



## Division of Human Rights

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

HELEN DIANE FOSTER  
Commissioner

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### **STATE DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AIDS INSTITUTE JOIN FORCES TO FIGHT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS**

New York State Division of Human Rights Commissioner Helen Diane Foster today announced the launch of a statewide public information campaign designed to educate New Yorkers about the protections afforded to people living with HIV/AIDS under the Human Rights Law. This campaign is made possible through a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Department of Health's AIDS Institute which allocated \$90,000 to the Division for this purpose.

"I cannot emphasize enough the importance of this joint effort to ensure that persons living with HIV/AIDS understand their rights under the law," said Commissioner Foster. "We are thankful to the AIDS Institute for helping our agency achieve our common goal to provide those impacted by HIV and AIDS with the knowledge they need to seek justice when their rights are violated."

"We are proud to partner with the New York State Division of Human Rights on an HIV/AIDS public education campaign," said Dan O'Connell, director of the Department of Health's AIDS Institute. "This collaboration represents a key strategy to combat HIV stigma and discrimination and will help ensure the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic in New York State is realized."

The statewide multi-media campaign, which will launch in January 2016, urges members of the public living with HIV/AIDS to learn more about their rights under the law and to file complaints with the Division if they feel they have been discriminated against. The campaign will appear in mass transit stations and on billboards throughout the state. A social media component will also be incorporated.

The Human Rights Law prohibits discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS in employment, housing, places of public accommodation, credit transactions, and private, non-sectarian educational institutions.

Additionally, the Division's Director of Disability Rights, John Herrion, will meet with advocacy groups and service providers throughout the state to educate organizations and the communities they serve about the agency's enforcement of the provisions of the law that protect people living with HIV/AIDS.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has made it a priority to establish New York State as a leader in the national and global effort to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The state campaign to End the AIDS Epidemic in New York calls for reducing the annual number of new HIV infections to 750 by the end of 2020 (from an estimated 3,000 in 2013). The goal is to achieve New York's first-ever decrease in HIV prevalence, since the epidemic began in the early 1980s. To learn more about Governor Cuomo's End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic campaign, please visit: [www.health.ny.gov/EndingtheEpidemic](http://www.health.ny.gov/EndingtheEpidemic).

New York has the proud distinction of being the first state in the nation to enact a Human Rights Law, which affords every citizen "an equal opportunity to enjoy a full and productive life." The New York State Division of Human Rights is the agency in charge of enforcing this law, which prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, credit, and other jurisdictions, based on age, race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, military status, and other specified classes. For more information about the law and the work of the agency, please visit the Division of Human Rights' website at [www.dhr.ny.gov](http://www.dhr.ny.gov) or call 1-888-392-3644.

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