

# Anti-Racism Action Plan: Progress Report

**Publication Type**

Anti-racism work

**Subject Matter**

Human Rights

Issue 2 (September 2021 - September 2022)

Canadian Human Right Commission

ISSN 256

## Content of the page:

[Message from the Co-Champions of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

[Anti-Racism action as an employer](#)

[Enhancing internal accountability and leadership](#)

[Making policies and procedures inclusive](#)

[Increasing diversity and removing barriers in the workplace](#)

[Expanding professional development and training](#)

[Advocating for diversity and inclusion in external processes](#)

[Anti-Racism action as a service provider and regulator](#)

[Enhancing internal accountability](#)

[Addressing systemic racism as part of the Commission's regulatory and compliance enforcement work](#)

[Improving disaggregated data collection](#)

[Advancing access to justice through the human rights complaint process](#)

[Training for the Complaints team and supporting advisors](#)

[Anti-Racism action as a human rights advocate](#)

[Applying an anti-racist lens when engaging, advocating and monitoring](#)

[Supporting anti-racism work through the Commission's publications](#)

[Building inclusive processes](#)

# Message from the Co-Champions of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism

It has been one very busy year since we published the Canadian Human Rights Commission's Anti-Racism Action Plan. The September 2021 version of our Action Plan built on our draft version from January 2021 by incorporating feedback, input and suggestions from employees, bargaining agents and expert consultants. In it, we articulated a strong collective commitment to take bold action and build on work we started several years ago to "take the talk" of effecting and influencing systemic change as an employer, a regulator, and as Canada's national human rights institution.

Many of our actions are articulated in an [Open Letter](#) we sent to the Interim Clerk of the Privy Council last fall in support of the Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion. In addition, we featured key updates on our anti-racism work in our [2021 Annual Report to Parliament](#), which was tabled in the spring. We also shared our journey and some of our best and promising practices with organizations in the public and private sectors that we encourage to take decisive and courageous action to effect anti-racist change.

Along the way, we have been asked how we have maintained our momentum. We have been asked how we achieved a collective commitment to embed the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity and anti-racism in everything we do and everything we are. We have been asked how we have managed to live with the discomfort that comes with this work. While we do not purport to have all the answers, we have continued to remind ourselves and others that:

**Change happens when we are uncomfortable.** Being anti-racist means challenging systems and structures that are familiar to us; systems and structures that have benefitted some at the disadvantage of others. Because it is human nature to find comfort in the familiar, it has been and will continue to be critical to engage in honest self-reflection and to seek external support to understand and mitigate feelings of discomfort. This process of self-development takes courage, humility and vulnerability, and has been an important facet of our anti-racist journey.

**Change happens when we work together.** The systems and structures that underpin our society were built by and are made up of people. These systems and structures are steeped in hundreds of years of racism and colonialism, and will take time and a concerted effort to dismantle and rebuild. Effecting anti-racist change is therefore an individual and a collective responsibility. Through ongoing learning, the sharing of experiences, and engagement with a diverse community of stakeholders, we galvanized and fueled the commitment we need to effect anti-racist change.

**Change happens when we take bold action.** Every day, we have the choice and the responsibility to contribute to a long-lasting transformation in society by taking decisive anti-racist action at the individual, interpersonal and institutional levels. Not knowing where to start, however, keeps many people from acting at all. But our silence and inaction make us complicit, and can be much louder than we realize. We have therefore continued to listen and learn from one another and from our diverse community of stakeholders to identify emerging priorities for change and evaluate the effects of the actions we have taken. This process of listening, learning, action and evaluation has been and will remain continuous and sustained.

If you have been following our journey and our efforts over the past number of years, or if you are just joining us, we hope you will feel inspired to take bold steps to effect anti-racist change in your own life. Now more than ever, we must look to human rights to guide our values, to promote social harmony, and to protect our peace and prosperity. Human rights are universal and the foundation of our free and democratic society. It will be through concerted and deliberate actions that we will together redress the insidious historical and violent forms of oppression and colonization that continue to fester in our society and our institutions.

We are a caring, compassionate and resilient nation. Diversity, inclusion and acceptance are the values we hold dear. We are inspired and encouraged by countless examples of people in Canada coming together to help each other. It makes it clear that we are stronger together.

Together, we must call out hate when we see it.

Together, we must confront the deeply rooted systemic racism that has long denied Indigenous, Black and other racialized people a sense of belonging and full and equal participation in society.

Together, we must advance reconciliation. We must learn the truth about our shameful past, and take responsibility for it.

We must continue to push for a Canada where everyone feels welcome, valued and safe. Because when everyone can participate, everyone benefits.

Marie-Claude Landry, Ad. E., Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer

Ian Fine, Executive Director

## Executive Summary

The time for action to address systemic racism and discrimination, and ensure the full inclusion of Indigenous, Black and racialized people in all facets of our society is long overdue. As Canada's human rights watchdog and national human rights institution, the Canadian Human Rights Commission is more determined than ever to not only be a strong voice for human rights in Canada, but also a leader in advancing anti-racism, equity and inclusion as an employer, a regulator, and as Canada's national human rights institution.

When we set out to effect anti-racist organizational change several years ago, we responded to calls from our employees, stakeholders and rights holders, allies and external experts for immediate and meaningful action by establishing nearly 50 action-oriented commitments for change. At this stage in our journey, and one year after publishing our Anti-Racism Action Plan, we recognize the need to take action with outcomes in mind.

As a result, the present Progress Report documents not only the actions we have taken, but also the results we have achieved, and the next steps we will pursue to maintain our momentum. It also demonstrates that while we have completed some of the items in our Anti-Racism Action Plan, our work has awakened us to additional steps we can take to embed the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility into everything we do and everything we are.

In this regard, and going forward, we will continue to report on our anti-racism work as an employer, but we will report on our work as an advocate, regulator and service provider through an improved and more integrated articulation of our role as a regulator and as Canada's national human rights institution, responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The present Progress Report also documents the interrelatedness of many of the commitments we made in our Anti-Racism Action Plan, and the way they harmonize our results achieved under the following actions to favour systemic change:

Our actions in support of our commitment to openness and transparency with regard to the implementation of our Anti-Racism Action Plan have been consolidated under a single action, Action 1.4.

Our actions in support of our commitment to integrate the collection and analysis of disaggregated data in our operations have been consolidated under a single action, Action 2.7.

Our actions in support of our commitment to strengthen our complaints process and improve access to justice for Indigenous, Black and other racialized people have been consolidated under a single action, Action 2.14.

As a result of this consolidation, we now articulate our commitment to effect and influence systemic anti-racist change under 40 actions. Moreover, the present progress report presents the status of our work using one of three categories, which can be described as follows:

17.5% (7) of our actions are **complete**. This means that these actions were time-limited. Any subsequent action we take with regard to these actions is captured in our overall reporting efforts.

52.5% (21) of our actions are **in progress**. This means that these actions are well underway, but we have not yet achieved the full extent of change we are seeking. Going forward, much of our effort will be dedicated to advancing these actions to ensure they are embedded in everything we do and everything we are.

30% (12) of our actions are **integrated in our way of working**. This means that through the implementation of these actions, we have embedded the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility into our way of working. Going forward, we expect that our ability to effect and influence change will manifest as a result of our integration of these principles in everything we do and everything we are.

With all of this in mind, the present Progress Report shines a light on how we have improved our workplace; strengthened our complaints screening process to improve access to justice for Indigenous, Black and other racialized people; and leveraged engagement with community to inform and improve our work.

## Improving the workplace

In response to feedback received through a variety of means from employees, bargaining agents and external experts, we have embedded the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in our workplace.

Representation matters, which is why we are systematically advertising our employment opportunities with federal public service employee networks and with stakeholder and community groups, to ensure the opportunities reach as many Indigenous, Black and other racialized candidates. We are also using non-advertised appointments – including acting appointments – to support diversity and merit in staffing, and increase representation of Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees at all levels of the organization. To ensure employee success, we have launched a Mentorship

Program that places a strong focus on sponsorship and coaching. To support employee advancement into roles that require proficiency in English/French, we are increasingly investing in opportunities to enable staff to acquire and retain proficiency in their second official language. We have continued to engage with the Government of Canada to advocate for diversity in Governor in Council appointments to the Commission, including through the implementation of recruitment strategies that promote anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

We know that regular and ongoing training and personal development will support the sustainability of our work to improve inclusion in our workplace. This is why we continue to prioritize Commission-wide training for staff and Governor in Council appointees to increase awareness and discussion about implicit bias, systemic racism and discrimination, and the impacts of racism, colonialism, the Residential Schools and trauma. We continue to share research and relevant media scans to provide the most up-to-date anti-racism literature, articles, tools, events and other resources available to enhance staff competencies in understanding and addressing racism in the workplace, and supporting a diverse and inclusive work environment. We have also continued to invest in nearly monthly internal learning events to deepen our understanding of topics such as anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, inclusive language and intergenerational trauma.

To ensure the sustainability of our efforts to create an inclusive workplace, we are working with partners across the federal public service to strengthen our suite of people management policies, directives and guidelines. We are developing a comprehensive learning roadmap, as well as guidance on accommodating religious and spiritual observances. We are also ensuring that psychological supports for our employees, and for all federal public servants, are culturally appropriate and demographically representative. We are also developing indicators to assess executive and employee engagement with regard to the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

Going forward, we will engage with employees, bargaining agents and external experts to develop an approach to assess and capture the outcomes of our efforts, including through the collection of qualitative and quantitative data, and anecdotal evidence.

## Increasing access to justice

In response to feedback received through a variety of means from employees, stakeholders and rights holders, allies and external experts, we have strengthened our complaints process and the supports available to complainants with a view to improving access to justice for Indigenous, Black and other racialized people.

We remain steadfast in our efforts to support access to justice for people in Canada. We know that access to justice means more than improving individual's access to tribunals or courts, or ensuring legal representation. Access to justice doesn't mean having a day in court! Rather, access to justice means that an individual can see themselves in the human rights system, can use it in a meaningful way, and can trust that it will result in a meaningful outcome. There is no access to justice when people – for example, Indigenous, Black or other racialized people – fear the system and do not access it; when the system is inaccessible for a variety of reasons, including financial; and when people do not have information or knowledge about their rights. Yet, this is the reality for so many people; so many Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, and so many people in vulnerable circumstances. Indeed, as Marie-Claude Landry, Ad. E., Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Human Rights Commission acknowledged in her [closing remarks](#) at the 2022 National Black Canadians Summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia: "...for many racialized groups in Canada, accessing justice takes courage. It takes incredible courage to even consider engaging a system steeped in colonial history and tradition." This is why we are engaging in innovative and strategic partnerships with community organizations to enable them to support Indigenous, Black and other racialized people navigate the human rights system and other services when they have faced discrimination or harassment. We are committed to ensuring that the words "access to justice" take on their full meaning, that access to justice is for everyone and not just for a few!

