



NEWS RELEASE

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Human Rights Agencies call on Governments across Canada to Implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Marking December 3rd United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) today launched its new brochure, *Canada and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was set up to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.” It is about the rights of persons with disabilities and what countries that have ratified the CRPD are expected to do.

The CRPD was developed and passed in record time by the UN with unprecedented involvement and support from persons with disabilities; their motto is “Nothing about us without us!” Canada signed the CRPD in 2007 and ratified it in March 2010.

“The CRPD strengthens legal rights for persons with disabilities in all jurisdictions in Canada”, commented Barbara Hall, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and current President of CASHRA. “This requires federal, provincial and territorial governments to develop and carry out policies, laws and measures that will better protect and advance the rights of people with disabilities.”

CRPD rights and obligations involve making sure persons with disabilities:

- Can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, information and communications and related technologies without barriers
- Have equal protection without discrimination under the law and have legal capacity to make important life decisions and control their own affairs, with supports if needed
- Are not deprived of their liberty and are free from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, exploitation and abuse
- Are able to live independently in the community, with supports if necessary including for families with disabilities

- Have equal access to an adequate standard of living, education, health care, work and rehabilitation services
- Can vote, run for elections, hold office and otherwise be involved in political and public life
- Are able to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

CASHRA is calling on federal, provincial and territorial governments to begin fulfilling their CRPD obligations by:

- Designating one or more focal points within government, such as an office for disability issues, with responsibilities for implementing the CRPD
- Identifying initiatives and developing priority plans that demonstrate how they will address CRPD rights and obligations
- Making sure independent mechanisms, such as human rights commissions, are in place and have adequate resources to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the CRPD
- Consulting and involving persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to monitor implementation of the CRPD including providing resources to support and accommodate their participation
- Collecting data and other research, promoting awareness and reporting on progress

Canada is required to submit its first CRPD progress report to the UN by April 2012.

Visit CASHRA.ca for a copy of CASHRA's new brochure on the CRPD and to learn more about what human rights commissions across Canada are doing to help promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

Brochure - *Canada and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

- accessible version
- print version

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission is an active member of CASHRA. We fully endorse the CASHRA Brochure. It can be found on our website www.shrc.gov.sk.ca. It is fitting that it is released to mark this very important date.

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