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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2026AG0032-000635  
June 1, 2026

Ministry of Attorney General

### **Making government services more equitable for all**

B.C. launches Anti-Racism Action Plan to address barriers Indigenous, racialized people face

SURREY –

#### **Summary**

- *The Anti-Racism Action Plan includes 37 commitments between June 2026 and May 2028 from 17 core government ministries and agencies to support more equitable access to public services*
- *Actions cover jobs, health care, public safety, education, labour, children and family services, the legal system, climate response, finance, municipal affairs and the public service*
- *First update report will be released in September 2027 and the next action plan will be released in 2028*

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A new provincial anti-racism plan will help create stronger, healthier communities throughout B.C. by setting out actions to address the systemic barriers Indigenous and racialized people face when accessing government services.

“Despite progress, too many people in B.C. still face racism when accessing services meant to help everyone,” said Niki Sharma, Attorney General. “This plan sets out clear actions to undo the unfair and unjust legacy of systemic racism. This is how we create a government that people trust, and works for everyone, regardless of their race or identity.”

The inaugural Anti-Racism Action Plan sets out measurable, practical actions government will take from 2026 until 2028 to remove barriers and improve access to services for Indigenous and racialized people in B.C. It covers government sectors, such as health care, public safety, education and climate response. The plan is partly informed by data collected under 2022’s Anti-Racism Data Act (ARDA) and addresses the Anti-Racism Act’s (2024) direction for government to take action to address systemic racism and improve equity in public services.

#### **Protecting workers at risk of exploitation**

Research gathered under ARDA found that temporary foreign workers, international students, newcomers to B.C. and racialized people working in the gig economy, such as in ride-hailing and delivery driving, can face a higher risk of abuse and exploitation. This is often because of language barriers, job dependency and limited awareness of their rights.

The plan aims to improve these groups’ labour conditions and financial outcomes with actions,

such as:

- strengthening the legal oversight of immigration consultants and reviewing how regulatory bodies that assess the validity of foreign professional credentials
- reviewing employment standards and legal protections for temporary foreign workers and gig workers
- identifying and addressing barriers in income and disability assistance programs
- providing materials and resources in multiple languages that are clear and easy to understand

This work will help workers better understand their rights, reduce barriers to support and improve job stability and fair pay.

### **Ethical use of AI and other emerging technologies**

In recent years, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning and other forms of emerging technology have become more prominent across all aspects of life. People are increasingly using AI. However, as most AI models are based on human knowledge and data, early research indicates that AI systems can exhibit racial bias.

As government explores how AI can be used to make services more connected and responsive, the action plan commits to creating a multidisciplinary group that will:

- develop an ethical, anti-racist AI-use policy for the public sector
- identify potential harms that could be caused or worsened by unregulated AI use
- recommend how these risks might be mitigated
- explore how AI can be used to counter historical marginalization of Indigenous and racialized people and improve their life outcomes

This will help ensure that government is embracing technology without deepening racial inequality or perpetuating harms on historically marginalized communities.

### **Racism in health care**

Findings from the independent In Plain Sight Report in 2020 and ARDA research show that Indigenous and racialized people experience stereotyping, racism and discrimination in B.C.'s health-care system. These experiences can make people hesitant to seek care or return for followup treatment, affecting early intervention and long-term health outcomes for chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes, and mood and anxiety disorders more prevalent in Indigenous and racialized communities.

To address this, the plan includes actions to:

- establish a new centre for anti-racism and cultural safety within the Ministry of Health to lead and co-ordinate efforts to eliminate Indigenous-specific racism in health care
- adapt chronic-disease programs and supports to better reflect the needs and experiences of racialized communities
- set learning expectations for all health-care workers on Indigenous-specific racism and how to provide culturally safe care

These actions aim to make health care safer and more accessible, helping people feel confident

seeking care and improving health outcomes over time.

### **Build public safety and trust in the justice system**

Historical and ongoing experiences of discrimination have contributed to lower trust in the justice system among many Indigenous and racialized people, affecting whether they report crimes and how they engage with legal processes.

This plan includes actions such as:

- piloting a Red Dress alert system to support timely and co-ordinated responses when Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit and gender-diverse people go missing
- establishing a First Nation safety officer program to support community-based safety initiatives and enforcement
- providing funding for legal, mental health, healing and community-based supports for people and communities affected by racism

These steps aim to ensure that when Indigenous and racialized people are targets of crime, their concerns are taken seriously and responded to quickly, while helping them feel safer engaging with law enforcement and increasing their trust in public institutions.

### **Support for Indigenous people and communities**

Despite recent governmental efforts, systemic racism continues to affect outcomes for Indigenous and racialized children, youth and families. Research gathered under ARDA has found Indigenous over-representation in the child welfare system and disparities in education outcomes.

Under the plan, government is committing to:

- ensuring First Nations communities understand existing self-determination provisions that can help them advocate for their communities in child and family welfare matters
- reviewing how Indigenous youth are supported and treated by the justice system
- strengthening the STAR Elder Program through which Indigenous Elders are able to provide guidance to child welfare staff and cultural support for Indigenous children, youth and families
- reviewing why Indigenous students are over-represented in special education categories and school completion (evergreen) certificates and working to address this

These actions will help ensure Indigenous and racialized youth are supported from birth through adulthood, without facing discrimination, allowing them the same access to supports and opportunities as their non-racialized peers.

