

The best way to protect yourself from discrimination and from complaints is to know and respect **The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code.**



Ageism and Age Discrimination

Ageism results in individuals being discriminated against on an individual basis, and in systemic ways, such as in the development and design of programs and facilities.

Ageism

The term “ageism” refers to two notions. One is a way of thinking about older persons based on stereotypes and negative assumptions about aging. The second is the tendency to design and construct society based on the assumption that everyone is young, thus failing to address the needs of many people, including older persons, as a consequence.

Age discrimination

Age discrimination involves treating persons unequally based on their age in contravention of human rights law. *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) protects people from discrimination based on age in many areas including: public services, employment, housing, education, and contracts.

Age discrimination is often not taken as seriously as other forms of discrimination and this compounds its affect. Age discrimination can have the same economic, social and psychological impact as any other form of discrimination. The experience of ageism and age discrimination differs based on each individual’s personal circumstances. Groups of older persons may experience unique barriers because of their age combined with their disability, sexual orientation, race, colour, sex or any other prohibited ground of the *Code*.

Addressing ageism and age discrimination

One way to address ageism and age discrimination is to raise public awareness and educate people. Public education can dispel common stereotypes associated with aging and to ameliorate the effects of ageism.

Age, like all prohibited grounds of the *Code*, impacts individuals differently. Each person’s situation and experiences are different and as such there is no way to generalize about the skills and abilities of a person based on age. Ageism can be addressed by changing prevalent common practices through inclusive planning and design to reflect the circumstances of persons of all ages to the greatest degree possible.

It is not acceptable to structure systems in a way that assumes everyone is young with after attempts to accommodate those who do not fit this assumption.

Instead, the age and ability diversity that exists in Saskatchewan must be reflected in policies, programs, services, facilities, and public buildings, so that physical, attitudinal and systemic barriers are not created. Where barriers already exist, the people responsible should identify the barriers and take steps to remove them.

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