

INFORM YOURSELF- Racial Profiling; Know your Rights

If you are Black in Canada – it is likely you have experienced racism in all areas of your life. Race continues to be a significant issue in Canadian society. Race creates and continues to sustain inequalities for African Canadians. Whether racism is upfront and in your face, such as name calling, or spoken in whispers behind closed doors, it affects every facet of people’s lives.

Racial profiling is one of the most common and harmful forms of racism faced by racialized people in their interaction with the criminal justice system. The African Nova Scotian community is subjected to much greater police surveillance and racial profiling compared with non racialized communities.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission broadly defined racial profiling as any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security, or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place of origin rather than on reasonable suspicion, to single out an individual for greater scrutiny or different treatment.¹

For the purpose of this article, I define racial profiling as a racial bias in policing, where African Canadians are more likely than members of other racialized groups or whites to be watched, stopped, questioned, searched and arrested by police.

Racism, racial profiling and more intense police scrutiny of African Nova Scotians lead to the over-representation of racialized people in arrests and custody. African Nova Scotians are 2.3% of the provincial population (most live in the Halifax area).² Yet in 2014, 16% of youth sentenced to a correctional facility in Nova Scotia were African Nova Scotians and 14% of adults sentenced to provincial jail time were African Nova Scotian.³ In 2017, Halifax Regional Police (HRP) released a report which indicated 33% of Halifax Black population had been a victim of police checks.⁴

To help address the over representation of African Nova Scotians in arrest and provide knowledge around racial profiling and police, I

In focus groups people express feelings of segregation, alienation and anger. One person described her emotions on a daily basis:

“... I feel - I am in a state of anxiety, ready for battle. I am conditioned to my feelings of anger. I am consistently trying to interpret situations in my head to help me deal with what may happen - always on alert because I never know when it is going to hit me - when my culture and identity will be attacked simply because of the colour of my skin”.

One Halifax man said he often feels like the subject of police interest:

“I have been racially profiled by police. I was just walking down the street and the car kept driving up and down, up and down the same street. So, when I see the car approach me I was not surprised but I felt sick, almost wanting to throw up because I was scared – but then mad, I mean really mad. That feeling stayed with me all day, not something you just get over.”

¹ “What is Racial Profiling?” <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/what-racial-profiling-fact-sheet>

² This information was compiled from conversations with criminal lawyers, professors and African Canadians who have been engaged in a Civil Society Consultation in collaboration with African Nova Scotian Affairs and Dalhousie Law School Indigenous Blacks & Mi’Kmaq Initiative. October 2016.

³ “Black, Indigenous Prisoners Over-Represented in Nova Scotia Jails” - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/black-indigenous-prisoners-nova-scotia-jails-1.3591535>

⁴ “CBC Investigates: Black people 3 times more likely to be street checked in Halifax, police say” - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/halifax-black-street-checks-police-race-profiling-1.3925251>.

facilitated several community engagements. I participated in a combination of round table discussions with leaders in the community and small focus groups in Halifax and Dartmouth from September 30 to November 10, 2016. The hope was to gain an informed, deeper understanding of racial profiling in Halifax Municipality by hearing the voices, experiences and stories of African Nova Scotians in this city. I spoke with 29 individuals ranging in age from 16 – 45 in the HRM.

The widespread experience of people in communities that have been subject to racial profiling by police is that they feel they are under siege and living in constant fear. In essence, it robs racialized people in Nova Scotia of their sense of citizenship and belonging within our province. The information provided below is in response to these community consultations.

THE LAW

It is essential to understand your rights and responsibilities under the law in order to better protect yourself from racial profiling.

