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# Strengthening diversity and inclusion



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## Message from Honourable Kaycee Madu, QC, Minister of Labour and Immigration

As Alberta's Minister of Labour and Immigration, I am reminded daily of the incredible diversity of Alberta's population. Our province's economy depends on an ever-growing mix of people and skills. As we emerge from the economic downturn of the past decade and the more recent effects of the pandemic, and as we ponder the changing nature of work in the 21st century, we will need all the brilliance that the world has to offer to make the most of our tremendous potential.

In that challenge, our diversity is our strength: diversity of skills, of perspective, of experience and of background. We must also embrace diversity of participation – in the workforce and in society – of those who face systemic, historic or cultural barriers, including Indigenous Peoples, racialized communities and newcomers to our country. From a moral standpoint, there is simply no place for racism in Alberta. From an economic perspective, we must recognize how much each person has to offer – and how unique and valuable each person's contribution is.

That is why I am pleased to welcome Alberta's Anti-Racism Action Plan, "Strengthening Our Diversity." Thanks to the dedication of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, in collaboration with Honourable Muhammad Yaseen, Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism, we have a road map for moving forward on addressing racism in Alberta. After all, racism can be an uncomfortable topic, but it is something we need to talk about. The future of our province as a free, fair and prosperous place depends on our will to confront it.

Addressing racism is the right and the necessary thing to do. The closer we get to eliminating racism, the better life will be for every one of us. This plan points to the way.

Sincerely,

Honourable Kaycee Madu  
Minister of Labour and Immigration



## Message from Honourable Muhammad Yaseen, Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism

As Alberta's Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism, I have the privilege of working with the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council to address racism in our province. I also have the opportunity to meet with newcomers and multicultural groups to listen, learn from, and help inform government's response to their challenges and hopes. And, I acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples hold a special place in Alberta and Canada as the first Peoples of this land.

Diverse ethnic communities in Alberta are filled with people who are intelligent, caring, creative and resilient. They have so much to offer. But difficulties can stand in the way of their dreams – whether it is fear or lived experience of violence, or roadblocks they face when trying to go to university, get a job, or even access supports like housing and healthcare. Alberta's government is committed to making Alberta a great place for everyone to live, work and raise a family. We cannot achieve this goal without addressing the racism that exists in our society.

This anti-racism action plan outlines steps government will take to tackle racism. This includes identifying and changing policies, practices, procedures and processes that prevent racialized<sup>1</sup> communities and Indigenous Peoples from accessing services or taking the next step in their career and life development. It also includes a zero-tolerance approach to acts of hatred and discrimination. Living free from violence is a basic human right, and we cannot allow people of our province to continue to be targets of racist actions. In addition, the government is dedicated to truth and reconciliation for Indigenous Peoples, and to honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, which also speaks to the importance of anti-racism efforts. Racialized and Indigenous individuals, like all Albertans, are important to our province's prosperity, and further actions in this plan are designed to help empower them and celebrate their accomplishments.

This plan would not have been possible without the contributions of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council and other community groups who provided advice. Several of the actions in this report stem from recommendations provided by the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, and I thank them for their hard work and ongoing commitment to combatting racism. As Alberta's government continues to work towards building a more inclusive and equitable society, we will continue to speak with and seek advice from the council to guide our actions. This plan also commits to gathering data that will help us measure our progress.

Addressing racism is a complex and ongoing task, but I am confident that, working together, we can build an Alberta that is a place of safety, freedom and opportunity for everyone.

Sincerely,

Honourable Muhammad Yaseen  
Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism



<sup>1</sup> In this plan, we use the term 'racialized', in alignment with language used by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and Statistics Canada, to describe Alberta's diverse cultural groups.

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## Overview

Alberta's society is diverse, and together Albertans benefit from a variety of cultural traditions, histories and perspectives of the people who call this province home. This diversity is our collective strength, but not everyone benefits equitably or is empowered to participate to their full potential in society.

Some people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds experience bias, hatred, race-based discrimination and systemic barriers. This can negatively impact an individual's health and well-being, and make it more difficult for them to find a job, get their educational and professional credentials recognized, be accepted into post-secondary programs, access grant funding or access public services such as health and social services. In addition, in recent years, there has been an increase in hate crimes towards Albertans due to race or ethnicity, including physical attacks and vandalism of places of worship. These crimes cannot be tolerated, and Alberta's government has already begun to take action to protect vulnerable groups from hate and harm.

