

# Request for Delegation

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

MEETING DATE YYYY/MM/DD 2022/05/19	MEETING NAME Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Committee
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Attention: Regional Clerk  
Regional Municipality of Peel  
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A  
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9  
Phone: 905-791-7800 ext. 4582  
E-mail: [council@peelregion.ca](mailto:council@peelregion.ca)

DATE SUBMITTED YYYY/MM/DD 2022/04/26
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NAME OF INDIVIDUAL(S) <b>Varsha Naik and Gurpreet Malhotra, and Sean Meagher</b>
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POSITION(S)/TITLE(S) <b>Co-chairs and Member</b>
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NAME OF ORGANIZATION(S) <b>Peel's Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination (ABR-SD) Collective</b>
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E-MAIL <b>chair@regionaldiversityroundtable.org</b>	TELEPHONE NUMBER <b>4163990934</b>	EXTENSION
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REASON(S) FOR DELEGATION REQUEST (SUBJECT MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED) <b>Delegate the Regional Council for sharing the ABR-SD Collective's work, present the letter listing the systemic issues in Peel, seek endorsement and support of the Council for needed change</b>
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A formal presentation will accompany my delegation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Presentation format: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint File (.ppt) <input type="checkbox"/> Adobe File or Equivalent (.pdf)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Picture File (.jpg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Video File (.avi,.mpg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>
Additional printed information/materials will be distributed with my delegation : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Attached		

**Note:**  
Delegates are requested to provide an electronic copy of all background material / presentations to the Clerk's Division at **least ten (10) business days prior** to the meeting date so that it can be included with the agenda package. **In accordance with Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, delegates appearing before Regional Council or Committee are requested to limit their remarks to 5 minutes and 10 minutes respectively (approximately 5/10 slides).**

Delegates should make every effort to ensure their presentation material is prepared in an [accessible format](#).

Once the above information is received in the Clerk's Division, you will be contacted by Legislative Services staff to confirm your placement on the appropriate agenda.

**Notice with Respect to the Collection of Personal Information**  
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Personal information contained on this form is authorized under Section 5.4 of the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, for the purpose of contacting individuals and/or organizations requesting an opportunity to appear as a delegation before Regional Council or a Committee of Council. The Delegation Request Form will be published in its entirety with the public agenda. The Procedure By-law is a requirement of Section 238(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended. Please note that all meetings are open to the public except where permitted to be closed to the public under legislated authority. All Regional Council meetings are audio broadcast via the internet and will be posted and available for viewing subsequent to those meetings. Questions about collection may be directed to the Manager of Legislative Services, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, 5th floor, Brampton, ON L6T 4B9, (905) 791-7800 ext. 4462.

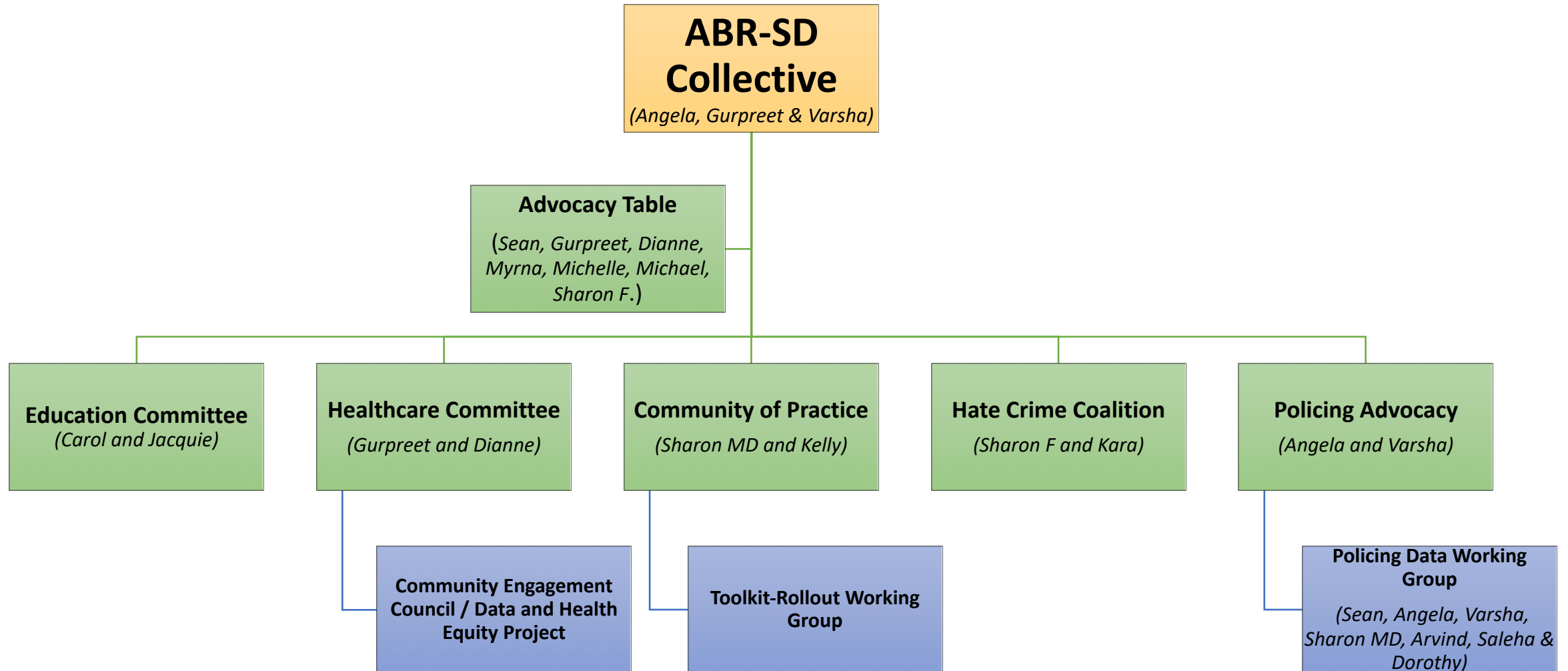
Please save the form to your personal device, then complete and submit via email attachment to [council@peelregion.ca](mailto:council@peelregion.ca)

# **Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination Collective**

## Who we are

- Over 40 nonprofit organizations from across Peel
- Emerged from the Community Response Table (CRT) process
- Working for the past 20 months to address discrimination and inclusion issues with partners across sectors including police, education, health care
- Focused on key areas of concern in Peel and overarching issues affecting racialized communities

# ABR-SD Collective Structure



# Participants

	<b><u>Name of Organizations</u></b>
1	Abilities to Work
2	Distress Centres of Greater Toronto (formerly Spectra)
3	Achev
4	Assaulted Women's Helpline
5	Associated Youth Services of Peel
6	Big Brothers Big Sisters
7	Black Community Action Network
8	Black Youth School Success Initiative
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15	Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin
16	CDRCP
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20	Community Alliance for Support and Empowerment
21	Community Foundation of Mississauga
22	Community Living Mississauga
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71	Trillium Health Partners
72	United Way Greater Toronto
73	Victim Services of Peel
74	Vita Centre
75	Volunteer Mississauga Brampton Caledon
76	Wellfort



## Strategic Priorities

## Goal

### Brave Space

- An anti-racism, anti oppressive environment that allows marginalized individuals to seek services in a safe space and access equitable services without stereotypes or judgements.

### Equity

- Services within the Peel region are equitable and free from discrimination and racism.

### Sustainability

- Sustainable leadership, partnerships, funding and resources to ensure the longevity of the Collective.

### Advocacy

- The Collective is a body that advocates for meaningful systems change and is consulted on issues dealing with ABR & SD

### Accountability

- Be publicly accountable to the communities we serve

## Committees

## Priorities

### Healthcare

- **Access to Primary Care/Prevention/Screening** (which can include mental health) (individuals from particular communities in Peel have increased barriers to access and have fallen even further behind during the pandemic)
- **Access to Culturally Appropriate Care** (meals on wheels, community health ambassador program, primary care services)
- **Integrated Health System** (Where funding is distributed from large hospital systems to community-based health centres/programs i.e.. LAMP, Wellfort, Indus, PCHS, Roots etc.)

### Education

- **Engagement & Accountability** (With School Boards & Post secondary institutions)
- **Awareness Building** (Have DEI imbedded in the framework and strategies of all with committees within the Region of Peel)
- **Develop a Scorecard/Monitoring Tool** (To review the actions and commitment of school boards & to keep them accountable for their directives)
- **Community Support** ( Support and engage Parent focused committees and to have youth voice at the table)

### Policing Advocacy

- **Advocacy** (For needed initiatives with Peel Regional Police and Ontario Provincial Police)
- **Hate Crimes** (Identification, reporting, community impacts, and prevention)
- **Collaborative Relationships** (PRP's ARAC & Policing SD-ABR working relationship, regular exchanges, communication and collaboration)
- **Policing and Community Co-designing** (Initiatives, campaigns and more/Challenging Systems on engagement practices)
- **Inclusion initiatives** (Monitoring, tracking, data gathering and accountability)

### Hate Crime Coalition

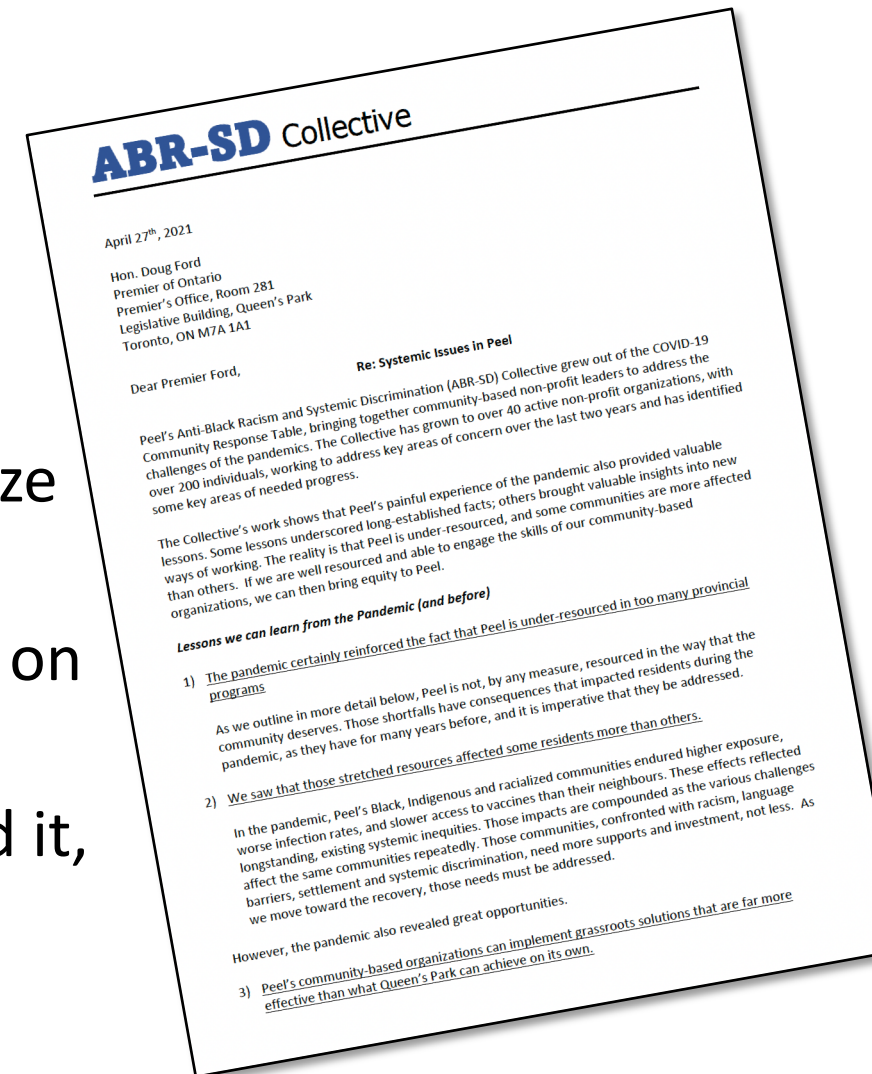
- **Implementation of a Victim Reporting Network in Peel** (To ensure victims can report hate crimes and receive support services where they feel safe, regardless of their identity)
- **Increase Access to Supports** (for individuals who are at risk of hate motivated violence)
- **Create Awareness** (On the harmful impacts of hate motivated crimes)
- **Identify & Challenge the System/Policies** (That further perpetuate hate motivated crimes)

### Community of Practice

- **Facilitate** (The gathering of organizational leaders to share issues and successes relating to ABR-SD)
- **Enable Leaders** (To learn together and strategize about ABR-SD within participating organizations)
- **ABR SD Toolkit** (Coordinate the implementation plan of the ABR-SD Toolkit)

# Overarching Issues

- Under-resourcing of Peel in provincial programs
- The impact under-resourcing has on particular communities and groups
- The ability of community-based agencies to maximize impact
- The need for partnership and codesign to capitalize on the capacity of community-based agencies
- An ask to the Province, and parties that seek to lead it, to address these issues in the coming mandate
- A call to our partners to reinforce that ask



April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Hon. Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Premier's Office, Room 281  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

**Re: Systemic Issues in Peel**

Peel's Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination (ABR-SD) Collective grew out of the COVID-19 Community Response Table, bringing together community-based non-profit leaders to address the challenges of the pandemics. The Collective has grown to over 40 active non-profit organizations, with over 200 individuals, working to address key areas of concern over the last two years and has identified some key areas of needed progress.

