

ONTARIO STRENGTHENS HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION*McGuinty Government Supporting Diversity And Fighting Intolerance***NEWS**

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Ontario is leading the way in protecting human rights in Canada by launching a stronger system to prevent discrimination.

Starting today, everyone in Ontario has faster access to human rights adjudicators and legal support if they need it.

The new system reinforces Ontario's leadership in human rights and addresses systemic discrimination. Here's how it works:

- A strengthened [Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario](#) offers direct, early access to additional adjudicators with the expertise to fairly resolve discrimination claims.
- The new [Human Rights Legal Support Centre's](#) team of lawyers and paralegals provides free assistance throughout Ontario for starting and resolving discrimination claims.
- The [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#) addresses the underlying causes of discrimination with a strengthened capacity for public education, policy development, research and monitoring.

As previously announced, the province's \$31.7 million investment in the human rights system this year includes \$14.1 million in one-time funding to provide:

- A strategy to resolve 4,200 open cases at the Commission, of which over half are 12 months or older
- A new case management system to process claims faster and monitor system performance
- New, state-of-the-art accessible facilities, including 22 mediation and hearing rooms.

QUOTES

"The McGuinty government is building a stronger Ontario by safeguarding the human rights of our people so they can live and work without discrimination," said Attorney General Chris Bentley. "Ontario now has a better way of achieving the values enshrined in our Human Rights Code."

"Ontarians will have the opportunity to be heard by applying directly to the Tribunal, where experienced human rights adjudicators will address discrimination claims in a fair and expeditious manner," said Michael Gottheil, Chair of the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

"We have created a team of lawyers and paralegals to ensure everyone has access to the legal supports they need in the human rights process," said Raj Anand, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Human Rights Legal Support Centre.

“We now have a greater ability to help eliminate barriers and prevent discrimination by focusing on systems and sectors, intervene on difficult issues when they’re needed, but also connect with communities through education and partnership,” said Barbara Hall, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. “That’s the best way to advance Ontario’s human rights culture.”

Read more about [what people are saying](#) about Ontario’s new human rights system.

QUICK FACTS

- An average of 2,500 discrimination cases are filed every year in Ontario.
- Under the old system, it could take four to five years for a human rights complaint to be resolved. The goal of Ontario’s new system is to complete hearings within one year of receiving the application.
- This is the first major reform of Ontario’s human rights system since 1981.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the [new human rights system](#).

Find out about the [process for filing a discrimination claim](#).

Download the ministry’s [brochure](#) on the new system.

Read the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).

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