. Your rights as a person in Canada, your rights as a person in BC, your rights as a person who uses the services of Community Living BC (CLBC) and your rights as a person who uses the services of our agency, Community Connections Support Services. We have borrowed directly from information from the governments of Canada and BC as well as



CLBC to put this brochure together and can get you original copies of the things we have used. If you have any questions about this information, please get in touch with one of the support workers at Community Connections. It is our job to help you understand your rights.

Did you know?

You have rights in CANADA.

As a citizen of Canada, you have the same fundamental freedoms and rights that every Canadian has. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter) guarantees these to you.

Every Canadian has the following freedoms:

1. Freedom of conscience and religion: the freedom to believe in what you want to believe in.
2. Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression: the freedom to think and feel the things you want to and the ability to express those thoughts and beliefs to others.
3. Freedom of peaceful assembly: this is the freedom to gather and express your thoughts and feelings about those things that matter to you.
4. Freedom of association: this is the freedom to join groups and associate yourself with others.

More information about your rights / Important contacts:

BC Human Rights Tribunal
Suite 1170 - 605 Robson St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3
Phone: 604 775-2000
Toll Free (in B.C.): 1 888 440-8844
TTY (for hearing impaired): 604 775-2021
Web: www.bchrt.gov.bc.ca

University of Victoria Law Centre
Third Floor 1221 Broad St.
Victoria, BC V8W 2A4
Phone: 250 385-1221
Toll Free: 1 866 385-1221
E-mail: reception@thelawcentre.ca

Community Living BC (CLBC)
7th Floor, Airport Square
1200 West 73rd Ave.
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5
Web: www.communitylivingbc.ca

BC Human Rights Coalition
Suite 1202 - 510 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8
Phone: 604 689-8474
Toll Free: 1 877 689-8474
Web: www.bchrcoalition.org

Ministry of Attorney General
Strategic Planning and Legislation Office
11th Floor 1001 Douglas St.
PO BOX 9286 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9J7
Phone: 250 356-9666
TTY: Please call Enquiry BC: 1 800 661-8773
Web: www.ag.gov.bc.ca/human-rights-protection

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Did you know?

Having rights also means having responsibilities.

We need to be able to work together to provide you with the services that best fit your life and meet your needs. Sometimes, the services that you receive through our contracts with CLBC can be very expensive. Therefore, it is important for us to be working together to make the most of the opportunity that has been provided to us.

Our part of this arrangement is to make sure that we show up on time, help you achieve your goals and work as hard as we can in your best interest respecting your rights as outlined in this booklet.

However, it is very important that you follow through on your agreements with us as well. Here are some examples of things to think about:

- If you can't make an appointment because you are feeling unwell please call us as soon as you can to let us know that you won't be able to make it.
- Please make sure that you have what you need to participate in an event (proper I.D., enough money, transportation) before you commit to going.
- If you have agreed to pay rent, utilities and a portion of the expenses in the place you are living, make sure that you follow through on that commitment.
- If you have agreed to give notice before you change your living situation or your services, it is important that you honour your commitment before making those changes.
- Please respect that others participating in our services have the same rights as you do

Your support worker or home share provider will be able to help you work through these challenges if you need help. Please contact us if you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities as they relate to your relationship with our agency and with members of the community in which you live.

As a Canadian, the Charter also gives you democratic, mobility, legal, equality and language rights in Canada.

- **Democratic Rights:**

You have the right to vote for members of the House of Commons (Canadian federal government) and be a member if you chose to and were successfully elected.

- **Mobility Rights:**

You have a right to enter, stay in and leave Canada

- You can live in and move between any province and;
- you can pursue work in other areas of the country



- **Legal Rights:**

You have many legal rights in Canada, including:

- Life, liberty and security of person
- Search or seizure:
You are protected against unreasonable search or seizure
- Detention or imprisonment:
You can not be held against your will without a legal reason
- Proceedings in criminal matters:
You have the right to be fairly treated in dealings with the law and be supported through the criminal justice process
- Treatment or punishment:
Everyone has the right to not be subjected to any cruel and unusual treatment or punishment



- **Equality Rights:**

The Charter guarantees that all Canadians are equal under the law.