### **About the action plan**

The action plan includes 37 commitments from 17 core government ministries and bodies. It is informed primarily by research under ARDA, consultation and co-operation with Indigenous partners, engagement with racialized communities, advice from the Provincial Committee on Anti-Racism and other action-specific evidence and ministry analysis.

To support transparency and accountability, individual ministries will monitor progress on their

commitments and report to the Ministry of Attorney General regularly. Government will publish annual progress reports starting in 2027 to show actions taken and areas where more work may be needed. The next action plan will be published in 2028 and will build on lessons learned and progress made, informed by ongoing consultation and co-operation with Indigenous and racialized communities.

Under the plan, government will develop and implement learning and incident-response resources to counter rising antisemitism and islamophobia in schools. This addresses gaps in supports available for Jewish and Muslim students that are already in place for other racialized students.

The action plan complements the Province's ongoing anti-racism work, including the racist incident helpline, Resilience BC and historical projects that address past harms committed by government.

**Learn More:**

- To see the list of actions and read the full Anti-Racism Action Plan, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/395973612AAD40B5BAC2B7D8ECCF9FA7>
- To read research findings under the Anti-Racism Data Act, visit: <https://antiracism.gov.bc.ca/annual-releases/>
- To learn how B.C. is keeping people safe and communities strong, visit: [gov.bc.ca/SafeCommunities](http://gov.bc.ca/SafeCommunities)
- To contact the racist incident helpline, visit: <https://racistincidenthelpline.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **What people are saying about the Anti-Racism Action Plan (2026-28)**

#### **Amna Shah, parliamentary secretary of anti-racism initiatives –**

“The anti-racism action plan is a significant step forward in moving government’s anti-racism work beyond symbolism, by focusing on practical, evidence-based actions to strengthen and expand initiatives that Indigenous and racialized communities have long called for. I look forward to continuing to work alongside our partners to help build a more just and inclusive B.C. for generations to come.”

#### **Diana Gibson, Minister of Citizens’ Services –**

“Anti-racism work is ultimately about people’s experiences, opportunities and sense of belonging. The Anti Racism Action Plan was developed based on the Anti Racism Data Committee’s work and sets out clear, concrete steps to remove barriers and ensure public services are delivered with dignity and equity. This important work reinforces our commitment to building a more equitable B.C. in a time when diversity, equity and inclusion efforts face increased threat across North America.”

#### **Hasan Alam, chair, Provincial Committee on Anti-Racism –**

“Since February 2025, the Provincial Committee on Anti-Racism has worked tirelessly alongside government to shape this action plan. Addressing institutional racism and the barriers it creates is not easy work, and we know much remains ahead. But we hope this plan marks an important first step, one that moves British Columbia closer to being a place where everyone can live, work and belong with dignity.”

#### **Robert Phillips, political executive member, First Nations Summit –**

“The Anti-Racism Action Plan represents an opportunity to move beyond simply acknowledging systemic racism, and toward real meaningful actions and accountability. First Nations have long identified the harms created by colonial systems, and we are helping lead the solutions. We will continue to work alongside government to ensure that First Nations and other racialized groups in B.C. can engage with public institutions in ways that acknowledge the negative impacts of systemic racism and genuinely work to address them.”

#### **Hegus John Hackett, Tla’amin Nation, on behalf of the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations –**

“At a time when we are seeing an alarming surge in anti-Indigenous racism across the province, meaningful action is urgently needed to address systemic discrimination and rebuild trust in public institutions. The Anti-Racism Action Plan is an important step in respecting Indigenous rights, histories and perspectives, helping to ensure they are reflected in government policies,

services and decision-making. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Province to support lasting change for current and future generations.”

**Celeste Hayward, executive director, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres –**

“Friendship centres see the realities of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination every day. Meaningful progress and real change require sustained partnership between government and Indigenous organizations, as well as investment, transparency and accountability. We welcome the Province’s first Anti-Racism Action Plan as an important step toward addressing the systemic racism that continues to impact Indigenous communities across British Columbia.”

**Pamela Charron, executive director, the Worker Solidarity Network –**

“Equity-deserving workers continue to face significant barriers in accessing justice, from complex complaint processes and legal jargon to language barriers and lengthy wait times. The Worker Solidarity Network welcomes the anti-racism action plan and its commitment to making employment and human rights systems more accessible, equitable and responsive to the realities workers face. These actions are an important step toward ensuring meaningful access to justice for all workers.”

**Anthonia Ogundele, founder and executive director, Ethós Lab –**

“We welcome the Province’s Anti-Racism Action Plan as an important step toward making public services fairer and more inclusive for everyone. Addressing systemic racism is essential to building a province where people can truly access the opportunities that rapid innovation brings. It’s encouraging to see a strong focus on community voices and responsible use of technology so that innovation supports equity and works for all.”

**June Francis, chair, Anti-Racism Data Committee –**

“The Anti-Racism Data Committee has been calling for government to act on the important findings coming out of its anti-racism research for the last three years so it is encouraging to see this plan build on the foundation established under the Anti-Racism Data Act, including research priorities recommended by the committee, which commit government to concrete steps to address systemic racism across its programs and services. While strong data and research are essential bases for action, implementing the action plan and creating measurable change must remain the central outcome of this work. We look forward to seeing sustained progress over the coming years, and will continue to hold government accountable to a robust agenda for ensuring data is collected, governed and used in meaningful and culturally safe ways to remove barriers faced by Indigenous and racialized people in government-service treatment, impact and outcomes.”

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