The Canadian *Constitution* is the supreme law of Canada. It outlines the powers of the different levels and branches of government. The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter)* is part of the *Constitution*, and sets out our fundamental rights and freedoms.⁵

The *Charter* applies to all government actions, and protects people in Canada from government policies and actions that may have violated a person’s fundamental rights and freedoms. When your rights are limited or infringed (violated) by the law or by a government action, it is up to government to demonstrate that those limits are justified and consistent with the values of a “free and democratic society.”⁶

Several sections of the Charter are relevant to someone who has been racially profiled, especially sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 15.

Section 7: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.

This section means the government can only limit or take away these rights if they follow fair legal procedures that are based on just laws. For example, if you are accused of a crime you have a right to a “fair judicial process”, including:

- a judge without bias;
- a lawyer to represent you against serious charges;
- the opportunity to fully defend yourself.

⁵ *Constitution Act, 1982. Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; <<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>>

⁶ *Ibid*, s 1.

Section 8: Everyone has the right to be secure against unreasonable search and seizure.

This means that a police officer cannot search you or your property, or seize your property, without a valid reason. For example the police can search you if you consent to a search, or if they suspect you have committed a crime and have arrested you.⁷

Section 9: Everyone has the right not be arbitrarily detained or imprisoned

This means you cannot be held against your will or imprisoned by a police officer for no reason. To find out if you are under arrest or being detained, politely ask the officers, “Am I under arrest?” If they say yes, you can ask why. Or, you may ask the officer “Am I free to go?”, and if the answer is no, ask “why not?”⁸

The police have a right to briefly detain you if they are investigating a crime and have “reasonable grounds” to believe that you are connected to that crime.⁹

If you have been detained but not arrested, and a police officer believes that there are reasonable grounds to think that his safety or the safety of others is at risk, the officer may do a “pat-down” search of you to check for weapons.¹⁰

Section 10: Everyone has the right on arrest or detention:

- a. to be informed promptly of the reasons thereof;***
- b. to retain and instruct counsel without delay and to be informed of that right; and***
- c. to have the validity of the detention determined by way of habeas corpus and to be released if the detention is not lawful.***

This section grants you the right, once you have been arrested or detained, to be told why and to be given the opportunity to speak with a lawyer promptly.

If you are arrested or detained the Police ***must***:

- tell you why you are a suspect or what is the charge
- tell you that you have a right to speak to a lawyer
- give you a chance to speak with a lawyer promptly.

Reasonable Grounds:

The arresting officer must believe there are grounds for the arrest.

Those grounds must be justifiable from an objective (without bias) point of view.

A reasonable person placed in the position of the officer must be able to determine that there were indeed reasonable grounds for the arrest.

⁷ “A Citizen Guide to Rights when dealing with Police” Canadian Civil Liberties Association; www.ccla.org, pg 2

⁸ *Ibid*, pg 2

⁹ *Ibid*, pg 4

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pg 6

Section 11(a)(b)(d). Any person charged with an offence has the right

(a) to be informed without unreasonable delay of the specific offence;

(b) to be tried within a reasonable time...

(d) to be presumed innocent until proven guilty...

“There is no Access to Justice for me or my community – Justice is a joke”

Female youth in Halifax

Everyone has these and other rights under this section if charged with a criminal offence. This section protects individuals as they find their way through the criminal court system.

You have a right to be told what you have been charged with at the time of the offence. Generally, for a less serious offence trial should take place within 18 months and for a more serious offence trial should take place within 30 months.¹¹ The amount of time between getting charged and your trial must be fairly necessary to allow police and the prosecution to do what is required for the investigation and court proceedings. At trial it is not up to the accused to prove their innocence, it is up to the Public Prosecution Service to prove guilt of the accused.¹²

Section 15 (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability

This section means that police officers cannot discriminate against you or treat you unfairly solely because you are a particular race, or colour.

In addition to this section of the *Charter*, there are provincial and federal human rights laws that also protect against discrimination. Generally speaking, Nova Scotia’s *Human Rights Act* applies to municipal police. The *Canadian Human Rights Act* applies to the RCMP as it is a federal organization.

