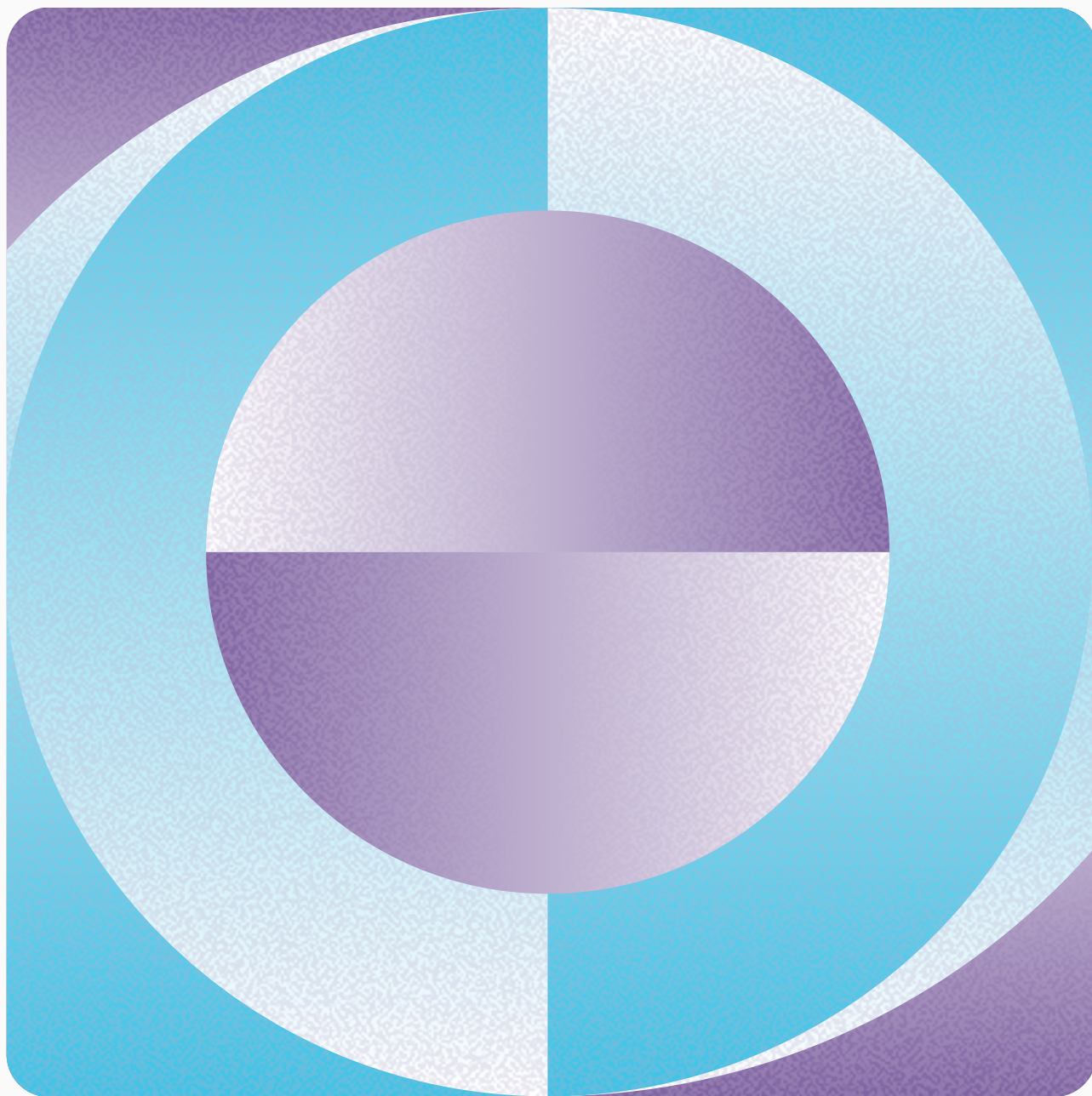


Upholding Gender-Diverse Young People's Rights



Acknowledgments

Territorial Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that we are located on Treaty Six and Treaty Seven territories and the Métis homeland – the travelling route and gathering place for many Indigenous Peoples. This includes the Nehiyaw, Denesų́łné, Nakota Sioux, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Siksikaitsitapi, comprised of the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations, the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Îyârhe Nakoda, including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations. We also acknowledge the Métis and Inuit Peoples who have lived on and cared for these lands. We recognize this land as an act of reconciliation and express our gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.

Community Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the youth and caregivers who shared their experiences navigating the joys and challenges of gender transition in Alberta and inspired this resource. To the youth, we are grateful for the candid glimpse into your lives you provided through your artwork. It has brought life to this guide. Thank you for your courage, creativity, and willingness to share your journey with us. We sincerely thank the thought leaders and service providers who shared their time, insights, and experiences with us. Your expertise and dedication helped shape these guides, and your contributions are invaluable. We are grateful for your ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive and affirming future.

This guide was created by PolicyWise for Children & Families

[PolicyWise for Children & Families](#) works in the social sector to improve policies and practices that benefit well-being. We help create a better future for youth and families through research, evaluation, data management, implementation, knowledge mobilization, and advocacy across Alberta and Canada.

