



ANTI-RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-RACISM

Department	Board	Policy No.	0340-015
Section	General	Date Approved by Board	June 25, 2020
Repeals		Board Resolution #	RD/20/06/23 (25)

Amended		Board Resolution #	
Amended		Board Resolution #	
Amended		Board Resolution #	

Repealed		Board Resolution #	
----------	--	--------------------	--

1. Purpose

1.1 This Policy is intended to demonstrate the Peace River Regional District’s (PRRD) commitment to conducting the day-to-day operations and governance in an anti-discriminatory and anti-racist manner and environment. The implementation of this Policy is a public commitment that the PRRD will continue to make best efforts to ensure that all who work and interact with the PRRD are able to do so in an environment and manner free of [racism](#) and [racial discrimination](#).

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all employees and elected officials of the PRRD.
- 2.2 This Policy applies to the interpretation and application of current and new bylaws, regulations, policies, procedures, contracts, procurements and activities carried out by the PRRD, all of which will be required to be compliant with the principles and particular requirements specified within this Policy.
- 2.3 The scope of this Policy includes all aspects of the PRRD’s activities, including its working environment, procurement, services, meetings and various public events. In addition, this scope will include ongoing relationships with individuals, businesses, community groups and contractors as well as with other local governments and public and private bodies.

3. Definitions

3.1 *Barrier*: An overt or covert obstacle which must be overcome for equality and progress to be possible.

- 3.2 *Bias*: A subjective opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination, often formed without reasonable justification, which influences the ability of an individual or group to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.
- 3.3 *Cultural Racism*: The full adoption by an individual or group of the culture, values and patterns of a different social, religious, linguistic or national ethos, resulting in the diminution or elimination of attitudinal and behavioural characteristics of the original individual or group. Can be voluntary or forced.
- 3.4 *Discrimination*: Means the differential treatment of an individual or group, on the basis of prejudice, stereotypes or the [Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination](#) set out in provincial human rights legislation. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional, conscious or unconscious. Discrimination can result in one individual or group having an advantage over another and can cause an individual or group to be excluded from activities which they ought to have the right to be included in.
- 3.5 *Diversity*: A term used to encompass the acceptance and respect of various dimensions including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, or other ideologies.
- 3.6 *Environmental Racism*: A systemic form of [racism](#) in which toxic wastes and dangerous and toxic facilities are located into or near marginalized communities, such as [People of Colour](#), [Indigenous Peoples](#), working class, and poor communities, often causing chronic illness and change in their lifestyle due to pollution of lands, air and waterways.
- 3.7 *Inclusive Language/Inclusion*: The deliberate selection of vocabulary that avoids explicit or implicit exclusion of particular groups and that avoids the use of false generic terms, usually with reference to gender. Making diverse members of society or an organization feel valued and respected.
- 3.8 *Indigenous Peoples*: Means the communities, peoples, and nations that have a historical continuity with pre-invasion, pre-settler, or pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, as distinct from the other societies now prevailing on those territories (or parts of them). The original inhabitants of Canada who lived here for millennia before explorers arrived from Europe.
- 3.9 *Individual Racism*: Racist assumptions, beliefs and behaviours that stem from conscious and unconscious personal prejudice.
- 3.10 *Institutional Racism (Systemic Discrimination)*: The institutionalization of [discrimination](#) through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface but which have an exclusionary impact on particular groups. This occurs in institutions and organizations, including government, where the policies, practices and procedures (e.g. employment systems – job requirements, hiring practices, promotion procedures, etc.) exclude and/or act as [barriers](#) to racialized groups.

- 3.11 *People of Colour*: Non-White racial or ethnic groups; generally used by racialized peoples as an alternative to the term “visible minority.” The word is not used to refer to [Indigenous peoples](#), as they are considered distinct societies under the Canadian Constitution. When including [Indigenous peoples](#), it is correct to say “[people of colour](#) and [Indigenous peoples](#).”
- 3.12 *Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination*: Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age of a person or class of persons.
- 3.13 *Racial Discrimination*: Means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, which nullifies or impairs the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.
- 3.14 *Racism*: A belief that one group is superior to others performed through any individual action, or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify [discrimination](#). There are many types of racism: Institutional, Systemic, and Individual.