Federal and Provincial human rights laws are designed to protect individuals from discriminatory practices. These human rights laws forbid discriminatory actions or behaviours on the basis of what are referred to as “prohibited grounds”. Examples of prohibited grounds of discrimination are sex, sexual orientation, race, marital status, creed, age, colour, and disability, political or religious belief.

¹¹ For details see *R v Jordan*, 2016 SCC 27.

¹² “Role of the Public Prosecution Service” <https://novascotia.ca/pps/role.asp>

IF YOU ARE SUBJECT TO RACIAL PROFILING

Now that you have some background on the law let's discuss what steps you might take if you feel you have been subject of racial profiling.

After speaking with individuals in the focus groups it became clear that people did not know what to do or who to talk to about their situation if they had been racially profiled by police. One young man said:

“ ...after the police let me drive off, I felt angry and I started driving to the police station....I was going to tell on him, tell his boss what he did. But then.. I parked in front and felt stupid...I didn't get a badge number, I didn't get a name and the only thing I knew was he was white. I thought no one will take me serious or even believe me, it will be his story against my story.”

IF THE POLICE APPROACH YOU ON THE STREET

A police officer can ask you questions but they must let you go if there is no reason to hold you. The police officer must have a reason to stop you. If an officer has a "reasonable suspicion" that you were involved in a criminal offence, it may be enough to justify the officer stopping you on the street.

For example; if the police see people in a vehicle drinking alcohol there is “reasonable suspicion” for further investigation.

The police have a right to detain people for investigative purposes. The investigation must be based on a "reasonable suspicion that the particular individual is implicated in the criminal activity under investigation" for it to be considered lawful.¹³

Many African Nova Scotian people know that police “suspicions” are often not reasonable. During the focus group one Dartmouth man said he felt that he was constantly being judged.

“young, black and driving a car late at night – (police think) you must be a drug dealer, or up to no good. For once I would like the police to see me driving and think ...oh maybe he is going to the movies....”

¹³ *R v Mann*, 2004 SCC 52, para 34.

IF THE POLICE ARREST YOU

If you are arrested you must give the police your name. For example, if you are stopped by a police officer who wants to give you a ticket for not wearing a bike helmet, you must give her your name so the officer can fill out the ticket.

Remember that if you are arrested the police are supposed to tell you the reasons for the arrest and they are supposed to inform you of your right to talk to a lawyer.

If you have been stopped by the police you are allowed to ask questions, and it may be particularly important to do so if you feel you have been subject to racial profiling.

You should ask:

- Why are you detaining me? On what grounds?
- Am I free to go?
- For the name, badge number and squad car number of the officer.¹⁴

TIPS IF ARRESTED

- You should contact a lawyer as soon as possible
- Stay calm and be polite
- Use good judgment and discretion when answering questions
- Remember as many details about the situation as you can

HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT

If you feel you have been a target of racial profiling you have a right to file a complaint. Nova Scotia's *Police Act* and the *Human Rights Act* each of have a complaint process that applies to municipal police. The federal *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* have similar complaint processes that apply to the RCMP.

Discrimination as defined by the *Human Rights Act* is unfair treatment based on characteristics such as your age, race, colour, or sex. These characteristics are just a few examples of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.¹⁵ Discrimination can take different forms. For example, discrimination can be direct or it can be systemic and often it can be both at the same time.

Direct Discrimination happens when an individual or group is treated differently in a negative way based on characteristics related to the prohibited grounds of discrimination, such as gender, race or disability.¹⁶ This kind of discrimination is usually easy to identify. For example, if a police officer says a racial slur that would be direct discrimination.

