



FACT SHEET

HIV, AIDS and *The Human Rights Code*

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission (MHRC) takes a broad and purposive view of the meaning of disability. AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) and other medical conditions related to infection by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) are recognized as disabilities within the meaning of *The Human Rights Code*. Individuals with AIDS, HIV and other AIDS/HIV related illnesses, including those who are asymptomatic, whose viral load is undetectable or who are perceived to have HIV/AIDS, are protected from discrimination and harassment in employment, housing, public services and contracts.

The Human Rights Code also protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of association. This means that a person who is associated with anyone who is identified by a prohibited ground of discrimination, such as a co-worker, a friend or a relative of the person who is HIV-positive, cannot be discriminated against because of this association.

The Human Rights Code also prohibits employers, housing and service providers from failing to reasonably accommodate the needs of a person, where they relate to a protected ground, such as disability. Individuals living with AIDS and HIV are entitled to reasonable accommodation to the point of undue hardship.

Considerable stigma continues to surround HIV/AIDS, although it is a treatable condition and individuals living with HIV can enjoy long, healthy lives. HIV and AIDS-related stigma arises mostly from fear and ignorance or from prejudice about groups that are commonly associated with HIV and AIDS (e.g. LGBT2QIA+ people). Human rights law stresses the importance of recognizing the dignity and worth of every member of the human family and challenging negative stereotypes which can lead to discrimination and social isolation.

The Code is the provincial human rights law that protects individuals and groups in Manitoba from discrimination. It is administered by The Manitoba Human Rights Commission. There is no charge for filing a human rights complaint or for seeking advice about a human rights concern. *The Code* has special status over all other laws of the Province of Manitoba.

This information is a simplified description of provisions under *The Code*. For more information, please visit our website or contact the MHRC.

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