The Collective's work shows that Peel's painful experience of the pandemic also provided valuable lessons. Some lessons underscored long-established facts; others brought valuable insights into new ways of working. The reality is that Peel is under-resourced, and some communities are more affected than others. If we are well resourced and able to engage the skills of our community-based organizations, we can then bring equity to Peel.

***Lessons we can learn from the Pandemic (and before)***

- 1) The pandemic certainly reinforced the fact that Peel is under-resourced in too many provincial programs

As we outline in more detail below, Peel is not, by any measure, resourced in the way that the community deserves. Those shortfalls have consequences that impacted residents during the pandemic, as they have for many years before, and it is imperative that they be addressed.

- 2) We saw that those stretched resources affected some residents more than others.

In the pandemic, Peel's Black, Indigenous and racialized communities endured higher exposure, worse infection rates, and slower access to vaccines than their neighbours. These effects reflected longstanding, existing systemic inequities. Those impacts are compounded as the various challenges affect the same communities repeatedly. Those communities, confronted with racism, language barriers, settlement and systemic discrimination, need more supports and investment, not less. As we move toward the recovery, those needs must be addressed.

However, the pandemic also revealed great opportunities.

- 3) Peel's community-based organizations can implement grassroots solutions that are far more effective than what Queen's Park can achieve on its own.

As one striking example, local leaders, municipal health officials, and community-based non-profits rescued the Province's sputtering vaccine rollout, using community leadership and local knowledge to lift Peel from a national COVID hotspot and vaccine hesitancy centre to a leader in vaccination rates.

The recognition of the under-resourcing of Peel's communities and of the opportunity presented by community networks and knowledge, should guide the public policy choice going forward.

**Action: "Peel deserves equitable resources, and our proven community infrastructure deserves the support required to fully capitalize on its capacity. It's time for Queen's Park to address that".**

The need for action is evident in many areas of life in Peel.

### ***Health care***

Health care has, for many years, been the most distressing example of these inequity issues. Funding for health resources in Peel is far too low when compared to other jurisdictions in Ontario—in fact LHINS give Peel's community health services half the per-capita funding other areas benefit from.

This is not simply a concern about dollars and cents but a concern about the root cause of a broad range of serious health concerns.

- Access to primary care is unacceptably low in Peel - especially when compared to other jurisdictions - an issue complicated by barriers such as language and immigration status, making it hard for many in the region to access a family doctor.
- Because primary care is the gateway to screening for many serious conditions, including mental health and cancer, Peel residents also have less access to these vital services.
- People in Peel have about 50% less access to emergency care than other Ontarians
- All these gaps result in higher mortality rates in Peel than the Ontario average

These issues affect Peel as a whole but are significantly more acute in particular communities. Black, Indigenous, and racialized residents in Peel continue to face higher barriers to access with worse outcomes and have fallen even further behind during the pandemic.

Even when members of Peel's highly diverse population are able to get access to services, the services available are too often inappropriate. Meals on Wheels programs, for example, have struggled with sending immigrant seniors food that is unfamiliar and, for some, inedible.

When services are delivered by well-supported, responsive agencies, then needs are better addressed. The Community Health Ambassadors hired through the High Priority Community Strategy initiative showed clearly how well local agencies can do when given the resources and latitude to meet the needs of the communities they know best.

Care models created by centralized systems that are unresponsive to local needs fare poorly in communities as diverse as ours. Peel can and should benefit from integrated health systems where funding is focused on community-based health programs like those at LAMP, Wellfort, Indus, PCHS, and Roots, rather than top-down models that assume healthcare needs in all communities are the same.

Disaggregated data would make these issues easier to track and should be part of all programs going forward.

Peel residents would benefit from equitable access and receiving the support they need if the Province fulfills its commitment to health equity in Peel

### ***Education***

We have similar challenges in the education system. Peel struggles with a funding formula that does not take into account its pace of growth and does not accommodate its complexity and diversity. Cookie-cutter funding formulas that rely on aging data underestimate needs. Homogenous models overlook the distinct needs of marginalized populations. Since Peel sees more rapid growth, higher rates of immigration, steeper fluctuations in population, and more students making linguistic and settlement transitions than other communities, it is poorly served by current funding models. As a result, Peel schools have 6% to 10% less in funding per student than other GTA municipalities, making it hard to sustain standards, let alone address the needs of multilingual students and ensure cultural responsiveness. Though Peel is home to many international students, few services support them.

Community leaders in Peel have worked to address the most distressing implications of these shortcomings in the education system. Pointing to racial and ethnocultural variations in rates of graduation, university admissions, discipline, and suspensions, they vigorously sought a more active role in the system, to correct persistent inequities. When the severity of the problem could not be ignored, the province intervened to appoint a Supervisor to the Peel District School Board to address these issues. Unfortunately, though 27 new directives were created to address racism in schools, the community was still left largely outside of the process, having little role in guiding the efforts to address the problems they identified, and their absence has resulted in ongoing challenges in making progress.

Real progress will rely on responsiveness and includes more open and engaged decision making, adequate resources to address the problem, and an expansion of disaggregated data to track progress.

### ***Public safety***

Ontario cities are engaged in the transition to the community safety and well-being model, acknowledging the importance of inclusion and well-being as key factors in safety. Resourcing the infrastructure that supports that model of safety will take some fresh approaches. Mental health supports, proactive interventions for youth, violence-against-women (VAW) services and efforts to address human trafficking are all part of achieving that model of safety. Unfortunately, they are all areas where waiting lists and service capacity in Peel are a significant concern.

Peel lags behind Toronto on almost every funding category on public safety, for example:

- Mental health funding a fraction of our neighbouring city.
- Peel has less than 1/10 the Provincial Youth Outreach Workers Toronto has (and only about half as many as Ottawa).
- Peel has half as many VAW shelter as Toronto.

Simply matching funding levels in other jurisdictions won't fully address the needs of Peel communities. Systemic discrimination must be addressed. The death of Ejaz Choudry, 17-year-old Jonathan Davis, and others showed clearly that public safety is a complex goal. Public safety relies on our ability to provide a full suite of safety supports that reflect the needs of the full diversity of Peel. New investments in safety will benefit from being more focused on community capacity and support not just on enforcement and punitive tools.



Peel deserves a safety system that is fully resourced, and an implementation model that fully reflects, and is responsive to, the distinct structure of Peel's communities.

### **Conclusion**

***Peel's communities ask that the Government of Ontario, and the various parties who are currently seeking to lead it, commit to equitably resourcing the region, its local municipalities, and local community service providers, and to optimize the impact of those resources by engaging local leaders, non-profit organizations, and community knowledge in the distribution of funding. We ask that these commitments come in writing to the Collective and our partners by May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022.***

On behalf of the ABR & SD Collective:

### **Co-chairs**

Angela Carter  
Gurpreet Malhotra  
Varsha Naik

### **Committees Co-Chairs**

Sharon Mayne-Devine  
Carol Reist  
Jacquie Lewis  
Kelly Henderson  
Dianne Fierheller  
Sean Meagher  
Sharon Floyd  
Kara Hart

**Included:** List of organizations and agencies affiliated with the ABR-SD Collective

### **Cc:**

Ministers of Ontario Provincial Government  
Leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party  
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party  
Leader of the Green Party of Ontario  
The Region of Peel Council  
The City of Mississauga Council  
The City of Brampton Council  
The Town of Caledon Council  
MPPs: Mississauga Centre, Mississauga -Malton, Mississauga East-Cooksville, Brampton East, Mississauga -Erin Mills, Brampton West, Brampton – North, Brampton-Centre, Brampton -South, Mississauga – Streetsville, Mississauga -Lakeshore, Dufferin-Caledon.

## Names of Organizations and Agencies Affiliated with the ABR-SD Collective

	<u>Name of Organizations</u>
1	Abilities to Work
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76	Wellfort



# **THE ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION (ABR & SD) COLLECTIVE OF PEEL REGION**

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

December 23, 2021

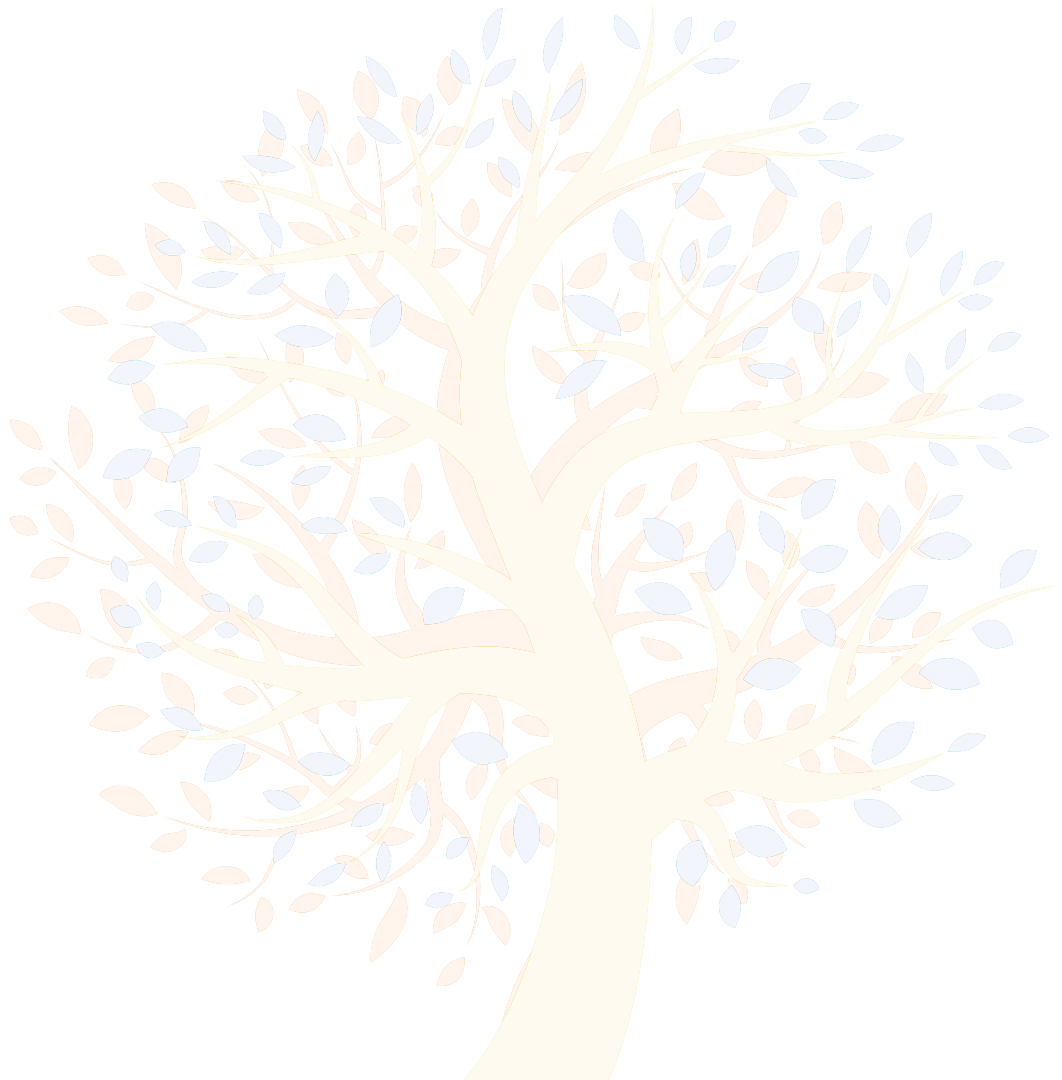
Funded by the Region of Peel



Prepared by The Rainbow Diversity Institute  
[www.rainbowdiversityinstitute.ca](http://www.rainbowdiversityinstitute.ca)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the COVID-19 pandemic sent the country behind closed doors in March 2020, the Region of Peel convened the Community Response Table (CRT) to understand how the pandemic was affecting community agencies and the people they served.