We created this guide in June 2026 as a part of PolicyWise's Empowering Providers [series](#). For more information, please contact us at info@policywise.com.

Introduction



Helpful terms are defined in pop-outs throughout the guide

Discrimination

An action, policy, or practice that negatively impacts a group based on certain protected personal characteristics, such as race, disability, or gender identity.¹

Gender

Socially constructed identities, roles, and behaviours of women, men, Two Spirit, non-binary, trans, and intersex people.⁴

Gender identity

A person's internal felt sense of their gender.⁴ Gender identity can fall within or outside of the gender binary (man/woman) and can change over time.

In Alberta, everyone has the right to live and work without **discrimination**.¹

Discrimination happens when actions, policies, or practices treat people unfairly because of a part of who they are, such as their **gender**, **gender identity**, or **gender expression**. Two Spirit, trans, non-binary, and other gender-diverse (2S/T/NB/GD) youth face high levels of discrimination and often have to advocate for their identities to be recognized and respected.^{2,3}

At the same time, it can be challenging for 2S/T/NB/GD youth and their families to find reliable information while navigating gender transition, changing legislation, and evolving community services. PolicyWise has created a [series](#) of guides to help youth, caregivers, and service providers find their way through these systems in Alberta.

This guide explains how human rights protect the dignity, privacy, inclusion, and livelihood of 2S/T/NB/GD youth in Alberta. The guide also provides strategies for responding to discrimination and fostering inclusion.

Because laws and services change, please seek out current information from organizations or legal experts. This guide doesn't provide legal advice. It gives youth, caregivers, and service providers knowledge and tools to ensure young people's rights are upheld in public spaces.

The Current Landscape

2S/T/NB/GD youth in Alberta face discrimination and barriers to inclusion in many areas of their lives.^{2,5} Discrimination can take many forms, including being **misgendered** or **deadnamed**, experiencing harassment, or being denied access to services.⁶ These experiences can have lasting impacts on young people's mental well-being.⁷⁻⁹

2S/T/NB/GD youth may experience **systemic discrimination** when interacting with public systems.^{10,11} Laws, policies, and societal beliefs that question the legitimacy of their identities can further intensify discrimination. When policies make it harder for youth to be affirmed, it can send the message that their identities, needs, and rights are not valid or protected, further impacting their mental health.^{8,12,13}

To ensure 2S/T/NB/GD youth can fully participate in public life, youth, caregivers, and service providers need to understand youths' rights and feel empowered to respond when these rights are violated.

Gender expression

How someone expresses their gender, which can include how they dress, hold themselves, behave, and other factors.⁴

Misgender

To incorrectly classify someone's gender by using incorrect pronouns or gendered language.⁷

Deadname

To refer to a 2S/T/NB/GD person by a former name, such as the name given to them at birth.¹⁴

Systemic discrimination

Discrimination that results from established structures, policies, or practices that exclude a group, and are reinforced by cultural beliefs or a desire to maintain "business as usual."^{10,11}

I'm 6 years into my trans journey and I still am missing gender affirming healthcare and ~~have~~ have uncomfortable interactions everyday. Somethings have regressed because of transphobic rhetoric and people have preconceived notions about non-binary ^{being}

Human Rights Protections

Alberta Human Rights Act and Commission

The [Alberta Human Rights Act](#) (the Act) protects people in Alberta from discrimination based on certain personal characteristics and in particular life situations.^{1,15} The Act's goal is to ensure everyone has equal opportunities to work, find housing, and access services.

Protected area

An activity or place where people are protected from discrimination by human rights legislation.¹⁷

The [Alberta Human Rights Commission](#) was created through the Act and operates independently from the Government of Alberta.^{15,16} They promote equality, educate the public, and help resolve human rights complaints.

The Act defines aspects of life, called **protected areas**, where discrimination is not allowed.^{15,17} These include:

- At work, including job advertisements, applications, interviews, and union membership.
- When accessing goods, services, accommodations, and facilities in Alberta provided by governments, non-profits, or private businesses.
- When renting housing or commercial space.
- In public statements or representations, such as on signs, in symbols, or in publications.

Protected grounds are parts of people's identities that are protected from discrimination under human rights law.¹⁸

Protected grounds in the Act include:^{15,18}

- **Gender**, including pregnancy and sexual harassment.
- **Gender identity**, including assumptions made about someone's gender identity.
- **Gender expression**.
- **Age**, for people 18 years and older.^{15,19} The Act allows certain age-based distinctions, such as benefits for minors or seniors and age-restricted housing. Although youth under 18 are not protected from age discrimination under the Act, they are protected from discrimination on all other protected grounds, including gender identity and gender expression.
- **Sexual orientation**, including assumptions made about someone's sexual orientation.²⁰

To see all of the Act's 15 protected grounds, visit the Alberta Human Rights Commission's [website](#).

