



HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

Policy on Environmental Sensitivities

January 2014



Canadian
human rights
commission

Commission
canadienne des
droits de la personne



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Policy on Environmental Sensitivities

Individuals with environmental sensitivities experience a variety of adverse reactions to environmental agents at concentrations well below those that might affect the “average person”. This medical condition is a disability and those living with environmental sensitivities are entitled to the protection of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The Canadian Human Rights Commission will receive any inquiry and process any complaint from any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against because of an environmental sensitivity. Like others with a disability, those with environmental sensitivities are required by law to be accommodated.

The CHRC encourages employers and service providers to proactively address issues of accommodation by ensuring that their workplaces and facilities are accessible for persons with a wide range of disabilities.

Successful accommodation for persons with environmental sensitivities requires innovative strategies to minimize or eliminate exposure to triggers in the environment. These may include: developing and enforcing fragrance free and chemical avoidance policies, undertaking educational programs to increase voluntary compliance with such policies, minimizing chemical use and purchasing less toxic products, and notifying employees and clients in advance of construction, re-modeling and cleaning activities. Such measures can prevent injuries and illnesses, and reduce costs and health and safety risks.

For further information on environmental sensitivities, click on the following Commission publications:

[*The Medical Perspective on Environmental Sensitivities*](#)

[*Accommodation for Environmental Sensitivities: Legal Perspective*](#)

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