In June 2020 a group from the CRT met to discuss the devastating impact of COVID-19 coupled with the social uprising resulting from anti-Black racism on residents in Peel Region. These “two pandemics” were disproportionately affecting the majority of residents in the region, which has one of the most racially and culturally diverse populations in Canada.

From this June meeting, the Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination Collective was formed with a focus on dismantling all forms of racism and discrimination from within the region. Committees were established to delve deeper into specific sectors where change is required: policing, healthcare, education and hate crimes as well as a Community of Practice that looks at internal operations of member agencies.

We have made connections with players from each of the identified sectors and great work is being undertaken in some instances. However, we realize that a great deal more needs to be done for us to dismantle racism, discrimination and hate crimes from our systems.



COVID-19 uncovered what many of us knew and experienced – that Black, Indigenous, South & East Asians and other racialized groups – were being underserved, ignored and marginalized in various sectors. Unearthed were grave disparities in systems and how these systems make it extremely difficult for many people to access services they desperately need and, therefore, are deprived of opportunities to enjoy a quality life.

Funding was secured from the Region of Peel to develop a strategic plan to help our fledgling group develop an infrastructure that would support its work and ensure that it becomes entrenched in the region as an advocate for and facilitator of system change that dismantles anti-Black and all forms of racism and discrimination.

[The Anti-Black Racism & Systemic Discrimination Collective](#)

# BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed deeply embedded racism and systemic discrimination within our institutions and society and has significantly impacted racialized communities in Canada. Throughout the pandemic, conversations about race and racism have been forefront in the public consciousness. Since March 2020, we have seen a significant increase in racist hate crimes, an increase in deaths of Black citizens by police, and the disproportionate impacts of a global pandemic on Black, Indigenous and racialized communities in Canada. These events have caused many to re-evaluate their understanding of and engagement with anti-racism, igniting an increased emphasis on addressing anti-Black racism in our communities.

Anti-Black racism describes the systemic, institutional, and social enforcement of beliefs, attitudes, and ideas that are anti-Black (i.e., it denotes Blackness in prejudicial ways or is discriminatory against Black people). In Canada, anti-Black racism is embedded within all of our institutions, including education, policing and healthcare. In the education system, Black students are four times more likely to be expelled than White students in Toronto, experience a dropout rate that is almost double that experienced by White students and are two times more likely than White students to come from a low-income household.<sup>1</sup>

In employment, Black people experience discrimination in hiring practices and salary negotiations, leading to a significant wage gap for Black people, and especially Black women.<sup>2</sup>

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1 BCG, 2020, "The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada."

2 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2019, Canada's Colour Coded Income Inequality.

Black people experience both explicit and subtle racism in the workplace and have significantly higher unemployment rates, particularly for Black women. In healthcare, Black women are routinely under-screened for cervical and breast cancer and do not receive adequate treatment or pain management because of anti-Black racism.<sup>3</sup>

Black people experience fatal police violence at alarmingly disproportionate rates and are 20 times more likely to be shot dead by police in Toronto than White residents, and despite making up only nine percent of Toronto's population, Black people represent between 36 and 57 percent of escalated police interactions involving pepper spray, tasers or police dogs.<sup>4</sup> A report that the Peel Regional Police tabled in August 2021, revealed that 35 percent of use-of-force incidents in the region involved Black people who make up just 9.5 percent of the population. These are just a few examples of how anti-Blackness shows up in Canadian institutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic also played a key role in escalating and illuminating racist hate crimes and xenophobia experienced by all racialized groups, but particularly by East and Southeast Asian people living in Canada. Data compiled by Statistics Canada found that while police-reported crime experienced an overall decrease in 2020, police-reported hate crimes skyrocketed to the highest rate documented by Statistics Canada in the 11 years they had been collecting this data.<sup>5</sup>

For East and Southeast Asian people in Canada, police-reported hate crimes increased by 301 percent, meaning that visibly racialized East and Southeast Asian people were three times as likely to experience racially-motivated violence. Some areas of Canada experienced exponentially higher increases, such as Vancouver where crimes against Asian individuals increased 717 percent in one year.<sup>6</sup>

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3 BCG, 2020, "The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada.

4 BCG, 2020, "The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada.

5 Statistics Canada, 2021, The Daily: After Five Years of Increases, Police-Reported Crime in Canada was down in 2020, but Incidents of Hate Crime Increased Sharply.

6 VAW Learning Network, 2021, Examining the Intersections of Anti-Asian Racism and Gender-Based Violence in Canada, pp. 1 – 13.

While East and Southeast Asian people saw the most significant increase in racially motivated violence, data show the concerning reality that all racialized communities experienced an increase in racialized violence in 2020.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to increasing violence, the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted racialized communities in many ways. Cases of the virus were up to five times higher, an unsurprising reality given existing health inequities for racialized people in Canada. Inequitable working and living conditions for these<sup>8</sup> communities make them more susceptible to COVID-19, and access to adequate health care is a challenge especially Black and Indigenous people who face severe racism in the health care system.<sup>9</sup>

In 2020 violence increased towards most marginalized communities, and especially for those living at the intersections of multiple systems of oppression. Violence against trans people was the worst on record and disproportionately impacted trans women of colour.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, increased violence against East and Southeast Asian communities was felt most acutely by women, who experience both sexism and racism and whose experiences of racialized violence are often inseparable from sexual violence.

Given the ways in which these oppressions work in tandem, it is imperative to address racism from an intersectional framework, attending to the diversity within racialized communities and the complex experiences of compounding oppressions. Applying an intersectional and equity-based approach is essential for combatting racism since racism occurs at multiple levels and impacts racialized people in distinct ways. Addressing anti-Black racism using an intersectional framework can serve as a pillar for tackling all other forms of oppression.<sup>11</sup>

7 Statistics Canada, 2021, The Daily: After Five Years of Increases, Police-Reported Crime in Canada was down in 2020, but Incidents of Hate Crime Increased Sharply.

8 Public Health Agency of Canada, CPHO Sunday Edition: The Impact of Covid-19 on Racialized Communities.

9 Public Health Agency of Canada, CPHO Sunday Edition: The Impact of Covid-19 on Racialized Communities.

10 Wareham, J. 2020. Murdered, Suffocated, and Burned Alive – 350 Transgender People Killed in 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamiewareham/2020/11/11/350-transgender-people-have-been-murdered-in-2020-transgender-day-of-remembrance-list/?sh=2e8259cb65a6>.

11 Kimberlé Crenshaw, "On Intersectionality: Essential Writings", 2014.

# ABOUT THE ABR&SD COLLECTIVE



The Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination (ABR&SD) Collective evolved from the Region of Peel's Community Response Table which was formed at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2020, a group of approximately 25 agencies and other individuals began meeting as the racial tensions mounted due to the killing of George Floyd in the US, which followed the outcries from within our own region of the police killing of Jamal Francique, D'Andre Campbell and Ejaz Choudry and the shooting of Chantelle Krupka.

The collective came together to tackle anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination in all forms. The reasons were dismantle discrimination, advocate for underrepresented communities through pushing for change at the organizational and systemic level, and holding institutions responsible for their equity commitments.

# MANDATE

The mandate of the Anti-Black Racism & Systemic Discrimination Collective (ABR&SD) is to provide a safe and open forum for discussion and advocacy that will lead to dismantling individual, structural and systemic discrimination, and racism at all levels of our community.

Our intention is to have courageous, intentional and focused conversations on anti-Black and other forms of racism and implicit prejudices embedded in our systems that continue to oppress a large segment of our population. Through the knowledge, expertise and willingness of our collective membership, we will advocate for and take action to ensure meaningful systems change occurs to provide an equitable community for all.

# GOALS

- Enhance collaboration and capacity building among the collective of cross-sector agencies in Peel Region to address issues of systemic discrimination and all forms of racism within their organizations and externally.
- Generate more awareness of and educate about the need for disruptive systems change as it relates to institutionalized discrimination and anti-Black racism within Peel Region.
- Work with the Region of Peel, its municipalities and major institutions such as Peel Regional Police and the school boards to address racial and systemic inequities and disparities that were blatantly exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Advocate for racial and social justice for all.



# VISION

A community where individuals and families can thrive as healthy, successful and active participants, free from discrimination, racism and hate.

# MISSION

We are a collective advocating for meaningful change that will erase racist and discriminatory policies, practices and processes from Peel Region's organizations and institutions. Through our collective action, we challenge the status quo and hold systems leaders and ourselves accountable for dismantling racism and discrimination and building an inclusive, equitable and just society for all.

# VALUES



**Equity**



**Humility**



**Collaboration**



**Bold & Brave**



**Accountability**



**Truth & Honesty**



**Social Justice**



**Advocacy**

# GUIDING FRAMEWORKS

## INTERSECTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding the interconnected nature of oppressions and for examining how multiple systems of oppression work to reinforce each other, creating further subjugation of groups who experience multiple oppressions. Developed by Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality can help us to better understand the ways in which racism operates against those marginalized by gender, sexuality, class, disability, age and other forms of oppression.

The concept of intersectionality is key to an analysis of oppression as every person exists at the intersection of multiple systems of power and oppression. Moving away from a single-identity framework, intersectionality helps us to see how the intersections of identities create conditions for increased harm against those facing multiple systems of oppression. In the context of anti-Black racism, an intersectional framework is key to examining the ways in which racism intersects with other forms of oppression to impact women, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, working-class and low-income individuals, those experiencing disability, or other forms of marginalization disproportionately and uniquely. Examining the experiences of Black youth in the education system, for example, requires us to examine not just race but also gender, class and other inequities. Examining violence experienced by Asian Canadians requires us to also attend to violence against women, and how this intersects with racialization.

## EQUITY-BASED FRAMEWORK

An equity-based approach draws on the framework of intersectionality to analyze how inequities are experienced and perpetuated against and within racialized communities, responding to these inequities to support those who experience the most challenges, barriers and discrimination. An equity-based approach recognizes that addressing the challenges and barriers of those who experience the most harm in our systems will not necessarily address the challenges and barriers of all. Applying an intersectional and equity-based approach is essential for combatting racism since racism occurs at multiple levels and impacts racialized people in distinct ways.

Anti-Black racism is a distinct form of racism that is entrenched in our cultural norms, institutions and systems. Alongside Indigenous peoples, Black individuals in Canada experience some of the most extreme and pervasive forms of systemic racism. Addressing anti-Black racism can serve as a pillar for tackling other forms of racism, ensuring that our efforts address the root causes of racism in its various manifestations, supporting those communities that experience the multiple barriers to achieving equity.

# WORK DONE TO DATE

Soon after our collective first met in June 2020, we recognized the need to focus on specific sectors where anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination was prevalent and committees were established in the following areas:

- **Policing** – the police advocacy group sent letters to the Peel Regional Police (PRP), the Police Services Board, the Peel Police Association and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) asking key questions regarding the work they are doing to address the issues and how they collaborate with the community to make meaningful change. Meetings have been held and are ongoing with the PRP, with limited interaction with the OPP.
- **Healthcare** – a position paper was developed outlining various situations where the healthcare system has provided inequitable service to people from racialized groups in Peel Region with recommendations on how these situations can be addressed. This document was shared with the Ministry of Health, Peel Public Health, Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams (former LHINs), Trillium Health Partners (THP), William Osler Health Systems, the Peel Regional Council, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon. There was an immediate response from THP and a partnership was developed that has led to work being done in data and health equity. Meetings were held with the Mayors, Peel's Medical Officer of health and the Regional Chair. There has been little traction with the other players and work is continuing to engage them more fully.

- **Education** – the education committee developed a white paper with observations and questions concerning anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination which was sent to the public, Catholic and French school boards in Peel. This document asked recipients for a meeting where they could respond to the questions and provide feedback on the work they were doing to address the issues. The Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board has engaged in the discussions and has shown the measures they are taking to erase the disparities and inequities in their system.
- **Hate Crimes** – the Peel Coalition for the Prevention of Hate Crimes conducted a survey during the summer to gauge the community's opinions on and experiences with hate crimes. In addition, the coalition has applied for funding to be able to provide educational workshops on this topic.
- **A Community of Practice** group was also formed where organizations that need to look internally at their own structures could meet, strategize and learn from each other.

# A DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL

Consisting of the Ontario municipalities of Brampton, Mississauga, and Caledon, the Regional Municipality of Peel is considered to be one of the most diverse regions in Canada.

