

NOVEMBER 30, 2018

**BLOG**

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### **AMENDMENTS TO THE *HUMAN RIGHTS CODE* RECEIVE ROYAL ASSENT**

Bill 50, the *Human Rights Code Amendment Act*, which re-establishes the British Columbia Human Rights Commission, received royal assent on November 27, 2018. The Commission had been previously disbanded in 2002 by the BC Liberals. Bill 50 also creates an office of the Human Rights Commissioner, who will head the new Commission.

The powers of the Commissioner are numerous, but are focused on the protection of human rights. Where the Human Rights Tribunal is has been granted the limited jurisdiction to investigate specific complaints of discrimination, the Commissioner is expected to take a proactive role in, for example, identifying and promoting the elimination of discriminatory practices, policies, and programs, with a view to broad and systemic issues.

Also of interest to local governments will be the extension of the previous limitation period for filing human rights complaints from six months to one year.

***Nick Falzon***