4. Policy

4.1 Principles

- a) The PRRD recognizes the [diversity](#) of the community and believes that all members of the community including, but not limited to, residents, elected officials, employees, volunteers, visitors of colour, and [Indigenous Peoples](#) have the right to live, work, do business and play in an environment that asserts and supports their fundamental rights, personal worth and human dignity.
- b) The PRRD acknowledges and recognizes the existence of [racism](#) in the community in all its forms, including [Cultural](#), [Environmental](#), [Institutional](#), [Systemic](#) and [Individual](#).
- c) The PRRD is committed to breaking down [barriers](#), deconstructing [biases](#) and fostering and promoting an [inclusive](#), respectful and welcoming environment for all, one that is free from [racial discrimination](#) and [racism](#).
- d) The PRRD acknowledges its role and responsibility in protecting every person’s right to be free from [racial discrimination](#) and [racism](#).
- e) The PRRD is further committed to respecting and upholding the vision and principles of British Columbia’s Human Rights Code and the implementation of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

4.2 Board of Directors Responsibilities

Board Members will:

- a) take leadership to model [inclusive](#) behaviour and [language](#) and not participate in [racist](#) or [racially discriminatory](#) conduct;
- b) support, promote and foster the [principles](#) of this Policy in all their work and interactions;
- c) report incidents of [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#) experienced or witnessed, immediately to the CAO (or their designate) or the Chair (or their delegate);
- d) cooperate and participate in good faith in any investigation under this Policy; and maintain the confidentiality of all involved in a complaint under this Policy.

4.3 PRRD Management Responsibilities

PRRD Management will:

- a) ensure that the workplace and the business of the local government is free from [racial discrimination](#) and [racism](#) and ensure the [principles](#) of this Policy are reflected in the execution of their duties, operational policies and practices within their area of responsibility;
- b) model [inclusive](#) behaviour and [language](#) and not participate in [racist](#) or [racially discriminatory](#) conduct;
- c) support, promote and foster the [principles](#) of this Policy in all their work and interactions and ensure that Management is trained on this Policy and is implementing it;
- d) train Board members on this Policy at the beginning of each term of office and provide refresher training thereafter. Training should be meaningful, interactive and involve group work where participants can work through various case studies highlighting appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- e) provide all new employees this Policy at the commencement of their employment and provide refresher training thereafter. Training should be meaningful, interactive and involve group work where participants can work through various case studies highlighting appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- f) report incidents of [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#) experienced or witnessed, immediately to a supervisor, the CAO (or their Deputy or designate) or the Chair (or their delegate);
- g) listen to any complaint, treating it sensitively, seriously and confidentially;



- h) when appropriate and required, provide a timely, thorough, confidential and objective investigation of any allegation and answer any complaints in accordance with this Policy;
- i) if necessary or appropriate, appoint an independent third-party investigator to investigate allegations or complaints when required under [section 5.9](#);
- j) subject to procedures referred to in [section 5.9](#), review the findings and recommendations and determine, in consultation with Human Resources, Management, legal counsel and/or Board, as applicable, the outcome and the appropriate action to be taken, which may include education, training or disciplinary action, dependent upon the results;
- k) maintain the confidentiality of all involved in a complaint under this Policy;
- l) cooperate and participate in good faith in any investigation under this Policy;

4.4 Employees

Employees:

- a) must not engage in [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#) and conduct oneself and speak in an [inclusive](#) manner;
- b) report incidents of [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#) experienced or witnessed, immediately to a supervisor, Human Resources, or the CAO (or their delegate);
- c) maintain the confidentiality of all involved in a complaint under this Policy; and
- d) co-operate and participate in good faith in any investigation under this Policy.

4.5 Complainants

Complainants have a right to:

- a) make a complaint and receive a copy of the complaint;
- b) be informed of the status and progress of the investigation;
- c) be informed of a summary of the results of the investigation in writing, including a summary of corrective action that has or will be taken as a result of the investigation;
- d) not be subject to retaliation; and
- e) withdraw a complaint at any time during the procedure; however, depending upon the nature and severity of the allegations, the CAO (or Deputy or designate), or Chair may determine that an investigation is required and the process will continue despite the withdrawal.



4.6 Respondents

Respondents have a right to:

- a) be informed that a complaint has been filed;
- b) be informed of the status and progress of the investigation;
- c) have the allegations provided to any independent investigator;
- d) be informed of the allegations against them and be provided an opportunity to respond; and
- e) be informed of a summary of the results of the investigation in writing.

