

WORKERS RESOURCE KIT



Humanitarian crises and pandemics result in human rights concerns and aggravate existing human rights susceptibilities. The huge number of people affected by these disasters has increased in recent years. If not addressed and corrected, the impact on people's lives creates tremendous sufferings, injustices, and heinousness. Most impacted are essential workers and front-liners. This was evident in the outbreaks that happened in meatpacking plants in Alberta, specifically Cargill and JBS, when systemic barriers, including poor and unsafe conditions, job insecurities and vulnerabilities, increased racism in and outside their workplace were exacerbated due to the impacts of the pandemic.

The prevention and alleviation of the crisis brought about by Covid19 have been a challenge to most countries and the business industries. Violations of rights and abuses had caused and led to physical harm and injuries, mental anxieties, and psychological impacts, most especially in the marginalized and vulnerable sectors.

In Alberta, 12 protected grounds on which the Alberta Human Rights Act (AHR Act) prohibits discrimination in employment based on race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical and mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, and sexual orientation.

Employers are expected to create an inclusive workplace that respects the dignity of every individual. Under the AHR Act, employees have the right to:

- Work in a respectful, inclusive work environment free of discrimination;
- Be accommodated based on their needs related to the protected grounds;
- Make a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission if they believe discrimination has occurred based on a protected ground.

Basic Worker's Rights

All workers in Canada have three basic workers' rights:

1. The Right to Know
2. The Right to Participate
3. The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

1. The Right to Know

You have the right to know about danger on the job and how to protect yourself.

2. The Right to Participate

You have the right to participate in health and safety training, and to report if you see unsafe activities.

3. The Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

You have the right to refuse work that is unsafe and puts you or your colleagues in danger.



Helpful Questions

Stay Safe

- Have you had your training yet?
- Is the training too fast or too difficult to understand?
- Do you have your PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)?
- Do you know what to do in an Emergency?
- Do you know who your supervisor and / or Manager are if you have concerns?

Stay Healthy

- Are you feeling ok or do you have COVID-19 symptoms?
- Do you know your sick policy?
- Are you physically distancing?
- Are you taking precautions like sanitizing workspaces, washing hands and wearing a mask?

On-the-job Reminders

- If you see something unsafe, tell your supervisor.
- If you're not ok because your work is unsafe, or you feel discrimination, tell your supervisor, your manager or Human Resources.
- Learn about workplace discrimination or harassment. This can include physical or mental abuse from your co-workers or customers.
- Your mental health matters. Be sure to talk to someone if you are feeling stressed, bullied or anxious.

Essential Worker's Rights

As an essential worker, there are laws that protect you in Alberta and Canada. It is important that you know your rights in the workplace and the responsibilities of your employer.

As a worker, you have the right to:

- Refuse work that you believe is not safe for you or your co-worker
- Be paid for the work you do
- Be provided training if you need one to do your job safely
- Be free from harassment at your workplace
- Be free from discrimination at your workplace
- Keep your passport or work permit
- Have a safe workplace
- Know about the hazards or dangers present at your workplace



What can I do to be safe at work?

- Participate in scheduled occupational health and safety trainings at work
- Report unsafe conditions or practices at work and not be punished for reporting
- Ask for training if you do not know how to do something
- Use the required safety equipment and clothing for you job
- Avoid violence in the workplace
- Report unsafe work practices

What should you expect from your Employer?

It is the responsibility of your employer to:

- Pay you for work
- Ensure that your workplace is safe
- Provide any personal protective equipment that you need to be safe while at work
- Respect the terms of your written contract

Your employer cannot:

- Force you to do a job you were not hired or trained to do
- Force you to work if you are sick or injured
- Take your passport or work permit away from you
- Deport you from Canada
- Change your immigration status
- Make you pay the back the fees they paid to hire you

Reporting

It is important that employees who make complaints of harassment/discriminations keep detailed notes of the action, names of witnesses should be recorded in the event the complaint proceeds to an internal workplace investigation or a formal human rights complaint at the Alberta Human Rights Commission. A complaint must be made to the Alberta Human Rights Commission within one year after the alleged discrimination date.

Harassment occurs when someone is subjected to unwelcome verbal and physical conduct. It can also be defined as an act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated, or assaulted in his employment. It is prohibited in Alberta under the AHR Act. Three workplace harassment are verbal/written, physical, and visual.

All workers in Canada are protected under Canadian Law. Canada takes the abuse of temporary foreign workers (TFW) seriously. Employers who abuse workers or the program could face a penalty or be banned from the program.



Things to know when making a report

- It is important to tell as much information as you can
- The information you tell is protected by Canada's privacy laws
- The government will never tell your employer or anyone at your workplace who made the report
- You do not have to give your name, phone number or LMIA/work permit number to make a report
- You will not be contacted or share your information without your permission
- For privacy reasons, they cannot tell you about the status of a report

Information you will need to make a report

- The name, address, and phone number of the business or organization
- The name(s) or positions of the people involved
- What is the abuse

Other Ways to report abuse

- By phone
- In-person
- By mail

Human right is a right acquired by being alive while civil rights are obtained by being a legal member of a certain political state or country. Victimization discrimination is when someone treats you badly or subjects you to harassment because you complain about discrimination or help someone who has been the victim of discrimination.



