

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

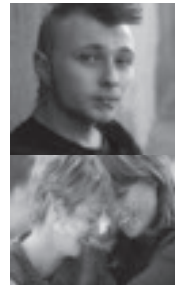
If you believe you have been the victim of discrimination or discriminatory harassment based on one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, you may file a complaint with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse.

It is important that you file your complaint as soon as possible after the events have occurred. Complaints related to housing discrimination are subject to a rapid initial processing.

After verifying whether your complaint is admissible, Commission staff will inform you of the avenues available to process your complaint. Mediation could be offered or a formal investigation could be held in order to determine whether the case should be brought before a tribunal.

In any case, the main purpose is to put an end to the discrimination and discriminatory harassment and to compensate the victim when applicable.

YOUR CHARTER RIGHTS



The Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination or discriminatory harassment based on:

- Race;
- Colour;
- Ethnic or national origin;
- Sex;
- Gender identity or expression;
- Pregnancy;
- Sexual orientation;
- Civil status; for example, being a single parent or having children;
- Age (except as provided by law);
- Religion;
- Political convictions;
- Language;
- Social condition; for example, low income, precarious employment, receiving social assistance or employment insurance;
- A disability or the use of any means to palliate a disability; for example, using a wheelchair or a service dog.

In all these instances, the Commission may receive a complaint, offer mediation, investigate or bring a case before the Human Rights Tribunal or any other court.

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse

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The Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission) ensures the promotion and respect of the principles set out in the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

It also ensures that the interests of children are protected and that their rights recognized in the Youth Protection Act are respected and promoted.

In addition, the Commission oversees compliance with the Act Respecting Equal Access to Employment in Public Bodies.

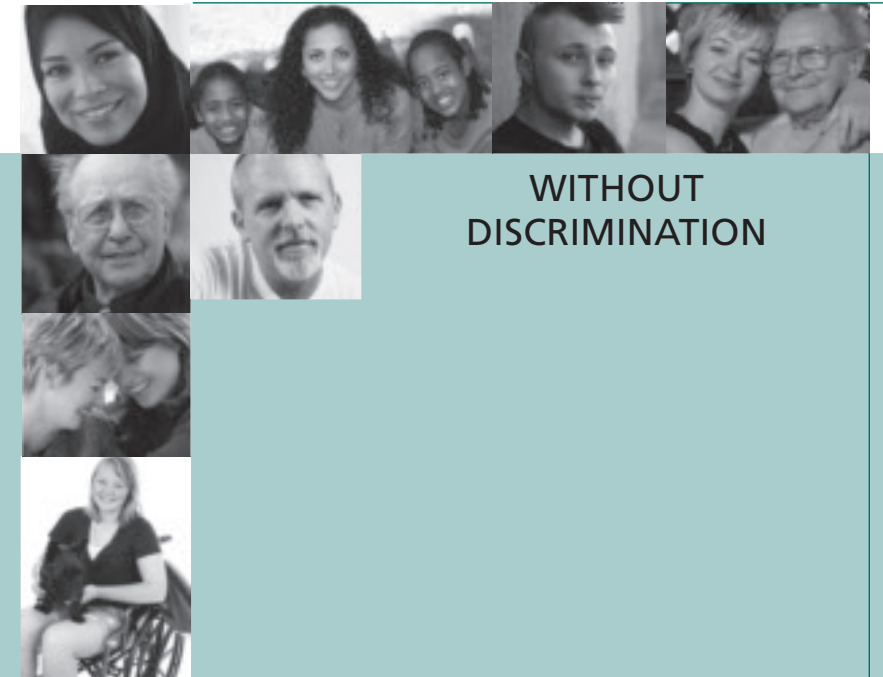
All services offered by the Commission are free of charge.



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RIGHT TO HOUSING



WITHOUT
DISCRIMINATION

www.cdpdj.qc.ca

DISCRIMINATION AND DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT ARE FORBIDDEN

In Québec, it is forbidden to discriminate with respect to housing or to harass tenants.

The Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms forbids distinctions based on personal characteristics, such as race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age (except as provided by law), disability or social condition.

Therefore, an owner or landlord cannot refuse to rent an apartment to a person based on ethnic origin or race or because he or she has children, receives social assistance, or uses a wheelchair.

DOCUMENTING YOUR COMPLAINT

If you believe you have been the victim of discrimination, it is important that your complaint be well-documented.

First, you can ask the landlord or owner the reason for his or her refusal. The landlord or owner could mention explicitly one of the prohibited grounds for discrimination. For example, if he or she implies that you cannot rent the apartment because you are a single-parent, this is a ground for discrimination.

If the landlord or owner tells you that the apartment has already been rented but the "for rent" sign is still up, you can ask a friend to call to check if the apartment is rented or not.

In all cases, you can ask someone to accompany you as a witness when you visit an apartment.

Record the following information:

- ✓ Reason for refusal
- ✓ Name and title of the person to whom you spoke
- ✓ Address of the apartment
- ✓ Telephone number
- ✓ Date and time of visit
- ✓ Amount of rent, number of rooms, heated/unheated, and availability
- ✓ Any other relevant information

A FEW TIPS

If you are interested in the apartment, clearly state that you want to rent it. The owner then has the right to check whether you pay your rent regularly. You can prove your ability to pay by providing references or paid utility bills (hydro and telephone).

An owner has the right to verify your ability to pay. However, the landlord may not refuse to rent an apartment on the basis of receiving prejudices. Precarious employment or social assistance does not mean a person is unable to pay rent.

You are not required to provide personal information (bank account number or Social Insurance Number) beyond what is necessary for the management and rental of an apartment.

DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

You have signed your lease, but your landlord or your neighbour is harassing you?

Inappropriate comments or behaviour, insults and offensive remarks regarding your sexual orientation, social condition, ethnic or national origin or colour are considered discriminatory harassment.

Harassment infringes the right to dignity, inviolability and equality under the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

If you believe you have been the victim of discriminatory harassment, you can file a complaint with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse.