

Nov 28, 2021

Michael Laverty
Thompson Community Services, Kamloops

Re: Support for Employment Accommodation for Amie Harbor

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of Amie Harbor's request for an accommodation to your organisation's Covid-19 vaccine policy. I understand that she has made this request on the grounds of political belief, which is included in the BC Human Rights Code as a protected characteristic with regards to employment. While the BCHRC does not define political belief, their website [links to a paper](#) based on Devyn Cousineau's (Continuing Legal Education Society of British Columbia) presentation to the BC Human Rights Tribunal in November, 2016. By way of defining the scope of the political belief ground, the paper includes the following in the conclusion:

In BC, employees and union members are protected from discrimination on the basis of their political beliefs. Political beliefs include association with partisan politics, beliefs about modes of social cooperation and beliefs in trade unionism. The ground also includes interactions with government actors, and beliefs and activities which engage public discourse matters that could be the subject of government action.

Below I will list [the 4 principles](#) that all members of the BC Libertarian Party must agree to upon joining the Party, and explain how each of them applies to vaccine mandates.

1) That no individual or group is permitted to initiate the use of force or fraud against any other;

This is the *non-aggression principle*, which all libertarians (regardless of party affiliation) share belief in. Without the consent of both parties, any act of physical force by one party against another is considered aggression. This applies to murder just as it does to an unwelcome slap on the back. The act of piercing a person's skin with a needle is also an act of force, or aggression, if consent has not been provided.

As Amie Harbor's employer, you have offered her a choice: submit to this act of force, or be deprived of employment. We understand that long-term civil servants and those who have made careers with crown corporations may have developed specialized experience and knowledge that do not easily transfer to the (competitive) private sector. Hence it is conceivable that being deprived of employment with your organization could mean the loss of livelihood in this province, or a significant loss in earning potential. That would mean that Amie Harbor's decision to get vaccinated (or not) is made under duress. Consent given under duress is not true consent.

2) That the universal natural rights to life, liberty, property, expression, and the peaceful pursuit of happiness are essential to the preservation of civil society;

Libertarians believe deeply in individual property rights, and the most important such right each person has is an absolute property right in their own body. This means that no one may lay hands on another person's body, even to administer a medical treatment to them, without their consent. Furthermore, when individual rights such as these are violated routinely, particularly if this a result of government policy, it undermines the moral basis of civil society and the legal and philosophical basis of liberal democracies like ours.

3) That the role of government is to protect and preserve such rights, and;

We believe that the proper role of government is limited to the protection of such individual, negative rights. In other words, the government's monopoly on the legitimate use of force is valid if it is used only to prevent or punish acts of aggression, theft, assault, murder, and so on, against its citizens. Conversely, the government loses its legitimacy when it goes beyond this scope and tries to solve all or many of society's problems by using coercive measures, such as restricting the free movement of citizens who are not ill or issuing orders that deprive citizens of employment in order to achieve "public health."

An employer mandating vaccines for all their employees amounts to placing societal goals or a notion of public good above the right of individuals to decide what is in their own medical best interest. Libertarians stand firmly against such collectivist utilitarian notions of right and wrong.

4) That the citizens of British Columbia have the right to defend and be defended from those persons or institutions that seek to diminish any of the above principles.

Because death is a possible side effect of the current Covid-19 vaccines, we argue that any organization imposing a mandate for these vaccines on their employees is seeking to diminish their right to life. Likewise, because such mandates make employees choose between a medical treatment that could be harmful, and the loss of employment, they represent a violation of property rights. We believe that every person has the right to defend themselves against these threats and to call on institutions such as the courts to assist them in that defense.

As a member in good standing of the BC Libertarian Party who has agreed to the principles above, in my estimation, Amie Harbor should qualify for an accommodation on the grounds of political belief with regard to the vaccine mandate.



Keith MacIntyre
BC Libertarian Party Leader



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