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Subject: Ontario Public Service Launches Third-Party Review of Inclusive Workplace Policies and Programs



Newsroom

Statement

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE LAUNCHES THIRD-PARTY REVIEW OF INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

September 17, 2020

FOCUS WILL BE ON ANTI-RACISM, TRANSPHOBIA AND SPECIFIC BARRIERS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

TORONTO — Today, Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of the Treasury Board, and Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General and the Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism, issued the following statement in response to the Ontario Public Service (OPS) review:

"Our government has zero tolerance for hate, racism and discrimination of any kind, and we know the province can, and should, play a leading role in eliminating systemic racism and ensuring all people in Ontario benefit equitably from public policies, programs and services. As one of the largest employers in the province, the OPS must actively listen to, learn from and act upon ongoing conversations about how we can create workplaces that are truly diverse and inclusive.

Informed by recommendations from internal employee networks, the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the [Independent External Review of Complex Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Cases Report conducted by Arleen Huggins](#), the OPS launched a third-party review of its inclusive workplace policies and programs to better address systemic employment barriers. This review will include all Ontario Human Rights Code grounds, with a focus on anti-racism (including anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism), transphobia and specific barriers for persons with disabilities. A final report is expected to be available in April 2021.

While we acknowledge the work is ongoing, we are making progress and have tools and policies in place to identify and address systemic racism, both [within the OPS](#) and in Ontario. Additional steps towards combatting systemic employment barriers within the OPS include holding senior leaders accountable for building teams that reflect the diversity of Ontario's labour force; providing anti-racism training for senior leaders in the coming months; breaking down barriers to employee

advancement and conducting a yearly OPS Employee Experience Survey and publishing the results.

Our government recently announced a new [anti-racism and anti-hate grant program](#) that will provide \$1.6 million to support community-based anti-racism initiatives focusing on anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia. This new program will be developed collaboratively with community partners across Ontario.

Our government is also supporting youth through the Premier's Council on Equality of Opportunity, a new advisory group that provides advice on actions the government can take to remove barriers for disadvantaged youth and help young people succeed in Ontario's changing economy.

But there is more work to be done, and our government remains committed to listening, learning and acting. The well-being of all Ontarians and the prosperity of our province depend on creating a place where everyone is welcome and able to participate and contribute to their full potential."

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