¹⁴ African Canadian Legal Clinic; <http://www.aclc.net/wp-content/uploads/Racial-Profiles-Toolkit-Final-adobe.pdf> at pg 5

¹⁵ Nova Scotia Human Rights. 2016, <<https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/>>

¹⁶ Hanna Garson, Brent Murphy, & Emma Halpern. *Human Rights in Action-A handbook for Women in Provincial Jails in Nova Scotia*; Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (2016) at pg .94

Systemic Discrimination is the creation, perpetuation or reinforcement of persistent patterns of inequality among disadvantaged groups.¹⁷ It is usually the result of seemingly neutral laws, policies, procedures, practices or organizational structures. Systemic discrimination tends to be harder to observe.

Evidence of a *pattern* of discriminatory conduct could show there is systemic discrimination. Examples of patterns are:

- in our education system, when teachers or administrators repeatedly refer racialized students to trade programs rather than academic courses;
- in policing, when officers conducting traffic stops disproportionately stop cars driven by African Nova Scotians.

Race only needs to be one factor in the police officer's conduct for it to be considered discriminatory. It need not be the main or major cause of the mistreatment. Racial profiling can be found to have occurred even if race was mixed in with other legitimate factors (e.g. speeding).

Also, there is no need to prove intent or motivation in a case of discrimination – the discriminatory effects of the act are sufficient. The officer's misconduct can be the result of subconscious beliefs about members of a visible minority group.¹⁸

Example: one youth parked in the south end of Halifax described how he felt watching a police officer approach his car;

“if you're black, in the wrong place at the right time you are guaranteed to be pulled over”

Racial profiling may be subtle and based on the circumstances, so it can be very hard to prove.¹⁹ It is important to gather and keep what evidence you can at the time when it happens. As soon as possible after the incident you should write down all the relevant facts about what happened and keep your notes somewhere you won't lose them.

¹⁷ Hanna Garson, Brent Murphy & Emma Halpern. *Human Rights in Action-A handbook for Women in Provincial Jails in Nova Scotia*; Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (2016) at pg. 95

¹⁸ African Canadian Legal Clinic; <http://www.aclc.net/wp-content/uploads/Racial-Profiling-Toolkit-Final-adobe.pdf> at pg 6

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

OPTIONS FOR FILING A COMPLAINT

1. To file a complaint about a municipal police officer (eg. Halifax Regional Police, Cape Breton Regional Police)

Anyone who feels that they have been improperly treated or have concerns about a municipal police officer's conduct can file a complaint at the police station or with the Office of Police Complaints Commissioner. You must file your complaint within six months of the incident which gave rise to the complaint. Your complaint will not be considered if it is not filed within six months of the incident.²⁰

To file a complaint about a municipal police officer, visit your municipal police station in your part of the province or contact the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner. For example, in Halifax, you can go to the Halifax Police Station Headquarters on 1975 Gottingen Street, and ask for the Sergeant in charge of Professional Standards.

If you do not want to visit the police station you could contact the Police Complaints Commissioner by phone 902-424-3246 or email: polcom@novascotia.ca or; by mail to:

The Police Complaints Commissioner's Office
1690 Hollis Street, 3rd Floor
PO Box 1573
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y3
Phone: 902.424.3246
Web: www.novascotia.ca/opcc/

Once you have put your complaint in writing, the Chief of Police will appoint a Sergeant who is of higher rank or a Staff Sergeant in Professional Standards to investigate the complaint. The officer appointed to investigate your complaint will contact you and go over your complaint, to ensure all the information is available and discuss your matter.²¹

If you are comfortable and agree to meet with the officer involved in the incident, the investigating officer will try to address the complaint through an informal resolution. This resolution uses the process of mediation and usually involves a face-to-face meeting between all involved parties. If you choose not to participate in the informal resolution, the investigating officer may suggest another option mutually consented to by all parties.²²

If there is no informal resolution that is mutually agreed on, the investigating officer will proceed with a formal investigation. This investigation must be completed within 60 days from the date the written complaint was filed. Any complaint submitted more than 6 months from the date of

²⁰ Interview with Sgt. Simmonds of HRP; October 2016.

http://novascotia.ca/opcc/publications/Complaint_Brochure.pdf ; <https://www.halifax.ca/fire-police/police/programs-services/compliments-or-complaints>

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

the incident will not be processed. However, in exceptional circumstances the Police Complaints Commissioner may grant an extension of time for the complaint to submit all information to complete the investigation.