The experiences of various ethnic groups in this province shows that Alberta has a lot of work to do to address racism. As Alberta's population becomes increasingly diverse, it is more important than ever to identify and address ways in which the experiences of racialized individuals and Indigenous Peoples are impacted. Alberta's government is committed to promoting an inclusive society built on a foundation of mutual respect. Government action to address racism can contribute to the creation of a more welcoming, equitable and inclusive society by demonstrating that there is no place for racism, acts of hatred or discrimination in this province, and by removing barriers that prevent people from diverse ethnic groups from enjoying their lives and contributing to a rich and diverse province.

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## A path forward

In 2021, the Government of Alberta received a set of recommendations from the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council on how to implement and evaluate action items to combat racism. Those recommendations, along with conversations with groups who are impacted by, or have a role to play in addressing racism, have guided the development of this action plan, which provides an overarching and strategic direction for combatting discrimination and addressing systemic racism in Alberta. This plan outlines government's commitment to play a leading role in addressing racism by educating Albertans about the value of diversity, removing systemic barriers to accessing government programs and services, and ensuring Albertans have equal access to information, resources, services and opportunities. With this plan as a guide, Alberta's government will also protect vulnerable groups from hate and discrimination – and empower communities to promote social inclusion, celebrate diversity and multiculturalism and cultivate social cohesion. In order to make sure government actions are effective, this plan also includes steps to measure our progress. Meaningful action to tackle racism cannot take place without the guidance and involvement of those who feel the impact of racism. Alberta's government will continue to listen to and work with racialized individuals and Indigenous Peoples while implementing this plan, and developing further plans for addressing racism.

The actions in this plan are grouped into five themes, which highlight broad areas under which Alberta's government plans to make progress toward building a more equitable and inclusive society.



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## Public education and cultural awareness

Racism is a complex and multi-faceted issue that goes beyond open acts of hatred. It can be unconsciously embedded in institutions, making it difficult to recognize.

As a first step towards addressing racism, Alberta's government will support targeted public education initiatives to raise awareness among Albertans about the way racism impacts people. One way to address racism is to recognize the achievements of people who come from diverse backgrounds. New grant and recognition programs will recognize and celebrate achievements within diverse communities to raise awareness about the contributions racialized and newcomer Albertans make to society.





## Public education and cultural awareness

### **Actions we're taking:**

Specific actions planned over the next three years.

- Establish a new grant program to help address racism and discrimination and enable Albertans to recognize and value cultural differences and heritage.
- Develop and implement a Newcomer Recognition Awards program to celebrate the success of newcomers and immigrants from diverse cultural groups.
- Launch targeted public education initiatives that raise awareness among Albertans about the way racism impacts people, and that has Indigenous specific content.
- Signal government's formal commitment to addressing racism and condemning actions of racism and hate.
- Engage Albertans on their perspectives related to diversity and anti-racism.

Alberta's government will also continue to collaborate with the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, and continue to make plans for addressing racism that are informed by discussions with stakeholders.

### **Responsible ministries**

Labour and Immigration, all ministries

### **How we plan to measure**

- Uptake of award and grant programs, including number of applications received and number of participants in each initiative
- Public education initiatives uptake and reach
- Results of engagement with Albertans on diversity and anti-racism

“Alberta’s government will support targeted public education initiatives to raise awareness among Albertans about the way racism impacts people.”

## Government as a catalyst for system improvements

Some people in Alberta face systemic discrimination due to their race or ethnicity when applying for jobs or grants, or accessing public services because these systems have been built with broad objectives, based on a western concept and structures, that have not accounted for the unintended bias or experiences of diverse communities. This discrimination is present in public and private institutions across society, including Alberta's government.

### **Creating equity in the Alberta public service, provincial granting programs, and public bodies**

As an employer and policy-setting public body, Alberta's government can take a leading role in breaking down the systemic barriers that limit people from all racial backgrounds from getting the support they need for their well-being. This includes building inclusive screening and interview practices into the hiring processes for the Alberta public service so that Albertans from all racial backgrounds have an equal opportunity to work for the Alberta government, and Alberta's public servants reflect the diverse population in Alberta. Efforts to foster racial equity practices will extend beyond hiring to provincial grant programs so that people in Alberta from of all racial backgrounds are enabled to apply for and receive provincial grants.