Through a comprehensive, rigorous and multi-pronged accountability framework, we are also fostering rich and fulsome discussions and considerations relative to complaints brought before us on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin. We are dismantling potential barriers for all impacted groups – including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people – by ensuring the involvement of employees, legal and policy advisors and executives who have different lived-experience in the complaint review process. With the feedback of stakeholders, rights holders and external experts, we are also ensuring the application of an anti-racist lens to our screening function.

We are also ensuring ongoing training and mentorship for employees, in particular analysts who triage complaints and human rights officers who assess complaints. Such training has included sessions on anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, inclusive language, ableism and intergenerational trauma. To identify opportunities for a coordinated approach to address emerging and systemic issues in human rights complaints, we are strengthening our assessment tools by considering the latest and most relevant legal and policy advice. In addition, we are actively participating in the litigation of a number of cases before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and the Courts involving allegations of discrimination based on race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin, with a view to dismantling systemic racism and discrimination.

Going forward, we will engage with employees, stakeholders and rights holders, allies and external experts to assess the impact of our efforts, including through the development of a comprehensive disaggregated data strategy.

## Engaging with community

In recognition of the value that has been brought to us through feedback from employees, stakeholders and rights holders, allies and external experts, we struck our first Network for Advancing Racial Equality. Through the Network, we have developed relationships with nearly 200 organizations and individuals who are steadfast in their commitment to engage with the Commission to advance racial equality in Canada.

The Network offers a regular channel through which we are engaging, seeking input and providing updates on our work to stakeholders, rights holders and allies seeking to advance racial equality. Meetings with Network members took place between March and September 2022, and will continue in the immediate- and long-term. Through the meetings that have already taken place, we received invaluable feedback on a variety of key areas of our work, including improving access to our human rights complaints process, and the development of an online submission tool through which systemic human rights issues are brought to our attention.

Upcoming engagements are planned by the end of 2022-23 on advancing access to justice and racial equality through the human rights complaints process, to test future information technology solutions, and to contribute to the development of engagement strategies to advance human rights.

## Next steps

The present Progress Report documents the advancement of Anti-Racism Action Plan over the past year. It also articulates an evolution in our understanding of the pervasive and intersectional nature of systemic discrimination, and the need to remain vigilant and focused on outcomes.

With this in mind, we will work over the next number of months to develop an integrated Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism outcomes-based strategy with clear indicators and outputs. We know we cannot do this alone, and look forward to engaging with our employees - including through our Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee – and with stakeholders, rights holders, allies and external experts advance this important work.

Together, we can dismantle systemic discrimination and build a better future for all people in Canada.

# Anti-Racism action as an employer

## Our Commitment

We commit to fostering a workplace that represents Canada's diversity, and ensuring an inclusive and welcoming work environment that promotes a sense of value, belonging, and well-being for all employees.

# Enhancing internal accountability and leadership

## Action 1.1 – Coordination of anti-racism work (ongoing)

Appoint a senior executive to develop an action plan and to support the implementation of key pieces of work with key partners in the organization over a one-year period. Develop a transition plan to ensure ongoing commitment and coordination of this work.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #1](#): Appoint Indigenous employees and Black and other Racialized employees to and within the Executive Group through career development and talent management.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission appointed a senior executive to support the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director in championing sustainable anti-racist organizational change with the Commission.

This executive worked closely with Commission employees and management at all levels, as well as with bargaining agents, central agencies and Government departments and agencies, to consolidate and articulate our anti-racism work under our Anti-Racism Action Plan. She also attended weekly senior management meetings comprising Branch heads, the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director to bring an anti-racism lens to her work. This individual also met at least once weekly with the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director to maintain accountability and ensure continued momentum.

In winter 2021-22, we built on the important groundwork laid by this executive by establishing our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism (IDEA-AR) Unit within the offices of the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director. At its conception, the Chief of Staff and Director of Stakeholder Relations, and two Advisors on IDEA-AR provided support and strategic advice to the Chief Commissioner, the Executive Director and the entire workforce to inform the ongoing implementation of the Commission's Anti-Racism Action Plan.

## Next steps

With a view to supporting the continued sustainability of the Commission's anti-racism initiatives, work is underway to build on feedback collected and following the first six months of the establishment of the IDEA-AR Unit to ensure its composition is as strategic and practical as possible, while balancing the realities of the Commission's small size. This work is expected to be completed by the end of 2022-23. Thereafter, the IDEA-AR Unit will develop and monitor the implementation of an integrated IDEA-AR strategy that will chart a path forward for this important work while maintaining a prominent and intersectional anti-racism lens.

## Action 1.2 – Establish an internal consultation committee (complete)

Establish an internal consultation committee comprising Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees. The Committee will be consulted by the executive team on the implementation of the Commission's anti-racism work. The perspectives of members with lived-experience will also be sought and incorporated in the development of policies and other program initiatives. The Committee will also assist in the continued identification and elimination of barriers.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #7](#): Enabling and advancing the work of grassroots networks and communities within the Public Service by providing necessary resources and bringing them into discussions at senior executive tables.

## Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, in collaboration with employees, bargaining agents and experts, the Canadian Human Rights Commission established the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee (DACC), initially composed of eight members from across the Commission and one external consultant with expertise in anti-racist organizational change.

The establishment of DACC has enabled the Commission to more rigorously identify systemic barriers and propose potential solutions to ensure equity in our work. Members champion the perspectives, ideas and recommendations of Indigenous, Black and racialized employees to support the advancement of the Commission's commitment to anti-racism, inclusion, diversity and equity. They also contribute to the development and implementation of Commission initiatives to further inclusion and equity for Indigenous, Black and racialized employees by providing advice, guidance and recommendations to their colleagues across the Commission.

Branches, Divisions and Units from across the Commission have engaged and continue to engage with DACC to discuss and seek feedback on products and initiatives such as:

- The collection and analysis of disaggregated data in the context of human rights complaints, with a view to identifying systemic issues.

- The striking of the Network for Advancing Racial Equality.

- The development of Guidelines for External Engagement and the Commission's Interim Policy on Stakeholder Compensation, with a view to bringing a consistently inclusive and anti-racist approach to the Commission's extensive engagement activities.

- The Commission's Employment Systems Review.

- The development of a list of resources and activities to mark the inaugural National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

- The development of an updated Mental Health Strategy, to ensure the principles of decolonization and anti-racism are well integrated in the Commission's work to support staff wellbeing.

- The development of the Commission's Mentorship Plus Program.

- The development of various policy documents, including: a paper on systemic discrimination; the Commission's submission to the UN Working Group Experts on People of African Descent; and a guide for employers on levelling the field for diverse employees.

DACC also engages on a quarterly basis with the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director as Co-Champions of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism, and Co-Champions of the Anti-Racism Action Plan to discuss DACC's work plan and identify areas where their engagement would be particularly helpful.

In addition to providing feedback on Commission products and initiatives, DACC is also working on self-generated initiatives, including one aimed at building empathy among staff through the sharing of personal, lived-experience by staff and invitees.

The establishment of DACC has strengthened the Commission's work by ensuring the consistent application of an anti-racist and anti-colonial lens to new initiatives. For example, their input to the list of resources and activities to mark the inaugural National Day for Truth and Reconciliation ensured that all Commission staff – in particular, non-Indigenous staff – could benefit from a well curated collection of stories and experiences to deepen their understanding of the legacy of colonization and the attempted erasure of Indigenous culture. Moreover, their invaluable input informed necessary updates to the Commission's guide on [Levelling the Field](#) to support employers in developing special programs under the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Employment Equity Act.

With the terms of DACC's initial membership drawing to an end, the Commission has worked with bargaining agents to identify new employee representatives and a new employee co-chair.

## Next steps

In support of the 2022 Speech from the Throne, the Canadian Human Rights Commission will continue to work in collaboration with DACC on initiatives to raise awareness of systemic racism and discrimination in Canada. The voices of DACC members will also be critical to ensuring the application of an anti-racist and anti-colonial lens to examine the socioeconomic impacts of the housing crisis on Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people, as well as people with disabilities.

We will also endeavour to ensure regular engagement between DACC and the Commission's Executive Management Committee to strengthen relationships and to serve as an accountability measure to support the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

## Action 1.3 – Executive accountability (in progress)

Tie this plan's progress to executive performance management.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

## Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission put measures in place to ensure that the various action items outlined in our Anti-Racism Action Plan are identified in and measured through the executive performance management cycle. Performance objectives with regard to the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan were added to executive performance agreements starting in 2021-22.

In that same timeframe, the Commission also engaged in preliminary discussions with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat on the development of a leadership and a behavioural competency pertaining to engagement with regard to anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat subsequently engaged with stakeholders – including public service employee networks, bargaining agents and senior officials for employment equity, diversity and inclusion – to collect information on the experiences of equity-impacted groups specifically in public service staffing. In response to feedback received, Bill C-30 was tabled to introduce amendments to the Public Service Employment Act, which provides the framework for staffing in the public service. The changes to be made to the Public Service Employment Act following the June 2021 passage of Bill C-30 aim to strengthen diversity and inclusion, and to remove or mitigate potential biases and barriers faced by equity-seeking groups. While provisions with regard to the identification of biases and barriers are not yet in force, the passage of Bill C-30 represents an important milestone within the federal public service, as it will help the federal public service to take measures in staffing actions to reduce barriers and encourage more inclusive recruitment practices.

## Next steps

While performance objectives with regard to the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan were added to executive performance agreements starting in 2021-22, valuable feedback has been received that clear performance indicators are needed to measure progress in a consistent and meaningful way.

As a result, the Canadian Human Rights Commission has begun to explore the development of evaluation criteria to improve and strengthen the assessment of executive performance with regard to the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan. To ensure the robustness of those criteria and to ensure they are responsive to the needs and expectations of the workforce, the Commission will engage with its internal Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee, expert consultants and the stakeholder community to seek ideas, feedback and input.

The Commission recognizes the importance of developing and implementing evaluation criteria at the earliest opportunity to establish baselines and measure progress over time, and is endeavouring to begin consultations in the second half of the 2022-23 performance cycle.

In addition, while the passage of amendments to the Public Service Employment Act will not immediately result in changes to the public service performance management process, it could eventually manifest in the integration of behavioural evaluation criteria with regard to the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. The Commission will therefore monitor progress in this regard.

## Action 1.4 – Reporting (ongoing)

Report regularly on the progress of this plan.

**Note:** Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Actions 1.5 and 2.1, this progress report, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around internal and external reporting as a single action, under Action 1.4.

Action 1.5: "Provide regular updates to Commission staff on this plan's progress."

Action 2.1: "Develop a communications plan and provide regular updates on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan. This will include reporting on the Commission's anti-racism work using a variety of means which may include the Canadian Human Rights Commission's Annual Report, social media and website."

## Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission operates with the core principle that measuring progress is the key to driving lasting change. This is why we have created an [Anti-Racism section](#) on our website, and this is also why we have been keen to share our lessons learned and promising practices through:

the present Progress Report;

our [Progress Report of June 1, 2021](#) [PDF 780KB];

[Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#); and

our [Anti-Racism Action Plan](#), the first version of which was informed significantly by input from staff, stakeholders, bargaining agents and expert consultants.

