



# STEPS TO JUSTICE

## *HUMAN RIGHTS LAW*

An OJEN workshop demonstrating a CLEO  
public legal information resource.



**CLEO**

Community Legal Education Ontario  
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario



## True or false?

1. One of my workers, Janie, says that I am discriminating against her. I hate complainers! Since I own the business, I can just fire her. Take that, complainy Janie!



## True or false?

**2.** I'm pretty sure some of my staff are getting high on the job – they keep eating all of the snacks in the staff room and giggling uncontrollably! There really isn't any problem with their work, but I'm sick of all the chips disappearing – luckily the law says I can make them take a drug test.



## True or false?

**3.** I'm too cool for school (I'm 16 – a grown man, lol)! I heard employers can't turn me away for being too young, so I'm going to drop out, get a day job and make money while my friends are bored in biology and mad in math class!



## True or false?

4. I just moved into a house where I share the kitchen with my landlord and her family. She just found out that I am Muslim, and now she wants to kick me out. She says he doesn't want her children to be exposed to my faith. That is really wrong – you can't kick someone out because of their religion, right?



## True or false?

**5.** I found a great apartment in a women-only dorm building on my university campus, but they rejected me because I'm a trans woman. I think that's discrimination!



## Housing Law in Ontario: *What is covered?*

- Discrimination at work
- Discrimination when receiving services
- Discrimination in housing
- Discrimination in public places
- Human rights complaints

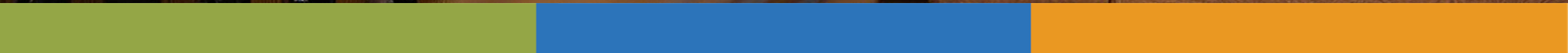
### ***Charter of Rights and Freedoms***

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>



## **Real Life Legal Problems** *Demonstration Scenario*

I applied for a new job and I was really excited. I didn't notice that the employer has a specific dress code that prohibits head coverings of any kind. My religion requires me to cover my head, so the dress code does not work with my beliefs. The employer was very excited to meet me based on my qualifications, but soon after the interview I was told they were no longer hiring. The dress code has nothing to do with safety and I feel that I was discriminated against based on my religion. What can I do?








# Human Rights in Ontario

## Human Rights Laws

Protect Ontarians against discrimination on the basis of things like:

- **Age**
- **Sex**
- **Gender**
- **Disability**
- **Race and ethnicity**
- **Religion and belief**

They deal with five important areas of life:

- **Services, goods and facilities**
  - **Housing**
  - **Contracts**
  - **Employment**
  - **Membership in vocational associations and trade unions**
- 

# Steps to Justice



**Steps to Justice**  
Your guide to law in Ontario

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Legal Topics About Steps to Justice Latest Updates Embed & Share

## Steps to Justice


Step-by-step information about legal problems.  
Reliable, practical, and easy to understand.

Tell us what you are looking for...

### Legal Topics

- Abuse and Family Violence
- Criminal Law
- Debt and Consumer Rights
- Employment and Work
- Family Law
- Health and Disability
- Housing Law
- Human Rights
- Income Assistance
- Tribunals and Court

Live chat  
Mon-Fri 11am-1pm



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### Some questions:

- Can an employer decide not to hire you based on your religious beliefs?
- Is it still discrimination if the dress code doesn't target you specifically, but rather applies equally to everyone?
- How can this person be sure that Ontario's human rights laws apply to them?
- Who can help this person figure out what to do?
- If the Human Rights Tribunal finds that the employer broke the law, what can the Tribunal do about it?



**Using the  
Steps to Justice  
Website**



## Group Work

1. Navigate to the Steps to Justice website:  
<http://stepstojustice.ca>
2. Read your scenario with your group.
3. Try to identify the main legal issues.
4. Imagine that you are the person in the scenario. Use the Steps to Justice website to answer the questions on your handout.
5. As you browse, try to find out more about how the law would affect the person in your scenario. What does it say? What are their options?
6. Record your answers on the handout.

If you get stuck, ask for help!



# Large Group Scenario

## FOCUS AREAS:

- 1) The provision of police records to employers
- 2) Questions an employer can ask an applicant

I am a 43-year old truck driver who is looking for work. I recently had an interview with a trucking company and it was a disaster. I think some of what happened was discrimination.

For starters, I have a criminal record for theft from a long time ago. I got a record suspension last year, so before the interview, I gave the company access to my record. The interviewer brought up the crime I was pardoned for and asked for details about what happened. I was very embarrassed and flustered and I could not give him a good explanation.

I have also been caught speeding a couple of times. The interviewer said that, even though this doesn't technically count as a criminal record, it would still be a problem for a position that requires driving.

Finally, the interviewer asked me how old I was. When I told him, he responded by saying: "We are looking for young, energetic blood. Old guys like you fall asleep at the wheel."

Needless to say, I didn't get the job. Is there anything I can do about this?

