

POSITION PROFILE

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER (WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS)

Position Title:	Human Rights Commissioner
Reports to:	Chief Human Rights Commissioner
Appointed by:	Governor-General on the advice of the Minister of Justice
Time commitment:	Full-time (reduced time commitment may be negotiable)
Term:	Up to 5 years
Salary:	As fixed by Remuneration Authority
Expenses:	Travel, telephone calls etc, met by the Commission for Commission related business.
Location:	The preferred location of the position is Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch

Human Rights Commission

The Commission is an independent Crown entity established under the Human Rights Act 1993. The Commission works with Government and civil society to promote respect for human rights, encourage harmonious race relations and equal employment opportunities, and to resolve complaints about discrimination and related issues.

Membership of Commission

The Commission consists of the following Human Rights Commissioners:

- (a) the Chief Commissioner; and
- (b) not less than 3 and not more than 4 other Commissioners.

There must be a Commissioner, other than the Chief Commissioner, appointed to lead the work of the Commission in each of the following priority areas:

- (a) disability rights (the Disability Rights Commissioner);
- (b) equal employment opportunities (including pay equity) (the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner);
- (c) race relations (the Race Relations Commissioner).

Functions of the Human Rights Commission

The Commission's main functions are to:

- Advocate and promote respect for, and an understanding and appreciation of, human rights in New Zealand society
- Encourage the maintenance and development of harmonious relations between individuals and among the diverse groups in New Zealand society
- Lead, evaluate, monitor and advise on equal employment opportunities
- Provide information to members of the public who have questions about unlawful discrimination and facilitate resolution of disputes relating to unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief (lack of a religious belief), colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status, sexual orientation or sexual harassment or racial harassment in the areas of employment, education, access to public places, the provision of goods and services, housing and accommodation, partnerships, qualifying bodies, organisations of employees and employers, vocational training and trade and professional associations, government or public sector activities.

Applicants should refer to section 5 of the Act for the full range of the Commission's functions.

Role of Commissioners

Section 7(1) of the Human Rights Act 1993 provides that the members of the Commission acting together determine the strategic direction and the general nature of activities undertaken in the performance of the Commission's functions.

Additional functions of Commissioner appointed or designated to lead work of Commission in priority areas

A Commissioner who is appointed or designated to lead the work of the Commission in a priority area has the following additional functions:

- (a) to lead discussions of the Commission in relation to that priority area of work:
- (b) to provide advice and leadership on matters in that priority area of work that arise in the course of activities undertaken in the performance of the Commission's functions, both when engaging in those activities and when consulted:
- (c) to contribute to the public debate on matters in that priority area of work:
- (d) any other functions or duties conferred or imposed upon him or her by or under this Act or any other enactment.

However, the exercise by a Commissioner of the functions is subject to directions given by the Chief Commissioner in the exercise of his or her responsibilities.

Criteria for appointment

Section 11(1) of the Act provides that in recommending persons for appointment as Commissioners or alternate Commissioners, the Minister must have regard to the need for Commissioners and alternate Commissioners appointed to have among them.

- (a) knowledge of, or experience in:
 - (i) different aspects of matters likely to come before the Commission
 - (ii) New Zealand law, or the law of another country, or international law, on human rights
 - (iii) the Treaty of Waitangi and rights of indigenous peoples
 - (iv) current economic, employment, or social issues
 - (v) cultural issues and the needs and aspirations (including life experiences) of different communities of interest and population groups in New Zealand society.
- (b) skills in, or experience in:
 - (i) advocacy or public education
 - (ii) business, commerce, economics, industry, or financial or personnel management
 - (iii) community affairs
 - (iv) public administration, or the law relating to public administration.

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KEY COMPETENCIES

- 1. Relevant professional qualifications or experience**
- 2. Appreciation of human rights issues**
- 3. Leadership skills**
- 4. Relationship management ability**

The successful applicants will have/be able to demonstrate:

Relevant professional qualifications or experience

- A tertiary qualification in a relevant discipline or comparable career experience
- Career experience at a senior level reflecting good judgement, integrity and impartiality
- Analytical skill and demonstrable clarity of thought
- Experience in advocacy or public education
- Experience of governance
Experience in working with diverse groups and familiarity with dispute resolution processes
- Broad experience of working in the disability sector

Appreciation of human rights issues

- Understanding of, and sensitivity to, Treaty of Waitangi issues
- Familiarity with issues relating to minority and disadvantaged groups
- Understanding of the issues arising from the multi-ethnic nature of the New Zealand population, including the need for different strategies and networks to communicate successfully with the various ethnic communities
- Understanding of the Human Rights Act 1993, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and New Zealand's obligations under various United Nations conventions
Familiarity with issues facing employers and employees in a diverse workforce
- Familiarity with issues relating to persons with disabilities that arise across the disability sector
- Appreciation of issues, trends and developments in human rights arising in other countries or internationally, with a focus on the human rights of persons with disabilities, and of the relevance of those issues or trends in New Zealand
- Understanding of the New Zealand Disability Strategy and, more generally, of human rights as they apply to persons with disabilities
Appreciation of the key goals of Government and their relevance to significant social issues

Leadership skills

- The ability to provide vision and strategic leadership, to set clear policies and priorities, and to motivate staff
 - The ability to provide advice and leadership arising in the course of the activities undertaken in the performance of the Commission's functions
 - An understanding of good management practices and the ability to apply these effectively to achieve organisational goals and objectives
 - An appreciation of public sector management as set out in the Public Finance Act 1989
 - An appreciation of the Crown entity governance and operation role as set out in the Crown Entities Act 2004
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- **Relationship management ability**
 - The ability to establish and maintain constructive relationships at all levels both externally and internally
 - The ability to work collegially with the Chief Commissioner and other Commissioners
 - The ability to stimulate interest in, and promote understanding of, human rights issues
 - Demonstrated consistent professionalism and fairness in dealing with others
 - The ability to interact effectively with the media to promote positive human rights
 - Superior public speaking and presentation skills
 - An understanding of the aspirations of a diverse range of people and organisations, including other Commissions, Maori, central Government agencies, businesses, non-Government organisations, media representatives, Members of Parliament, diplomats, ethnic community organisations, service organisations, local bodies, religious organisations and other sectoral interest groups