To ensure continued momentum and regular reporting on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, the Commission has – since January 2021 – retained the services of an external consultant with expertise in anti-racist organizational change. The consultant participates in monthly meetings with the Commission's Executive Management Committee and Governor in Council appointees to question them and hold them to account on the implementation of the commitments made in the Action Plan. He also meets on a monthly basis with the Chief Commissioner and the Executive

Director, as the leaders of the organization and as the Co-Champions of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism, to offer guidance to inform the strategic direction of the Commission's anti-racism work. The consultant also engages regularly with Branch heads and executives to offer guidance and advice on the implementation of Action Plan commitments under their stewardship, and to help bring cohesion to this work across Branches.

In addition to benefitting from his deep knowledge and expertise on anti-racist organizational change, the consultant has also facilitated numerous connections between the Commission and leaders of organizations that are embarking on their own anti-racism journey. Through these engagements the Commission has had the privilege to share our experiences and promising practices in the humble hope that they can guide organizations across Canada in effecting anti-racist organizational change.

To foster engagement while ensuring transparency, openness and accountability, the Canadian Human Rights Commission is also sharing updates on the status of implementation of our Anti-Racism Action Plan through frequent Commission-wide messages, and through town halls hosted regularly by the Chief Commissioner and the Executive Director as Co-Champions of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism.

#### Next steps

The Commission will work with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee to explore means to enable employees, bargaining agents and stakeholders to provide qualitative feedback to the Commission on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan. This feedback would be used to inform the establishment of baselines for the commitments within the Action Plan, and to gauge overall progress toward demonstrating that the Commission is indeed walking the talk to effect meaningful and lasting anti-racist organizational change.

## Action 1.5 – Updating Commission staff (combined with Action 1.4 as of fall 2022)

Provide regular updates to Commission staff on this plan's progress.

#### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Actions 1.4 and 2.1, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around internal and external reporting as a single action, under Action 1.4.

## Action 1.6 – Staff accountability (in progress)

Explore leadership and behavioral competency related to diversity and inclusion for all Commission staff.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

#### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission ensured that the assessment of employee engagement with regard to anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility was included as an employee work objective in the context of the annual performance management cycle.

#### Next steps

While the assessment of engagement with regard to the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility was added to the employee performance management cycle starting in 2021-22, valuable feedback has been received that clear performance indicators are needed to measure progress in a consistent and meaningful way.

With this in mind, the Commission looks forward to the results of work being led by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat on the development of leadership and a behavioural competency, and performance indicators, pertaining to engagement with regard to anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility, with a view to ensuring the application of an integrated approach at all levels across the federal public service.

The Commission will also participate in upcoming dialogues about further amendments to the Public Service Employment Act and other statutes governing employment within the federal public service to ensure the application of an anti-racism lens.

In addition, the Commission has begun to explore the development of evaluation criteria to improve and strengthen the assessment of employee objectives with regard to anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. To ensure the robustness of those criteria, and to ensure they are responsive to the needs and expectations of the workforce, the Commission will engage with its internal Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee, expert consultants and the stakeholder community to seek ideas, feedback and input.

## Making policies and procedures inclusive

### Action 1.7 – Religious and spiritual observances (in progress)



Ensure awareness of major religious and spiritual observances by sharing resources. Those in management positions will refrain from scheduling mandatory events on those days if they have a team member(s) observing the religious or spiritual holiday. Employees are encouraged to proactively identify religious and/or spiritual observances requiring accommodation to their direct supervisor as soon as practicable.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission promoted awareness of major religious and spiritual observances, and encouraged management to schedule important engagements around those dates. Instructions to import these days into personal calendars were also shared with all employees.

### Next steps

As the Commission's approach to promoting awareness of major religious and spiritual observances has fostered greater inclusive leadership, it will be incorporated into our onboarding package for new staff such that they, too, may contribute to promoting awareness of major religious and spiritual observances. The Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee will also be consulted on the development of tools to promote awareness of major religious and spiritual observances.

The Commission is also updating guidance for managers on how to accommodate employees and prevent discrimination, including with regard to accommodation of religious or spiritual beliefs and observances. The Commission will engage with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee during the development process to receive feedback.

## Action 1.8 – Psychological supports (in progress)

Develop and implement a plan to ensure that the 13 Factors of Psychological Health and Safety take into account the perspectives of Indigenous and other racialized employees either through consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee or through other means.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

### Results achieved

In 2022-23, the Canadian Human Rights Commission convened its Mental Health Network, which, together, finalized the second draft of the Commission's Mental Health Action Plan 2022 to 2025. The Plan was developed based on the outcomes of consultations that were held with employees and managers at all levels on the 13 Factors of Psychological Health and Safety. The latest draft Mental Health Action Plan 2022 to 2025 is inclusive of employees at the Commission, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees. The Plan is being finalized, and is expected to be shared in the near-term.

Also, as noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission took steps to ensure that qualified and appropriate mental health support is available to any employee who experiences stress, trauma or other mental health issues related to the impact of racism, in whatever form it may manifest. A dedicated counsellor was available to Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees – and to any employee who experienced stress or trauma due to their proximity to, or witnessing of, racism – from February to March 2022, in addition to existing support services offered under the Employee Assistance Program.

### Next steps

Employee support continues to be available through the Employee Assistance Program, which has been strengthened to allow clients to specify their preferred racial or other background of the counsellor assigned to them. While disaggregated data pertaining to the use of the Employee Assistance Program are not available, the Commission will continue to monitor the usage of the Program.

## Action 1.9 – Information technology solutions (in progress)

Ensure that the development of Information Management, Information Technology (IM/IT) services and solutions includes consultation with diverse groups of stakeholders early in the development process as well as engagement through User Acceptance Testing at the later stages of the development process for new products or services. This will help ensure representation of Indigenous, Black and other racialized people in the governance boards that are responsible for IM/IT investment and decision-making.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

## Results achieved

Throughout 2021-22 and so far in 2022-23, the Canadian Human Rights Commission has endeavoured to ensure our information technology and information management products and services are responsive to the needs of people in Canada by co-designing and testing solutions with diverse stakeholder groups. To support this vision, in 2020-21, the Commission struck its first Information Management, Information Technology (IM/IT) Steering Committee, which comprises diverse members from across the organization. Steering Committee members have worked collaboratively to develop an intake process for all IM/IT initiatives to bring rigour and consistency to the process, for example, with regard to cyber security considerations.

## Next steps

To build on the work undertaken thus far by the IM/IT Steering Committee, the Commission will take steps over the next year to integrate an anti-racism and accessibility lens to the intake process for IM/IT initiatives, in addition to a requirement for community engagement and user testing.

# Increasing diversity and removing barriers in the workplace

## Action 1.10 – Identification of barriers (complete)

Engage an external facilitator to meet with Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees to gain their perspectives and views on barriers that exist within the Commission, with the goal of eliminating systemic barriers and instituting anti-racist organizational change.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

## Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in June 2020, the Canadian Human Rights Commission retained an external facilitator who met with Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees who expressed an interest in sharing their personal perspectives and experiences with possible institutional and structural barriers within the Commission.

The facilitator selected was retained given her significant expertise and experience in human rights and employment law, and because of her deep understanding of systemic racism. The facilitator's objective was to surface issues, trends or patterns to inform management decisions. To support engagement, employees participated in a confidential manner, and all conclusions were articulated in general terms, with a commitment to ongoing confidentiality. Given the exploratory nature of her work, the facilitator did not engage in fact-checking, credibility assessments or other forms of procedural fairness typical of a workplace investigation, nor was she mandated to investigate allegations of individual wrongdoing.

The Commission takes the confidential observations and recommendations from the facilitator very seriously. We are encouraged that she feels the steps we are taking together in the context of the Anti-Racism Action Plan are addressing the feedback she received. Our efforts and results achieved are articulated throughout this progress report, and include:

- Using non-advertised appointments – including acting appointments – to support diversity and merit in staffing, and increase representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act.

- Launching a Mentorship Plus Program.

- Granting opportunities to enable staff to acquire and retain proficiency in their second official language.

- Advocating for the implementation of recruitment strategies that promote anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in the context of Government in Council appointments.

- Sharing job opportunities with as broadly as possible, including with public service diversity networks.

- Incorporating recommendations from various external stakeholders and experts on how we can improve the way we screen complaints alleging racism.

## Next steps

Notwithstanding the facilitator's encouraging feedback, we know there is still room for improvement. This is why, going forward, the Commission will continue to work with employees, bargaining agents and external experts to actively evaluate our procedures and practices through an Employee

Systems Review, to eliminate systemic barriers and to institute anti-racist organizational change. We have taken many actions to address the facilitator's observations, and we will continue to ensure that our workplace is respectful and inclusive.

The Commission will work also with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee to explore means to enable staff to provide quality feedback to management on increasing diversity and removing barriers in the workplace. This feedback would be used to establish baselines for commitment, and to gauge overall progress toward ensuring a workplace where respect, equity and positive recognition of differences are cultural and celebrated, where diverse voices are heard, and where everyone feels valued.

As Action 1.10 is complete, updates on how the Commission is addressing the feedback received from the facilitator will be articulated in reports on the implementation of our Anti-Racism Action Plan, and through other mechanisms such as annual reports to Parliament and our Employment Equity

## Action 1.11 – Independent employment equity audit (in progress)

Engage an external organization to conduct an independent employment equity audit in order to evaluate the Commission's hiring, promotion and retention of Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, as well as people with disabilities, at all levels of our organization using a GBA+ lens. An Employment Equity Plan will be developed to address the identified gaps. As part of this work, the Commission will pay particular attention to potential gaps in the area of frontline staff, team leaders and executives. The Commission recognizes that the Employment Equity Act is a minimum legal requirement regarding diversity levels in the workplace and continues to strive to exceed these requirements.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission retained the services of a firm to conduct an independent employment equity audit to examine the representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Act – women, Indigenous peoples, racialized people and people with disabilities – within our organization. The audit applied a GBA Plus (Gender Analysis Plus) lens, and specifically identified barriers to employment at senior levels within the Commission for members of these designated groups.

The Employment Equity Audit report was published in March 2021, and found that the Commission continues to have a strong representation of members from the designated groups when compared to the availability in the Canadian workforce (based on data available as of March 31, 2020).

### Next steps

Over the coming year, the Commission will continue to work with employees, bargaining agents and external experts to actively evaluate our procedures and practices through an Employment Systems Review, and to inform the development of an Employment Equity Plan.

The Employment Equity Plan will address the results of the Employment Systems Review, and will incorporate measures to support the implementation of amendments made to the Public Service Employment Act with regard to inclusive hiring practices. For example, when looking at the Commission's representation rates by occupational category, the employment equity audit shows that special attention is required to increase the representation of Indigenous peoples (3.3% representation versus 3.7% labour market availability). As a result, a future Employment Equity Plan may include commitments related to increasing the representation of Indigenous peoples within the Commission's workforce.

In the immediate-term, to support this objective, the Commission has bolstered its efforts to recruit and retain Indigenous employees. This includes sharing all appointment opportunities – whether they are advertised internally (to the federal public service) or externally (to people in Canada at large) – with a wide range of Indigenous stakeholder groups, including the Indigenous Federal Employees Network, and public and private sector organizations.

