



HRCO Engagement during COVID-19 Closure Period (March 16 – May 29, 2020) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Please be advised that the Human Rights Commissioner's Office (HRCO) at York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is no longer scheduling in-person consultations until further notice. Please note our responses to questions or concerns that you may have in regard to human rights and accessibility at YRDSB.

Human Rights Concerns

Q: What is the function / role of the HRCO?

A: The HRCO at YRDSB is an arms-length office for Human Rights Code compliance under YRDSB's Human Rights Policy. In addressing human rights issues of concern to the YRDSB community, the HRCO role is to:

- act upon receipt of general correspondences and/or reporting of human rights concerns promptly, fairly, judiciously and with confidentiality; and
- support and facilitate preventable actions through human rights education and training with the goal of fostering working and inclusive learning environments.

Any member of the YRDSB community may contact the HRCO on a human rights concern or a belief they have been the recipient of harassment and/or discrimination under a protected ground identified in the Board's [Policy #240, Human Rights: Code-Related Harassment and Discrimination](#).

Q: Will the HRCO be attending to human rights concerns/complaints during the COVID-19 shutdown period?

A: Yes. The HRCO staff will be working from off-site locations and will be attending to all matters directed to the HRCO.

Q: I sent in a Reporting Form from the HRCO website prior to the shutdown period. How will the HRCO be addressing my concern during the shutdown period?

A: If you attended an in-person consultation with HRCO staff prior to March 13, 2020, you may receive follow-up correspondence relating to a determination on your complaint. In-person

consultations are being postponed until further notice, although an HRCO staff member may follow up via telephone or email to assist in resolving or referring your complaint, as appropriate.

Q: I sent in a Reporting Form from the HRCO website after the shutdown period began. How will the HRCO be addressing my concern during the shutdown period?

A: Typically when a human rights complaint is submitted to the HRCO, an in-person consultation is scheduled to gather further information from the individual making the complaint. Due to the restrictions on access to Board property, including the HRCO office, we are not able to hold in-person meetings until further notice. The HRCO will be reviewing all complaints as they are submitted, and responding via telephone or email to assist in resolving or referring any complaint, as appropriate.

Q: I received a reply informing me that my matter is being reviewed by the Human Rights Commissioner. When can I expect a reply on next steps?

A: The HRCO office, in addition to all YRDSB schools and Board offices, are currently closed to staff and members of the YRDSB community. Please note that due to these constraints and a lack of clarity on timelines for the re-opening of our offices, the HRCO cannot schedule in-person consultations at the moment. It may be possible, given the nature of each complaint, to complete the preliminary assessment process via email, by telephone or through video conferencing, as appropriate. Review of each complaint and a decision on next steps is done on a case-by-case basis, in line with [Policy #240, Human Rights: Code-Related Harassment and Discrimination](#).

Q: I believe that I am experiencing human rights harassment or discrimination as a result of the COVID-19 shutdown, or because of the YRDSB's response. What can I do?

A: If you believe you are experiencing harassment and discrimination by a member of the YRDSB community, the HRCO requires a completed Reporting Form online detailing your complaint in order to proceed with a review. The Reporting Form, and other information about the HRCO process, can be found online at: www.yrdsb.ca/hrco.

Accessibility Concerns

Q: I have submitted a Barrier Buster feedback form. When can I expect to receive a response and have the barrier addressed?

A: While all YRDSB schools and Board offices are closed during the shutdown period, the HRCO will continue to review all matters that are submitted via the [Barrier Busters Feedback Form](#). For general accessibility questions or concerns, please email aoda@yrdsb.ca.