There are a few possible outcomes which could come from the investigation. The following list are some examples of possible outcomes once the investigation is completed:

- the Chief Commissioner may recommend police need to improve or change their procedures and training around the issue of the complaint;
- recommending loss of pay for the officer involved and/or suspension, and/or the officer to make a public apology to the complaint;
- hold a **private** disciplinary hearing between the officer involved in the complaint and the officer's Superintendent and the Sergeant in the Professional Standards Department; or
- the Chief Commissioner will reach a decision concerning disciplinary action based on the information provided in the complaint statement and the investigation without a hearing.²³

You will receive a notice when the investigation has been completed. Depending on the detail of contact information you provided in your complaint, you may receive this information in writing or a phone call.

If you are not happy with the Chief Commissioner's decision, you can apply to the Police Review Board for a review. If you apply for this review it must be within 30 days of the date you get the decision.²⁴

The Police Review Board is a panel of three individuals who are members of the general public and not members of Halifax Police or other police forces (i.e. not military police, RCMP or other municipal police force). The three members are all civilians; with one being a lawyer.

The Review Board members will conduct a public hearing into your complaint. You will be notified of the hearing date. This hearing date will be a time for you to present witnesses, if any, and to tell your story about the events that happened on the day of your complaint.

If you have a lawyer or support person they are able to attend that day with you. If you are not represented by a lawyer, the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner will provide assistance in preparation of subpoenas for witnesses and procedures.²⁵

Once the hearing is over, the Police Review Board may:

- dismiss the matter;

²³ Interview with Sgt. Simmonds of HRP; October 2016.

²⁴ <<http://www.halifax.ca/police/Departments/profstandards.php>>

²⁵ <<http://www.halifax.ca/police/Departments/profstandards.php>>

²⁵ *Ibid.*

- find the complaint to be valid and recommend to the municipal police force what should be done;
- agree with or change any penalty which has been imposed by the Police Department.

The Review Board cannot award monetary compensation but can provide fixed costs (expenses that have to be paid out of pocket) where appropriate.²⁶

The Police Review Board’s decision is final. If you are not happy with the final decision, you could contact a lawyer.

2. File a complaint about an RCMP officer with RCMP Police Department

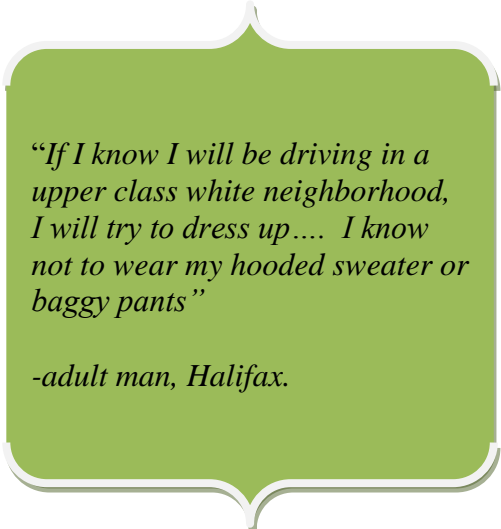
If you feel you have been mistreated by a RCMP officer, you can file a complaint at any RCMP detachment in your area. The detachment commander's duty is to speak with you to ensure complaints from the public are dealt with in a professional manner.

Complaints against an RCMP officer can also be lodged by contacting the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission (CRCC) for the RCMP.²⁷ The CRCC for the RCMP is an independent agency, to ensure that complaints made by the public about the conduct of RCMP members are examined fairly and without bias.