In addition to setting an example by incorporating racial equity practices within government systems, Alberta's government will work with other communities and organizations to improve inclusivity. This includes working with public bodies on developing measures for addressing racism and guidelines for anti-racist de-escalation techniques.

### **Continued investment to help racialized Albertans looking for careers**

To help racialized Albertans and Indigenous Peoples looking for careers outside of the Alberta public service, Alberta's government will continue to invest in or support targeted programs, specifically training to employment programs for Indigenous Peoples. This would also include mentorship and job-bridging programs that help newcomers find work in their chosen career path.

For racialized people in Alberta, differences in language and culture can make it more difficult to access any type of support, including government and other public services. Alberta's government will develop an inclusive communication strategy that will involve translating information on government services into multiple languages, and multilingual advertising to raise awareness among people in Alberta whose first language is not English about the services available to them.





## Government as a catalyst for system improvements

### **Actions we're taking:**

Specific actions planned over the next three years.

- Enable racialized and Indigenous Peoples in Alberta access to training to acquire skills they need to find good, long-term jobs by piloting targeted programming in short term skills development initiatives.
- Support people in Alberta who have experienced or witnessed racism by providing anti-racism resources in multiple languages, and in a way that is easy for people to understand.
- Support Indigenous Peoples in Alberta to access the post-secondary skills and training they need to pursue further education and find good long-term jobs through supporting Indigenous post-secondary providers and increased funding and programming supports targeted to Indigenous learners.
- Enable mentorship programs for internationally trained professionals.
- Work toward a barrier-free workplace that supports a diversity of perspectives to provide programs and services to meet the diverse needs of Albertans.
- Update kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum to include opportunities for students to learn concepts, topics and issues related to anti-racism, diversity and pluralism.
- Provide mandatory unconscious bias training for government staff involved in the hiring process, and enhance recruitment strategies to address barriers in sourcing, screening, and selection processes to increase diversity through hiring of underrepresented groups.
- Work with legislation, policies, and best practices to ensure that schools are welcoming, caring respectful and safe learning environments.

### **Responsible ministries**

All ministries, Treasury Board and Finance, Indigenous Relations, Labour and Immigration, Education, Advanced Education, Culture and Status of Women

### **How we plan to measure**

- Proportion of communication materials available in multiple languages
- Employment success of racialized and Indigenous Peoples

“As an employer and policy-setting public body, Alberta’s government can take a leading role in breaking down the systemic barriers that limit people from all racial backgrounds from getting the support they need for their well-being.”



## Empowering communities

Although Alberta's government is committed to taking a leading role in addressing racism, meaningful progress cannot be made unless racialized and Indigenous communities are active partners in the process. The actions in this plan involve strengthening partnerships, sharing best practices, and listening to the voices of racialized communities and Indigenous Peoples. Through these actions, Alberta can build community capacity to support anti-racism initiatives to become welcoming, diverse and inclusive places.

Alberta's municipalities can play a strong role in supporting the establishment of welcoming communities through demonstrated initiatives to address and respond to incidents of racism and hate in their communities.

### Specialized grant support for marginalized communities

Alberta's government has a variety of grant programs for communities, but racialized and Indigenous groups and communities sometimes have less capacity to obtain and manage these grants. Helping communities to better understand and manage the processes for government grants will enable them to make the most of grants to achieve their community's goals.

The Ministry of Culture and Status of Women delivers workshops to help organizations navigate the application process and strengthen their organization's capacity in strategic planning, board governance, evaluation, leadership, fund development, public and stakeholder engagement, and developing and enhancing partnerships.

### Giving diverse cultural communities in Alberta a voice

Empowering communities also means making sure they have opportunities to effect positive change. Alberta's government will establish connections with anti-racism groups across Alberta, as well as Indigenous communities and organizations, and encourage schools to develop or maintain safe spaces for people to talk about racism and inclusion. Alberta will participate in federal/provincial/territorial tables to share information about measures other jurisdictions are taking to address racism.

While developing the Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs strategy, Advanced Education organized two Indigenous-specific roundtables that included culturally-appropriate ceremony and protocols to ensure that diverse perspectives were included in the development of the strategy's vision, goals, and flagship initiatives. Alberta 2030 will transform the adult learning system to focus on providing the high quality education, skills and training needed for Alberta's future. Together, these actions will strengthen Alberta's response to racism by fostering partnerships and communication between racialized and Indigenous Peoples and the communities, governments and institutions they interact with.