## Action 1.12 – Fairness in staffing (in progress)

In order to further enhance transparency and fairness in staffing as well as to broaden the pool of eligible candidates, ensure that the use of non-advertised appointments does not act as a barrier to racialized individuals in search of opportunities.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

### Results achieved

Although the Canadian Human Rights Commission does not have any gaps in representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act, we continue to do more to increase representation and diversity. To help foster even greater representation in our workplace, the Commission has paid close attention to transparency and fairness in staffing, as noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB].

Over the past year, our staffing team has been meeting regularly with hiring managers to discuss upcoming staffing needs, and provide advice on considering advertised and non-advertised staffing approaches.

The Commission has also begun documenting the reasons for the use of advertised and non-advertised staffing approaches. When using a non-advertised approach, we are ensuring that under-represented candidates are given fair and equal access to employment opportunities. In some cases we have strategically used non-advertised processes to hire and promote people from equity-impacted groups. In fact, data collected over six months show that while non-advertised appointments are indeed used to staff vacancies, they are often being used to support diversity and merit in staffing and increase representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act. For example:

Non-advertised appointments have been used to appoint meritorious individuals belonging to at least one of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act when advertising the opportunity was unsuccessful.

Non-advertised appointments have also been used to grant acting opportunities to diverse staff from within and outside the organization to support the professional development and career advancement.

When using advertised staffing approaches, we have worked to broaden the pool of eligible candidates by promoting employment opportunities to the largest possible audience. We are also working to diversify the outcomes of advertised appointments. For example, we have undertaken anonymous assessments (whereby the names of applicants are redacted during the screening of candidates, including during the assessment of written examinations) to ensure we are mitigating unconscious bias in the early stages of the hiring process.

### Next steps

We will continue to document the reasons that support the use of non-advertised staffing appointments, with a view to establishing a set of objective criteria that can be applied as opportunities are available.

Moreover, with the June 2021 passage of amendments to the Public Service Employment Act – which provides the framework for staffing in the public service – the Canadian Human Rights Commission, with the support of the Public Service Commission, will work over the coming year to strengthen diversity and inclusion in the Commission's appointment process, and to remove or mitigate potential biases and barriers faced by equity-impacted groups in staffing.

## Action 1.13 – Valuing lived-experience (in progress)

Ensure staffing decisions take into account human rights experience, education and lived-experience. The Commission recognizes the value of human rights experience and education as well as the lived-experience of Indigenous, Black and other racialized individuals. This will continue to guide staffing decisions in a number of ways, including by:

ensuring diversity across the organization and in every business unit; and

ensuring that those hired in human rights positions have the required expertise.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action](#) #4: Recruit highly qualified candidates from Indigenous communities and Black and other racialized communities from across all regions of Canada.

### Results achieved

To build on the findings of the independent employment equity audit described under Action 1.11, and as noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission has engaged the services of an expert consultant to initiate a review of our employment systems, policies and practices. The Employment Systems Review requires an in-depth assessment of all employment systems, policies and practices, and the manner by which these are implemented, to identify barriers to the full employment of members of under-represented design groups. By understanding where employment barriers exist and why, we are better positioned to address them and develop a process to ensure our policies and practices are inclusive and anti-racist by design.

The Employment Systems Review consultant has been holding focus groups and one-on-one interviews to gather information that will assist in the review. The final report is expected to be completed by the end of 2022-23. The recommendations stemming from the Employment Systems Review contribute to our updated Employment Equity Plan, the development of which we will undertake through engagement with bargaining agents, employees and external experts.

In the meantime, to foster greater representation, we are considering intersecting identities – for example, the intersection of race and gender, or race and disability – to ensure the prioritization of recruitment includes traditionally under-represented groups. We have also continued to ensure that the value of lived-experience is considered in Commission staffing by identifying human rights experience and education as an asset criterion, when relevant to the core functions of a position.

### Next steps

While important progress has been achieved, work still lies ahead over the next year to develop an integrated, inclusive and equitable Employee Equity Plan.

In addition, with the June 2021 passage of amendments to the Public Service Employment Act – which provides the framework for staffing in the service – the Canadian Human Rights Commission, with the support of the Public Service Commission, will work over the coming year to strengthen diversity and inclusion in the Commission's appointment process, and to remove or mitigate potential biases and barriers faced by equity-impacted groups in staffing.

## Action 1.14 – Diversity in hiring boards (in progress)

Ensure diversity in the composition of the Commission's hiring boards. Particular efforts will be made to ensure representation of Indigenous, Black and other racialized board members when hiring for positions where a gap exists and at the EX-minus-one level.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #1](#): Appoint Indigenous employees and Black and other racialized employees to and within the Executive Group through career development and talent management.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #4](#): Recruit highly qualified candidates from Indigenous communities and Black and other racialized communities from across all regions of Canada.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], diverse officials from the Canadian Human Rights Commission have volunteered to participate on selection boards led by the Commission to ensure representation and a diversity of perspectives. Some have also identified themselves through [Board+](#), an initiative led by the federal public service's Quebec National Manager Community to establish a pool of diverse individuals who are interested in participating on selection boards.

In light of our complement, we have also been identifying Indigenous, Black and other racialized and diverse individuals external to the organization to participate on our hiring boards. Most recently, we were grateful for the support and expertise of racialized individuals who participated on a selection board for EX-1 positions at the Commission.

In addition, the Commission participates on a monthly interdepartmental call through which officials are discussing and sharing resources related to diverse hiring boards and inclusive hiring practices.

### Next steps

Going forward, the Commission will continue to contribute to efforts to establish a list of individuals who would be willing to participate on selection boards to ensure representation and a diversity of perspectives.

Moreover, with the June 2021 passage of amendments to the Public Service Employment Act – which provides the framework for staffing in the public service – the Canadian Human Rights Commission, with the support of the Public Service Commission, will work over the coming year to strengthen diversity and inclusion in the Commission's appointment process, and to remove or mitigate potential biases and barriers faced by equity-seeking groups in staffing.

In the immediate-term, the Commission will require all members of selection boards for Commission-led selection processes to successfully complete a course offered by the Canada School of Public Service that presents best practices and staffing strategies for conducting an inclusive and bias-free hiring process. Through that course, board members will learn about the importance of a diverse workforce, and the impact that unconscious bias and other barriers can have when recruiting new talent.

## Action 1.15 – Promoting opportunities (ongoing)

Reach out to relevant equity-seeking communities and stakeholders where gaps exist in representation and no Indigenous, Black or other racialized candidates apply.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #4](#): Recruit highly qualified candidates from Indigenous communities and Black and other racialized communities from across all regions of Canada.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission operates with the core principle that measuring progress is the key to driving lasting change. To identify gaps in representation, we are collecting disaggregated data regarding our recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion, on a voluntary basis, including of Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees. Where gaps exist we have implemented measures to share all appointment opportunities – whether they are advertised internally (to the federal public service) or externally (to people in Canada at large) – with a wide range of stakeholder groups, including public service employee networks, and public and private sector organizations.

## Next steps

While initial results of this approach are promising, and while feedback from the networks and stakeholders with whom we have shared opportunities has been consistently positive and enthusiastic, the Commission will develop a methodology to monitor and measure outcomes in staffing, and to ensure that opportunities are reaching as wide an audience as possible.

# Expanding professional development and training

## Action 1.16 – Mentorship (in progress)

Develop mentorship opportunities in consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee; explore the possibility of collaboration with other small agencies and human rights commissions to expand the number of mentors available to employees both at the Canadian Human Rights Commission and those agencies.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #2](#): Sponsor high-potential Indigenous employees and Black and other racialized employees to prepare them for leadership roles.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #3](#): Support the participation of Indigenous employees and Black and other racialized employees in leadership development programs (for example, the Executive Leadership Development Program) and career development services (for example, official language training).

### Results achieved

In this era of building back better, the principles of anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility are paramount, and will continue to guide the Canadian Human Rights Commission's recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion practices. As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], we have developed a Mentorship Plus Program, through which we will seek to:

- Increase representation of equity-impacted groups in leadership positions, over time.

- Increase our understanding of effective strategies to support and remove barriers for high-potential employees from equity-impacted groups.

- Ensure more equity-impacted groups are supported in achieving their career goals.

We are also exploring the possibility of collaboration with other small agencies to expand the number of mentors available to employees both at the Commission and within those agencies.

The first phase of the Mentorship Plus Program is now underway, and focusses on providing leadership opportunities for high-potential employees occupying positions that feed into the executive cadre (within the federal public service, these positions are often referred to as being at the "EX-one" level). Program participants who are sponsored for such opportunities are also being provided with the necessary mentorship and coaching to ensure their success.

## Next steps

The Commission will continue implementation of the first phase of the Mentorship Plus Program, and will monitor and assess implementation based on indicators that were developed in consultation with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee. Over the medium-term, the Commission plans to roll out future phases of the Program, which will focus on the development and sponsorship of employees belonging to other under-represented groups.

## Action 1.17 – Support in career planning (ongoing)

Engage in discussions with staff regarding performance, career advancement, learning needs and areas where improvement is required in order to be successful in their current position, as well as to obtain career advancement opportunities.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #2](#): Sponsor high-potential Indigenous employees and Black and other racialized employees to prepare them for leadership roles.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission is working with employees to identify their learning needs, career goals and areas for improvement necessary for success in their current positions, as well as to explore opportunities for career advancement.

## Next steps

The Canadian Human Rights Commission will continue to engage with employees to identify their learning needs, career goals and areas for improvement necessary for success in their current positions, as well as to explore opportunities for career advancement.

The Commission will also work over the coming year to develop guidance to managers on engaging in career planning discussions with their staff.

## Action 1.18 – Support for professional development (ongoing)

Grant training opportunities that are required for an employee's current position and/or for their career advancement to the extent that operational budgetary constraints allow.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #2](#): Sponsor high-potential Indigenous employees and Black and other racialized employees to prepare them for leadership roles.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission is working with Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees to identify and pursue training opportunities that are required for their current position and/or for their career advancement, to the extent that operational and budgetary constraints allow. For example:

Where the functions of a position require fluency in English and French – for example, positions that are supervisory in nature, or positions that require engagement with the public – opportunities are being granted to enable staff to acquire and retain proficiency in their second official language.

The small size of the organization requires flexibility among staff. As a result, when an employee is seeking opportunities to engage in work that is not their usual functions as a result of their career aspirations, they have ample opportunity to do so, and are being supported by their managers to pursue term assignments, including acting assignments.

With the increase in developmental offerings by the Canada School of Public Service, employees are being granted the time necessary to pursue learning programs, such as the new project management certification program, or the Manager Development Program.

### Next steps

We will continue to work with Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees to identify and support training opportunities that are required for their current position and/or for their career advancement, to the extent that operational and budgetary constraints allow.

We will also continue to support the leadership development of Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees, as well as employees with disabilities and those with lived-experience of disability, by offering acting opportunities and supporting official language training.

