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BC FAMILY STATUS LEGAL RESEARCH PROJECT

Media Release

BCLI Publishes Study Paper on Family Status Discrimination

for immediate release

Vancouver, 18 September 2012 —The British Columbia Law Institute has published a study paper on discrimination based on the ground of “family status” under the *BC Human Rights Code*.

BC’s human rights law lists a number of protected grounds, including race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation and age. Family status is one of the most recently added protected grounds.

The BCLI study paper is the first comprehensive Canadian publication on the meaning and scope of family status discrimination. The paper analyzes recent court and tribunal decisions, examines and compares human rights legislation across the country, and summarizes approaches taken in other countries to address disadvantage linked to family membership and family responsibilities.

“The cases tell us that BC and Canadian families are struggling to meet workplace expectations without compromising care of their children and other family members,” states Executive Director Jim Emmerton. “People are using human rights law to assert a right to workplace changes that will make life manageable. But it is not clear that human rights law is the ideal single tool for addressing such an important pressing social issue.”

The BCLI paper concludes with a series of questions for further consideration that explore different avenues for supporting BC families, including law reform and social policy development. The full paper, which includes a practical table summarizing recent cases, can be downloaded for free from the BCLI website: <http://www.bcli.org/bclrg/projects/bc-family-status-legal-research-project>.

This project was generously funded by the Law Foundation of British Columbia.

The BCLI strives to be a leader in law reform by carrying out the best in scholarly law-reform research and writing and the best in outreach relating to law reform.

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