

## Rights violated

### Panel rules club discriminated against would-be patron

**Sean Myers**

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CALGARY - An Alberta human rights panel has found a local bar discriminated against a patron based on his ethnicity when it barred him from entering the premises nearly four years ago.

Tequila nightclub has been ordered to pay Jaspal Randhawa \$5,000 in damages and officially apologize to him for the incident which took place July 9, 2004.

According to Randhawa, a Vancouver resident, a doorman approached him in line and told him he'd be required to produce five to 10 pieces of ID.

Randhawa told the human rights panel that the bouncer said: "I could lose my job if I let you in -- it's Cowtown and Stampede weekend. The owners want to maintain a certain image and don't want clients to say there are a lot of 'brown' people inside."

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart, the sole member of the panel, found the testimony credible and ruled that this constituted discrimination based on ancestry or place of origin, race or colour and religious beliefs.

"I'm very happy, this is a really favourable result," said Randhawa, 34. "Hopefully this will be a wakeup call to the industry that they can't do this anymore."

Tequila management insists that it has never had a policy to restrict certain groups of people from entering the bar and is considering an appeal of the human rights decision.

"Come down here any Friday or Saturday night and you'll see a wide variety of people -- staff and patrons," said co-owner P.J. L'Heureux. "This would never happen at our bar."

Colley-Urquhart wrote that she could "find no evidence to indicate that the respondent took the complaint seriously and fully investigated the complaint."

Tequila has 30 days to appeal the decision.



CREDIT: Photo courtesy Global Calgary

Jas Randhawa complained after being denied entry to a Calgary nightclub.



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Video shows Tantra nightclub bouncers refusing entry to Jas Randhawa in 2006.

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