## Action 1.19 – Cultural competency training (in progress)

Provide mandatory unconscious/implicit bias training for commissioners and staff. Additional, ongoing training will be provided as needed to continue to build awareness and develop cultural competencies.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission has actively promoted ongoing learning and self-awareness initiatives and activities, including by:

Purchasing a book on anti-racism for every Commission employee.

Providing Commission-wide training to staff and Governor in Council appointees to increase awareness and discussion about implicit bias, systemic racism and discrimination, and the impacts of racism, colonialism, the Residential Schools and trauma. Such training opportunities have included a half-day session on "Avoiding Harm when Discussing Racism," delivered to all staff in 2021, and a half-day session on "The Four Pillars of Trauma Engagement," delivered to management and those involved in addressing human rights complaints.

Providing specialized training and tools for Commission staff responsible for screening, analyzing and addressing discrimination complaints that allege racism, including training on how to take a trauma-informed approach to engagement with victims. These employees were also provided with training on microaggressions.

Regularly sharing ongoing research by the Commission's Library Services, as well as relevant media scans by the Commission's Communications Division with Commission staff to provide the most up-to-date anti-racism literature, articles, tools, events and other resources available to enhance staff competencies in understanding and addressing racism in the workplace, and supporting a diverse and inclusive work environment.

Hosting nearly monthly internal learning events to deepen our understanding of topics such as anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, inclusive language and intergenerational trauma. These events are consistently well-attended, and participants have expressed their sincere gratitude for the opportunity to deepen their learning.

## Next steps

The Commission will develop a learning roadmap to support existing and new staff at the Commission – including Governor in Council appointees – in deepening their understanding of anti-racism, unconscious bias, ableism and discrimination. An early draft of the roadmap is being prepared. In the New Year, the roadmap will be launched as a pilot during which feedback will be collected, analyzed, and addressed through future updates.

## Action 1.20 – Unconscious bias training (ongoing)

Provide unconscious/implicit bias training to all new Canadian Human Rights Commission employees during the first six to twelve months (maximum) of their employment, ideally through the Canada School of Public Service.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and for a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

### Results achieved

As noted under Action 1.19, in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission is supporting ongoing learning and self-awareness initiatives and activities, including formal and mandatory training opportunities. While the Commission has invested time to test a variety of unconscious bias courses to confirm their scope, and the breadth and depth of the information provided to learners, challenges with regard to the ongoing availability of these courses would preclude learners from registering.

## Next steps

In light of challenges with regard to the availability of courses, the Commission will develop a broader and more comprehensive learning roadmap to support existing and new staff at the Commission – including Governor in Council appointees – in deepening their understanding of anti-racism, unconscious bias, ableism and discrimination.

## Action 1.21 – Trauma-informed engagement (in progress)

Facilitate workplace conversations about race within an anti-racist framework. The Commission recognizes that priority must be given to preventing renewed or re-triggered racialized trauma or alienation. The Commission will take the necessary steps to facilitate these discussions in an appropriate way, within an anti-racist framework. The Commission will also address the impact that these discussions have had on workplace relationships in a way that promotes both a positive working environment and a continued openness to, and engagement on, anti-racism issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and for a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission has actively promoted ongoing learning and self-awareness initiatives and activities, including by providing Commission-wide training to staff and Commissioners to increase awareness and discussion about implicit bias, systemic racism and discrimination, and the impacts of racism, colonialism, the Residential School trauma. Such training opportunities have included a half-day session on "Avoiding Harm when Discussing Racism," delivered to all staff in 2021, and a half-day session on "The Four Pillars of Trauma Engagement," delivered to management and those involved in addressing human rights complaints.

The Commission has also launched a workplace restoration initiative, and has retained expert facilitators through Health Canada's SOS program. The facilitators met with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee and with management at all levels in fall 2021.

## Next steps

The Commission will continue its efforts in the context of its workplace restoration initiative. Moreover, all Commission staff have been encouraged to continue their self-development by reading books, listening to podcasts, and watching videos about microaggressions, subtle acts of exclusion, and racial trauma.

# Advocating for diversity and inclusion in external processes

## Action 1.22 – Diversity in public appointments (ongoing)



Advocate for the appointment of Indigenous, Black or other racialized Commissioners.

### Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission's membership is in a state of transition, and selection processes have been launched by the Governor Council to identify highly qualified and diverse candidates who are interested in joining the Commission. In an effort to further increase diversity a Commission members, the Chief Commissioner and the Commission have continued to advocate for the implementation of recruitment strategies promote anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility, as noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780

To ensure compliance with the Paris Principles, the Commission also highlighted to the Government of Canada the recommendations of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions Sub-Committee on Accreditation with regard to the Commission's representation among Governor Council appointees.

While appointment decisions – including with regard to appointments to the Commission – are made by the Governor in Council (and do not involve the Commission), the Commission's advocacy efforts appear to be bearing fruit, as appointments to public institutions, including to the Commission, are increasingly diverse.

### Next steps

The Commission will continue to advocate for the implementation of recruitment strategies that promote anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

The Commission will also continue to promote awareness that an individual's identity is not necessarily visible, and that passing judgment based on someone's appearance can be damaging to their sense of self.

In addition, the Commission will continue to highlight the recommendations of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions Sub-Committee on Accreditation, including in advance of our next accreditation.

## Action 1.23 – Employee Assistance Program (complete)

Request that Health Canada's Employee Assistance Program identify counsellors with expertise in dealing with discrimination related trauma and that they be consistently, reliably and confidentially available to employees.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in 2020-21, the Canadian Human Rights Commission took steps to ensure that qualified and appropriate mental health support was available to any employee who experiences stress, trauma or other mental health issues related to the impact of racism, in whatever form it may manifest. A dedicated counsellor was available to Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees – and to any employee who experienced stress or trauma due to their proximity to, or witnessing of, racism – from February 2021 to November 2022, in addition to existing support services offered under the Employee Assistance Program.

Health Canada has since confirmed that the Employee Assistance Program has been strengthened to allow clients to specify their preferred racial or other background of the counsellor assigned to them.

### Next steps

Employee support continues to be available through the Employee Assistance Program, and its effectiveness will be assessed on a periodic basis through existing means. Given the confidential nature of the service, combined with the small size of the Commission's workforce, data – including disaggregated data – on the use of the Employee Assistance Program is not available for sharing.

## Anti-Racism action as a service provider and regulator

### Our Commitment

We commit to ensuring access to justice by improving: the accessibility of the Commission's complaints processes; the identification of patterns and trends in complaints outcomes; and the advancement of strategic litigation to ensure the continued development of anti-racism case law in federal jurisdiction. The Commission also commits to ensuring that federal employers and service providers proactively identify and remove barriers to accessibility, equity and inclusion.

## Enhancing internal accountability

## Action 2.1 – Reporting (combined with Action 1.4 as of fall 2022)

Develop a communications plan and provide regular updates on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Action Plan. This will include public report the Commission's anti-racism work using a variety of means which may include the Canadian Human Rights Commission's Annual Report, social and website.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this action with Actions 1.4 and 1.5, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress report present the Commission's work around internal and external reporting as a single action, under Action 1.4.

## Action 2.2 – Engagement within the federal public service (ongoing)

Participate actively in Government of Canada anti-racism working groups.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking a on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission is actively engaged in various working groups and equivalent within the federal public service, including:

- Canadian Heritage's Director General Interdepartmental Committee, which is focussed on the implementation of the Federal Anti Racism Strategy, and development of the next version of the Strategy.

- The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Designated Senior Officials for Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Community of Practices.

- The various Employment Equity Chairs and Champion Circles.

In addition to contributing to discussions in these various fora, the Commission is also benefitting from a diversity of perspectives and is learning from the approaches taken by other departments and agencies in advancing the principles of advance anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in their own workplaces.

The Commission's network of public service stakeholders has also grown as a result of our active engagement in these fora.

### Next steps

The Commission will continue to serve as an active member in the context of the various working groups on which we are represented.

## Action 2.3 – Network for Advancing Racial Equality (ongoing)

Establish a national network of stakeholders representing racialized people to engage in a conversation and obtain their perspective on the work of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. This may include: improving access to the Canadian Human Rights Commission's human rights complaint process; implementing proactive human rights legislation, such as the new Pay Equity Act and the Accessible Canada Act; implementing our new housing mandate, per the National Housing Strategy Act; and developing opportunities for collaboration and advocacy, among other topics.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission has created its first Network for Advancing Racial Equality. The purpose of the Network is to have a regular channel through which to engage, seek input and provide updates on work to stakeholders seeking to support racial equality.

An inaugural meeting of Network members took place in March 2022, and registrations continue to roll in. Subsequent bilateral meetings were held and are upcoming with members who expressed an interest.

We have already received invaluable feedback on a variety of key areas of our work, including:

- improving access to the Commission's human rights complaints process;

implementing an online submission tool through which systemic housing issues are brought to our attention; and  
establishing relationships to support collaboration and advocacy, among other topics.

#### Next steps

The Commission will continue to regularly engage and reach out with members of the Network for Advancing Racial Equality, and will continue to promote awareness of the Network with a view to increasing the number of members, thereby increasing the diversity of perspectives. Upcoming engagements are planned by the end of 2022-23 on advancing access to justice and racial equality through the human rights complaints process, testing future information technology solutions, and to contribute to the development of engagement strategies to advance human rights.

## Action 2.4 – External complaints screening mechanism (complete)

Establish an external mechanism for screening complaints against the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

#### Results achieved

With the support of the federal Department of Justice, in December 2020, the Governor in Council approved an inter-delegation agreement with a provincial human rights commission to allow for the independent screening of human rights complaints against the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

#### Next steps

In the next six months, the Commission will explore options to complement the inter-delegation agreement, including the possibility of engaging the services of an external ombudsperson.

# Addressing systemic racism as part of the Commission's regulatory and compliance enforcement work

## Action 2.5 – Representation audit of the federal public service (in progress)

Conduct a horizontal audit on the employment of racialized public servants in management and executive positions in the federal public service.

#### Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission is conducting a horizontal audit on the employment of racialized people in management and executive positions within the federal public service to assess compliance with the Employment Equity Act; ensure employers have adequate plans to correct under-representation; identify employment barriers faced by racialized people in management and executive positions in the federal public service; gather and share promising practices that increase representation and help in the retention of racialized people in these positions.

The audit began with the Commission sending an employment equity audit survey to all federal departments and agencies with 500+ employees (total of 47). The results of this survey were then used to select 18 departments and agencies for a full assessment of their employment equity program with respect to the employment of racialized people. The selection was done using a simple random sampling method without replacement. Each of the 47 employers had an equal chance to be selected.

Analyzing the information gathered from the audit, the Commission produced 18 confidential individual audit reports – one for each department and agency – indicating whether they met, partially met or did not meet each line of inquiry for the audit.

Sixteen of these reports include a Management Action Plan, which sets out what the department or agency must do to comply with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act.

All the audited departments and agencies were very cooperative with the Commission during the audit, which revealed several promising practices that could address identified barriers to employment for racialized employees in management and executive positions in the federal public service.

The audit is now in the monitoring phase, during which the Commission will assess the evidence employers provide to ensure it satisfies the requirements of the Management Action Plan. These remedial actions will contribute to a strong employment equity program that meets the requirements of the Act and address the identified barriers racialized employees face.