For example, the Act protects a student from discrimination based on gender identity (a protected ground) at school (a protected area). People and organizations responsible for protected areas, such as landlords, employers, school administrators, and legislators, have a responsibility to prevent and address discrimination in areas they oversee.²¹

Protected ground

A personal characteristic protected from discrimination by human rights laws.¹⁷

Sexual orientation

The element of someone's identity connected to the genders they are sexually, emotionally, or romantically attracted to.¹⁷





Other Human Rights Protections

Other human rights laws may apply in areas not protected by the Act.

★ **Canadian Human Rights Act**

The [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) prohibits discrimination on several grounds, including gender identity and expression.²² It applies to federally regulated areas, such as employment and services provided by the Government of Canada, First Nations governments, banks, trucking companies, broadcasters, and telecommunications companies.^{22,23}

★ **Alberta Bill of Rights**

The [Alberta Bill of Rights](#) (the Bill of Rights) protects certain rights and freedoms from interference by the Government of Alberta.^{24,25} Gender identity and expression are recognized as protected rights under the Bill of Rights.

Rights protected by the Bill of Rights include individual liberty, security of the person, equality before the law, equal protection of the law, and the right not to be subjected to medical treatments without consent.²⁵

To challenge a government decision, action, or practice under the Alberta Bill of Rights, contact a lawyer for legal advice.

★ Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) (the Charter) is part of the [Canadian Constitution](#).^{26,27} It protects fundamental rights and freedoms and helps ensure that governments don't unjustifiably interfere with these rights.

Under the Charter, all people are equal before and under the law and are entitled to have equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination.²⁷ These protections apply to 2S/T/NB/GD youth and can be used to challenge government actions that infringe on Charter rights.

For more information about the Charter, check out the Government of Canada's [website](#) and this [guide](#) from the Manitoba Association for Rights & Liberties. This [guide](#) from the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre explains how to launch a case in Alberta when government actions may have violated Charter rights. Pursuing a Charter challenge is complex and lawyers can help. Advocacy organizations like [Egale](#) may support cases protecting 2S/T/NB/GD youth.



2S/T/NB/GD Rights

Human rights laws protect 2S/T/NB/GD people from discrimination in areas of public life. Human rights tribunals and courts across Canada have determined how these laws apply in specific situations by considering cases involving discrimination against 2S/T/NB/GD people.

In general, 2S/T/NB/GD youth have the right to:

- Be called by the name, pronouns, and gendered terms that match their gender identity, even if they differ from their government ID or sex assigned at birth.^{28,29}
- Have the same access to employment, rentals, and public services as everyone else.³⁰
- Use gendered spaces, activities, and services aligned with their gender identity.³⁰
- Be free from discrimination in protected areas.^{15,22,27}
- Keep their sex, gender, or gender identity private.³¹

There are some exceptions to these rights.

For example, in 2024 and 2025, Alberta passed legislation impacting 2S/T/NB/GD young people's rights in public services.³²

The Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 2) (Bill 26)

bans healthcare workers from performing gender-affirming surgeries or prescribing hormone treatments for gender dysphoria to most youth under 18 in Alberta, with exceptions outlined in [Ministerial Order 31/2025](#).^{33,34} Youth who have been prescribed hormone therapy before the legislation came into force may start or continue treatment. Youth aged 16 or 17 may access hormone therapy with the approval of a parent, physician, and psychologist.³⁴

The Education Amendment Act, 2024 (Bill 27) requires schools to tell parents if a student under 18 asks school staff to use a new name or pronouns for reasons related to their gender identity.³⁵ Schools must get parental consent before using the new name or pronouns for students under 16.

The Fairness and Safety in Sport Act (Bill 29) and Regulation require provincial sports organizations to only allow people assigned female at birth to participate in sports leagues for women and girls.^{36,37}

Concerned that these laws violate Albertans' rights, community organizations, youth, and their parents tried to challenge Bills 26 and 27 in court.³⁸⁻⁴⁰

Before the court cases were resolved, the Alberta passed the **Protecting Alberta's Children Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Bill 9)**.⁴¹ This legislation added a statement to Bills 26, 27, and 29 declaring that they operate notwithstanding the Alberta Bill of Rights, the Alberta Human Rights Act, and sections 2 and 7 through 15 of the Charter. This is called "invoking the Notwithstanding Clause."^{42,43}

As a result, these laws remain in effect for up to five years even if a court or tribunal determines they violate specific parts of the Charter, the Bill of Rights, or the Alberta Human Rights Act.⁴²



Accommodations

Sometimes 2S/T/NB/GD youth need changes, or **accommodations**, at school, work, or when accessing services to feel safe, respected, and included.^{15,44}

Under the Act, people have the right to ask for accommodations related to a protected ground in a protected area.¹⁵ Employers, landlords, service providers, and others responsible for protected areas have a duty to accommodate those needs unless doing so would create **undue hardship**.⁴⁵

Some accommodations 2S/T/NB/GD youth could ask for include:

