

In a Flash



July 25, 2016

BC Human Rights Code to Protect Gender Rights

On July 20, 2016, the British Columbia provincial government officially announced upcoming amendments to the BC *Human Rights Code* (the “Code”). The amendments will expressly recognize both gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination in British Columbia.

Express recognition of “gender identity” and “gender expression” as prohibited grounds of discrimination will bring British Columbia’s *Code* in line with many other Canadian jurisdictions, which have similar language in their respective human rights legislation. In 2012, Ontario amended its human rights legislation to recognize these same grounds.

While these amendments represent an express recognition of the *Code*’s protection of transgendered persons, they do not have any practical impact on the current state of the law in British Columbia. Currently, discrimination related in any way to an individual’s gender identity or expression is protected by the *Code*, as such characteristics have historically been included under the existing protected grounds of “sex”.

The amendments are expected to be introduced this week.

If you have any questions about this topic or any other questions relating to workplace law, please do not hesitate to contact a [Mathews Dinsdale lawyer](#).

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