#### Next steps

The final report stemming from this audit is expected to be published in fall 2023.

## Action 2.6 – Intersectional engagement on and evaluation of proactive human rights statutes (in progress)

Ensure the application of an intersectional lens as part of the Pay Equity and Accessibility Commissioners' engagement activities and measurement strategy to the extent that the mandates and data collection allow. Strive towards diverse representation and ensure that the perspectives of Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups are part of stakeholder consultations and program development. The Pay Equity program will ensure attention is paid to how it will address pay equity for women (Indigenous women, racialized women, women with disabilities) in the most vulnerable situations and if there are any GBA Plus considerations for the implementation of the Pay Equity Act.

## Results achieved

In establishing this commitment, the Canadian Human Rights Commission sought to signal our intent to engage with diverse stakeholders to advance our work under the Accessible Canada Act and the Pay Equity Act.

## Next steps

The sectoral approach of the Accessible Canada Act means that numerous partners have a role to play in its implementation. As a result, the newly appointed Accessibility Commissioner will build on work undertaken to date to foster cohesion between partners to ensure that organizations and individuals are equipped and supported in the realization of a Canada without barriers by 2040. The Canadian Human Rights Commission is also developing a strategy to inform engagement with community to receive feedback on their expectations with regard to the implementation of the Accessibility Commissioner's duties under the Accessible Canada Act, as well as of the Commission's role as the body designated to monitor Canada's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This strategy will be developed over the next year, and take into consideration the intersectional identities of people with disabilities and the need to foster allyship between communities.

In parallel, efforts are underway to establish a research plan for the Pay Equity Commissioner as provided by the Pay Equity Act. While the Act is focused on eliminating systemic gender-based discrimination in compensation, it is well-known that racialized women, Indigenous women and women with disabilities are disproportionately affected by discriminatory compensation practices. Indeed, this was a [finding](#) of the Pay Equity Task Force established between 2001 and 2004 to formulate recommendations to the Government to improve the pay equity legislative framework. To further study this matter, the Pay Equity Commissioner's research plan will include a strategy to inform engagement with community to seek their input and feedback on the plan. This research plan and engagement strategy will be developed over the next year.

# Improving disaggregated data collection

## Action 2.7 – Disaggregated data strategy (in progress)

Ensure that the collection of disaggregated race data is part of the Commission's forward looking data strategy; ensure that the Commission's new management system allows for this collection and reporting.

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.10, this progress report, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around the development of a disaggregated data strategy as a single action, under Action 2.7.

Action 2.10: "The Commission will explore options to collect disaggregated race data in its Pay Equity and Accessibility programs when possible. This will allow for a better understanding of the pay equity and accessibility challenges faced by Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups in the workplace or in the provision of services."

## Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has continued to gather requirements to inform the development of a new case management system. One of those requirements is the need to integrate the collection and analysis of disaggregated data. With this in mind, the Commission is continuing to develop a comprehensive and forward-looking data strategy.

## Next steps

The Commission's Information Management, Information Technology (IM/IT) Steering Committee, which comprises diverse members from across the organization, will take steps over the next year to integrate an anti-racism and accessibility lens to the intake process for IM/IT initiatives, in addition to the requirement for community engagement and user testing. Data considerations will also be integrated in the process.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission is also developing a strategy to inform engagement with community to receive feedback on their expectations – including with regard to data collection – in the context of the implementation of the Accessible Canada Act, as well as of the Commission's role as the body designated to monitor Canada's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

To further study the incidence and impact of discriminatory compensation practices on Indigenous, Black and other racialized women, and women with disabilities, the Commission's research plan under the Pay Equity Act will include a strategy to inform engagement with community to seek their input and feedback.

Over time, a broad data strategy will also be developed to guide the Commission's data collection and analysis efforts.

## Action 2.8 – Retroactive collection of disaggregated data (complete)

Collect retroactive data (disaggregated by race) on the users of the Canadian Human Rights Commission's complaints screening process for the of 2019–20 as baseline. Integrate forward collection of disaggregated race data of the users of the Canadian Human Rights Act complaints system. This data will be collected based on voluntary user self-identification.

### Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has engaged with, listened to and learned from our employees, as well as a diverse community of stakeholders on the kinds of changes and improvements we need to continue to make to our discrimination complaints process and our internal operations.

One such improvement was realized through the launch of a project to retroactively collect and analyze disaggregated data from past complaints on the grounds of race, culture, and/or national or ethnic origin, and capture disaggregated data for all new complaints, which we described in our [2021 Progress Report](#) [PDF 780KB]. We also presented the results of this work to stakeholders and the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultative Committee.

### Next steps

The response rate to the surveys we conducted with those who filed complaints in 2019 and 2020 was acceptable, but not high. It was therefore challenging to identify barriers encountered during the process.

Instead of attempting to retroactively collect data from those who filed complaints in 2021, stakeholders share the Commission's perspective that instead integrate the collection of disaggregated race-based data into our intake process going forward. With this in mind, in 2023, we intend to take steps to integrate this functionality – as well as the collection of other types of disaggregated data – in our online complaint form and in future forms to be used by people in Canada when contacting the Commission.

## Action 2.9 – Reporting on complaints trends (ongoing)

Monitor and report on the outcomes of discrimination complaints filed on the ground(s) of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.

### Results achieved

Beginning in October 2021, the Canadian Human Rights Commission implemented a modernized complaint process to improve our efficiency and efficacy. Since modernizing our complaints process and modifying the way we screen and assess complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin, we have seen:

- A significant reduction in the dismissal of complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin, from 32% in 2017 to 7% in 2021.

- A doubling of the percentage of complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin referred to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal from 9% in 2017 to 18% in 2021.

- An increase in the settlement rate of complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin resolved through mediation. In previous years, the settlement rate had declined to 40%. In 2021, the settlement rate is 66%, which is consistent with the settlement rate of complaints not based on these grounds.

- A continued acceptance rate that is higher for complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin than complaints filed on other grounds over the last four years.

- An elevation of the profile of systemic issues impacting individuals who filed a complaint on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.

### Next steps

Going forward, reports on complaints trends will be articulated in our annual reports to Parliament and on our website.

## Action 2.10 – Disaggregated data strategy (combined with Action 2.7 as of fall 2022)

The Commission will explore options to collect disaggregated race data in its Pay Equity and Accessibility programs when possible. This will allow for a better understanding of the pay equity and accessibility challenges faced by Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups in the workplace or in the provision of services.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.7, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will prepare the Commission's work around the development of a disaggregated data strategy as a single action, under Action 2.7.

# Advancing access to justice through the human rights complaint process

## Action 2.11 – Improve access to justice (combined with Action 2.17 as of fall 2022)

Improve access to justice by: enhancing our online complaint form; ensuring that materials are easily understandable and accessible; and simplifying our processes and providing additional supports, including translation services where possible, to those in vulnerable circumstances.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.17, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around improving access to justice as a single action, under Action 2.17.

## Action 2.12 – Triage of human rights complaints (combined with Action 2.14 as of fall 2022)

Include a diverse group of employees, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized staff, in early triage discussions on complaint files. Provide executive guidance and oversight through the Complaints Support Committee. Promote the dismantling of potential barriers for Indigenous, Black and other racialized complainants by using an internal accountability and governance framework, consistent with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.14, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening, including as it relates to triage, as a single action, under Action 2.14.

## Action 2.13 – Revised complaint screening tools (combined with Action 2.14 as of fall 2022)

Revise complaints screening tools in order to ensure that the necessary evidence, both individual and systemic, is gathered and considered effectively in all complaints, including those alleging racism.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.14, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening, including as it relates to revising our screening tools, as a single action, under Action 2.14.

## Action 2.14 – Strengthen complaint screening (ongoing)

Provide policy and legal expertise in order to support effective screening of complaints, including those with allegations based on race, colour, and national or ethnic origin.

**Note:** Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Actions 2.12, 2.13, 2.15, 2.18 and 2.19, this progress report, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening as a single action, under Action 2.14.

Action 2.12: "Include a diverse group of employees, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized staff, in early triage discussions on complaint files. Provide executive guidance and oversight through the Complaints Support Committee. Promote the dismantling of potential barriers for Indigenous, Black and other racialized complainants by using an internal accountability and governance framework, consistent with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector."

Action 2.13: "Revise complaints screening tools in order to ensure that the necessary evidence, both individual and systemic, is gathered and considered effectively in all complaints, including those alleging racism."

Action 2.15: "Implement innovations to the Commission's complaints process in order to assist in the improved screening of all complaints, including complaints alleging racism. This includes moving towards evaluative mediation when appropriate and requiring parties to provide their submissions earlier in the process."

Action 2.18: "Offering training to complaints staff, as well as supporting legal and policy advisors, to continue to build on their understanding of conscious and unconscious/implicit bias, systemic racism, and the discriminatory impacts of racism, including trauma."

Action 2.19: "Offer training to complaints staff and supporting legal and policy advisors on revised complaints assessment tools over a two-month period. The objective is to provide an interactive and longer-term opportunity to use and refine the application of these tools. Ongoing training will be provided pursuant to review and assessment of needs."

## Results achieved

As noted in our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission continues to incorporate recommendation from various external stakeholders and experts on how we can improve the way we screen complaints alleging racism. We owe many of the improvements we have implemented this year to the invaluable feedback we received in 2020 from racialized stakeholders.

Beginning in October 2021, the Canadian Human Rights Commission implemented a modernized complaint process to improve our efficiency and efficacy. We know that every human rights complaint is different, and that a one-size-fits-all approach to complaint handling does not work. At its core, the goal of our new modernized complaint process is therefore to allow complainants and respondents to move their case through the process faster, which allows our limited number of analysts and human rights officers to focus their attention on those who need our assistance at every stage of the process.

Our new process has also helped to level the playing field by enabling us to collect information earlier in the process to ensure that both parties know the other's side of the story before entering into mediation or an assessment of the allegations.

In addition, in line with a trauma-informed approach, we have also reduced the number of times a complainant has to tell their story. We have also implemented significant changes in our guidance to human rights officers to properly assess allegations of racism.

We have also developed an efficient triage model through which we prioritize complaints for several reasons including where the alleged victim is in a vulnerable circumstance or where the allegations may impact a large number of alleged victims. Prioritized files generally move faster through the process (if both parties are able to participate in a timely way).

The Commission also revised its complaints screening tools in line with [recommendations](#) [PDF 2.3MB] we received in April 2020. All staff involved in complaints processing have been trained as needed, and all new staff will be trained as part of their onboarding.

Lastly, all mediations are now evaluative, rather than facilitative. Mediators and parties have responses and replies prior to the mediation.

To ensure the sustainability and integration of these changes, we have developed a comprehensive accountability framework to guide our complaint screening. The accountability framework is multi-pronged, and improves access to justice for Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, as well as other equity-impacted groups, by providing for:

- The dismantling of potential barriers for all equity-impacted groups – including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people – by ensuring the involvement of employees, legal and policy advisors, and executives who have different lived-experience in the complaint review process.