- Using a different name or pronouns than what is on their legal identification.^{29,46,47}
- Adopting a gender-neutral dress code.⁴⁷⁻⁵⁰
- Having access to a gender-neutral washroom or changing space.^{47,51}
- Accessing medical leave, a gradual return to work plan, or reduced physical activity after gender-affirming surgery.⁵⁰
- Having private space and longer breaks to remove binding or tucking garments to maintain physical health.^{52,53}
- Working from home to reduce the negative health impacts of **binding** or **tucking**.⁵²⁻⁵⁴
- Having alternative options to complete Physical Education class if uncomfortable participating in gendered classes or removing binding garments to exercise safely.⁵²
- Having cold drinks or fans if experiencing discomfort from wearing a binder.⁵²
- Modifying schedules to accommodate transition-related appointments, such as medical appointments or to change legal documents.⁴⁵

Accommodation

A change to a policy, practice, or physical environment to reduce its negative impact based on a protected ground and support equal opportunities to participate in a protected area.⁴⁴

Undue hardship

A level of difficulty or cost that would significantly disrupt operations or create an unreasonable burden for an employer, service provider, or landlord.⁴⁵

Binding

Using special clothing, like a binder or body-safe tape, to flatten the chest.⁵⁵

Tucking

Arranging the penis and testicles to minimize a bulge in clothing, often using a special garment or body-safe tape.⁵⁵

Requesting Accommodations

The first step in requesting accommodations is to explore the youth's needs related to a protected ground.^{44,45} Consider what could change to help the youth feel safe, respected, and included.

Before the conversation, the youth may wish to gather supporting documentation, if it might be required.^{44,45} This could include a letter from a doctor or mental health professional describing the youth's needs. Supporting documents should focus on the accommodation required and shouldn't include any unnecessary personal information, such as specific diagnoses.

Next, consider who at the organization has the authority to make accommodation decisions and who the youth feels safe talking to. Youth may have to **come out** to this person if the accommodation is related to their gender identity.⁵⁶

When making the request, it can be helpful to approach the conversation collaboratively.^{44,45} Employers and service providers must provide reasonable accommodations, but they don't have to provide the exact accommodation requested. The youth and the person making the accommodations should work together to come up with a solution that meets the youth's needs while not causing undue hardship for the organization or business.

Come out

To share one's gender identity or sexual orientation to another person or group.

Example

Tyler wears a binder to school to help manage their gender dysphoria. They experience shortness of breath and feel faint in Physical Education (Phys Ed) class. Their doctor advised them to take off their binder when exercising, but they aren't comfortable removing it at school. It would be helpful for them to find another way to complete their Phys Ed credits.

They explain the situation to their doctor and ask for a letter saying that they are unable to complete Phys Ed at the school and require alternative programming for medical reasons.

Tyler feels most comfortable talking to their Phys Ed teacher about their needs.

Tyler and their parent meet with the teacher, provide the letter, and explain that Tyler's needs are related to their gender identity. They ask to work together to come up with an alternative way for Tyler to complete their Phys Ed credits. The school offers an at-home learning Phys Ed class that Tyler can take.

After the meeting, it is a good idea to send a follow-up email documenting the conversation. The email can summarize the need, the options discussed, and any agreements that were reached. Keeping a written record can help prevent misunderstandings and provide documentation if issues arise later. To support conversations about accommodations and to help with documentation, check out this [tool](#) created by PolicyWise, the Alberta Human Rights Commission, and the Canadian Immigrant Women's Association.

If the youth and the person responsible for making the accommodation can't come to an agreement, the youth can clarify their request and explain how it's connected to a protected ground. It may be helpful to put the request in writing, including details about what the youth needs, why it's important, and possible solutions.

If the youth and the service provider are still not able to come to an agreement, the youth can raise the issue with someone higher up at the organization. They can also reach out to the [Alberta Human Rights Commission](#) or the [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) for help, depending on the jurisdiction.

Tyler sends an email to their teacher documenting the conversation:

"Hi Ms. Harris,

We had a meeting today where we talked about my needs in gym class connected to my gender identity. I gave you a letter from my doctor and told you that I need to find an alternative way to complete my Phys Ed class. We came up with a plan where I'll do Phys Ed by at-home learning. You'll talk to the guidance counsellor about our agreement and he'll get me registered. I appreciate you working with me to figure out how I can still get my credits!

Thanks,

Tyler"

Discrimination

Discrimination can be intentional or unintentional.⁵⁷ It can be out in the open or indirect, such as when a policy has an unfair impact. Actions, policies, or practices that treat people unfairly based on a protected ground are considered discrimination even where there was no intention to cause harm.

Harassment is a form of discrimination where someone repeatedly offends or humiliates a person based on a protected ground.⁵⁷ Sometimes even a single serious incident is considered harassment. Harassment can include unwelcome comments or jokes, bullying, gossiping, threats, intimidation, or unwelcome physical or sexual contact.

