

# PUBLIC SPACES/ SERVICES

## Trans people in British Columbia have:

The right to go about our daily activities free from **harassment** and **violence**. Unfortunately some people feel the need to 'gender police' spaces like washrooms and change rooms. People may become aggressive or call security if they believe someone is in the 'wrong' space. See our Harassment and Violence fact sheet or check our website for more information.

The right to access the same general **services** as anyone else. This includes restaurants, bars, grocery stores, health clubs, public transportation, social services, schools, and clinics.

Businesses cannot refuse to serve us because we are trans, because their staff is uncomfortable with trans people, or because the staff thinks that customers may be uncomfortable with trans people.

The right to be given access to **washrooms** and **change rooms** that correspond with our felt gender. We have this right regardless of our anatomy.

The right to access **gendered spaces** that correspond with our felt gender, regardless of our anatomy.

### Activist Spotlight

Coming from a Chinese Canadian cultural background, Tara Chee (featured above) was keenly aware of the way queer and trans people of colour face marginalization within broader queer communities, as well as many linguistic and cultural communities. This drove her to become the first trans board member of Our City of Colours (OCC), which works to address the issues of LGBTQ people of colour. Tara's smiling face appears in OCC's poster campaign, which raises the visibility of trans people of colour from the walls of libraries, community centres, clinics, businesses, and schools across Canada. Visit our website to find out more about Tara's work.

Unfortunately, the right to receive gendered services and participate in gender-based activities has one exception. A transphobic court case decided that if the organization offering the service is a non-profit organization whose primary purpose is to serve women, it is allowed to discriminate against trans women. That said, many women's organizations welcome and include trans women.

### *How can you stand up for your rights?*

Advocate for **signage** that indicates that a gendered space welcomes trans people.

Advocate for more gender-neutral spaces, including **universal, accessible, single-user** washrooms and change rooms.

Advocate for **training** for service providers about how to be respectful of trans people.

**If you are denied access to a gendered space** (including a washroom or change room) that corresponds with your felt gender identity, you can file a human rights complaint under the BC Human Rights Code. See the *Human Rights Complaints* section of our website for more information. In cases where you are being discriminated against by an organization that claims it is covered by the one exception in the BC Human Rights Code, contact a lawyer.

*If you are denied services on the basis that you are trans, you can file a human rights complain under the BC Human Rights Code.*

**If there are no gender-neutral washrooms and you identify as non-binary**, you can file a human rights complaint under the BC Human Rights Code. See the *Human Rights Complaints* section of our website for more information.

**If you are denied services** on the basis that you are trans, you can file a human rights complaint under the BC Human Rights Code. See the *Human Rights Complaints* section of our website for more information.

**If you experience harassment or violence**, you can report the crime to the police. In some cases, you can sue or file a human rights complaint. See our *Harassment and Violence* resources for more information.

For information on organizations and resources that can help you stand up for your rights, please visit [transrightsbc.ca](http://transrightsbc.ca)

*The Catherine White Holman Wellness Centre and the VCH Transgender Health Information Program produced this document as general legal information. It was reviewed by The Law Office of barbara findlay, QC and is current as of July 2015. It is not legal advice, as each situation is unique.*