This demographic snapshot is to provide readers with an understanding of the various minority groups living in the Region of Peel. It is important to note as this report is being completed the 2021 Canadian Census collection period is currently in progress.

	Regional Municipality of Peel	The Province of Ontario
Total Population in 2016	1,381,739	13,448,494
Total Population in 2011	1,298,809	12,851,821
Population percentage change, 2011 to 2016	6.5%	4.6%

Source: Census Profile, 2016 Census - Peel Region

## REGION OF PEEL PROJECTIONS

Year	Projected Population
2031	1,770,000
2036	1,870,000
2041	1,970,000

Source: Region of Peel, Population Growth



## PEEL REGION VISIBLE MINORITY POPULATION IN 2016

Minority Group	Population	Percentage of Minority Group
South Asian	434,105	50.80%
Black	131,060	15.34%
Chinese	63,647	7.46%
Filipino	57,205	6.69%
Latin American	31,060	3.63%
Arab	42,500	4.97%
Southeast Asian	23,415	2.74%
West Asian	13,435	1.57%
Korean	6,630	0.78%
Japanese	2,595	0.19%
Visible Minority, n.i.e.	25,470	1.86%
Multiple Visible Minorities	23,335	2.73%

Source: Region of Peel, 2016 Census Bulletin

In 2016, Peel Region had the highest percentage of visible minorities within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) at 62.3% of the total population. Within the Peel Region, the City of Brampton had the highest percentage with 73.3%, Mississauga had 57.2% and, Caledon had 18.7%. The visible minority population in Peel is **three times** more than the national average and **two times** more than the provincial average (Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada 2016). With a high percentage of visible minorities in Peel Region, it is vital that services are provided with a level of cultural competency that reflects the intersectional needs of the community.

Further, the 2016 Census reports that there were 72,880 same-sex couples in Canada (representing 0.9% of all couples). A statistic of notable importance from the 2016 Census reports that from 2006 to 2016, the number of same-sex couples increased much more rapidly (+60.7%) than the number of opposite-sex couples (+9.6%). More information is necessary to fully understand the percentage of Peel residents that are also members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and their specific equity needs.

Source: Census in Brief: Same-sex couples in Canada in 2016.

# SNAPSHOT OF EDI INITIATIVES IN PEEL REGION

There are numerous institutions in the Greater Toronto Area, and Ontario more broadly, that have implemented anti-racist and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives. These institutions acknowledge the issue of racism and systemic discrimination and have implemented plans to break down barriers to produce equitable outcomes for historically marginalized people. These initiatives are primarily based on anti-racism strategic planning targeting policies, creating programs and providing services.

The community initiatives reviewed include the Ontario: Anti-racism Strategic Plan; City of Toronto: Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism; Legal Aid Ontario: Racialized Communities Action Plan; Region of Peel: Peel's Community Safety and Well-being Plan 2020-2024, and CAMH: Strategy to Dismantle Anti-Black Racism. The common themes that arise from these 5 community initiatives are data collection, cultural humility, hiring and accessibility.

## Data Collection

Data play a multi-level role in strategic planning, from racial equity impact assessments which can give an organization a baseline of what equity looks like at their organization to workplace censuses. Further data clearly show organizations where their gaps are and what the impact is on equity deserving groups (economically, socially, psychologically and physically in health outcomes). Data not only offer support to organizations that are seeking to create change but also provide power to communities who can then use that data to further validate their needs for funding, policy changes and greater accessibility in their communities.

Further, the strategic plan calls for disaggregated data that specifically show the breakdown of needs or outcomes for Black and other racialized communities. By treating racialized groups as homogenous we miss the opportunity to understand the specific cultural and community needs that are specific to each racialized community. The specific needs of Black communities, for example, would differ from the needs of the South Asian communities although there is of course quite a bit of overlap in experiences as racialized people. In addition, each community has various ethnicities, cultures, languages and people who have a wide range of sexualities and accessibility needs. The more data collected and the greater the disaggregation, organizations are able to grasp a better depth of understanding of the complex experiences within communities.

## Hiring

Hiring from underrepresented and underserved communities is a common theme for all the above-mentioned organizations. Many organizations found data play a central role in knowing which groups of people are applying, which groups are being hired, as well as which populations are being retained. All organizations recognize that representation is key to making systemic changes. What is unclear is how targeted the hirings will be and if the outcomes from these initiatives will lead to representation throughout all levels within the organizations. More specifically, if Black and underrepresented groups will have positions of power where they are able to not only influence but also implement long-term changes.

The City of Toronto's plan speaks to promotion, training and mentorship which would be needed to support underrepresented staff in going into positions of power. CAMH highlights creating an equitable work environment for Black staff but couples it with offering a safe reporting system and a method of reporting that allows for confidentiality.

This safety mechanism is crucial to have in place when organizations are planning to increase Black and racialized staff. Hiring racially diverse people increases the visibility of diversity but does not necessarily equate to a safe work environment for racialized staff. Having a safe and equitable complaints process is critical when planning for the full life cycle of employees and thinking about the holistic and psychological safety of new employees.

### Community Centred

Understanding the racialized communities in which they serve and providing an avenue to consult with Black and racialized communities is expressed in all the plans in different ways. The Region of Peel plans to increase the public visibility of its equity practices and anti-oppressive plans. They do not explicitly state how the organization will collaborate with impacted communities, but they do commit to publicly reviewing their equity work. CAMH is focusing its energy on strengthening its existing community partnerships with organizations serving the Black community. This does not tell us if those partnerships are with Black-led organizations or if the leadership, management or volunteers in the partner organizations have Black and racialized representation.

Peel explicitly states that they will be collaborating directly with cultural organizations, social services and school boards, which will likely give them access to greater cultural knowledge to make decisions that can accurately support Black and racialized communities. All the initiatives include training to increase leaders' and staff's understanding of equity, diversity and anti-oppression which will be necessary to implement changes that support the specific needs of communities that have been historically underserved. It is necessary within that training to include a full understanding of the specific histories of racialized and underserved communities to fully understand the role of colonialism, segregation, geographically racially restrictive immigration policies, over-policing, surveillance, residential schools, etc., on the current outcome and lived realities for racialized and other underserved communities.

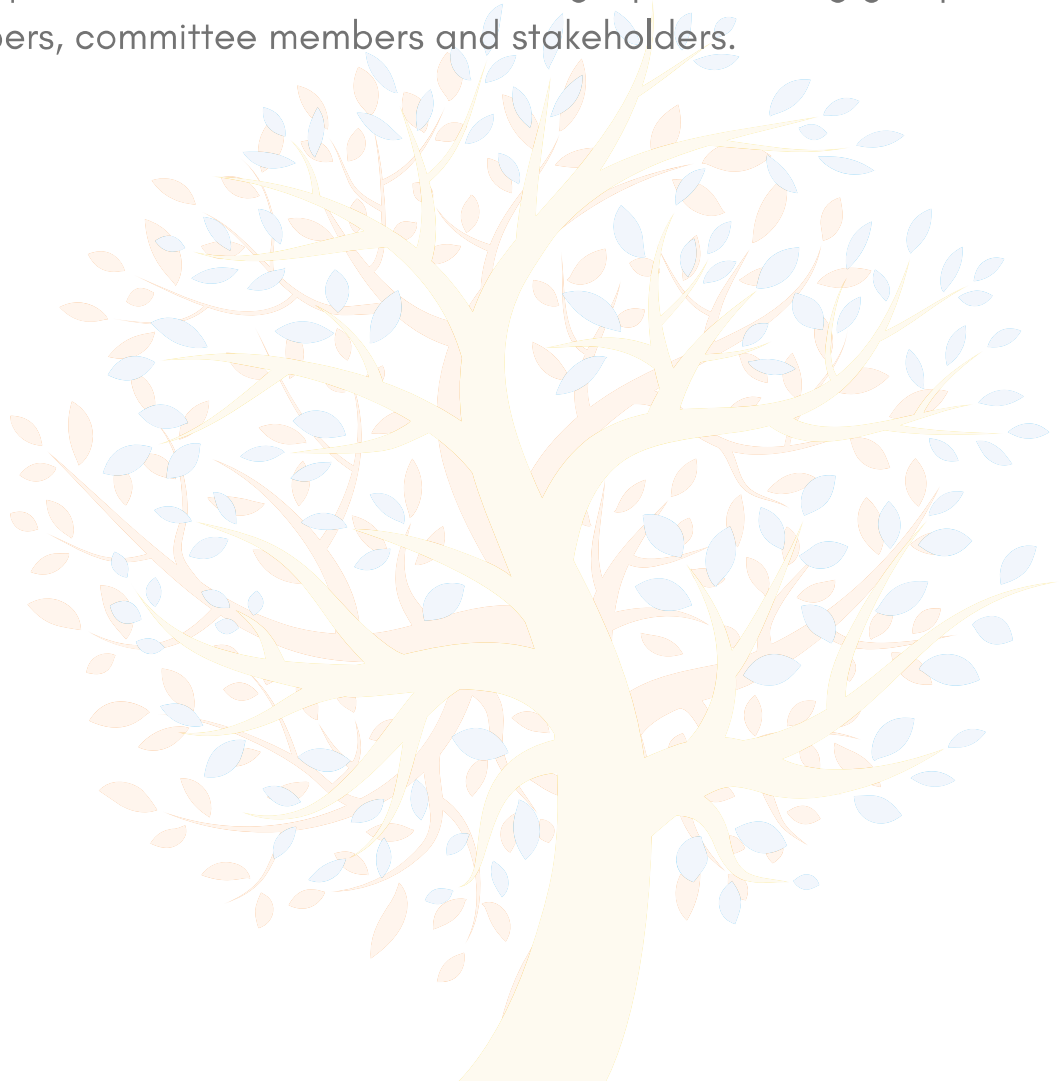
## Accessibility

The majority of initiatives include accessibility, but clear direction is lacking in some of the plans. Peel describes the removal of barriers to providing equitable access to services. CAMH describes the need to improve care for Black patients that is accessible and equitable. Legal Aid of Ontario (LAO) provides a greater outline of some of the steps including informational material in various languages and interpretation services. Through these steps, LAO would provide more access to individuals who have a language barrier. It is important for organizations to take a holistic approach to accessibility and a further look at the needs of sub-populations within racialized communities such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ groups, gender-diverse people, low-income, etc. Funding for smaller community organizations would be important for larger organizations to include in their planning to ensure that capacity can be increased to fulfill the programming and accessibility needs of the communities.

The greater focus on historically underserved communities and more specifically Black and racialized communities provides the opportunity to truly create change through data collection, to show the status of systemic discrimination, and further track progress over time to ensure that anticipated goals are reached. Hiring is crucial as visible representation is important but the positioning of the hires in roles of power is key to ensuring diverse voices are heard at the top of systems. Further, a high level of cultural sensitivity is key but is not limited to training the current senior managers in an organization. Learning must occur in collaboration with organizations serving underserved and racialized communities, along with direct consultation with the communities impacted in a way that is not exploitative but mutually beneficial.

# OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

During the strategic planning process, the Rainbow Diversity Institute (RDI) conducted a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats), in group sessions. Two work sessions were also facilitated to start developing the Vision, Values, Mission, Mandate of the ABR&SD Collective as well as one-on-one interviews and focus group sessions. The members involved in this process were the ABR&SD strategic plan working group members, committee members and stakeholders.



# RESULTS FROM CONSULTATIONS

The following is a summary of the feedback from the one-on-one interviews:

## **How are you connected to the ABR&SD collective?**

Main committee members, subcommittee members and stakeholders of the ABR&SD committee were interviewed. Many of the members hold professional positions within EDI in their respective organizations or are currently active members that sit around EDI-focused tables within the community.

## **What does the ABR&SD Collective mean to you?**

When asked this question, the group was in agreement: The ABR-SD collective is a unification of community leaders and members who seek racial equity across the Peel Region. It is a collective of people who are seen as caretakers of the system, who are trying to disrupt the status quo through advocacy, education and allyship. They set out to combat racial injustice and discrimination and provide equitable accommodations for those who require them.