- Everyone has equal protection and benefit regardless of their race, national or ethnic background, colour, religion, gender or mental or physical disability.
- No one can discriminate against other Canadians based on their race, origin, colour, religion, gender or mental or physical disability.

- **Language Rights:**

Every Canadian has the right to have representation in Canadian government matters in either of the two official languages of Canada; English or French.

Did you know? You have rights in BC.

You have rights everywhere in the Province of British Columbia as one of its citizens:

The BC Human Rights Code applies to all businesses, agencies, and services in BC, except those controlled by the Government of Canada. It protects people from discrimination in public situations. This means schools, workplaces, universities, hospitals, medical clinics, stores, restaurants, provincial and local government offices, and transit services (buses and handi-dart). It also protects people against discrimination in printed publications and in areas such as employment, renting your home, and the purchase of property.



British Columbia's Human Rights Code protects you from being treated differently and poorly because you may have a disability. People are even protected if someone treats them differently and poorly because they *think* the person has a disability, even though they do not.



We all need to respect each other's human rights. The BC Human Rights Code is an important law that protects people from discrimination and harassment. The Code lets a person or group to file a complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal if they believe

they have been discriminated against or harassed, and protects them from retaliation if they make a complaint.

WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

A disability is a condition that limits a person's senses or activities. It may be physical or mental, visible or invisible, temporary or permanent.

DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

The Code makes it illegal for employers to advertise a job in a way that discriminates against someone because they have a disability. Employers aren't allowed to deny someone a job because of their disability if the person is able to do the job.

They also can't pay someone a different wage than others doing the same job because the person has a disability. They also aren't allowed to fire or lay off a person because of their disability, unless the person can no longer do the job.



- **Decide what you need:**
Think about what you need such as money, services or equipment.
- **Know your rights:**
Get information from advocacy organizations and community groups regarding your rights. Ask about relevant policies, procedures and laws.
- **Use good communication skills:**
Stay calm and express yourself clearly. Be a good listener. What you hear may be as important as what you say.
- **Keep a log:**
Make notes, including the name, title, and telephone number of each person you speak to and a summary of the conversation.
- **Use the chain of command:**
Be sure to speak to the person who has the authority to resolve your problem.
- **Protect your rights:**
Do not accept an oral (in person or over the telephone) denial your request. Submit a written application and ask for a written decision.
- **Know your appeal rights:**
Request clear information about your appeal rights in case you disagree with the written decision you receive.
- **Ask for help:**
Don't give up. If you need assistance, contact and advocacy organization.
- **Remember to thank those who provide assistance!**

The above is a list of some steps that may help you through the process of advocating for your rights. Some of these steps you may feel more confident doing than others.

If you need assistance or support with advocating for your rights, please contact us and we will be more than happy to assist you in whatever way we can.



Be supported well: We think you have the right to be supported to the best of our ability. We are proud of what we do at Community Connections. If you think that there's something we can be doing better, please let us know. We want to be improving our services and learning from you how we can improve.

We have a full policy and procedures manual in place at Community Connections that we use to guide us when we need help with making decisions and supporting you best. These policies protect your rights and give us direction when you need help protecting them. If you are interested in reading the policy and procedures manual, any support worker at our agency can help you get a copy to review.

We have policies in place that support you to assert your rights around many of the topics discussed in this booklet. If you feel that your rights are being compromised in your life, a great place to start is by talking with your support worker. Our support workers are here to help you get the most out of your services, and your life. Thanks for reading this and please let us know how we may help you best.

Did you know?

You can get help with claiming your rights.

Helping claim your rights is called advocacy. Advocacy comes in all kinds of different forms whether you advocate for yourself (self advocacy) or whether someone you trust advocates on your behalf.

We have lots of materials about advocacy on our website (<https://commconn.ca>) and in our office that may help you learn more about advocacy and how you might be able to advocate for your rights or for the rights of someone else.

If you need help, you can always contact us for more information or for support as you go through the process of finding out more about claiming your rights in a specific situation.

