Dear Service Provider,

**The Human Rights Code – what it means for you and your business**

Your provincial or territorial Human Rights Code is a piece of legislation that aims to ensure we have a fair and equal society. This includes making sure everyone has an equal opportunity to use services. The Human Rights Code sets out specific duties with which “service providers” have to comply. You are receiving this letter because a person with sight loss believes that you, as a service provider, have broken the law.

The Human Rights Code says that service providers are not allowed to discriminate against people by treating them less favourably because of a protected characteristic. This includes disabilities.

Discrimination in providing services means:

* refusing to serve them
* providing a service of a poorer quality than would be provided to the general public
* providing a service on worse terms or in a worse manner than would be provided to the general public
* terminating a service

Service providers are also not allowed to harass or victimize someone.

There is a further specific duty which only applies to people with disabilities. This is the duty to make reasonable accommodations. You must comply with this duty.

If you do not make a reasonable accommodation, you are breaking the law.

This includes waiving a “no dogs” policy, so people who are blind and partially sighted with guide dogs can enter your premises.

Recognize that people with disabilities may want to use your service. Failing to consider the needs of and make appropriate accommodations for people with disabilities is against the law.

We ask you to address this person’s complaint and ensure you are complying with your obligations under the Code. If you fail to comply with the Human Rights Code, the individual can take you to court. If you lose, the court could order you to pay compensation of up to $5,000.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Larissa Proctor  
Manager, Guide Dog Advocacy  
CNIB