



## Portland Human Rights Commission

City of Portland, Oregon

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# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Human Rights Commission's Work Aligns with Principles of International Women's Day**

PORTLAND – The Portland Human Rights Commission (HRC) invites the community to join it in celebrating International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>. This is a day in which we reflect on issues that impact women, including gender equality, health and human rights.

Almost every article of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) addresses topics of particular relevance to women. Visit <http://www.ohchr.org/en/udhr> to review the UDHR.

The HRC's work intersects with women's issues in the areas of *human trafficking*, policy efforts relating to *protected sick time*, and *housing rights*.

The HRC's *Human Trafficking Task Force* works on two sides of the human trafficking problem: domestic and foreign-born, both of which implicate women's issues. The obvious implication is the issue of women who are trafficked in sex trade. This is a major problem in the Portland area. On the foreign-born side, women comprise a substantial percentage of persons trafficked into this country to exploit their labor, particularly in the area of domestic services, food preparation and service, and agriculture.

The HRC supports the proposed ordinance authorizing changes to the City Code to *require protected sick time for employees*. In Multnomah County, 48 percent of single mothers of color and 32 percent of white single mothers are living in poverty and typically work in positions without paid sick time. Access to paid sick days addresses the dual goals of improving public health and promoting greater equity in the City of Portland. The HRC testified before City Council in support of the proposed ordinance.

The HRC's *Housing Rights Task Force* challenges two significant barriers to the ability of low-income people to find housing in the neighborhoods of their choice. First, landlords discriminate against people who use Section 8 vouchers to help pay for their rent. Second, Oregon cities and counties cannot set affordable housing requirements in new developments. Both policies disproportionately impact the single mother who seeks to improve her family's living conditions.

The Portland HRC works to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen inter-group relationships, and to foster greater understanding, inclusion, and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in the City of Portland.

For more information, please contact Jeff Selby at [jeff.selby@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:jeff.selby@portlandoregon.gov).

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