In the meantime, we came across a really great set of steps on being an effective self advocate or advocate for someone else. They are:

- **Believe in yourself:**
You are important and worth the effort to protect your rights and interests.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Disabled persons have the right to use all public services and facilities, including movie theatres, stores, restaurants, educational institutions, public transit, and government services.

HOUSING

A landlord cannot refuse to rent a house or an apartment to a disabled person, charge them a higher rent or security deposit, or evict them because they have a disability.

DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

Employers, landlords, and people who provide a service to the public have to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability, unless doing so would result in undue hardship. How a disability is accommodated varies depending on the situation.



DEALING WITH DISCRIMINATION

If you think you are being discriminated against or harassed because of a disability:

- If it is safe to do so, tell the person firmly that their actions or comments are unacceptable and ask them to stop. If you find this difficult, consider asking a friend for help.
- Write down exactly what happened and when, and of what was said.

If the discrimination or harassment happens at work, in your apartment building, or in a store or restaurant, or the agency that provides you services, ask your support worker, employer or landlord or the manager to do something about it.



Use the organization's complaint process to file a complaint at work, school, or services that you receive. If you do not feel that you have been supported or heard, you may want to file a human rights complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

(See Contacts.)

HELP WITH COMPLAINTS

A complaint must normally be filed within six months after the alleged discrimination or harassment occurs. Filing a complaint initiates a legal process that is similar to going to court. Help is available when either filing or responding to a complaint. A publicly funded legal clinic provides assistance, including legal representation, to eligible persons everywhere in B.C., free of charge.

(See Contacts.)

Did you know?

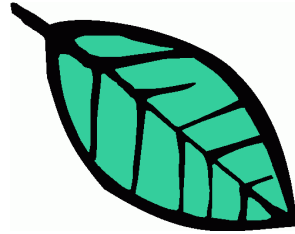
You have rights with Community Living BC (CLBC)

The crown agency that provides you with your services wants to remind you that you have rights.

Knowing your rights helps you make sure you are treated with dignity and respect.

You have the right to:

- understand important information.
- to be heard.
- speak up for yourself
- say no
- be married
- be a Mom or Dad
- choose your own friends
- love
- have private space
- have a say in where you live and who you live with
- have a say in what you eat and when you eat
- be welcome in the community
- full citizenship
- have access to community
- vote
- volunteer and contribute your skills
- to have your own beliefs
- have a job



Did you know?

You have rights with Community Connections.



We're an agency that provides you with supports and, as a result, hold personal and private information about you. We also are trusted to help you with certain things in your life and we want for you to feel comfortable with us and be happy with the service that we provide.

In keeping with those goals, we want to inform you of your rights with your services at Community Connections. You have the right to:

Confidentiality: Private information that you share with us is kept private and is not shared without your permission with anyone. We keep reports on the progress toward your goals as well as contact and health information in a file. We keep these in a locked filing cabinet in our offices.

See your file: All of this confidential information we were talking about is about only one important person, YOU. So why wouldn't you be able to see it? If you ever want to look at your file and see what is written about you, please let us know and we will help you.

Complain: You have a right to complain about things that are not working well for you. If you are unhappy with your services, talk to your support worker and let them know. It's ok to complain and it gives us a chance to do our job for you better. Complaining will never mean that you will be denied services or that you will be in trouble for complaining.

Change your support worker: If there is a good reason why you would like to change your support worker, we will do our best to accommodate the change. We want you to feel comfortable with the person helping you.

Say no to services: Sometimes people in your life think something is going to be good for you and set services up accordingly. If you don't want us working for you, just say so. And if you try us out and decide that services aren't working for you and you'd like to end them, that's ok too. Of course, we think we do great work and we'd like you to give us a chance, but if we're not your cup of tea, we understand.

Contribute: You are the most important person we support. Our services are designed around your needs. You have the right to tell us how we can help you best. In some of our services, we do group activities and we'd like to hear about the things that you would like to do. Call us and let us know what you want to do and see happen in our services. It helps us a lot and it is your right.