You can contact the CRCC by phone at 1-800-665-6878. You can visit the website for an online complaints form:
<http://www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca/en/make-complaint> or;

Mail to: Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP
 National Intake Office
 P.O. Box 1722, Station B
 Ottawa, ON K1P 0B3

The RCMP complaint process is similar to the process for a Municipal Police Complaint.²⁸ Once your written complaint is received then an RCMP member will be assigned to investigate it and report back to you. If you are not satisfied with their report then you have to request a review by the CRCC. If the CRCC is not satisfied with the RCMP report then they make recommendations to the RCMP Commissioner and the Minister of Public Safety regarding what the response to the



²⁶ “Complimenting or Filing a Complaint a Halifax Regional Police Officer” <https://www.halifax.ca/fire-police/police/programs-services/compliments-or-complaints>

²⁷ <https://www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca/>

²⁸ “Complaint and Review Process Flowchart” <https://www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca/en/complaint-and-review-process-flowchart>

incident should be. After receiving a response from the RCMP Commissioner and the Minister of Public Safety the CRCC will send you a final report. The decision of the CRCC is final.

3. File a Human Rights Complaint

Nova Scotia government and Municipal employees (like Halifax Police Officers) are regulated by Provincial laws and must follow the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*. This means that if your complaint involves discrimination you can file with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.²⁹

Under the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act* you have one year from the incident to file a Human Rights complaint, although in some cases, the deadline may be extended.³⁰

Contact the Human Rights Commission if you want to file a complaint. They will listen to your complaint, and help you to decide what to do next. When you file complaint, it is important to include as much information as possible.

Toll Free: 1-877-269-7699 or local in Halifax: 902-424-4111
Office Address: 5657 Spring Garden Road, Park Lane Terrace, 3rd floor, suite 305.
Mailing Address:
PO Box 2221,
Halifax, NS B3J 3C4.

You will find further information on their website:
<https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/content/resolving-disputes>

Things that are particularly important to include with your complaint:

- The name and badge number of police officer(s);
- The date(s) and location(s) of where and when you experienced the discrimination;
- Description of event(s), with as much detail as possible;
- The discriminatory action/practice and explanation of how this treatment made you feel and how it was discriminatory against you;
- Be sure to state the ground of discrimination (that is, race or colour).³¹

The Commission has the power to award damages for injury to dignity, feelings and self respect. It is therefore important to keep track of your feelings, including loss of self-esteem, dignity, self-respect or fears. Practical tips about how to keep track are keeping a diary, speaking with a family doctor, counselor, psychologist, friends or/and family.³²

²⁹ For an example see: *Johnson v. Halifax (Regional Municipality) Police Service*, 2005 NSCA 70

³⁰ *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, s 29(2)-(3)

³¹ Africian Canadian Legal Clinic; <http://www.aclc.net/wp-content/uploads/Racial-Profiling-Toolkit-Final-adobe.pdf> at pg 8

³² Africian Canadian Legal Clinic; <http://www.aclc.net/wp-content/uploads/Racial-Profiling-Toolkit-Final-adobe.pdf> at pg 9

Some examples of the psychological impacts of racial profiling may include:

- Someone stops driving at night because the incident occurred while driving at night;
- Someone doesn't allow their child to walk home from school or to a friend's house, but instead insists on driving everywhere because he/she was the victim of a street check;
- Trust in police, or in society, is damaged or shattered;
- New feelings of fear upon seeing police.³³

*My race may not have everything to do what happens in my life... (or) influence or determine my success or what happens to me in my life....but I am always looking out for racism.”
-adult woman, Halifax*

The Human Rights Commission looks to solve the problem and come up with a solution that addresses your needs. The Board could order remedies that they feel may help, including:

- that the discriminatory practice be changed
- that the police offer you an apology and/or
- the municipal police members have further human rights training to better understand how to accommodate your needs, and community needs, based on the ground of discrimination and nature of your complaint.³⁴

As mentioned earlier, the RCMP are subject to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. The complaint process is similar except the complaints are made to the Canadian Human Rights Commission.³⁵

SUING THE POLICE

Another possible avenue to seek a remedy for racial profiling incidents is suing the police in civil court. The law and procedures involved with suing someone are complicated. Police officers can be sued for torts like false arrest, false imprisonment, negligent investigation or negligent use of force. It is also possible to sue for a breach of charter rights and attempt to obtain what are sometimes called charter damages. However, there are also many defences, such as the defence of lawful authority, that police can use to protect themselves from these lawsuits. The result is that it can be very hard to figure out if your lawsuit will be successful.

