News

OHRC Draft Policy on Mental Health Discrimination and Police Record Checks

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In February 2008, the Ontario Human Rights Commission released a Draft Policy on Mental Health Discrimination and Police Records Check for public consultation. The draft Policy is aimed at addressing concerns that the requirements, policies and practices relating to police record checks can have a discriminatory impact on persons with mental health-related disabilities and those identified by other Code grounds from seeking employment, volunteer or other opportunities. Unlike criminal background checks, “police records checks” are broader and include information about non-criminal contact with police, such as transfers to a medical facility under the *Mental Health Act*, or being a victim or witness.

The Draft Policy will be of interest to organizations that require police records checks of prospective employees and volunteers, and the police services that provide them. The reach of the policy goes beyond the employment context and will likely require organizations and police services to carefully re-examine the need and use of information obtained from police records checks