

Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Workplace: A Guide for the Public

Workplaces are meant to be safe spaces for all employees. Unfortunately, that is not always the case and one major issue that comes up frequently is racism and racial discrimination in the workplace. While [HRPA's Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct](#), which all registered HRPAs members, firms or students must comply with, includes many references related to addressing racism and racial discrimination in the workplace, due to the importance of the topic we have also developed a [Practice Guideline on Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Workplace](#).

We have developed the FAQs below to answer important questions you may have around HRPAs guidance to registered HRPAs members, firms, and students around addressing racism and racial discrimination in the workplace.

DISCLAIMER: The information provided in this resource is in respect of the law of the Province of Ontario and is intended for general information only. This resource is not provided for the purpose of providing legal advice or a complete statement of the law on the particular topics. Every situation is unique and involves specific legal issues. Please seek legal advice, as applicable, if needed on the topic of racism and racial discrimination in the workplace. Further, this resource to be read in conjunction with the applicable employment standards, occupational health and safety, and human rights legislation and does not supersede or replace the legal requirements set out in the legislation.

What are the expectations of registered HRPAs members, students and firms related to racism and racial discrimination in the workplace?

All registered HRPAs members, students and firms must comply with *HRPA's Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct*, which includes Section V. on Equity and Fairness. This section sets out the following expectations for all registered members, students and firms:

- **Fostering an environment that offers safety, belonging and inclusion for all**, valuing differences between each unique individual and understanding, accepting and treating everyone fairly.
- Promoting and educating employers to **make fair and equitable treatment of everyone** in the workplace a key priority.

- Developing, administering, and advocating for policies and procedures that foster **fair, consistent, inclusive and equitable treatment for all**, where applicable to their role.
- **Being alert to potential biases, including unconscious biases**, and ensuring personal views do not impact professional relationships, obligations or advice being provided.
- **Preventing and discouraging the use of or reliance on stereotypes** in the workplace.
- **Being alert to the potential for systemic biases or discrimination** built into policies and procedures and working to amend these to the extent within their control.

HRPA members, students and firms must also always comply with all applicable laws, including Ontario and federal human rights laws where every individual has the legal right to be free from racial discrimination and harassment, including in areas of employment, services, goods, facilities, housing accommodation, contracts and membership in trade and vocational associations.

In addition to our Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct, HRPA's Practice Guideline on Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Workplace is to be followed by HRPA members, student and firms, where applicable to their roles. This Practice Guideline contains guidance on:

- What racism is, how it operates at several levels and what racial discrimination is.
- How members, students and firms should be aware of ways in which racism manifests in the workplace how to address it at both the individual (micro level) and at the organizational level.
- Ways in which to develop and implement workplace anti-racism policies and practices.
- Organizational-wide education and training that should be in place related to anti-racism.
- Addressing organizational culture and practices to maintain an inclusive culture that is free from discrimination.
- Collecting and using de-identified race-based data in the workplace to inform anti-racist strategies and programs.

How can I submit a complaint if a registered HRPA member, student or firm is acting unethically and/or unfairly?

We understand that potential professional misconduct by an HR professional can be extremely challenging. If you believe that an HR professional has acted unethical or unprofessional, then we would strongly encourage you to consider filing a complaint with HRPA.

First, check the [public register](#) to confirm the HR professional is registered with HRP. Unfortunately, HRP can only accept and investigate complaints against a registered member, student or firm.

Second, review the *Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct* and note any sections that you believe may have been breached by the registered HR professional's actions.

Third, complete the professional complaints form to share your experience – what happened, when did it happen, who may have witnessed the situation and what supplementary documents do you have that may support your statements. You can find a copy of the professional complaints form [here](#).

Once you've written out your experience, link your allegations and any supporting documents or witness statements to the sections of the *Code of Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct* you had previously identified as having been breached.

Finally, submit your assembled complaints package to registrar@hrpa.ca.