Hate is an extreme form of discrimination. Legally, hate includes actions based on an unreasonable extreme opinion about someone's identity.^{18,58} Hate sends the message that people should be despised, disrespected, and treated poorly because of who they are and attacks their dignity and worth.⁵⁸ Some acts of hate are crimes under Canadian law.⁵⁹

Human rights cases in Canada have demonstrated that discrimination against 2S/T/NB/GD people in protected areas can look like:

- Repeatedly, carelessly, or deliberately using the wrong name, pronouns, gendered language, or gendered nicknames.^{28,29,60-63} This includes repeatedly misgendering people who use they/them/theirs pronouns.^{60,63}
- Refusing to recognize their gender unless they can prove they have had gender-affirming surgery.^{61,64,65}
- **Outing** them.^{62,66,67}

Harassment

A form of discrimination where someone repeatedly offends or humiliates a person based on a protected ground.³¹

Hate

Discrimination based on an unreasonable extreme opinion about someone's identity, sending the message that people with that identity should be despised and treated poorly.^{17,32}

Outing

Revealing someone's private gender identity or sexual orientation without their consent.

- Denying them service because they're 2S/T/NB/GD.^{30,68,69}
- Not allowing them to use the bathroom or changeroom aligned with their gender identity.^{61,70,71}
- Not dealing with discrimination by others promptly.^{60-63,72}
- Calling them names, such as slurs.^{61,63,70,71}
- Making unwelcome personal comments or asking questions about their body, sexuality, or which bathroom they use.²⁸
- Expressing discomfort about their transition or gender identity, even when based on religious beliefs.^{28,73}
- Not hiring them because they're 2S/T/NB/GD, even if to protect them from potential violence at work.⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶
- Being hostile to them because of their efforts to address workplace discrimination.⁶⁰
- Firing them for a reason connected to their gender identity or expression, including for how they responded to discrimination that the employer didn't address in a timely way, even if they're on probation at work.^{60,61}
- Making public statements likely to expose them to hatred or contempt.⁷⁷
- Not providing gender marker options for non-binary people on legal documents.⁷⁸
- Denying them medically necessary care following gender-affirming surgery while they're in police custody.²⁹
- Not allowing them to choose the gender of the officer doing a body search.⁷⁹
- Denying requests for municipal pride recognitions because of an individual town councillors' personal disagreement with 2SLGBTQIA+ identities.^{80,81}



The Alberta Human Rights Act and other human rights laws only apply in protected areas.^{17,22} While similar behaviour might happen in other spaces, such as at home, among friends, or on the street, human rights laws do not protect people in these situations. In some cases, civil or criminal law may offer protection instead.^{59,82}

Addressing Discrimination

Experiencing discrimination can be upsetting and difficult to navigate. While the Act and other human rights laws provide protections and complaints processes, filing a complaint isn't the right choice for everyone in all situations. The complaints process can be long, complex, and emotionally draining. Youth may prefer to address discrimination using other strategies first.

If it feels safe to do so, youth can tell the person that their behaviour is unwelcome or unfair and ask them to stop. Try bringing up the issue as soon as possible and provide clear examples of what happened. If the behaviour continues or youth don't feel safe addressing it themselves, they can tell a caregiver, teacher, administrator, facilitator, manager, or employer what happened. Youth can also try engaging with the organization's process for addressing discrimination, if one exists.

Youth can call the Commission's [confidential inquiry line](#) to privately talk to someone about their situation and figure out what steps they can take. The information they receive can help them decide how they would like to address the situation.

Depending on where the discrimination happened, there may be several formal processes available to address it. Check out this [flowchart](#) to see some options. Youth can still submit a complaint to the Commission even if they've already submitted a complaint through other formal processes.

Keeping records of the discrimination can help if youth and their caregivers decide to pursue a formal complaint through internal organizational processes, human rights commissions, or the courts.

Youth and caregivers may wish to discuss the situation with a lawyer. In some situations, caregivers may be able to take legal action through civil court against the person, organization, or government who discriminated against a youth.⁸²⁻⁸⁵ Lawyers' services can be expensive, but there are many low- and no-cost services available. Check out the [Legal Supports](#) list at the end of this guide to find legal service providers across Alberta.

If the discrimination involved an administrative decision made by the Alberta government or one of its agencies, boards, commissions, municipalities, the Alberta Health Services Patient Concerns Process, or a provincial professional regulating body, youth can file a complaint with the organization that made the decision.⁸⁶ If they aren't satisfied with the response, they can submit an appeal. If this doesn't resolve the situation, families can file a [complaint](#) with the [Office of the Alberta Ombudsman](#).

Youth may find it helpful to keep track of:

What happened, when and where it happened, and how it made them feel.

Steps they took to stop or report the discrimination.

Emails, messages, or documents related to the discrimination and steps they took to address it.

The names and contact information of any witnesses.



The Ombudsman works under the [Ombudsman Act](#) to ensure Alberta's public sector operates fairly and according to its internal rules and legislation.⁸⁶ For more information about what kinds of complaints the Alberta Ombudsman can investigate, check out their [website](#).

If the discrimination involved child intervention or youth justice services, contact the [Office of the Child and Youth Advocate](#) for support.⁸⁷

If a youth was a victim of a crime, they can contact local police services. Some discriminatory acts may also be crimes. Hate crimes, for example, can include promoting genocide, making public statements inciting or promoting hate towards a protected group, or damaging property motivated by hate.⁵⁹ Other crimes that could be a part of discrimination include physical or sexual assault, certain kinds of harassment, and property damage.

Youth can report non-criminal hate incidents using StopHateAB's [form](#).⁸⁸ StopHateAB collects anonymous reports to better understand hate incidents in Alberta. They don't investigate incidents or follow up with people who submit reports.