Courts are difficult to navigate without legal representation and there are fees and possible costs associated with suing someone so it is a good idea to see a lawyer before starting a lawsuit. A lawyer can help you decide whether there is a basis for a lawsuit and what it will cost to sue. Legal aid does not cover this type of civil law suit. That means that if you want to sue the police

³³ Africian Canadian Legal Clinic; <http://www.aclc.net/wp-content/uploads/Racial-Profiling-Toolkit-Final-adobe.pdf> at pg 6

³⁴ *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, s 34(8)

³⁵ “How to File a Complaint” <http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/how-file-complaint>

you will either have to find a private lawyer that you can afford or one that is willing to take your case on pro bono. You can also choose to represent yourself in court.

GETTING LEGAL HELP

- 1) Lawyers in private practice are listed in the telephone book and online. If you are thinking about suing the police then you will want to look for a lawyer with civil litigation experience. If you are employed then it is also a good idea to check with your Employee Assistance Program or union, if you have them through work, as sometimes they can help to put you in touch with a lawyer. Some Private Sector Law Firms may consider doing pro bono (free) legal work. When you call to inquire about legal representation, be sure to ask if there is a Pro Bono Department you can be referred to, or if they consider doing pro bono work.
- 2) The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia is a charitable, not-for-profit organization. They have a Legal Information Line and a Lawyer Referral Service. Counsellors on the Legal Information Line can answer basic legal questions including questions about police complaints, human rights complaints and civil law suits. Through the Lawyer Referral Service you may be referred to a lawyer in private practice for an initial 30 minute consultation for no more than \$20 plus tax. The contact information is 1-800-665-9779 or 902-455-3135 or you can visit the website: www.legalinfo.org.
- 3) Nova Scotia Legal Aid does not do civil law suits, but they sometimes provide summary advice and information on police complaints and human rights complaints. The Halifax office is located at 5475 Spring Garden Rd #400. The phone number is (902) 420-6583. The Dartmouth office is located at 99 Wyse Rd #300. The phone number is (902) 420-8815. For further information and contact info for other offices visit their website: <https://www.nslegalaid.ca>.
- 4) Dalhousie Legal Aid is a community based legal clinic offering, advocacy, information, advice and legal representation in criminal, family, child protection, residential tenancies and income assistance cases. Dalhousie Legal Aid does not do civil lawsuits, but in some instances they are able to provide information on human rights complaints and other social justice matters. The office is located at 2209 Gottingen Street in Halifax. The phone number is (902)-423-8105.
- 5) If you have decided to represent yourself in a civil lawsuit and your case is being heard in Halifax then you can contact the Free Legal Clinic at the Halifax Law Courts for some advice and guidance. Go to courts.ns.ca/self_reps/nsca-nssc_free_legal_clinic.htm for more information.

CONCLUSION

Racism very much exists. It appears in everyday conversations and throughout our society. Although most people try to ignore its existence, it's quite obvious that it marks the lives of racialized people and is a difficult but essential part of African Nova Scotian history. One of the

ways racism manifests itself is through the practice of racial profiling by police. This paper explains your rights and what legal steps you can take after being subject to racial profiling. Hopefully it helps empower people to gain a bit of the respect, citizenship and sense of belonging that they have been denied.

This article is written by Angela Simmonds, a third year law student at Dalhousie's Schulich School of Law.