## **What role do you feel the collective should be playing within the broader community?**

- Advocacy
- Being active and present
- Bringing together the Peel Region through allyship
- Networking and collaboration with political leaders and businesses
- Reaching out to the community at a grassroots level
- Community engagement and education



### **Is there a particular focus within SD that you or your organization would love to focus on?**

Other than ABR, the areas of SD that are of interest to the participants are:

- Disabilities
- Immigration
- Mental health
- LGBTQ+
- Removing barriers to access within these communities

### **What Barriers or Gaps do you see within the community when it comes to ABR&SD?**

- 100% of the respondents felt that the main barrier/gap when it comes to ABR&SD within their community is the lack of reliable and sustainable resources. Not having secure funding that is consistent hinders them from effectively making the changes that are needed in this area.
- 83% of the respondents believe that those who should be at the table (i.e., politicians, police, etc) are not. It was expressed that if they were to be involved with the collective, it would contribute greatly to the success and effectiveness of their desired goals.
- 66% of the respondents felt that lack of community engagement and involvement due to COVID-19, was a huge barrier when it came to accessing ABR&SD based services within the Peel Region. Not being able to connect with and inform the community of available services and access points hindered many from receiving the equitable help needed.
- 33% of the respondents stated that the members of the collective also act as a barrier, causing a gap, when each person is not as vocal and dedicated as they should be. It was noted that goals can only be successful when ideas are implemented and acted on, beyond the brainstorming and discussion stage.

- 16% of the respondents believed that the help within the community is universal and does not suit everybody. Therefore, these universal policies and programs do not give those who need it an equitable chance at success.

### **How can the Collective help with the barriers/gaps?**

The majority of the respondents strongly felt that if the Collective could raise these issues with people of power and encourage them to be active members at the table, it would open the door for sustainable and reliable funding and allyship. It was especially believed that if the government was at the table, it would positively aid in implementing policies and change when it comes to ABR&SD.

The majority of participants also expressed that playing an active and consistent role for change, through advocacy will help overcome these gaps and barriers. Being a strong voice for change and showing solidarity, dedication and determination is key to breaking through barriers and closing the gaps.

Many believed that public education and community-driven engagement, will spread awareness, and capture the attention of those who need the services, or who can provide equitable services.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## BRAVE SPACE

**Goal:** An anti-racist, anti-oppressive environment that allows marginalized individuals to seek services in a safe space and access equitable services without stereotypes or judgments. This will be a brave space to express views, share pain and develop solutions that will lead to equitable opportunities for all.

### Objectives:

- Organizations within Peel Region are seen as safe spaces where people are welcomed, heard and supported.
- Members of racialized and marginalized groups feel comfortable seeking help, knowing that they will have a safe and judgement-free experience.

### Strategies:

- Promote spaces, in-person and virtually, in which individuals can go for help within the Peel Region.
- Organizations will assess and implement changes to their internal operations to ensure their policies, processes, and practices allow for safe and brave spaces internally where all voices are heard.
- Each agency or facility brings their dedication to anti-racism and systemic discrimination and its practices to the forefront, making their stance publicly known.
- Through community engagement create trust and allyship with those in vulnerable groups.
- Move beyond words to bold action, challenging stereotypes and inequities where they occur.

**Actions:**

- Design promotional material outlining the Collective's dedication and commitment to advocate for and support equitable services for racialized and marginalized groups.
- Clearly define shared values and how to operationalize those values in the collaborative work within our organizations and externally.
- Support capacity building through ongoing training and other activities for agencies to understand what "safe" and "brave" spaces mean for different vulnerable groups and how to create those spaces.

## EQUITY

**Goal:** Services within the Peel Region are equitable and free from discrimination and racism.

**Objectives:**

- Create a framework that can be the foundational model used in developing equitable solutions to address the issues of anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and other forms of racism, hate crimes and systemic discrimination.
- Organizations will develop an anti-racism/racial equity plan that will guide them through the process to dismantle racism and discrimination from within their structures.
- Individuals will make a conscious effort to apply an equity lens to their work and their views.

**Strategies:**

- Encourage service providers and individuals within the Peel Region to work from an equitable framework.
- Each organization will review its anti-Black racism and system discrimination policies and align them with the developed framework. This would make sure that every organization in Peel is working from the same model.

**Actions:**

- Provide tangible resources for community partners to build a consistent and comprehensive approach to Anti-Black Racism and Systemic discrimination.
- Develop a reporting template and instructions for people to use when they identify/report on systemic discrimination.
- Research other collectives/communities and incorporate their best practices/experiences.
- Develop clear definitions of key terms and concepts to ensure community partners and individuals have a uniform understanding of the meaning.
- Develop and report on a yearly dashboard of agencies that are making meaningful system change.
- Provide a pathway to support agencies that are struggling to make changes.

## SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal:** Sustainable leadership, partnerships, funding and resources to ensure the longevity of the collective

**Objectives:**

- Encourage government and other major institutions (such as the police and healthcare) to recognize and include ABR&SD as a priority in their planning and operational processes.
- Obtain financial and other support from community members and public and private sectors.
- Develop a plan to secure consistent and stable funding.
- Establish a secretariat that would support the ongoing work of the collective.

**Strategies:**

- Seek innovative opportunities through which community partners, businesses, government and organizations can regularly support the work of equity within Peel Region.
- Ensure wide participation within the collective, understanding that organizations and individuals are at different stages of the equity journey.
- Ensure alignment with other groups doing similar work in the region, such as the Community Safety & Well-being table, to avoid duplication.

**Actions:**

- Reach out to community foundations to determine the feasibility of establishing a fund to support our collective
- Invite key stakeholders, including community members, to actively participate in meetings and activities
- Create a list of potential funders and submit applications

## ADVOCACY

**Goal:** The collective is a body that advocates for meaningful systems change and is consulted on issues dealing with ABR&SD.

**Objective:**

- Leverage the voice of the collective to ensure the various communities' concerns and views are included in discussions, are heard and actioned.

**Strategies:**

- Communicate our position to the broader community so people understand the work the collective is undertaking.
- Focus on advocating for systems change that can positively influence changes in policies, regulations and legislation on issues pertaining to inequities, racism and systemic discrimination.

**Actions:**

- Reach out to and collaborate with other groups outside of the region that are involved in advocacy work.
- Meet regularly with various levels of government and the Community Safety & Well-being table to position and advocate for the needs of communities we serve.
- Bi-annual delegations to local councils to discuss needs, their actions and joint accountabilities with focused objectives and timeframes.
- Provide tools to the communities so they can act as change agents to help build a just and equitable society.
- Be visible in supporting the dismantling of all forms of racism and systemic discrimination, especially anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia and hate crimes.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

**Goal:** Be publicly accountable to the communities we serve.

**Objective:**

- Develop clear guidelines and procedures to identify when racism and discrimination are occurring within systems that our communities rely on for transparent and accountable leadership and governance.
- Evaluate and measure the work being done by the collective and publicly communicate the outcome.
- Each committee of the collective will develop terms of reference to guide their discussions and actions.

**Strategies:**

- Demonstrate change is possible with visible results that benefit racialized and equity-deserving populations.
- Meetings of the collective are open to agencies and community members who want to see the dismantling of systemic racism and discrimination, hate crimes and other prejudices from within our society.

**Actions:**

- Develop an evaluation plan with measurable outcomes that will demonstrate progress through public reporting.
- Publicly portray the work being done on ABR&SD within the region and the results of actions taken.
- Track progress over time on planned initiatives.

The Anti-Black Racism & Systemic Discrimination Collective believes that playing an active role and consistently advocating for systems change will help to remove the systemic barriers and close the gaps on inequitable and disparate policies and practices. This can be accomplished by being a strong voice within the community and showing solidarity, dedication and determination.

Through public education, community-driven engagement and embracing all voices the Collective aims to create a groundswell that would bring significant and positive change to Peel Region.



# DEFINITIONS

**Accessibility:** a general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment, and information) can be accessed, used, and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design, and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population, by making things more usable and practical for everyone, including older people and families with small children. (OHRC)

**Accessible:** does not have obstacles for people with disabilities, that is, something that can be easily reached or obtained; a facility that can be easily entered; information that is easy to access.(OHRC)

**Adverse impact:** having a harmful result. Sometimes treating everyone the same will have a negative effect on some people. (OHRC)

**Anti-racism/Anti-oppression:** an active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as the oppression and injustice racism causes. (OHRC)

**Barrier:** anything that prevents a person from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic, and technological barriers, as well as policies, processes, or practices. (OHRC)

**Colonialism / Colonization:** is an intentional process by which a political power from one territory exerts control over a different territory. It involves unequal power relations and includes policies and/or practices of acquiring full or partial political control over other people or territory, occupying the territory with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

Colonization is the invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of one people or community to another. The long-term result of such dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized. UBC Equity Terms

**Cultural competence:** an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, particularly in human resources, non-profit organizations, and government agencies whose employees work with persons from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Cultural competence has four components:

1. Awareness of one's own cultural worldview
2. Attitude towards cultural differences
3. Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
4. Cross-cultural skills (developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures. (OHRC)

**Culturally competent organization:** an organization that displays cultural competence, in both its systems and individual behaviour. (OHRC)

**Cultural Humility:** Cultural humility: is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. – from Creating a Climate for Change

**Dimensions of diversity:** the unique personal characteristics that distinguish us as individuals and groups. These include but are not limited to: age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, class, creed, religion, sexual orientation, educational background and expertise. (OHRC)

**Disability:** There are two common ways of looking at what disability is. One way is to see a disability as a medical condition that a person has. From this perspective, disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental, cognitive and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities and other conditions.

A newer way of looking at disability is that it is not something a person has. A person with a medical condition is not necessarily prevented (or disabled) from fully taking part in society. If society is designed to be accessible and includes everyone, then people with medical conditions often don't have a problem taking part. From this point of view, disability is a problem that occurs when a person's environment is not designed to suit their abilities. (OHRC)

**Equity:** Equity refers to fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution so as to achieve equality among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to provide opportunity for all individuals and communities to thrive in any situation they are in. (OHRC)

**Equity Deserving Groups:** Equity deserving groups are communities that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation. QueensU EDI Terms

**Historical disadvantage:** disadvantage resulting from historic patterns of institutionalized and other forms of systemic discrimination, sometimes legalized social, political, cultural, ethnic, religious and economic discrimination, as well as discrimination in employment. This also includes under-representation experienced by disadvantaged groups such as women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBT persons and racialized people. (OHRC)

**Inclusive design:** Taking into account differences among individuals and groups when designing something, to avoid creating barriers. Inclusive design can apply to systems, facilities, programs, policies, services, education, etc. (OHRC)

**Microaggressions:** are brief and commonplace verbal behavioural and environmental indignities which communicate degrading, hostile, negative, messaging to an individual person or a group because of their identity with a group that has been historically faced oppression in society. There are four main categories of microaggressions including insults, assaults, and invalidations. Although the term micro\* is used the impact of microaggressions can be devastating

Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life

**Racialization:** the process by which societies construct races as real, different, and unequal in ways that matter and affect economic, political, and social life. (OHRC)

**Racial profiling:** any action that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion or place of origin, or a combination of these, rather than on a reasonable suspicion to single out a person for greater scrutiny or different treatment. (OHRC)

**Racism:** a belief that one group is superior or inferior to others. Racism can be openly displayed in racial jokes, slurs or hate crimes. It can also be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, people don't even realize they have these beliefs. Instead, they are assumptions that have evolved over time and have become part of systems and institutions. (OHRC)

**Systemic barrier:** a barrier embedded in the social or administrative structures of an organization, including the physical accessibility of an organization, organizational policies, practices and decision-making processes, or the culture of an organization. These may appear neutral on the surface but exclude members of groups protected by the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)

**Systemic discrimination:** patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for groups identified under the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)

**Two-Spirit:** "two-spirited" people were considered gifted among all beings because they carried two spirits: that of male and female. It is told that women engaged in tribal warfare and married other women as there were men who married other men. These individuals were looked upon as a third gender in many cases and in almost all cultures they were honoured and revered. Today, the term refers to Aboriginal people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, other gendered, third/fourth gendered individuals that walk carefully between the worlds and between the genders. (OHRC)

**2SLGBTQIA+:** Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Asexual. The placement of Two-Spirit (2S) first is to recognize that Indigenous people are the first peoples of this land and their understanding of gender and sexuality precedes colonization. The '+' is for all the new and growing ways we become aware of sexual orientations and gender diversity (UBC Equity Terms)

**Note:** Definitions are taken from the Ontario Human Rights Commission please visit the [ohrc.on.ca](http://ohrc.on.ca) for more human rights definitions

**Systemic barrier:** a barrier embedded in the social or administrative structures of an organization, including the physical accessibility of an organization, organizational policies, practices and decision-making processes, or the culture of an organization. These may appear neutral on the surface but exclude members of groups protected by the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)

**Systemic discrimination:** patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for groups identified under the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)