★ Discrimination in Healthcare

Like other service providers, healthcare providers can't deny youth care based on their gender identity or expression.¹⁷

If a healthcare provider denies a youth's request for a procedure or treatment, the youth can ask questions to better understand why. For example, healthcare providers are not required to provide treatments or procedures that are outside their scope of practice or training.⁸⁹ If the youth isn't satisfied with the healthcare provider's response, they can speak to someone in charge of the clinic, hospital, or network. Youth can also ask the provider to document the refusal and the reasons for it in their health records.

Healthcare systems have formal complaint processes. Large health organizations, such as [Alberta Health Services](#) or [Covenant Health](#), have patient relations processes for addressing concerns. If the issue involves a regulated health or mental health professional, youth can reach out to the professional regulatory organization, for example the [College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta](#), [College of Registered Nurses of Alberta](#), [College of Alberta Psychologists](#), or [Alberta College of Social Workers](#).

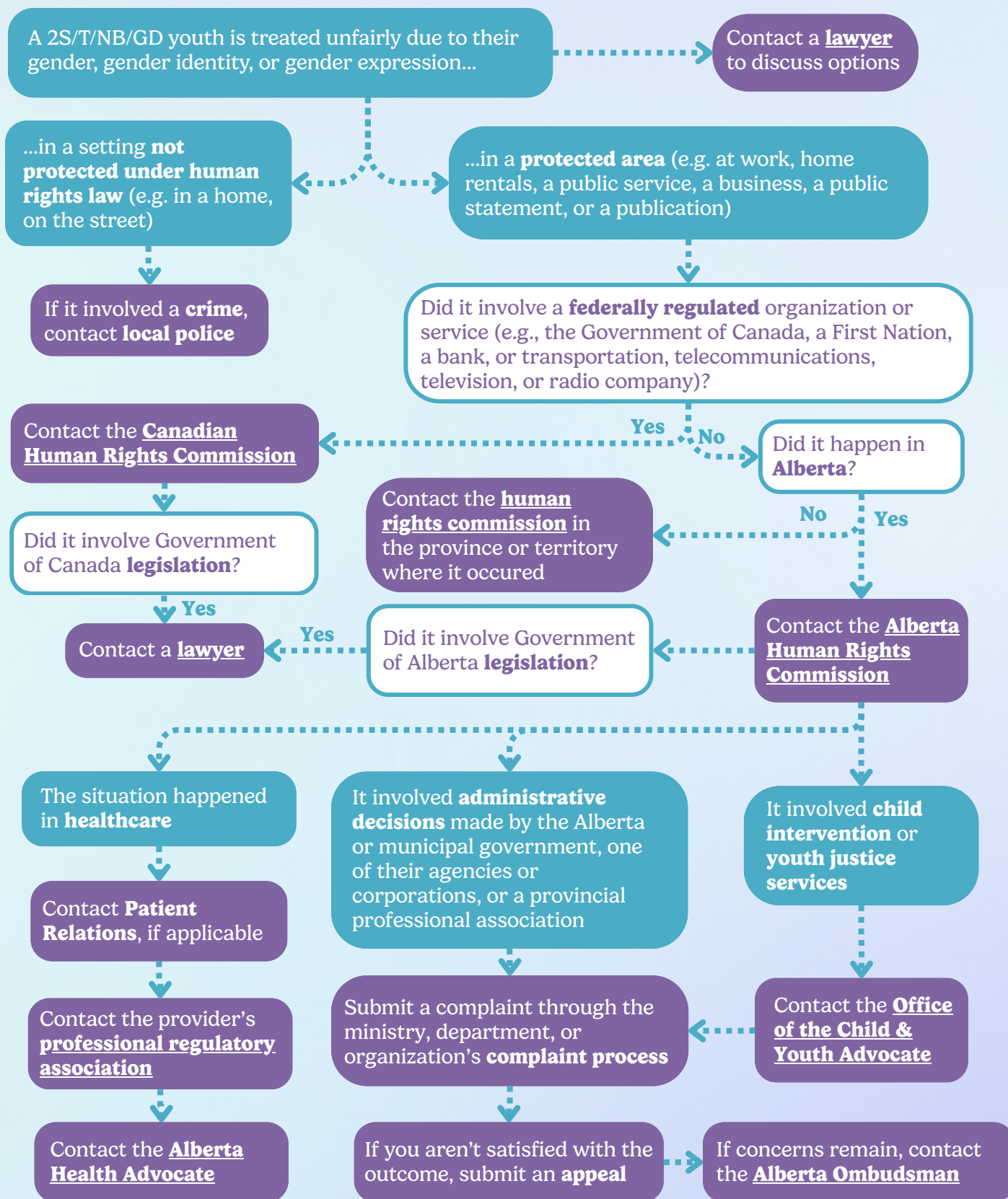
Alberta Health Act & Advocate

The [Alberta Health Act](#) outlines the principles guiding the healthcare system in Alberta.⁹⁰ Under this Act, Alberta's [Health Charter](#) describes what patients can expect from the healthcare system and their responsibilities in their own care.⁹¹ Patients can expect to:

- Have their personal beliefs and values acknowledged
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Have an opportunity to raise concerns without fear of impact on their care

For the full list of expectations, check out the [Health Charter](#). The [Health Advocate](#) investigates situations where healthcare services don't follow the principles in the Health Charter.⁹² Patients can connect with the Health Advocate using their [inquiry form](#). Bear Paw Media and Education offers a [guide](#) to understanding Alberta's Health Charter.

