

News Release Communiqué



Ontario Commission
Human Rights ontarienne des
Commission droits de la personne

For immediate release
5 October 2009

NEW POLICY SHOWS HOW TO PROVIDE HUMAN RIGHTS IN RENTAL HOUSING

Toronto – New guidelines will help improve equal access to rental housing for all Ontarians. The *Policy on Human Rights and Rental Housing*, Canada's first comprehensive look at how barriers to housing can be identified and eliminated, was released today by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC).

The policy follows extensive research and consultation with tenants, housing providers, decision-makers and other partners. Its aim is to provide tools, practical scenarios and information that can be applied to everyday situations, so that human rights problems can be eliminated quickly or prevented from happening in the first place.

"The evidence is very clear," said OHRC Chief Commissioner Barbara Hall. "Discrimination occurs in many forms in rental housing across Ontario. Vulnerable and marginalized people have a much tougher time getting the housing they need because they face a number of barriers. This new policy is just part of a wider effort to break down those barriers to fair rental housing."

Under Ontario's *Human Rights Code*, tenants and housing providers have rights and obligations. But the Code does not spell out what these protections and duties mean. The policy gives practical advice on how people can exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations.

"There is an undeniable link between affordable and adequate housing and quality of life," Barbara Hall said. "Secure housing is a starting point for access to good employment, strong community resources and supports, and educational opportunities."

Housing is a strategic priority for the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Today's policy release will be followed by a report on the progress of recommendations made last year in the OHRC's consultation report, *Right at Home* as well as new public education "e-learning" tools and other materials to help build awareness of human rights protections in housing.

-30-

Aussi disponible en français

For more information:

Afroze Edwards
Sr. Communications Officer
416-314-4528/416-576-0571 (cell)