

The Times, They are a Changin'...

The British Columbia Government recently introduced Bill 50, *The Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2018*. If passed, this Bill will significantly change B.C.'s human rights regime, which hasn't been the subject of change since 2002. Noteworthy, the Bill proposes to do the following:

- Extend the time for filling a complaint from 6 months to 12 months
- Create a Human Rights Commissioner with a broad mandate to promote and prevent discrimination, convene public inquiries, as well as to intervene in complaints and court proceedings
- Create an advisory council to advise the Commissioner on human rights issues
- Impose a legislatively mandated review of the Commission and advisory council every 5 years

These proposed changes will necessarily have an impact on employers in British Columbia. In particular, the extension of the limitation period for filing a complaint from 6 to 12 months will decrease an employer's ability to predict its potential liability in a timely manner.

In addition, the role that the Commissioner will play will be determined largely by the specific individual's priorities or agenda. Although the Commissioner does not have the power to initiate a human rights complaint with the Tribunal, they will have a right to intervene into complaints. It is more likely that these interventions will occur on behalf of the Complainant.

Bill 50 has already passed its second reading and it is not anticipated that any significant changes will take place before it becomes law. We will keep you updated on this developing story.

If you have any questions about these legislative changes or your organization's human rights obligations generally, please contact an e2r® Advisor.