When youth and their caregivers want to use formal channels to resolve discrimination, they have options. The process can be challenging. Families get to decide if pursuing a complaint is right for them.



Filing Complaints with the Alberta Human Rights Commission

If a young person experiences discrimination in an area protected by the Alberta Human Rights Act, they can file a complaint with the Commission.⁹³ Protected areas include:¹⁷

- Workplaces
- Businesses, services, accommodations, and facilities
- Unions and professional associations
- Rental housing and commercial tenancy
- Statements, publications, and notices in Alberta

Youth must file complaints with the Commission within one year of the incident.⁹⁵ There is no cost to get information or make a complaint. Throughout the complaints process, youth can have a support person with them. For a high-level overview of the complaints process, check out this [graphic](#).

Complaints about discrimination in organizations and companies regulated by the Government of Canada should be submitted to the [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#).⁹⁵ For more information, check out the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal's [website](#).

If youth experience discrimination in another province or territory, they can reach out to the local human rights commission. If youth and their caregivers are unsure where to file their complaint, the Alberta Human Rights Commission can help them figure out the appropriate process.

Contact Information

Go to the Commission's [website](#) or [guide](#) for more information about making a complaint.

For a visual overview of the complaints process, check out this [infographic](#).

You can also:

- Call the Commission's Confidential Inquiry Line at 780-427-7661 or 310-0000 (toll-free)
- Email ahrc.registrar@gov.ab.ca



★ What Happens After a Complaint is Filed?

When the Commission receives a complaint, they make sure it falls under the Act and the [Commission's Bylaws](#).⁹³

If the Commission accepts the complaint, they'll ask the person or group the complaint is against (the respondent) for a written response.⁹³ Based on the response, the Commission will figure out the next steps.

If the Commission doesn't accept the complaint, they'll send the person who made the complaint (the complainant) a letter explaining their decision.⁹³ If the complainant disagrees with the decision, they can ask the Director of the Commission to reconsider.

Most accepted complaints go through a process called **conciliation** where a human rights officer helps the complainant and respondent come to an agreement about how to proceed, called a resolution.⁹⁶

If the parties can't come to a resolution, the Director of the Commission can dismiss the complaint or send it to the Alberta Human Rights Tribunal.⁹³

A member of the Tribunal will work with the parties to try to resolve the complaint.⁹⁷ If they still aren't able to come to a resolution, the complaint will go to a hearing. At the hearing, both sides present their cases to Tribunal members. The Tribunal members then make a decision about the case and may order remedies to address the discrimination.

To file a complaint with the Commission, youth can:⁹⁴

1. Take detailed notes about the discrimination.
2. Complete the Commission's [self-assessment tool](#) to see if their complaint fits under the Act.
3. Complete the Human Rights Complaint [form](#) with the help of a supportive adult.