## Empowering communities

### **Actions we're taking:**

Specific actions planned over the next three years.

- Empower diverse groups of people to meet and discuss racism and inclusion by creating safe and welcoming spaces.
- Work with Indigenous and racialized groups and communities throughout the provincial grant process, and continue to provide grant development and reporting support to First Nations Colleges and Community Adult Learning providers who serve diverse and marginalized populations.
- Revise Settlement, Integration and Language Projects grant policies to remove barriers to cultural organization applicants and increase focus on community capacity.
- Work with First Nations and Métis groups and persons throughout the province to address racism in the healthcare system.
- Include anti-racism on the agenda of the 2023 Premier's Summit on Fairness for Newcomers.
- Work with the Health Quality Council of Alberta to engage First Nations and Métis groups to obtain information and recommendations regarding Alberta Health Services' patient complaints process.

### **Responsible ministries**

Labour and Immigration, Health, Advanced Education, Culture and Status of Women, Indigenous Relations

### **How we plan to measure**

- Participation in and feedback from planned events

“The actions in this plan involve strengthening partnerships, sharing best practices, and listening to the voices of racialized communities and Indigenous Peoples.”

## Responding to hate incidents and crimes (safe society initiatives)

Raising awareness of racism, removing systemic barriers racialized groups face, and empowering communities can all help people to fully participate in society. People of different racial and ethnic backgrounds must also feel safe and protected within society in order to express who they are and live up to their potential. Creating a safe society for everyone involves various reforms within Alberta's justice system so it is better able to recognize and respond to racism, hate incidents and hate crimes.

### Protecting Albertans from hate crimes and discrimination

A provincial Hate Crimes Coordination Unit has been established to help protect people in Alberta from hate crimes by coordinating services across the province and sharing information on occurrences and risk factors. Additionally, Hate Crimes Community Liaisons have been recruited as special advisors to Justice and Solicitor General to forge relationships with communities and community organizations to gather information and coordinate action in ongoing efforts to address hate and bias-motivated crimes and incidents.

In order to reduce discrimination faced by racialized and Indigenous Peoples from the justice system, action will be taken to ensure inclusion and diversity training for all law enforcement officers is mandatory. In addition, policing standards regarding police stops or street checks have been defined and clarified so they are applied consistently.

In addition to modifying provincial policies and legislation, Alberta's government will encourage and work with the federal government to improve hate crimes legislation.

### Improving diversity in police services

To help improve diversity in police services across Alberta, policies will be developed that encourage recruitment, training and support of law enforcement officers who experience racism.

These reforms to the justice system will make it clear that hate crimes will not be tolerated while also improving equity within the justice system.





## Responding to hate incidents and crimes (safe society initiatives)

### **Actions we're taking:**

Specific actions planned over the next three years.

- A Provincial Hate Crimes Unit has been established to help coordinate services between jurisdictions and share information about occurrences, trends and risk factors.
- Take action to ensure inclusion and diversity training for law enforcement officers.
- New Hate Crimes Community Liaisons were recruited to put forward recommendations to improve government's response to addressing hate crimes.
- Continue to support organizations at risk of being targeted by hate crimes by enabling them to upgrade their facility's security with funds from the Alberta Security Infrastructure Grant program.
- Encourage and work with the federal government to improve hate crimes legislation.

### **Responsible ministries**

Justice and Solicitor General

### **How we plan to measure**

- Number of communities/organizations supported by Alberta Security Infrastructure Program
- Improved reporting through provincial hate crimes unit
- Number of engagements that the Hate Crimes Community Liaisons will undertake.

“Creating a safe society for everyone involves various reforms within Alberta’s justice system so it is better able to recognize and respond to racism, hate incidents and hate crimes.”



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## Data and measurement

Addressing racism is a complex and ongoing task, one that requires data on how racism is impacting Alberta, as well as ways of measuring progress so that we can continue to improve our anti-racism actions.

### Collecting disaggregated race-based data

Alberta's government will develop data standards to collect disaggregated race-based data to better understand the realities of racialized and Indigenous individuals and communities in the province. A new Alberta Data Strategy will establish a data ethics and privacy management framework that will be leveraged when considering data collection, use, storage and disclosure for racialized and Indigenous communities in areas such as health, education, housing, income, exposure to crime, interactions with the justice system, and hiring, wages, and occupation achievements. Better information can shape program and service delivery plans for addressing racism, and, over time, will indicate whether Alberta is making progress.

