

What does Accommodation in Housing Look Like?

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Like

Under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, all persons are equal in dignity, rights and responsibilities when it comes to the provision of public services. The process of accommodation is one way to make sure that all persons have equal access. In accommodating tenants, landlords and service providers may need to make adjustments or offer alternative arrangements to make sure that there is no negative effect on individuals based on protected grounds. The following are some examples of accommodation in housing adapted from human rights cases in Canada.

Race/colour/ancestry

A resident has a life sub-lease for a unit in a housing co-operative. The resident regularly cooks ethnic food. New residents living above the resident's unit complain about the food smell coming from the housing cooperative's ventilation system. To accommodate the resident who cooks ethnic food, the housing co-operative can:

- Allow her to continue cooking ethnic foods.
- Take responsibility for the costs of repairing the ventilation system if complaints about food smell continue.

Physical disability

An elderly condominium owner is blind, deaf and has mobility issues, as well as cancer. She relies on her family and friends for transportation to various medical appointments, tests and treatments. The condominium she lives in recently amended and passed a parking bylaw, which results in the owner losing her assigned parking stall in the building's indoor parking lot. To accommodate the owner, the condominium corporation can:

- Offer a temporary stall in the building's visitor area until an indoor stall becomes available.
- Make the owner a priority on a waiting list for the first available indoor stall.
- Find alternative indoor parking nearby for anyone displaced by the bylaw and compensate the owner for being moved to the visitor parking area.

Mental disability

A housing co-operative's bylaws require that residents perform volunteer work each month. A resident has a mental disability preventing her from meeting the volunteer work requirement. To accommodate the resident, the co-operative can:

- Exempt the resident from the volunteer requirement.
- Change the bylaw requirement for volunteering to account for residents with disabilities.

Religion

Before moving into a condominium complex, condominium owners sign a contract of co-ownership which do not allow any alterations or construction to be built on balconies. After moving in, some of the owners wish to set up religious alterations or constructions such as succahs (temporary huts) on balconies despite the restriction. To accommodate the owners, the condominium corporation can:

- Allow owners to have temporary or permanent alterations to a condominium unit for religious observances.
- Allow owners to have temporary or permanent alterations to condominium facilities for religious observances.

Where to find more information

The Alberta Human Rights Commission can give you free and confidential information about the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and how it helps protect you from discrimination.



www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca

To learn more, refer to the Commission's Information Sheet on *Human Rights in Tenancy*
<http://bit.ly/2x3FpSy>

You should not rely on this publication for legal advice.
It provides general information on Alberta law only.

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