



British Columbia's
Office of the Human Rights
Commissioner

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kasari Govender reappointed as B.C.'s independent Human Rights Commissioner

Vancouver B.C. – Today the B.C. Legislative Assembly voted unanimously to reappoint Kasari Govender, KC, as Human Rights Commissioner for British Columbia. Commissioner Govender will serve a second five-year term beginning Sept. 4, 2024.

The vote from the Legislature followed a unanimous recommendation from the all-party Special Committee to Appoint a Human Rights Commissioner.

Initially appointed in September 2019, Govender is British Columbia's first fully independent human rights commissioner. She is also the first commissioner since the province's previous human rights commission was abolished in 2002.

Reflecting on her first five-year term, Govender's work to advance concrete steps to improve human rights in the province was praised by the all-party committee. This has included a public inquiry into experiences of hate in the pandemic, ground-breaking analysis showing systemic discrimination in policing and making recommendations for reform, community embedded research across B.C., public awareness campaigns about ableism and racism and significant contributions to the creation of both the *Anti-Racism Data Act* and the *Anti-Racism Act*.

"I am honoured and energized to be reappointed today as B.C.'s independent Human Rights Commissioner. I have dedicated my career to the pursuit of greater equity and justice, and I am passionate about doing this work alongside and in service of our communities" said Commissioner Govender. "As I look forward over the next five years of my term, there is no doubt that B.C. faces significant human rights challenges, from hate and discrimination to poverty and the ongoing impacts of colonization. I am grateful to all those standing up to meet these challenges and thankful for the opportunity to work towards a province free of discrimination and injustice."

Prior to becoming Commissioner, Govender held leadership positions at West Coast LEAF and was appointed Executive Director in 2011. Her earlier work includes a pivotal role in establishing the Rise Women's Legal Centre, a non-profit legal clinic in B.C.

Govender is currently the Vice-Chair of Government Relations for the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA). She has co-authored key reports and articles and speaks widely on crucial social issues such as hate speech, gender-based violence, human rights issues in policing and systemic racism.

Govender earned her law degree from the University of Victoria and her Master's Degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Oxford, UK. She has served on the board of directors for the University of Victoria, Pivot Legal Society, the Coalition for Public Legal Services and the Society for Children and Youth. Govender has taught as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the

University of British Columbia and as an instructor at Simon Fraser University. She was recognized with the King's Counsel (KC) designation for exceptional contributions to the legal profession in B.C. in 2023.

Her commitment to building a more equal world is inspired by her roles as a mother, an aunt, a daughter and a sister.

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Media contact

To request an interview with Commissioner Kasari Govender, please contact Lindsey Bertrand, Manager, Communications, at media@bchumanrights.ca or 604-306-7369.

Media kit

[Visit our media kit](#) for images of Commissioner Kasari Govender, pronunciation guidance, bios and more.

About BCOHRC

BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner exists to address the root causes of inequality, discrimination and injustice in B.C. by shifting laws, policies, practices and cultures. We do this work through education, research, advocacy, inquiry and monitoring. Learn more at: bchumanrights.ca

About the Commissioner

B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, started her five-year term on Sept. 3, 2019. As an independent officer of the Legislature, Commissioner Govender is uniquely positioned to ensure human rights in B.C. are protected, respected and advanced on a systemic level. Her work through BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner centres listening deeply to British Columbians to inform educational materials, policy guidance, public inquiries, interventions, community-based research and more that protects marginalized communities, addresses discrimination and injustice and upholds human rights for all.

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