

Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary



January 29, 2018

Statement re: Canada Summer Jobs Application Process Changes

Employment and Social Development Canada has changed the application process for the Summer Jobs funding program in 2018.

The following attestation is now required to be checked off by all organizations applying for federal funding from the Canada Summer Jobs program: "both the job and the organization's core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada, including the values underlying the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as other rights. These include reproductive rights and the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression." The government's website further specifies this includes "the right to access safe and legal abortions."

A number of faith-based organizations are deeply concerned and cannot acquiesce to this new requirement since it would infringe on our beliefs, in the "dignity and sanctity of the human person from conception to natural death", and the right to freedom of conscience and religion in our democratic society. I share this adamant objection and am advising all Catholic parishes, organizations, and charities in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary not to sign this attestation if they are applying for a grant through the Canada Summer Jobs program.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary operates many programs that serve people living in poverty and difficult life circumstances without asking about a person's background or belief. We serve because it is our witness of Christ through our faith that motivates us to do so. Therefore, I am disturbed and angry that our long-time tradition of service in our community has been disregarded in the formulation of application process changes. I strongly encourage you to contact your Member of Parliament asking them to remove the attestation from the application process and the determination of eligibility for funding.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William T. McGrattan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

†Most Reverend William T. McGrattan, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary

†WTM/dj