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NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ANNOUNCES HIV/AIDS PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

New York State Division of Human Rights Commissioner Helen Diane Foster announced the launch of a public information campaign designed to educate the public about the protections afforded to people living with HIV/AIDS under the State's Human Rights Law.

"People who are HIV+ or have AIDS are entitled to live in a society free from stigma and discrimination," said Commissioner Foster. "It is a priority for this agency to provide them with the knowledge they need to understand their rights and the means to seek justice when those rights have been violated. Campaigns such as this one allow us to achieve both goals."

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.

The statewide campaign, funded by a grant from the New York State Department of Health's AIDS Institute, includes an advertisement urging members of the public to learn more about their rights under the law. The ad has appeared in several print and online publications, such as AM New York, POZ Magazine, El Diario La Prensa, New York Newsday, Gay City News, The Buffalo News, and The Advocate, among others. Posters and palm cards based on the ad will be distributed to organizations that provide services to people with HIV/AIDS.

Also as part of the campaign, the Division's Director of Disability Rights John Herrion, is conducting a series of meetings with advocacy groups and service providers throughout the state to educate these organizations and the communities they serve about the agency's enforcement of the provisions of the law that protect people living with HIV/AIDS. **The next meeting will take place on March 5, 2015 at the Walter J. Mahoney State Office Building, 65 Court St., Part 6 in Buffalo from 2:00 to 4:00 pm.** For a full list of events or to request materials, please visit our website at www.dhr.ny.gov/hiv aids or call our toll free number 1-888-392-3644.

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, credit, and other jurisdictions, based on age, race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, military status, and other specified classes.

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