



RELEASE

Marking the Hearing of *Elise Pendlebury v Government of Yukon* (Department of Economic Development)

May 23, 2024 – Whitehorse, YT – Yukon Human Rights Commission

A hearing into Elise Pendlebury’s human rights complaint of discrimination on the basis of political belief, political association or political activity is scheduled to take place from May 28 to 31, 2024, commencing at 9:00am at IRP Property Developments Inc., The Khutàn Room, at 316-105 Titanium Way, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Elise Pendlebury (the “Complainant”) filed a complaint with the Yukon Human Rights Commission in November 2022, alleging that her employer, the Government of Yukon, Department of Economic Development (the “Respondent”), discriminated against her on the basis of her political beliefs and activities. Specifically, the Complainant alleges that the Respondent treated her unfavourably with respect to the following two political beliefs and activities:

- a) the Complainant’s participation on the board of directors for the Watson Lake Daycare; and
- b) comments made by the Complainant on Facebook and to news outlets regarding the Complainant’s employment, particularly in relation to the Respondent’s decentralization policy.

Subsection 7(j) of the *Human Rights Act* lists political belief, political association or political activity as prohibited grounds of discrimination. Section 9(b) prohibits discrimination in connection with any aspect of employment or application for employment.

The Respondent’s position is that the complaint should be dismissed with costs.

The Commission is taking the position that the Respondent has discriminated against the Complainant on the basis of political belief, political association or political activity. The remedy sought includes:

- a) damages for injury to dignity, feelings and self-respect per paragraph 24(1)(d) of the *Act*;
- b) damages for any financial loss suffered as a result of the discrimination as per paragraph 24(1)(c) of the *Act*;
- c) an order that the Respondent’s management staff receive half-day training in human rights from the Commission; and
- d) orders for the Respondent to pay the Commission’s costs, with pre-judgment and post-judgment interest.

The hearing is before Yukon's Human Rights Board of Adjudication, an independent body created under the Yukon *Human Rights Act* to hear human rights complaints once they are investigated and referred by the Commission. The Board of Adjudication will consist of Judith Hartling (Chief Adjudicator), Julie Jai, and Roxane Larouche.

The Yukon Human Rights Commission is an independent body that promotes equality and human rights through research, training, public education, and enforcement of the Yukon *Human Rights Act*. The Commission will be represented at the hearing by Kelly McMillan and Caroline Grady.

For further information please contact Karen Moir, Director, at director@yukonhumanrights.ca, call us at (867) 667-6226 or visit our website www.yukonhumanrights.ca.