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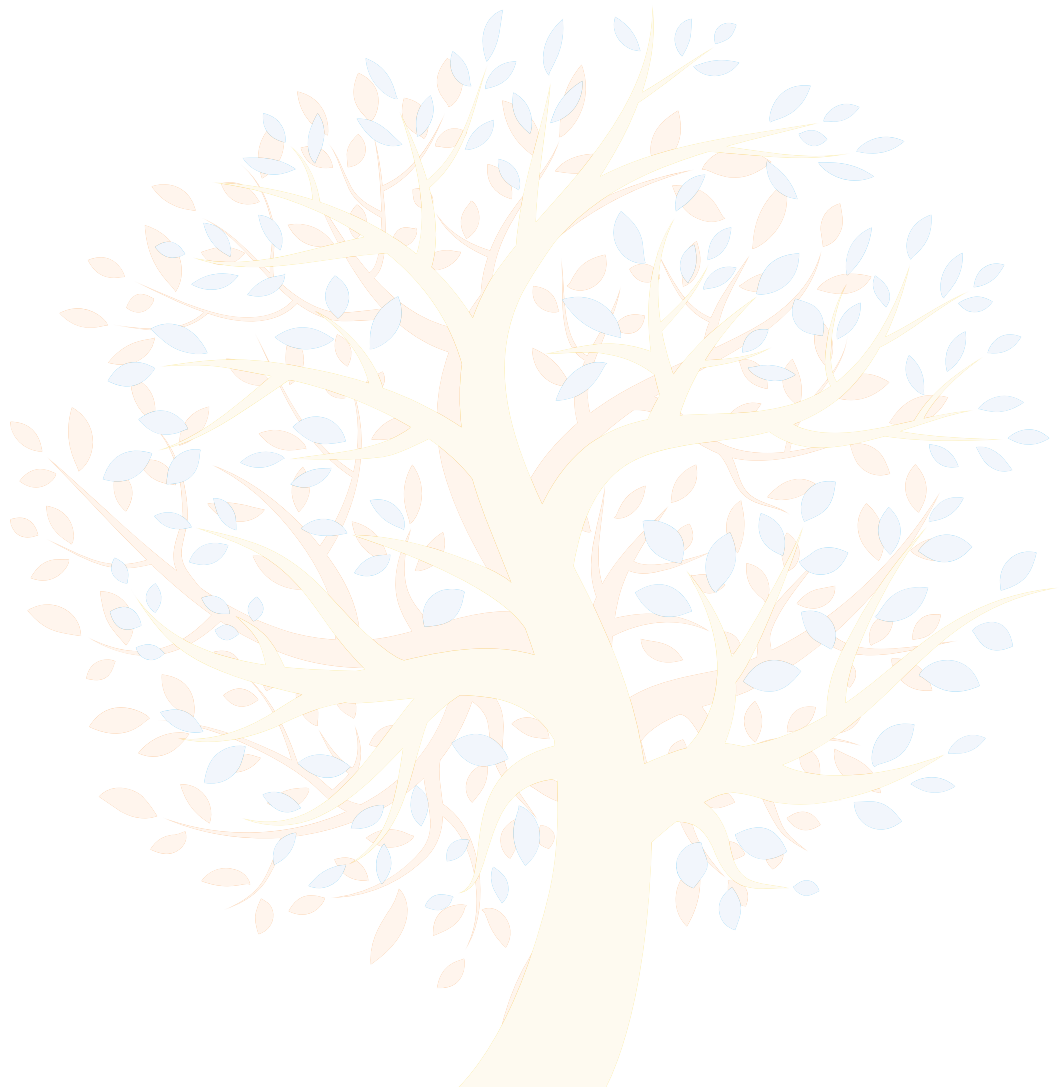
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[rainbowdesignmedia.com](http://rainbowdesignmedia.com)



# **DISMANTLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM & SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION**

A Toolkit for Community Organizations  
in the Region of Peel

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Prepared for The Anti-Black Racism & Systemic  
Discrimination Collective of Peel Region (ABR & SD)

December 23, 2021

Funded by the Region of Peel



By: The Rainbow Diversity Institute  
[www.rainbowdiversityinstitute.ca](http://www.rainbowdiversityinstitute.ca)



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit is a collaborative effort of a number of community agencies, institutions and individuals from the Region of Peel who are on a journey to dismantle systemic discrimination and eliminate all forms of racism from within their respective organizations and within the broader Peel community. We are at different stages of this journey, however, we are travelling together, helping each other along the way. We hope others will join us too.

We acknowledge the Region of Peel Community Investment Program for their ongoing support and commitment to this community-led work and for funding this project. We thank the consultants, [The Rainbow Diversity Institute](#), for walking alongside us and for bringing this project to fruition.

The following is a list of the organizations that are on the journey. We thank each of you for your dedication and willingness to take a stand for social justice and racial equity.



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- Associated Youth Services of Peel
- Black Community Action Network
- Boys & Girls Club Peel
- Brampton Young at Heart Seniors
- Black Youth School Success Initiative
- Caledon Community Services
- Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services
- Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
- City of Brampton
- City of Mississauga
- Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin
- Canadian Mental Health Association Peel/Dufferin
- Community Alliance for Support and Empowerment
- Distress Centres of Greater Toronto
- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
- Embrace
- EveryMind Mental Health Services (EveryMind)
- Family and Child Health Initiative
- Find Help/211 Central
- Free For All Foundation
- Heart House Hospice Inc.
- Hope 24/7
- Indus Community Services
- John Howard Society



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- Journey Neighbourhood Centre
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- Moyo Health & Community Services
- Newcomer Centre of Peel
- Peel Addiction Assessment and Referral Centre
- Peel Alliance to End Homelessness
- Peel Career Assessment Services
- Peel Children's Aid Society
- Peel Family Education Centre
- Peel Multicultural Council
- Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
- Peel Regional Police
- Punjabi Community Health Services
- Regional Diversity Roundtable
- Roots Community Services
- Salvation Army
- The Dam
- The Indigenous Network
- The Salvation Army /Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre
- Town of Caledon
- Victim Services of Peel
- Volunteer Mississauga Brampton Caledon
- Wellfort Community Health Services

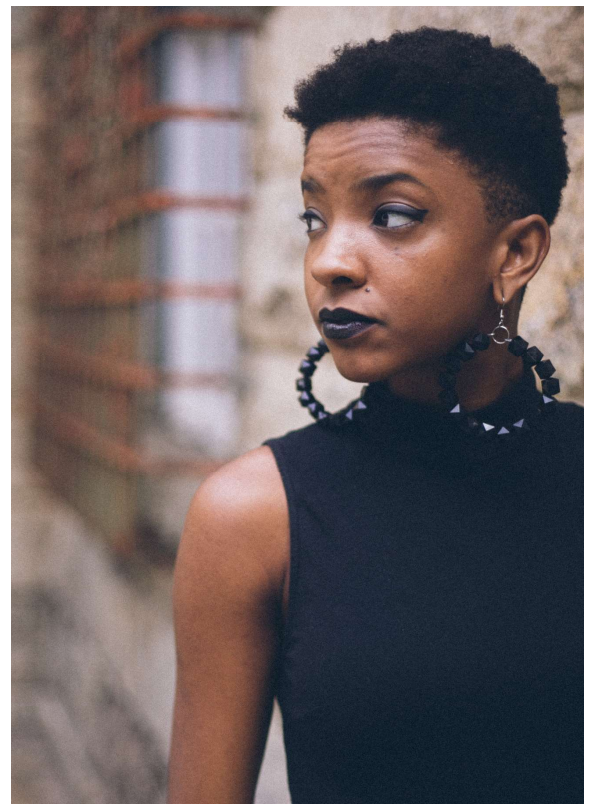


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# WHY THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit, developed by the Anti-Black & Systemic Discrimination Collective, is a resource to support community agencies who want to join the work of addressing anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and all forms of racism, dismantling systemic discrimination and adopting practices, policies and behaviours that promote an equitable environment for all.

Each organization is at a different stage and place in this life-long journey toward racial equity and social justice. The issues, challenges and opportunities may present differently depending on a number of factors within your organization such as your leadership, staff, location and organizational culture. We are all seeking information on how to authentically engage racialized and marginalized populations, how to be strong allies and disrupt racism and systemic discrimination without conflict.



We hope this toolkit will help you to reflect and take action as we learn from each other. We encourage you to make notes as you read through the toolkit about where your organization is on this journey. Are you just starting out? Have you taken a few steps and faltered? Are you jogging along at a steady pace? That's OK. It's all good. You are here because you have the same vision and are moving along the same path as many others. Systems change is not a quick-fix initiative, a program with a short-term timeframe or will be changed by employing a diversity, equity and inclusion manager. Dismantling anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and all types of racism, prejudices and discrimination will take time, will be frustrating sometimes and you may feel as if you are not making progress.

We encourage you to stay the course. Together, with our combined will and perseverance, we will all reap benefits on the way.





# BACKGROUND

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The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to expose the extreme inequities faced by underserved communities. Black, Indigenous, South and East Asian and other racialized communities have been hit hard and the disparities are glaring. Systemic racism continues to have a multifaceted impact on how the pandemic has affected Black, Indigenous and racialized peoples, as they are more exposed to COVID-19 and the least likely to be protected, (VAW, 2020).

*“Race doesn’t put you at higher risk [of COVID-19]. Racism puts you at higher risk. It does so through two mechanisms: People of color are more infected because we are more exposed and less protected. Then, once infected, we are more likely to die because we carry a greater burden of chronic diseases from living in disinvested communities with poor food options [and] poisoned air and because we have less access to health care.”*

*(Wallis, 2020, para. 4)*



# BACKGROUND

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The intersection between the lack of access to equitable health care, over-representation in detention centers, precarious employment, and other race-based inequities that also lead to overcrowding in housing and on public transit, all increased the risk of exposure to COVID-19:

- Black women and racialized women are overrepresented in the care economy.
- Black, South Asian, and Filipino Canadians experienced higher increases in unemployment than the general population, thereby increasing their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- The risk of unemployment increased if the racialized person was also from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community or belonged to multiple underserved communities.
- Immigrants and migrant workers are found to be one of the most at-risk populations throughout the pandemic and are the least likely to have access to the legal labour protections afforded to the general Canadian population, (VAW, 2020).



# BACKGROUND

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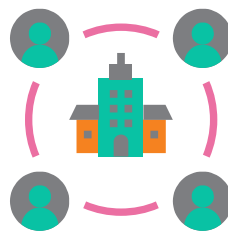
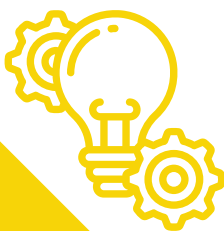
The Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination (ABR&SD) Collective evolved from the Region of Peel's Community Response Table which was formed at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. A group of approximately 25 agencies and other individuals met as the racial tensions mounted due to the killing of George Floyd in the US, which followed the outcries from within our own region of the police killing of Jamal Francique, D'Andre Campbell and Ejaz Choudry and shooting of Chantelle Krupka.

The collective came together to tackle anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination in all its forms. Their goals are to disrupt discrimination and advocate for underrepresented communities, through pushing for change at the organizational and institutional levels. The members are seeking a deeper understanding of the racial and social injustice issues in Peel Region and what can be done within their respective organizations and externally to address the issues.



# THE FOUR I'S OF OPPRESSION

The Four I's of oppression provides a framework for understanding how oppression operates in various categories in organizations and society more broadly. All of the categories are interrelated therefore working to dismantle one category of oppression must be approached with consideration of all other categories. As you progress through each section of this toolkit reflect on how each category of oppression operates together as a system within your organization starting with ideological and moving through to interpersonal, institutional, and internalized.



# IDEOLOGICAL OPPRESSION

We live in a society structured by systemic racism and discrimination, a system that reinforces the belief that some groups are more deserving than others. The historical and cultural legacy of colonialism and slavery informs race relations and ideologies today. The enslavement of Black peoples was justified through false ideologies that labelled Black people as inferior, dangerous, and undesirable. Today these stereotypes and attitudes linger with Black people often imagined as criminal, dangerous, and undesirable. Colonial narratives have been used to justify the inequitable treatment of Black, Indigenous, and racialized peoples across Canada. Anti-Black racism is an ideology that is deeply entrenched in our culture, and ideological oppression shows up significantly in stereotypes of Black people, the devaluing of Blackness and Black culture, and negative characterizations of Black people. By working together to root out anti-Black racism we work towards the benefit of all peoples. Islamophobia, homophobia, ableism, transphobia and all forms of discrimination begin with ideas that support the justification of othering groups that are seen as outside of the 'norm' or 'acceptable'.