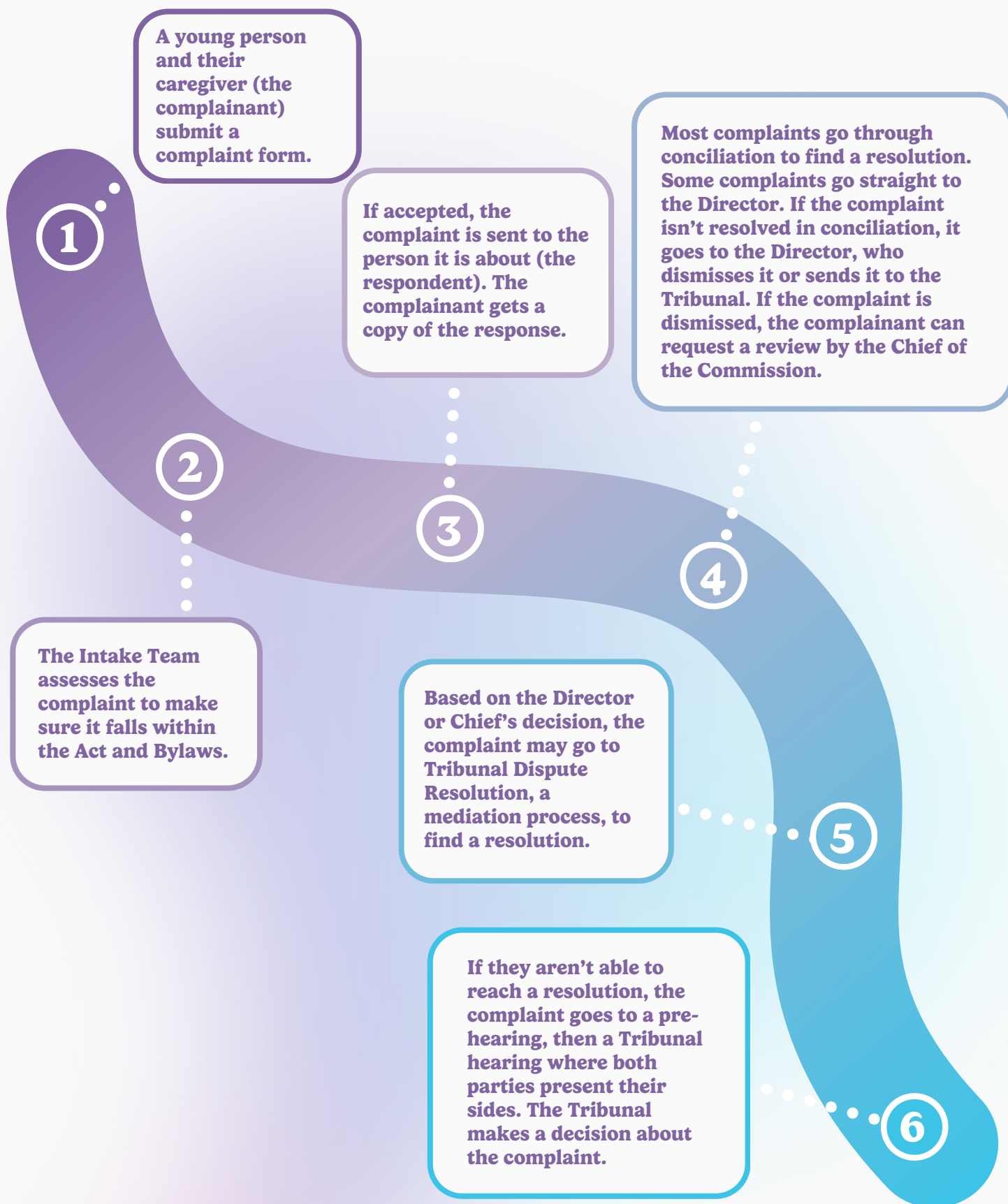
If the youth is under 18, a parent or legal guardian will generally represent them. A lawyer, service provider, or another trusted person or group may also be able to represent them, with their parent or guardian's consent.

Conciliation

A non-adversarial way to resolve complaints with the help of a human rights officer.⁹⁶

we do grow up, we do thrive, and we do have the ability to create beautiful lives for ourselves.

Alberta Human Rights Commission Complaint Process⁹⁸



Fostering Inclusion

Creating environments where 2S/T/NB/GD youth feel safe and included helps prevent discrimination. People in charge of protected areas can create a welcoming environment by making sure their policies and practices consider 2S/T/NB/GD youths' needs. Youth and caregivers can collaborate with people working in protected areas to amplify youths' needs and help create more equitable programs, services, and workplaces.

Some ways to foster inclusion include:

- Listening to 2S/T/NB/GD youth to better understand their needs and experiences.
- Providing staff with trainings and resources that build their knowledge and understanding of 2S/T/NB/GD youth.
- Including pronouns in introductions and using gender-inclusive language.
- Making sure youth have access to gender-inclusive washrooms and changerooms.
- Including positive representations of 2S/T/NB/GD people in program materials.
- Elevating 2S/T/NB/GD voices through partnerships with 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations.
- Ensuring policies, forms, and eligibility requirements are inclusive of 2S/T/NB/GD youth.
- Creating a gender transition policy outlining how the organization will support people who are coming out, updating internal records, or navigating discrimination.^{46,49}
- Having a clear anti-discrimination policy and ensuring youth know how to report concerns.
- Taking discrimination seriously and responding quickly.
- Staying open to ongoing learning, self reflection, and feedback from 2S/T/NB/GD youth.



Legal Supports

- [Pride Centre of Edmonton](#) has a justice navigator and legal clinics, hosted in partnership with [Edmonton Community Legal Centre](#).
- [Skipping Stone](#) also offers a justice navigation program.
- [Alberta Human Rights Commission](#) provides human rights information and a complaints process for Alberta.
- [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) provides human rights information and a complaints process for Canada.
- [Alberta Ombudsman](#) investigates complaints of unfair treatment in Alberta's public sector administration.
- [Alberta Law Libraries](#) provides a directory of legal services, including free legal supports.
- [Pro Bono Law Alberta](#) has a list of free legal clinics.
- [Egale Canada](#) provides legal advocacy on particular issues, including the protection of gender-diverse youth.
- [Student Legal Services of Edmonton – Human Rights Project](#) provides legal information and support for human rights complaints for people with low income.
- [Workers' Resource Centre](#) provides legal support to workers in Alberta, including in cases of discrimination.
- [Government of Alberta](#) provides support and information for people engaging with Albertan courts.
- [Student Legal Services of Edmonton – Trans ID Clinic](#) provides free support to change names and gender markers on government IDs in Edmonton.
- [Skipping Stone – Trans ID Clinics](#) provide free support for changing names and gender markers on ID documents in Calgary and virtually.
- [StopHateAB](#) offers a form to document hate incidents in Alberta.



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