4.7 Bystanders

- a) Bystanders have the right to not be subject to retaliation because they have participated as a witness; and
- b) bystanders have a responsibility to meet with the investigator and to cooperate in good faith with all those responsible for the investigation of the complaint.

4.8 Investigator

The investigator, if engaged under the process referred to in [section 5.9](#), shall:

- a) have expertise regarding the matters covered under this Policy;
- b) ensure the Respondent is informed of the allegations;
- c) ensure all parties involved have been informed of their rights and responsibilities;
- d) interview the parties concerned and any witnesses;
- e) collect all pertinent information;
- f) recommend a mediation process where appropriate;
- g) prepare a written report;
- h) ensure the investigation is completed in a timely fashion taking into account particular circumstances; and
- i) maintain confidentiality.

4.9 Complaint Process

All members of the Board of Directors, management, and employees of the PRRD have a responsibility to treat all complaints under this Policy seriously and to investigate all



complaints of [racism](#) and [racial discrimination](#) pursuant to the complaint procedures set out in the:

- a) PRRD's Staff Code of Conduct Policy (Respect in the Workplace);
- b) Union Collective Agreement; and
- c) PRRD's Directors Code of Conduct Policy.

4.10 Remedies

- a) Any individual covered by this Policy, who is found to have engaged in, or known about and took no action to report or stop [racial discrimination](#) or racist behaviour contrary to this Policy may be subject to appropriate action depending up on the severity of the misconduct. The range of appropriate remedy may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i) Oral and/or written apology from the Respondent and/or PRRD.
 - ii) Any administrative change that is appropriate (i.e.: job site or position transfer; no contact for a period of time, temporary or permanent changes to reporting structures or work assignments).
 - iii) Coaching.
 - iv) Counselling.
 - v) Training or education.
 - vi) Re-orientation to this Policy and its purpose.
 - vii) Discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause.
 - viii) Termination of contract for service or of a volunteer opportunity.
- b) In the case of an elected official, sanction by Board (including but not limited to censure, removal from appointments, referral to police or legal action).
- c) If the Respondent is not covered by this Policy, the PRRD will take any and all steps reasonable and necessary to remedy the substantiated complaint to protect the Complainant from future harm.

4.11 Unsubstantiated Complaints

If an investigator finds insufficient evidence to support the Complainant's allegations, the investigator will submit that finding. There will be no record of the complaint on the Complainant's or Respondent's file and there will be no sanction to anyone concerning the incident. A finding of no evidence is a simple reflection of an absence of evidence to support the claim and nothing more.



4.12 No Reprisals or Retaliation

- a) Any reprisal or retaliatory action that is related, in any way, to the circumstances noted above against a Complainant (or person closely related to or associated with the Complainant), Bystander, Respondent, elected official or employee responsible for implementing this Policy and procedure, who in good faith:
 - i) makes a complaint alleging [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#);
 - ii) identifies or opposes a practice that they reasonably believe to constitute [racial discrimination](#) or [racism](#);
 - iii) implements or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing under this Policy or pursuant to any applicable statutory complaint process; violates this Policy and will not be tolerated.
- b) Any officer or employee covered by this Policy who is found to have engaged in any reprisal or retaliation in violation of this Policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which action may include the termination of employment for just cause or legal action.
- c) Any elected official covered by this Policy who is found to have engaged in any reprisal or retaliation in violation of this Policy will be subject to Board consideration of appropriate sanctions, which may include censure, removal from appointments, referral to police or legal action.

4.13 Vexatious Allegations and Complaints

Any individual covered by this Policy who makes an allegation or complaint under this Policy that is subsequently found to have been made in a deliberately vexatious or malicious manner, or otherwise to have been made in bad faith, will be subject to appropriate action set out in sections [5.12. b.](#) or [5.12 c.](#), as applicable.

4.14 Limitations

This Policy articulates the position of the PRRD and demonstrates its support and commitment to an environment that is free of [racial discrimination](#) and [racism](#). It is not intended to supersede or replace the other processes available to individuals or groups wishing to pursue avenues of formal complaint or redress under other PRRD policies.

Affiliated Polices	Directors Code of Conduct Staff Code of Conduct (Respect in the Workplace)
Referenced Documents	Union Collective Agreement