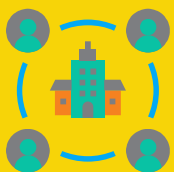
# INTERPERSONAL OPPRESSION

Interpersonal oppression refers to how our ideologies manifest into oppressive behaviour and interactions, including behaviours that disrespect or harm members of groups that have been historically oppressed based on identity (e.g., racist jokes, microaggressions, stereotypes, hate crimes, physical violence). Interpersonal racism is when negative ideas about racialized people manifest into verbal or physical harm against them. 2SLGBTQIA+ communities are at a higher risk of social and economic exclusion that is further fuelled by interpersonal oppression. It's important to note that interpersonal oppression is supported by ideological and institutional oppressions. In community agencies, interpersonal racism looks like microaggressions, racist jokes, and comments that reinforce negative characterizations of Blackness or otherness. Interpersonal oppression can also lead to institutional oppression e.g., job loss, lack of promotions, inferior health care, lack of access to social services, or even housing.



# INSTITUTIONAL OPPRESSION

Institutional oppression refers to the ways in which institutions (e.g., legal system, policing, education system, etc.) uphold and reinforce oppression and oppressive ideology through policies, practices and procedures. Anti-Black racism is evident in the ways institutions reinforce the inferiority of Blackness and Black people, such as the criminal justice system which asserts control over Black communities via policing, police violence and criminalization (e.g., war on drugs). In a community agency setting, institutional racism can show up in dress codes, hiring practices and pay inequities that marginalize racialized and 2SLGBTQIA+ staff. Institutional oppression can be so ingrained in practises that agencies may hide behind 'tradition' or by saying "this is the way that it has always been done". Institutional oppression is influenced by ideological oppression which is often false, stereotypical beliefs about underserved populations that make it into the operational framework of institutions.



# INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

Internalized oppression refers to when oppressive ideologies are internalized and those from the oppressed groups mirror oppressive messages and behaviours against members of the group, including themselves. This includes when oppressed people believe and accept their oppression. While oppression is usually externally imposed on oppressed people, no one is immune from the ideologies that permeate our culture and institutions. Internalized anti-Black racism looks like Black individuals harbouring negative beliefs and attitudes towards Black people (including themselves) and Blackness or enacting racialized violence against other Black people. Racialized lateral violence can also occur between racialized communities who may internalize stereotypes about themselves as well as other racialized groups that they do not belong to. Lateral violence delays progress and allows institutional oppression to thrive. It is in the best interest of all racialized and other groups facing oppression to form solidarity between themselves and allies to impact change.





— “ —

*The truth is, no one of us  
can be free until  
everybody's free.*

*Maya Angelou*

— ” —

# TACKLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION IN COMMUNITY AGENCIES

## THE HEALTH THREAT OF RACISM IN CANADA

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, racism has risen to the forefront of public consciousness and conversation. The heinous murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, by police in Minnesota, served as a social awakening for many who previously ignored or were in denial about the realities of anti-Black racism.



While this movement engaged many Canadians to begin or enhance their actions against racism, 2020 also saw an alarming increase in racially motivated attacks against Black communities. According to an annual report on hate crimes by Peel Regional Police, the Black community had seen a 57% increase in reported hate crimes in comparison to the previous year.



# TACKLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION IN COMMUNITY AGENCIES

Over the last few decades Indigenous communities have spoken out against the past and current colonial violence endured by Indigenous peoples such as the legacy of residential schools, the 60s scoop, cultural genocide faced by many generations, and the unrelenting plight of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women. Racial discrimination in Canada predates the formation of Canada with the enslavement of Black peoples and the segregation of Indigenous groups. Racial discrimination was also evident in the imposition of the Chinese head tax of 1885 and the Japanese internment camps of 1941.

Black activists, scholars, community leaders, and educators have worked to highlight and dismantle anti-Black racism entrenched in our social systems and institutions. Despite their continued efforts and decades of advocacy and protests, Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities still experience significant disadvantages in education, the justice system, economic stability, life expectancy and quality of life. In the education system, Black students are four times more likely to be expelled than White students in Toronto, experience a dropout rate that is almost double that experienced by White students, and are two times more likely than White students to come from a low-income household, (BCG, 2020).



# TACKLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION IN COMMUNITY AGENCIES

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In employment, Black people experience discrimination in hiring practices and salary negotiations, leading to a significant wage gap for Black people, especially Black women, (CCPA, 2019).

Additionally, Black people experience both explicit and subtle racism in the workplace and have significantly higher unemployment rates, particularly Black women. In healthcare, Black women are routinely under-screened for cervical and breast cancer and do not receive adequate treatment or pain management because of anti-Black racism, (BCG, 2020). Black people experience fatal police violence at alarmingly disproportionate rates and are 20 times more likely to be killed by police in Toronto than White residents, and despite making up only 8.5 percent of Toronto's population, Black people represent between 36 and 57 percent of escalated police interactions involving pepper spray, tasers or police dogs, (BCG, 2020). A report tabled by the Peel Regional Police in August 2021, revealed that 35 percent of use-of-force incidents in the region involved Black people who make up just 9.5 percent of the population.



# TACKLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION IN COMMUNITY AGENCIES

The COVID-19 pandemic played a key role in escalating racist hate crimes and xenophobia experienced by all racialized groups, but particularly by East and Southeast Asian people living in Canada. Data compiled by Statistics Canada found that while police-reported crime experienced an overall decrease in 2020, police-reported hate crimes skyrocketed to the highest rate documented by Statistics Canada in the 11 years they had been collecting this data, (STATS, CAN 2021).

For East and Southeast Asian people, police-reported hate crimes increased by 301 percent, meaning that visibly racialized East and Southeast Asian people were three times as likely to experience racially motivated violence. Some areas of Canada experienced exponentially higher increases, such as Vancouver where crimes against Asian individuals increased 717 percent in one year, (VAW, 2020). It's important to note that these statistics only capture the hate crimes that were reported to the police. Given the violence experienced by racialized communities at the hands of police and the lack of follow-through or accountability in response to incidents of racism, it is more than likely that the actual risk and experience of racially motivated hate crimes was significantly higher for all racialized communities.





## APPLYING AN INTERSECTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO RACISM

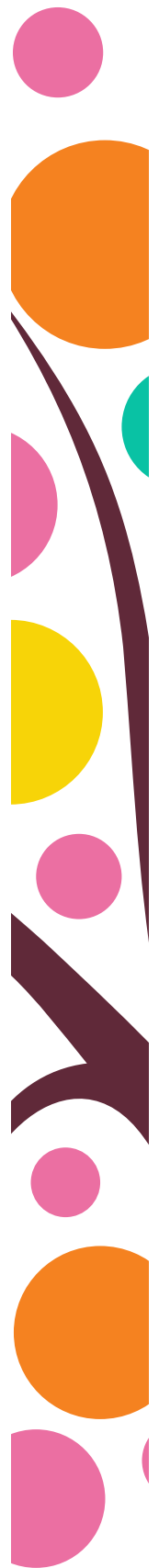
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Intersectionality is a framework for understanding the interconnected nature of oppressions by examining how multiple systems of oppression work to reinforce each other and create further subjugation of groups who experience multiple oppressions.

Developed by Black legal scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw, (Crenshaw, 2014), intersectionality can help us to better understand the ways in which racism operates against those marginalized by gender, sexuality, class, disability, age and other forms of oppression. The concept of intersectionality is key to an analysis of oppression as every person exists at the intersection of multiple systems of power and oppression. Moving away from a single-identity framework, intersectionality helps us to see how the intertwining of identities creates conditions for increased harm against those facing multiple systems of oppression.



In the context of anti-Black racism, an intersectional framework is key to examining the ways in which racism intersects with other forms of oppression to impact women, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, working-class and low-income individuals, those experiencing disability, or other forms of marginalization disproportionately and uniquely. Examining the experiences of Black youth in the education system, for example, requires us to examine not just race but also gender, class and other inequities. Examining violence experienced by Asian Canadians throughout 2020 requires us to also attend to violence against women, and how this intersects with racialization.

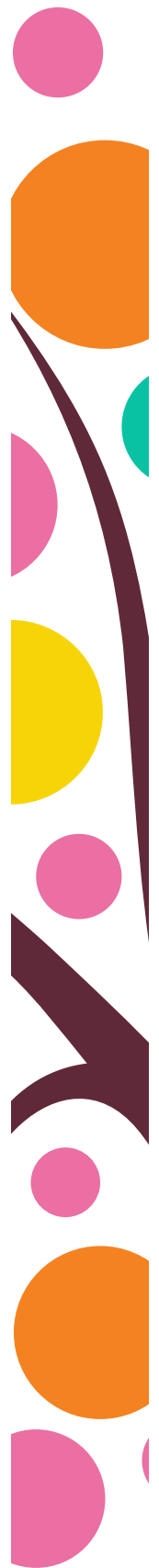


# EQUITY-BASED FRAMEWORK

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An equity-based approach draws on the framework of intersectionality to analyze how inequities are experienced within and perpetuated against racialized communities. This approach is a response to these inequities to support those who experience the most challenges, barriers and discrimination. An equity-based approach recognizes that by addressing the challenges and barriers of those who experience the most harm in our systems will necessarily address the challenges and barriers of all. Applying an intersectional and equity-based approach is essential for combatting racism since racism occurs at multiple levels and impacts racialized people in different ways. Anti-Black racism is a distinct form of racism that is entrenched in our cultural norms, institutions and systems. Alongside Indigenous peoples, Black individuals in Canada experience some of the most extreme and pervasive forms of systemic racism.

Addressing anti-Black racism can serve as a pillar for tackling other forms of racism, ensuring that our efforts to address racism do not serve only the most privileged people, but address the root causes of racism and in its various manifestations, supporting those communities that experience the most barriers to achieving equity. Anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada cannot be addressed without taking into consideration the impact of hundreds of years of slavery and colonization, which have left an indelible stain on the history pages of this country.







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## PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZING

In this section, you will find organizing principles to be used by your organization to help guide your decision-making and reflection process. With utilizing these principles comes the acknowledgment that institutional and interpersonal conscious and unconscious bias historically and currently excludes equity deserving groups in often violent and significant ways. The following guiding principles are to be utilized in a manner that proactively works towards dismantling oppressive structures. Review each principle and reflect on the accompanying questions when making decisions in your organization.



# ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability refers to the assurance that an individual or organization will follow through with commitments made, act ethically and engage in repair work as needed when harm occurs or commitments are not met. In community organizations, accountability involves being answerable to the communities the organizations serve. When applying equity-based, intersectional and anti-racist approaches, accountability requires community organizations to engage in anti-racist efforts, actively seeking out and responding to feedback about processes, policies and procedures.



## ACCOUNTABILITY - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- How often are you performing need assessments within Black, Indigenous and equity-deserving communities?
- What data are being collected to track progress? How is that data being used to improve services to equity-deserving communities?
- How and about whom is data collected and shared?
- Does the work you are engaged in challenge systemic anti-Black racism, homophobia, transphobia, islamophobia, and other forms of systemic discrimination?
- Are you willing to address systemic racism and the root causes of inequity both internally and externally?

## ACTION-ORIENTED

To be action-oriented is to be willing to take action not only when problems arise but also proactively. This requires a willingness to explore and accurately assess the issues that are occurring. An equity-based and intersectional lens is necessary to accurately examine the dynamics that are creating the problem, and how the problem is experienced differently for different members of the community, (French, Elizabeth). For example, when an organization wants to respond to racism, it is essential to examine and name the specific issues around racism that are occurring (e.g., Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, etc.). An action-oriented approach aims to identify existing strengths and resources within communities and organizations, as well as identify what other resources or supports might be needed in order to address the issue.



## ACTION-ORIENTED - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- How is the organization disrupting the status quo? Has this been measured over time?
- Is the organization moving beyond the planning phase into the implementation phase?
- Does the organization have the capacity to follow through with equity initiatives?
- What actions has your organization taken to address anti-racism and systemic discrimination within your organization?
- Are you willing to join other members of the collective in challenging institutions such as the police, education, justice and healthcare to make their services more accessible and barrier-free?



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## ADVOCACY

Advocacy is any action by an individual, group, or organization that aims to influence institutions and systems. In an equity-based and intersectional approach to community-based work, advocacy means including and accounting for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community and incorporating these groups into the planning, implementation and assessments of programs, as well as the design of policies and procedures. True advocacy is community-led and responsive; it includes the community in change-making and advocacy efforts. Advocacy is connected to cultural humility because it requires us to assess the privileges we have and to use these privileges to support the aims of a marginalized community.