- The integration of the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector in each stage and function of the complaints process, to ensure accountability to the public in Canada and good stewardship of the complaints that are brought to us.

- The application of an anti-racist lens to our screening function, as articulated throughout our Anti-Racism Action Plan.

- A rigorous complaint review process that involves group and committee discussions about strategic operational and legal issues, the consistent processing and prioritization of complaints, and the provision of necessary support to analysts and human rights officers.

- Ongoing training and mentorship for employees, in particular analysts who triage complaints and human rights officers who assess complaints. Such training has included sessions on anti-racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, inclusive language, ableism and intergenerational trauma.

- The identification of emerging and systemic issues that merit a coordinated organizational response, including through the provision of timely and relevant legal and policy advice.

Above all, our accountability framework articulates a solid commitment to including people with diverse lived-experiences in our complaint screening process to foster rich and fulsome discussions and considerations relative to complaints brought before us.

## Next steps

The Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of these new tools, structures and processes. We will assess the effectiveness of these approaches by examining outcomes of complaints filed on the basis of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin in relation to other grounds of discrimination (for example, how many complaints are being screened out, how many are being dismissed versus referred to Tribunal). Policy and legal expertise will also continue to be considered to confirm the effectiveness and accuracy of our tools and criteria.

We will also launch an expanded online complaint form in the coming months. HTML forms are also being created based on the existing PDF and templates.

This is all part of our broader mission to strengthen our complaint screening, including by improving the quality of information we receive and the tools we use to assess complaints, particularly with respect to systemic forms of racism and inequality.

## Action 2.15 – Streamlining the human rights complaint process (combined with Action 2.16 as of fall 2022)

Implement innovations to the Commission's complaints process in order to assist in the improved screening of all complaints, including complaints alleging racism. This includes moving towards evaluative mediation when appropriate and requiring parties to provide their submissions earlier in the process.

## Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.14, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will per the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening, including as it related to streamlining efforts, as a single action, under Acti 2.14.

## Action 2.16 – Contribute to eliminating systemic racism through litigation (in progress)

Participate fully in the litigation of systemic race cases to the extent that resources allow. Strategic litigation will focus on a number of areas includ for example:

Alleged discrimination in or by policing and other security and enforcement bodies.

Treatment of Indigenous, Black and other racialized prisoners including the use of security classification tools, administrative segregation, access to m health services.

Underrepresentation in employment, particularly at senior levels.

Equality of services on First Nation reserve lands.

The intersectionality of race with other grounds of discrimination, including for incarcerated women.

Where relevant, the Commission will incorporate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliatio Calls to Action and the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice into its legal submissions and arguments

### Results achieved

While the Canadian Human Rights Commission is not funded to participate in the litigation of all complaints before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, we remain committed to public interest advocacy and supporting access to justice.

As noted in our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], we continue to participate in the litigation of a number of cases before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and the Courts involving allegations of discrimination based on race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin. Our participat includes but is not limited to:

Complaints alleging the federal government has engaged in systemic discrimination by failing to adequately fund or support the delivery or various ser to First Nations people on reserves, including education, health, community living, and child and family services, as well as policing.

Complaints alleging that systemic and discriminatory barriers exist to the hiring or career advancement of Black or other racialized people, in settlings include the federal transportation industry, federal policing, and various federal government departments or agencies.

Complaints alleging the federal correctional system discriminates against Indigenous, Black and other racialized prisoners in various ways, including th of inappropriate actuarial tools; the over-use of isolation; or failing to provide appropriate mental health services, culturally-appropriate programming, o substantively equal access to spiritual practices and advisors.

The Commission is fully participating in 80% of Tribunal hearings of complaints based on race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.

A statistical snapshot taken on the last day of the fourth quarter of 2020-21 shows the following:

Of 389 active complaints before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal: 156 (40%) cite one or more grounds of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic or and 233 (60%) do not cite any grounds of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.

The Commission is fully participating in 55% of active complaints citing one or more grounds of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin, as compa 39% of active complaints citing other grounds.

The Commission gave 28 instructions about participation level in new cases referred to the Tribunal. The Commission decided to fully participate in all cases (100%) citing at least one of the grounds of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin. The Commission also decided to fully participate in 11 of the 15 cases citing other grounds.

Of 12 pending applications for judicial review of Tribunal decisions: 6 (50%) relate to complaints that cite one or more grounds of race, colour, and/or n or ethnic origin; and 6 (50%) relate to complaints that do not cite any grounds of race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin.

## Next steps

The Commission will continue to monitor the effectiveness of our participation in litigation relative to the grounds of race, colour, and/or national o ethnic origin, and will adjust as needed. We will assess the effectiveness our participation by examining outcomes of complaints filed on the basis race, colour, and/or national or ethnic origin in relation to other grounds of discrimination. Where required, additional training will be provided to strengthen our participation.

## Action 2.17 – Community support for filing a human rights complaint (in progress)



Continue to build capacity and expand/advocate for community supports to assist complainants in accessing the federal human rights system. This involves exploring and engaging in partnerships with pro bono and legal aid organizations as well as Indigenous, Black and racialized community stakeholders. In addition, the Commission will continue to advocate for the availability of legal supports for vulnerable complainants.

**Note:** Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.11, this progress report, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan, and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around improving access to justice as a single action, under Action 2.17.

Action 2.11: "Improve access to justice by: enhancing our online complaint form; ensuring that materials are easily understandable and accessible; simplifying our processes and providing additional supports, including translation services where possible, to those in vulnerable circumstances."

## Results achieved

Through ongoing engagement with stakeholders and rights holders, the Canadian Human Rights Commission is seeking to improve access to justice for people in Canada, including by contributing to the establishment of community supports for filing a human rights complaint. As noted in [Walkin Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#) and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], we continue to work collaboratively with Pro Bono Students Canada and the Ontario Association of Friendship Centres to support the Indigenous Human Rights Program. Free legal clinics are offered to Indigenous peoples requiring support in accessing justice through Friendship Centres in Ottawa, Toronto and – most recently – Thunder Bay. We are also partnering with the Indigenous Human Rights Program in the context of our complaints modernization and user testing efforts. Legal students, who are engaged with the Program on a volunteer basis, have provided feedback on various aspects of our modernization efforts, and participated in a "fireside chat" with the Chief Commissioner in February 2022.

The Commission is also engaged with the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission to provide an overview and resources pertaining to access to, the federal human rights system.

In the context of the strengthening of our complaint process, a number of new templates have been created, written in plain language and posted on our website. This includes a comprehensive question-and-answer document. Forms were also created in rich text format to increase accessibility for complainants. We have also launched a user testing strategy with Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, as well as with people with disabilities to ensure that existing forms are easily understood and accessible, and to test a new online complaint form.

Moreover, most recently, we engaged with a local distress centre to offer a support line through which compassionate and empathetic responses are offered to people from across Canada, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, who are emotionally distraught or in a vulnerable circumstance when they contact us for help. As this partnership is relatively new, its impact will be assessed and reported on in a future progress report.

We have also engaged with United Way Centraide Canada to offer support to people through the 2-1-1 help line. Through this partnership, the Canadian Human Rights Commission can leverage 2-1-1 to help people who contact us to access support and navigate the range of services and supports available across Canada. Such services and supports include culturally appropriate community resources for access to justice, as well as more immediate supports such as access to housing and food. 2-1-1 offers this service in over 150 languages used by people in Canada. As this partnership is relatively new, its impact will be assessed and reported on in a future progress report.

## Next steps

To ensure the effectiveness of these supports, the Canadian Human Rights Commission will continue to engage with stakeholders and rights holders in a variety of ways, including through the Network for Advancing Racial Equality, to receive feedback and suggestions for improvements.

Over the next year, we will also explore the possibility of engaging with community organizations to ensure the availability of specialized and culturally appropriate resources for Indigenous, Black and other racialized people who need to file a human rights complaint.

We will also continue to advocate with the Government of Canada for increased community supports for those who are facing discrimination or harassment.

# Training for the Complaints team and supporting advisors

## Action 2.18 – Specialized training for staff involved in complaint handling (combined with Action 2.14 as of fall 2022)

Offering training to complaints staff, as well as supporting legal and policy advisors, to continue to build on their understanding of conscious and unconscious/implicit bias, systemic racism, and the discriminatory impacts of racism, including trauma and the importance of applying a lens that takes into account these traumas.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

## Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.14, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will present the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening, including as it related to specialized training, as a single action, under Action 2.17.

## Action 2.19 – Training on improved complaint screening tools (combined with Action 2.14 of fall 2022)

Offer training to complaints staff and supporting legal and policy advisors on revised complaints assessment tools over a two-month period. The objective is to provide an interactive and longer-term opportunity to use and refine the application of these tools. Ongoing training will be provided pursuant to review and assessment of needs.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and for a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

### Next steps

Noting the interrelatedness of this Action with Action 2.14, future iterations of the Anti-Racism Action Plan and subsequent progress reports will provide the Commission's work around strengthening our complaint screening, including as it related to training on revised screening tools, as a single action under Action 2.14.

## Anti-Racism action as a human rights advocate

### Our Commitment

We commit to actively engaging in public dialogue and advocacy for equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism in Canadian society, in its laws and workplaces.

## Applying an anti-racist lens when engaging, advocating and monitoring

### Action 3.1 – Advocate for the elimination of systemic racism (ongoing)

Participate in public dialogue on anti-racism in Canada; and amplify issues of importance as identified by racialized stakeholders. This advocacy includes: appearances before, and submissions to, Parliamentary Committees; engagement and collaborative work with other human rights commissions across the country; the release of public statements and engagement with the media, when appropriate; submissions and statements to United Nations bodies; and participation in other public engagement opportunities.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission has redoubled efforts as a credible and influential national voice for human rights by speaking out against hate, intolerance and racism. We have used our various platforms to help ensure that the truth about systemic racism and discrimination in Canada remains part of the public debate.

Over the past year, we have worked to promote equality and inclusion in Canada by raising awareness of human rights, speaking out about human rights injustices, encouraging dialogue, and engaging with civil society, experts from Canada's human rights community and people with lived-experience. Since our last Progress Report, more than half of the public advocacy events in which we have participated have been dedicated to the issue of systemic racism in Canada. In addition, a large proportion of our public statements, our social media engagement and our stakeholder engagement has been focused on this priority issue. Some key examples of our advocacy on this issue include:

**Panel remarks** on unconscious bias and decision-making delivered by the Chief Commissioner for the panel entitled "Incarceration and Human Rights" at the **September 2021** Islamic Social Services Association's "Breaking the Shackles of Racism": National Conference on Human Rights, Justice, Policing and Media.

**Panel remarks** on systemic racism delivered by the Chief Commissioner for the panel entitled "Police and justice: Discrimination and racism, through a human rights lens" at the **September 2021** Islamic Social Services Association's "Breaking the Shackles of Racism": National Conference on Human Rights, Justice, Policing, Media.

"The Big Three: Key Inclusion Principles for Canadian Businesses": **opening remarks** delivered by the Chief Commissioner at the **October 2021** United Nations Global Compact Conference entitled "Making Global Goals Local Business."

