



RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY

LEGISLATION

Equality Legislation

Individuals in Northern Ireland are protected against discrimination on grounds of race, religious belief or political opinion, sex, sexual orientation, age (from 1 October 2006) or because of a disability. Discrimination is not simply unfairness. To be discriminated against means to be treated less favourably than others. If you have been discriminated against you may be able to bring a complaint to a tribunal or to a county court.

Disabled Persons Rights

The Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order, 2006 (DDA) provide protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability. The legislation provides protection in the areas of: employment and vocational training; goods, facilities and services; education; and premises.

Age Discrimination and Ageism

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) came into force on 1st October 2006, making it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age in the areas of employment, vocational training and further and higher education. The Age Regulations also introduced a new duty on employers to consider requests by employees to continue working beyond



retirement. The Equality Commission has produced the following guidance:

- Age Discrimination in Northern Ireland - A Guide for Employers
- Age Discrimination in Northern Ireland - A Guide for Workers and Employees.

If you think you have been discriminated against on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, race, age or disability the Equality Commission may be able to help you with advice or legal representation. Contact the Equality Commission Discrimination Advice team on **028 9089 0890**

The Equality Commission also has a range of information booklets giving advice on your rights. These booklets can be obtained by ringing **028 90 500 600** for a hard copy. Alternatively they can be downloaded from their website: www.equalityni.org

CONSUMER RIGHTS

The **Consumer Council** has produced an extensive A to Z guide called the “Consumer Advice Handbook” to raise awareness of consumer rights and to highlight existing sources of information and advice on consumer issues. Within this guide you will find information about your general consumer rights and how to complain effectively.

The Consumer Council also manage a separate consumerline website (www.consumerline.org) giving



information on a wide range of consumer issues and problems ranging from goods and services; travel and transport; consumer law; services to your home; money matters; taking legal action and consumer organisations.

The Consumer Advice Handbook can be accessed by either downloading it from the Consumer Council website: www.consumercouncil.org.uk or by ringing **028 9067 2488**

Information on your consumer rights can also be obtained by ringing the Consumerline on **0300 123 6262** or **028 9025 3900**

LEGAL ADVICE

Before taking legal action on consumer issues it is a good idea to talk things over at your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) or Advice Centre. They may be able to tell you whether you have grounds for legal action and suggest a suitable solicitor. CAB have trained advisers that provide specialist information and advice on 14 different areas of the law including consumer issues, employment legislation, social security benefits, money advice, health, housing rights and other legal matters.

If you're thinking of taking legal action about goods or services that you have bought, contact the Consumerline on **0300 123 6262** for advice or visit the Consumerline website: www.consumerline.org.



BELFAST CITY COUNCIL CONSUMER ADVICE CENTRE

Belfast City Council provides free specialist advice to consumers and traders in Belfast on consumer issues, such as: faulty goods; shopping complaints; bad service; and holiday complaints. Their advisors can also give talks on consumer law and consumer rights to voluntary groups, traders and other organisations.

For more information contact Belfast City Council's Consumer Advice Centre on **028 9032 8260**

COMMISSIONER FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Claire Keatinge was appointed in November 2011 as the first commissioner for older people for Northern Ireland. The principle aim of the commissioner is to safeguard and promote the interests of older people.

For more information contact **028 9089 0892** or visit the COPNI Website www.copni.org