## ADVOCACY - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are you willing to speak up when you see disparities in systems, processes and practices within your organization?
- Do you consider yourself a champion for equity-seeking groups?
- Does your advocacy efforts seek to empower and put people first?
- Are you clear about your purpose, the end goal and the impact on communities?
- How does the organization advocate for communities facing marginalization in a responsive and proactive manner?
- Is the organization public with its advocacy through using voice, writing letters, and standing in solidarity with equity deserving groups?
- Does your organization centre the lived experiences and community voices in service delivery?



## BOLD AND BRAVE

Challenging systems of oppression is scary and requires us to push against the norms and status quo. It is impossible to engage in an equity-based or anti-racist framework without experiencing pushback from others or experiencing very challenging internal emotions. We must be bold and brave in this work, willing to stick to our values in the face of opposition, prepared to challenge oppressive systems and practices, and to push past ours and others' comfort for the safety and dignity of those who we aim to support. This work requires courage and a willingness to take risks, be accountable for our mistakes and move towards action. We are being called to be fearless in the pursuit of justice and take the path towards equity.





## BOLD AND BRAVE - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are you ready to face being uncomfortable and vulnerable in addressing anti-racism and systemic discrimination policies and practices?
- Are you willing to unlearn some of what you have learned and learn new ways of doing and seeing things?
- Are you afraid to admit you were misinformed in your beliefs, ways of thinking?
- Are you willing to challenge the status quo and break down barriers within your organization and externally?
- Are employees in your organization encouraged to speak up about disparities and inequities they see within the organization?
- Do you know which systems, policies, and procedures in your organization may be harming equity-deserving communities and perpetuating inequities?

## COLLABORATION

Collaboration refers to the process of meaningfully engaging all of the relevant stakeholders in decision-making. A collaborative process requires establishing a common or shared objective that is responsive to the experiences, needs, strengths, gifts, and talents each collaborator brings to the table. Meaningful collaboration makes room for transparent communication, authenticity and creativity to emerge, which is only possible when all those collaborating have equal authority over the process and decisions being made. Community organizations can engage in collaboration within their own teams, and also by engaging other stakeholders including service users and community leaders in designing and delivering services.



## COLLABORATION - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Does your organization ensure that the voices of equity-deserving groups are centred in your decision-making?
- Do you ensure that recipients and clients have access to the decision-making process in programs and services impacting them?
- How often is your organization consulting with other culturally-diverse organizations?
- Do you consciously seek to do business/partner with racialized groups?
- How do your initiatives consider the impact of anti-racism, especially anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, and systemic discrimination within your organization and in the wider community?
- Does your organization collaborate with 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations or organizations focused on mental health?
- Does your organization take intersecting dimensions of diversity into consideration?



## COMMUNITY-CENTRED

In a community-centred approach, initiatives are created in partnership with community-based organizations, community leaders and community members who collaborate in controlling resources, determining priorities and making decisions, (Attygalle, 2020). Community-centred initiatives require a sharing of power between organizations and the communities they serve, recognizing the unique context and needs of each community, drawing on the expertise and assets that exist within a community to address the issues they face, and redistributing resources to support the initiatives the community wants to develop.



## COMMUNITY-CENTRED - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are Black, Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQIA+ community members consistently given a seat at your decision-making table?
- How are you including communities in decisions that directly impact their members?
- Are your organization's leadership and staff reflective of the communities in which they serve?
- How often do you seek feedback and input from clients and the communities you serve?



## CULTURAL HUMILITY

Cultural humility is a process that requires individuals to continually engage in self-reflection and self-critique as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners, (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). It is an approach that helps us create equitable institutions through the intentional practice of meeting others where they are, developing and maintaining mutually respectful and dynamic partnerships, addressing power differentials, institutionalizing organizational consistency and focusing on unlearning personal biases. An equity-based and intersectional approach requires recognition of systems of power and oppression and how each individual person exists within them. Humility in this sense lends itself to redressing the imbalance of power created by systems of oppression and hierarchy within our own workplaces and allows for more collaboration within organizations and with communities, (Greene-Moton, E & Minkler, 2020). Humility does not ask us to discredit ourselves: it requires us to recognize and critically self-reflect on our contributions and actions. Organizations must show humility and be ready to learn from other organizations and communities. It is important to remember that people are the experts of their own lived experiences and should be honoured and respected for this knowledge.



## CULTURAL HUMILITY - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Does the organization accept criticism from community organizations and provide a platform to receive feedback from community members?
- Do you make a conscious effort to reduce the power imbalance in your interactions with clients/the community?
- Do you focus on the client and acknowledge that you can learn from them as well?
- Does your organization practice cultural humility when engaging with communities?



# RESPONSIVENESS

Responsiveness is key to engaging in work that is community-led, action-oriented, transparent, accountable and equitable. Responsiveness requires organizations to be involved in the community, engaging and interacting with those most impacted by the issues, in order to accurately understand and address the issues that exist or arise. Communities change, needs change, and so do social issues and their impacts. In order for community support to be effective, it must be responsive to these changes as they occur, requiring that those involved are tuned into these shifts and prepared to make changes as they're needed.



## RESPONSIVENESS - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are your planning and initiatives flexible to meet emergency community needs?
- Does your organization strive to participate in initiatives that are organized by the communities you serve?
- When data show disparities between groups, is your organization shifting its services and resources?
- How is accessibility built into the organization's responses?
- Are barriers sought out and removed regularly?



# SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a practice of meeting needs and taking actions in a way that does not create further harm to individuals or an organization and can be sustained over time. Sustainability requires both extensive planning and an openness to change. It requires community organizations to account for the possibility of change in the planning of programs and services and to create structures that can function amongst change. In order for community work to be sustainable it must be responsive to the community, adjusting as needed to support the needs of those it aims to support, adjusting who it aims to support, or the effort it needs to move forward. In community work, sustainability efforts should examine the capacity of staff, the availability of long-term and permanent roles, and the wellness of those doing the work as these are often under-examined aspects of sustainable work that have a significant impact on the success of an organization and its efforts. To be sustainable, organizations need resources such as people, finances and capacity to remain effective over time.



## SUSTAINABILITY - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are your programs that support Black, Indigenous, racialized and equity-deserving communities sustainable or do they often become defunded?
- How does your organization plan to increase participation or outreach to Black, Indigenous, and equity-deserving populations over time?
- Is your organization prepared to pivot and adapt quickly to the changing needs of equity-deserving groups?
- Have your staff received adequate training to provide trauma-informed and culturally safe service to the community?
- Have your staff received mental health support and/or feel supported by your organization in the work they do?
- Do you partner with other organizations that can provide the services you do not offer?



# TRANSPARENCY

Transparency refers to openness and honesty and is achieved when it is easy for others to see and understand what actions are taking place. Transparency is intricately linked with accountability, in that it is only when organizations are transparent about their aims and their actions, can the community hold the organization accountable to commitments they made or ought to make. Organizations should be transparent when stakeholders ask questions but should also be proactively transparent by making key information available that is relevant to stakeholders publicly.

## TRANSPARENCY - QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

- Are the economic, social, political, and health implications of your programming clear to equity-deserving communities?
- Are funds being allocated to specific equity-deserving communities? How are the funds being used? Is this clear to the communities accessing your services?
- Do you acknowledge any adverse impact on Black, racialized or other equity-deserving groups of intentional or unintentional actions taken by the organization?
- Are your policies and practices clearly stated and available to the communities you serve?
- Do you have “unwritten rules” that are contrary to your written policies?

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## DEFINITIONS

**Accessibility:** a general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment, and information) can be accessed, used, and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design, and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population, by making things more usable and practical for everyone, including older people and families with small children. (OHRC)

**Accessible:** does not have obstacles for people with disabilities, that is, something that can be easily reached or obtained; facility that can be easily entered; information that is easy to access. (OHRC)

**Adverse impact:** having a harmful result. Sometimes treating everyone the same will have a negative effect on some people. (OHRC)

**Anti-racism/Anti-oppression:** an active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as the oppression and injustice racism causes. (OHRC)

**Barrier:** anything that prevents a person from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic, and technological barriers, as well as policies, processes, or practices. (OHRC).



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## DEFINITIONS

**Colonialism / Colonization:** is an intentional process by which a political power from one territory exerts control over a different territory. It involves unequal power relations and includes policies and/or practices of acquiring full or partial political control over other people or territory, occupying the territory with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

Colonization is the invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of one people or community to another. The long-term result of such dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized. UBC Equity Terms

**Cultural competence:** an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, particularly in human resources, non-profit organizations, and government agencies whose employees work with persons from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Cultural competence has four components:

1. Awareness of one's own cultural worldview
2. Attitude towards cultural differences
3. Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
4. Cross-cultural skills (developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures. (OHRC))

**Culturally competent organization:** an organization that displays cultural competence, in both its systems and individual behaviour. (OHRC)



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## DEFINITIONS

**Cultural Humility:** is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. – from Creating a Climate for Change

**Dimensions of diversity:** the unique personal characteristics that distinguish us as individuals and groups. These include but are not limited to: age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, class, creed, religion, sexual orientation, educational background and expertise. (OHRC)

**Disability:** There are two common ways of looking at what disability is. One way is to see a disability as a medical condition that a person has. From this perspective, disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental, cognitive and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities and other conditions.





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## DEFINITIONS

A newer way of looking at disability is that it is not something a person has. A person with a medical condition is not necessarily prevented (or disabled) from fully taking part in society. If society is designed to be accessible and includes everyone, then people with medical conditions often don't have a problem taking part. From this point of view, disability is a problem that occurs when a person's environment is not designed to suit their abilities. (OHRC)

**Equity:** Equity refers to fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution so as to achieve equality among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to provide opportunity for all individuals and communities to thrive in any situation they are in. (OHRC)

**Equity Deserving Groups:** Equity deserving groups are communities that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation. QueensU EDI Terms



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## DEFINITIONS

**Historical disadvantage:** disadvantage resulting from historic patterns of institutionalized and other forms of systemic discrimination, sometimes legalized social, political, cultural, ethnic, religious and economic discrimination, as well as discrimination in employment. This also includes under-representation experienced by disadvantaged groups such as women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBT persons and racialized people. (OHRC)

**Inclusive design:** Taking into account differences among individuals and groups when designing something, to avoid creating barriers. Inclusive design can apply to systems, facilities, programs, policies, services, education, etc. (OHRC)

**Microaggressions:** are brief and commonplace verbal behavioural and environmental indignities which communicate degrading, hostile, negative, messaging to an individual person or a group because of their identity with a group that has been historically faced oppression in society. There are four main categories of microaggressions including insults, assaults, and invalidations. Although the term micro\* is used the impact of microaggressions can be devastating

Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life



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## DEFINITIONS

**Racialization:** the process by which societies construct races as real, different, and unequal in ways that matter and affect economic, political, and social life. (OHRC)

**Racial profiling:** any action that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion or place of origin, or a combination of these, rather than on a reasonable suspicion to single out a person for greater scrutiny or different treatment. (OHRC)

**Racism:** a belief that one group is superior or inferior to others. Racism can be openly displayed in racial jokes, slurs or hate crimes. It can also be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, people don't even realize they have these beliefs. Instead, they are assumptions that have evolved over time and have become part of systems and institutions. (OHRC)

**Systemic barrier:** a barrier embedded in the social or administrative structures of an organization, including the physical accessibility of an organization, organizational policies, practices and decision-making processes, or the culture of an organization. These may appear neutral on the surface but exclude members of groups protected by the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)



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## DEFINITIONS

**Systemic discrimination:** patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for groups identified under the Human Rights Code. (OHRC)

**Two-Spirit:** “two-spirited” people were considered gifted among all beings because they carried two spirits: that of male and female. It is told that women engaged in tribal warfare and married other women as there were men who married other men. These individuals were looked upon as a third gender in many cases and in almost all cultures they were honoured and revered. Today, the term refers to Aboriginal people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, other gendered, third/fourth gendered individuals that walk carefully between the worlds and between the genders. (OHRC)

**2SLGBTQIA+:** Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Asexual. The placement of Two-Spirit (2S) first is to recognize that Indigenous people are the first peoples of this land and their understanding of gender and sexuality precedes colonization. The ‘+’ is for all the new and growing ways we become aware of sexual orientations and gender diversity UBC Equity Terms

**Note:** Definitions are taken primarily from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Please visit the [ohrc.on.ca](http://ohrc.on.ca) for more human rights definitions



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