HELPLINES IN ALBERTA

Basic Needs, Labor Issues, Accessing Community Resources

Basic Information & Referral System

211 (24/7)

Cargill Food Union Representative, High River

Joe Attwood & Devin Yeager
1-888-468-6466

ActionDignity

915 33 St., NE, Calgary, AB T2A 6T2 | Phone:
403-263-9900
www.actiondignity.org

Migrante Alberta

403-392-8286
www.migrantealberta.ca/

Legal Counseling & Information, Human Rights, Basic Needs, Health Care

Worker Resource Center

440 - 999 8th St., SW Calgary, AB T2R 1J5
403-264-8100
www.helpwrc.org/

Alberta Civil Liberties Research

2500 University Drive, NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4
403-220-2505
www.aclrc.com/navigating-the-legal-system

Women's Centre of Calgary

39 4 St., NE, Calgary, AB, T2E 3R6
403-264-1155
www.womenscentrecalgary.org

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

200 - 138 4 Ave., SE, Calgary, AB T2G 4Z6
403-263-4414
www.ciwa-online.com

Settlement, Newcomers, Immigrants, Refugees, Job Search, Employment & Language Training

Centre for Newcomers

125 - 565 36 St., NE, Calgary, AB T2A 6K3
403-569-3325

The Immigrant Education Society (TIES)

3820 - 32 St., NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 7L9
403-291-0002 | 403-235-3666
www.immigrant-education.ca

Calgary Bridge Foundation For Youth (CBFY)

203 - 602 11 Ave., SW, Calgary, AB T2R 1M7
403-230-7745
www.cbfy.ca

Financial, Jobs Search, Homelessness, Seniors

Alberta Supports (Alberta Income Support)

Toll-Free 1-877-644-9992 (In Alberta)
TTY 1-800-232-7215 Toll-free in Alberta
TTY 780-427-9999 Edmonton

Alberta Works Centre

9499 137 Ave., NW, Edmonton, AB T5E 5R8
780-422-9440

Health and Mental Wellness

Distress Centre of Calgary (24-hour crisis line)

999 8th St., SW, Calgary, AB T2H 1J5
403-266-HELP (4357)

Alberta Supports

Call Alberta Supports: Help is available in more than 100 languages

Call between 7:30 am to 8 pm (open Monday to Friday, closed statutory holidays)

Toll free: 1-877-644-9992 (in Alberta)

TTY – ask to speak to Alberta Supports.

TTY: 1-800-232-7215 toll free (in Alberta)

TTY: 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

www.alberta.ca/alberta-supports.aspx

Athabasca Alberta Supports Centre

3rd Floor Duniece Centre, 4810 50 St., Athabasca, Alberta T9S 1C9
780-675-2243
www.css.athabascado.gov.ab.ca

Barrhead Alberta Supports Centre

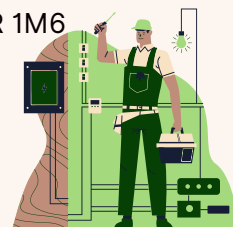
Provincial Building, 6203 49 St., Barrhead, Alberta T7N 1A4
780-674-8345
www.css.barrheaddo@gov.ab.ca

Bonnyville Alberta Supports Centre

5401 44 St., Bonnyville, Alberta T9H 2G3
780-826-4175
www.css.bonnyvilledo@gov.ab.ca

Brooks Alberta Supports Centre

200 - 600 Cassils Road East, Brooks, AB T1R 1M6
403-362-1278
www.css.southreg@gov.ab.ca



HELPLINES IN ALBERTA

Health and Mental Wellness (CONT.)

Calgary Central-Lancore Alberta Supports Centre

Main Floor Lancore Building, 1021 10 Ave., SW

Calgary, AB

403-297-2094

www.css.ds-calgary@gov.ab.ca

Calgary East - Westland Alberta Supports Centre

Main Floor Westland Professional Centre

2752 Sunridge Way, NE , Calgary AB, T1Y 0A5

403-297-1907

TTY 1-800-232-7215

www.ds-calgary@gov.ab.ca

Calgary North - One Executive Place Alberta Supports Centre

1816 Crowchild Trail NW, Calgary, AB T2M 3Y7

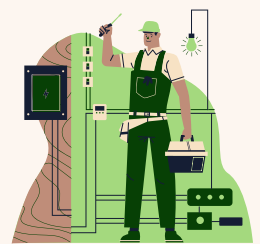
403-297-7200

www.css.ds-calgary@gov.ab.ca

Calgary South - Heritage Square Alberta Supports Centre

403-297-2020

www.css.heritage@gov.ab.ca



This project is through the support of our funding partner:



The **BRAVE Workers Program** (**B**elieve in the **R**ights and **V**alue of **E**ssential **W**orkers) highlights and addresses the challenges and barriers of racialized essential workers in meat-packing plants to ensure that their human and labour rights are enforced. BRAVE Workers help pave the way to reduce racial inequities exacerbated by COVID-19 through systems change as communities continue to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, labour groups & unions, service providers and government agencies.

Credits:

- Amaka Agonsi, Catamount Fellowship for Emerging Changemakers, Mount Royal University
- Marilou Roxas, Community Support Workers Program, AGA Academy
- Juanito Gegajos, The Immigrant Education Society
- BRAVE Workers project team, ActionDignity

Sources:

- Alberta Human Rights -<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>
- 10 Rights at Work You Probably Didn't Know You Have in Alberta - <https://www.cplea.ca/rightsatwork/10-rights-you-probably-didnt-know/>
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety -<https://www.ccohs.ca/>
- Fronteirs -<https://www.frontiersin.org/>
- Our work on human rights in humanitarian action, United Nations, Workers Rights <https://www.ohchr.org/en/humanitarian-crises/our-work-human-rights-humanitarian>

