

How to ask employers and landlords for accommodation series

Part 1: Asking landlords for accommodation

Speaker: Demar Kemar Hewitt (BLAC)

Wednesday, October 15 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.



Land Acknowledgement



CLEO acknowledges that our office is located on the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat. This land is now also home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Today this area of Tkaronto, also known as Toronto, is covered by Treaty 13 between the Mississaugas of the Credit and the British Crown.

We acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonization, anti-Indigenous racism, white supremacy, and anti-Black racism on which this city and our legal system are built. We are all Treaty people and we commit to working in solidarity towards truth and reconciliation. We also remember those who were brought to this land involuntarily, particularly those who came as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. So we also honour and pay respect to the ancestors of African origin and descent.

What can you expect today?

- 90 minutes with a Q and A period.
- The webinar may contain legal information. As a reminder, this is not legal advice. The information is current as of today's date, October 15, 2025.
- Links to the recording, slides, and handout will be sent by email to all registrants within a few days.
- Subtitles (closed captioning) have been enabled.
- ASL interpretation is available today. Subtitles (closed captioning) have also been enabled.

Demar Kemar Hewitt
Executive Director and General Counsel
Black Legal Action Centre



BLACK LEGAL ACTION CENTRE

**Part 2 – Asking your Landlord for
Accommodation**

October 15, 2025

WARNING: TRAUMA TRIGGERS



Clinic Mental health support services:

- Legal Aid Ontario clinic staff support
- General Public Mental Health and Trauma support:
 - Across Boundaries
 - 416-787-3007 ext. 222
 - Naseeha
 - 1-866-627-3342
- Contact BLAC for additional referral:
 - 416-597-5831

Not legal advice

- Fictional scenarios
- General discussion on legal concepts
- Not intended as legal advice
- Does not create a lawyer-client relationship

Land Acknowledgement



We are on the Ancestral Traditional Territories of the Ojibway, the Anishnabe and, in particular, the Mississauga of the Credit. This territory is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty. It is also covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

Today, Tkaronto, the traditional Mohawk name of this area called Toronto, and its surrounding areas, are still home to Indigenous people. I am grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this land.

I also acknowledge the many people of African descent who are not settlers, but whose ancestors were forcibly displaced as part of the transatlantic slave trade, brought against their will, and made to work on these lands.

Indigenous sovereignty is deeply and inextricably linked to Black liberation and I will continue to mobilize and take action in solidarity with Indigenous people and communities.

Our objectives

- The Basics - Understanding the duty to accommodate
 - Guiding principles
- Requesting accommodation
 - Initiating the request
 - Useful information
 - Consider Housing Provider's Role
 - Procedural and substantive accommodation
 - Undue hardship

THE BASICS

- The legal framework
 - Ontario Human Rights Code
 - Rights to equal treatment and access (to rent or buy) in housing
 - Right to be free from discrimination
 - Applies to many types of rental or occupancy arrangements except shared housing
- The Duty
 - Duty imposed on housing provider to give effect to Code rights
 - Duty includes removing barriers (procedural, policy or physical)

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- Make the “need” known
 - Identifying your need
 - Code grounds
- What information can be provided (or requested):
 - Letter from regulated health professional (eg doctor, occupational therapist etc)
- What information is “overly broad and intrusive”:
 - Diagnosis information, details of medical condition or full medical records

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- State the limitations and impact
 - What information can be provided (or requested):
 - Details of functional limitation (eg. cannot climb stairs etc)
 - Doctors Note confirming mobility impairment
 - Copy of accessibility permit issued under *Accessible Parking for Persons with Disabilities regulation*
 - What information is unreasonable, “overly broad or intrusive”:
 - Physical proof or demonstration of show mobility issues
 - Specialized test

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- State the accommodation required (linked to the limitation)
 - Transfer to lower-level unit due to mobility issues;
 - closer parking spot due to ramp access
 - Ramp installation
 - Transfer to another building (eg. to avoid hostile environment)
- What information can be provided (or requested):
 - Specifics on how the accommodation requested will assist in overcoming the barriers
- What information is impermissible:
 - Treatment information to overcome the disability

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- Suggest cost solutions (if useful) – Undue hardship
 - Tenant contribution
 - Set-off
 - External grants or funding options
 - Google search on prices
 - Contractor quotes

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- Additional considerations (housing provider's role)
 - Procedural accommodation
 - Accept or investigate in good faith
 - Duty to inquire and gather information
 - Substantive accommodation
 - Duty to meaningfully engage with requestor
 - Determine whether the duty is triggered
 - Duty to provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATION

- “No pet” policies
 - Must be waived to accommodate a person with disability and support animal
- What information can be provided (or requested):
 - Proof of disability
 - Proof of service animal registration
- What information is unreasonable:
 - Proof of training for the animal

questions

Steps to Justice & Guided Pathways

- stepstojustice.ca
- stepstojustice.ca/guided-pathways-home/

CLEO Connect recorded webinars

- cleoconnect.ca/webinars

Community and legal resources



Black Legal Action Centre: blacklegalactioncentre.ca

[Find your community legal clinic](#) or call 1-800-668-8258

Legal Aid Ontario: [How do I apply for Legal Aid?](#)

[Visit Pro Bono Ontario](#) or call 1-855-255-7256

[Ontario Legal Information Centre](#) offers appointments with a lawyer, in English or French.

Resources

HR compare tool: <https://stepstojustice.ca/resource/options-discrim/>

[Ask for any accommodations you need - Steps to Justice](#)

[Tell your landlord you need accommodation for your disability - Steps to Justice](#)

[What are my rights as a tenant if I have a disability? - Steps to Justice](#)

[Have you experienced discrimination? – Human Rights Legal Support Centre](#)

[Asking for changes to your hearing - Steps to Justice](#)

[I have mobility issues. Does my landlord have to make adjustments to the rental unit for me? - Steps to Justice](#)

[Navigating the Human Rights Tribunal process: From application to decision - Part 1 - CLEO Connect](#)

[Navigating the Human Rights Tribunal process: From application to decision – Part 2 - CLEO Connect](#)

[Navigating the Human Rights Tribunal process: From application to decision - Part 3 - CLEO Connect](#)

[Addressing unhealthy conditions in rental housing: the case of mould - CLEO Connect](#)

Thank you for joining us!



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QUESTIONS or COMMENTS?

Contact info@cleoconnect.ca