Alberta's government will further measure progress by evaluating whether grant applications and other applicable government programs and initiatives are serving diverse communities.

This action plan will be a living document and will be updated on an annual basis to track and record progress. Through engagement with partners, Alberta's government will work to identify emerging issues, encourage complementary actions and responses and identify areas for further collaboration.





## Data and measurements

### **Actions we're taking:**

Specific actions planned over the next three years.

- Implement a data ethics and privacy management framework through Alberta's Data Strategy that will support the collection and analysis of disaggregated race-based data.
- Assess the collection of disaggregated race-based data to identify disparities for racialized Albertans and Indigenous Peoples in the following areas:
  - hiring, wages, and occupation achievements
  - health outcomes
  - interaction with the justice system.
- Report to Albertans on progress the Government of Alberta is making towards addressing racism
- Commission an expert report, specific to Alberta, to set out a framework and any necessary data standards for the creation, collection and use of race-based data that incorporates perspectives of racialized communities and institutions in the province.

### **Responsible ministries**

All ministries

“Alberta’s government will develop data standards to collect disaggregated race-based data to better understand the realities of racialized and Indigenous individuals and communities in the province.”

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## Conclusion

Addressing racism and building a more equitable and inclusive society involves everyone. Alberta's government is committed to taking a leading role in educating Albertans about the value of diversity, breaking down barriers, listening to those with lived experience and empowering communities, tackling hate and improving safety, and producing disaggregated race-based data and measuring progress.

Throughout this process, Alberta's government will continue to listen to those impacted by racism and collaborate with them in developing responses to issues. With hard work and cooperation, Alberta can be a place where everyone has equal opportunity to succeed, equal protection from violence, and equal ability to embrace their heritage and identity.

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## The Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council

The Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council was established to provide advice to the Alberta government on efforts to combat racism and promote more inclusive and accepting communities across Alberta. The council consists of up to 24 people who together represent Alberta's diverse communities.

For a list of current council members, please visit:  
<https://www.alberta.ca/anti-racism-advisory-council.aspx>

In response to the systemic nature of racism, the council provides advice on a wide range of areas including making government programs and services more accessible, removing language barriers for accessing information, educating Albertans in order to build a more accepting society, working with law enforcement agencies, and identifying actions and strategies for combating racism.

“Alberta’s society is diverse, and together Albertans benefit from a variety of cultural traditions, histories and perspectives of the people who call this province home.”

Strengthening diversity and inclusion  
Alberta's anti-racism action plan

تعزيز تنوعنا وشمول الجميع  
خطة عمل ألبرتا لمكافحة العنصرية

Renforçons la diversité et l'inclusion  
Plan d'action albertain de lutte contre le racisme

增强多元化和包容性  
阿尔伯塔省的反种族主义行动计划

增強多元化和包容性  
亞伯達省的反種族主義行動計劃

अल्बर्टा की नस्लवाद-विरोधी कार्य-योजना  
विविधता और समावेश को मजबूत बनाना

تنوع اور شمولیت کو مضبوط بنانا  
البرٹا کا نسل پرستی کے خلاف ایکشن پلان

Alberta fortalece la diversidad y la inclusión  
La provincia y su plan de acción contra el racismo

Pagpapatibay ng pagkakaiba-iba at pagsasama ng lahat  
Plano ng Alberta sa Aksyon ng Anti-Rasismo

Củng cố sự đa dạng và hòa nhập  
Kế Hoạch Hành Động Chống Phân Biệt chủng Tộc của Alberta

다양성과 포용성 강화  
알버타의 인종차별 반대 행동 계획

Xoojinta kala duwanaanshaha iyo ka mid ahaanshaha  
Qorshaha Hawleedka ka-Hortagga Cunsurinimada ee Alberta

تقویت تنوع و شمول  
طرح اقدام ضد نژادپرستی آلبرتا

ਸਾਡੀ ਵਿੱਤਿੰਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਤ ਕਰਨਾ  
ਅਲਬਰਟਾ ਦੀ ਨਸਲਵਾਦ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਯੋਜਨਾ

Alberta