**Opening remarks** delivered by the Chief Commissioner on the importance of meaningful conversation about systemic racism in Canada and improve the Canadian Human Rights Commission's complaints process during the Follow-up Session with Representatives from Racialized Communities or

Advancing Racial Equality in Canada in **October 2021**.

Unconscious bias and decision-making; **three presentations** delivered to decision makers in a federal Board and to a regulator of the financial and investment industry by the Chief Commissioner in **November 2021**.

Inclusive leadership: **presentation delivered** to the management team of a federal agency by the Chief Commissioner in **November 2021**.

A human rights based approach to leadership (unconscious bias and decision-making) **presentation delivered** to a federal authority whose main objective is to prosecute federal offences, and to provide legal advice and assistance to law enforcement by the Chief Commissioner in **November 2021**.

**Remarks delivered** touching on both systemic racism in Canada and access to justice from a legal perspective to students from a well-renowned law school in Canada provided by the Chief Commissioner in **February 2022**.

**Opening remarks delivered** by the Chief Commissioner on awareness of systemic racism and bias for an internal learning event with a prominent QM political figure as a guest speaker to share his experience with racism growing up for Black History Month in **February 2022**.

**Fireside Chat** with the Chief Commissioner for student members of Pro Bono Students Canada's Indigenous Human Rights Program on the subject of Indigenous human rights and how they factor into the Canadian Human Rights Commission's processes in **February 2022**.

**Closing summary remarks** touching on hate and intolerance delivered by the Chief Commissioner at the Globe & Mail and Canadian Race Relations Foundation's all-day conference on Hate in **March 2022**.

**Remarks delivered** by the Chief Commissioner on how to build an anti-racist and inclusive culture and the importance of acknowledging systemic racism in Canada to a performance rights organization that represents the performing rights of various types of artists in **March 2022**.

**Two presentations (webinars)** to demystify and explain how to access the human rights complaints process at the federal level delivered by the Chief Commissioner in collaboration with a provincial human rights commission to promote access to justice for Indigenous peoples. These webinars were delivered to a provincial entity defending the interests of First Nations and supporting their priorities in the areas of health and social services, in **March 2022**.

The Chief Commissioner provided **remarks and participated in a panel discussion** on the impact of unconscious bias in an organizational context and how to overcome them. This event was for students of the Faculty of Management of an internationally renowned Canadian University, in **May 2022**.

Demystifying the importance of Employment Equity for a public service that is representative of the population it serves: **presentation delivered** to senior officials of a department that helps government in implementing its vision, goals and decisions in a timely manner, in **May 2022**.

How to realize rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms **panel discussion and remarks delivered** by the Chief Commissioner during "Our Charter – Our Rights, 40th Anniversary Conference on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" at the University of Ottawa, in **June 2022**.

**Opening remarks delivered** by the Chief Commissioner on hate and religious intolerance for an internal learning event with a survivor of the Holocaust as a guest speaker to share his experience for Jewish Heritage Month in **June 2022**.

**Opening remarks delivered by the Chief Commissioner** on the importance of reconciliation for an internal learning event featuring a guest speaker about Reconciliation and Aboriginal Peoples: An Overview of Key Issues for National Indigenous History Month in **July 2022**.

Setting the Bar on Human Rights: Key Cases in African Nova Scotian Communities **closing remarks** delivered for the panel by the Chief Commissioner during the National Black Canadians Summit in **July 2022**.

## Next steps

We will continue to serve as a national, credible voice for equality in Canada by raising public awareness of human rights issues through engagement with civil society, governments, employers and rights holders, with a view to effecting anti-racist change.

## Action 3.2 – Engage in the review of the Employment Equity Act (in progress)

Advocate for, and participate in the review and modernization of, the Employment Equity Act.

### Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission continues to collaborate with Employment and Social Development Canada and the Labour Program in the review of the Employment Equity Act. The Commission engaged with members of the Government's Employment Equity Act Review Task Force in a session on April 5, 2022, where key recommendations were shared. The Commission also provided a written submission, which was sent to the Task Force on April 28, 2022. The Commission also engaged in bilateral discussions with and at the request of the Task Force in September 2022.

Our recommendations to the Task Force include – but are not limited to – the following:

Integrating equality provisions in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, other human rights legislation such as the Accessible Canada Act and the Pay Equity Act, and those guaranteed in the international human rights instruments to which Canada is a party.

Harmonizing and strengthening compliance, audit and awareness-raising approaches with similar requirements under proactive human rights legislation, namely the Accessible Canada Act and the Pay Equity Act.

Adding designated groups, and redefining and disaggregating the four existing designated groups to better reflect uniquely affected groups, such as the Black community, and ensure a distinctions-based approach for Indigenous peoples.

Broadening the application of the Act to the largest possible proportion of Canada's workplaces.

Requiring the collection of disaggregated data.

Throughout our engagement in the review process, we have advocated that the process must begin with a recognition and understanding of how Canada's institutions have historically been built on and continue to exist according to colonial practices, ableist attitudes, sexism, racism, ageism, limited and discriminatory understanding of gender and sexual identities. We have called for meaningful engagement with equity-impacted groups including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, to understand and remove barriers to employment. The Commission is thus far pleased that the Task Force appears to be applying a human rights-based approach to this phase of the review process, and we will continue to encourage application of these principles beyond this phase of the legislative review process.

### Next steps

The Canadian Human Rights Commission welcomes the review of the Employment Equity Act, and urges the Task Force to embed bold and progressive changes to the Act to create a modern system that can both redress historical harms and inequities in Canada, and lead the world with an invigorated view of inclusion. With this in mind, the Commission will continue to engage with the Task Force, the Government of Canada and Parliamentarians to monitor how our recommendations, informed by our role as Canada's national human rights institution, are addressed in the Task Force's future report to the Government.

## Action 3.3 – Disaggregated data within the federal public service (in progress)

Continue to advocate for Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to provide disaggregated data to allow more accurate audits of the federal public service.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #8](#): Including voices from diverse backgrounds in the identification of systemic racism, discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and the design and implementation of actions to address them.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #9](#): Measuring progress and driving improvements in the employee workplace experience by monitoring disaggregated survey results and related operational data (for example, promotion and mobility rates, tenure) and acting on what the results are telling us.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission worked with the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer to advocate for and support the collection and sharing of disaggregated data on employment equity in the public service. In April 2022, we were pleased to learn that the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer published an interactive data visualization tool to allow users to manipulate fields and parameters easily while accessing and visualizing human resources demographic and employment equity data.

### Next steps

While progress has been made in the collection of disaggregated data within the federal public service, more work is needed to analyze those data to identify continued barriers for Indigenous, Black and other racialized public servants, and other groups that face barriers in the workplace. As a result, the Commission will continue to advocate for further progress. This work is as important as it is urgent. It is time to close the gaps and eliminate the barriers that remain, ensuring the public service is truly representative of the people it serves.

## Action 3.4 – Monitoring the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (in progress)

Monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with an intersectional lens, and ensure the perspectives and priorities of Indigenous, Black and other racialized people with disabilities are reflected throughout. As part of its work in developing the framework, targeted engagement with Indigenous, Black and other racialized people with disabilities will be undertaken.

### Results achieved

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has continued to undertake targeted engagement with Indigenous, Black and other racialized people with disabilities.

Advocacy efforts, including submissions to United Nations bodies and other reports, take an intersectional approach with a focus, where appropriate, on Indigenous, Black and other racialized people with disabilities. In April 2022, the Commission provided a Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the occasion of its [consideration of Canada's 5th-6th periodic reports](#).

## Next steps

The impact of the Commission's efforts specifically in the context of our Submission to the United Nations will be assessed following the publication of the United Nations' own report. Our assessment efforts will be complemented and strengthened through engagement with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee, and with stakeholders, rights holders and allies, including those who are members of the Network for Advancing Racial Equality.

# Supporting anti-racism work through the Commission's publications

## Action 3.5 – Guide on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace (in progress)

Develop a guide on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partners.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], in March 2022, the Canadian Human Rights Commission's Network for Advancing Racial Equality and the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee were engaged to determine the needs and views on what should be included in a future guide on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace. An expert consultant was also hired to contribute to the development of the guide.

In addition, a policy paper on systemic racism has been drafted and consultation on this draft was undertaken with the Decolonization and Anti-Racism Consultation Committee in September 2021. This paper is in the process of being finalized.

## Next steps

We will continue to work toward publishing the guide on preventing and addressing racism in the workplace by the end of 2022-23.

## Action 3.6 – Guide on special programs (complete)

Release a guide on special programs that considers the situations faced by Indigenous, Black and other racialized people or other groups experiencing socio-economic disadvantages due to historical social disadvantage.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #5](#): Committing to personally learning about racism, reconciliation, accessibility, equity and inclusion, and fostering a safe, positive environment where these conversations are encouraged throughout our workplaces.

Aligns with the [Clerk's Call to Action #6](#): Combatting all forms of racism, discrimination and other barriers to inclusion in the workplace by taking action on what we have learned, empowering employees to speak up about bias and oppression, and better equipping managers to address these issues.

### Results achieved

As noted in [Walking the Talk: An Open Letter on the Canadian Human Rights Commission's implementation of the Clerk's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#), and our [Progress Report of June 2021](#) [PDF 780KB], the Canadian Human Rights Commission completed updates to the guide "Leveling the Field: Developing a special program under the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Employment Equity Act," at the end of 2021. The updated guide was made available on our website in early January 2022. The guide sets out best practices for developing special programs<sup>1</sup> under the Canadian Human Rights Act and special measures under the Employment Equity Act. It is intended for federally regulated employers and service providers that are seeking to improve representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act.

## Next steps

The Commission will continue to work with federally regulated employers and service providers to offer guidance on improving representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act.

# Building inclusive processes

## Action 3.7 – Submission form to identify systemic housing issues (complete)

Design and implement a public submission process that will allow the Federal Housing Advocate to gain a better understanding of systemic housing issues faced by populations in vulnerable circumstances, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people. Research will be conducted in order to provide public guidance on how to tailor laws, policies and programs in order to address identified challenges. Members of the public making submissions will have the option to self-identify.

## Results achieved

In May 2022, the Canadian Human Rights Commission implemented an [online submission tool](#) that will allow the Federal Housing Advocate to gain a better understanding of systemic housing issues faced by people in vulnerable circumstances in Canada, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized people.

The submission tool is the product of close collaboration and consultation with 29 diverse organizations over the course of 11 sessions during which stakeholders raised concerns about the accessibility of the tool for all audiences and how long it takes to complete the online form.

The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate has addressed these concerns and included a helpful landing page that connects individuals to live support agents in addition to the form.

## Next steps

We will continue to engage with stakeholders and rights holders to monitor the effectiveness and usability of the online submission tool, and will make adjustments as needed.

# Footnotes

Under the Canadian Human Rights Act, a special program is any plan, arrangement, rule, or policy designed to prevent, reduce or eliminate a disadvantage or representation gap experienced by any group of individuals. Under the Employment Equity Act, it refers to any measure used to correct situations of underrepresentation in the workforce of individuals identifying as belonging to one of four designated groups.