

GUIDE

Developing a workplace anti-racism policy

How to write an anti-racism policy

Developing a workplace anti-racism policy

In Victoria, under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) (the Act), employers have an obligation to not discriminate against employees on the basis of race. Employers also have a 'positive duty' to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation as far as possible.

An anti-racism policy is a document that outlines an organisation's commitment to prevent and respond to race discrimination. Designing an anti-racism policy is a crucial step in fulfilling the positive duty, protecting employees from harm, and fostering a positive workplace free from racism. However, an anti-racism policy is only one step toward creating an anti-racist workplace. To create meaningful long-term change, anti-racism policies should be supported by practical changes to workplace culture and practices.

For more information on workplace race discrimination, see the Commission's *Guideline: race discrimination in the workplace* (Guideline). See [Chapter 4: Understanding the positive duty: Standard 2 policies and procedures](#) for more information on anti-racist policies.

Designing the policy

This document is a guide for employers to develop their own anti-racism policy and does not constitute legal advice.

This is not a 'one size fits all' policy. The scope of the policy will depend on the size and nature of the organisation. Employers should write their anti-racism policy to fit the specific organisational and/or industry characteristics of their workplace.

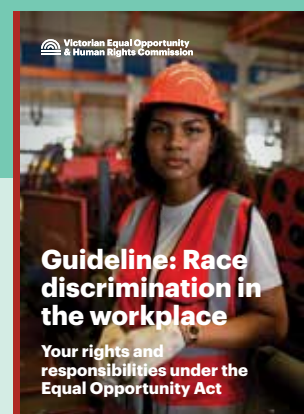
Employers may decide to keep the anti-racism policy as a separate document or incorporate it into a broader equal opportunity policy.

The policy should be fit for purpose, meet the needs of the workforce (especially those more at risk of racism), and establish clear expectations around race discrimination.

Employers may decide to combine this policy with their race discrimination prevention plan. View our guide for writing a prevention plan for your workplace.

For more information on anti-racism policies, take a look at the Commission's *Guideline: Race discrimination in the workplace*.

Download the Guideline at humanrights.vic.gov.au/resources.





1. Background

Set out a commitment to anti-racism.

- This should include an acknowledgement of First Peoples.

Outline what the anti-racism policy contains.

- Include a short table of contents (this may follow the headings of this template).

Outline what racism is and how it may arise in the organisation.

Provide clear definitions of terms used in the policy.

- These are not limited to, but might include: *anti-racism*, *discrimination*, *microaggression*, *race*, *victimisation* or other definitions relevant to the workplace.
- For definitions of these terms, see our [Guideline – Annex: Key terms](#).

 For guidance on all these sections, see our [Guideline – Chapter 2: Understanding workplace racism](#).



2. Purpose

State the purpose of the anti-racism policy.

- Why is it being written?
- What are the intended outcomes?
- What are the benefits?



3. Scope

Outline who the policy covers and when it applies.

- There may be workplace or industry characteristics that affect the operation of the anti-racism policy.
- The people covered by the policy should include employees, contractors and potentially volunteers and/or stakeholders.
- Circumstances when the policy is relevant may include: recruitment, promotion, training, compensation, leave access, etc.

 For guidance, see our [Guideline – Chapter 3: Understanding the law on workplace racism](#).



4. Consultation

Set out the consultation involved in the development of the policy.

- Who was consulted? For example, employees, unions, organisational stakeholders, experts in racism.
- What was the process? For example, workshops, employee surveys or staff interviews.



For information on consultation, see our [Guideline – Chapter 4: Understanding the minimum standards – policies and procedures](#).



5. Staff rights and responsibilities

Detail staff entitlements under the policy.

- This should describe what the employers are required to provide. For example:

All staff are entitled to:

- substantive equality in recruitment, employment and promotion processes
- a safe and positive workplace without discrimination and racism
- lodge a complaint or report of racism without fear of victimisation.

Detail staff responsibilities under the policy.

- Staff also carry responsibility to prevent racism in the workplace. For example:

All staff are responsible for:

- managing respectful relationships with colleagues and managers
- following standards and processes contained in this policy
- co-operating fully with complaints procedures.



6. Manager responsibilities

Outline manager and leadership responsibilities under the policy.

- If manager responsibilities vary across organisational hierarchy, outline responsibilities for each level separately. For example:

Managers and senior leadership are responsible for:

- *informing staff of their rights and responsibilities under this policy*
- *responding swiftly once informed about incidents of alleged racial discrimination*
- *modelling positive and professional behaviour*
- *communicating transparently about complaint processes and progress.*



7. Workplace misconduct

Define workplace misconduct.

- Discrimination:
 - what is discrimination?
 - outline workplace-specific case studies/examples.
- Casual racism:
 - what is casual racism?
 - what is a microaggression?
 - outline workplace-specific case studies/examples.
 - how do microaggressions differ from discrimination?
- Vilification:
 - what is vilification?
 - how does it differ from discrimination?
 - outline workplace-specific case studies/examples.
- Victimization:
 - what is victimisation?
 - outline workplace-specific case studies/examples.



For guidance, see our [Guideline – Chapter 2: Understanding workplace racism](#) and [Chapter 3: Understanding the law on workplace racism](#).



8. Prevention

How does the organisation plan to prevent these behaviours?

- Either direct staff to the organisation's existing prevention plan or outline prevention measures.



For guidance, see our [Guideline – Chapter 4: Understanding the positive duty – policies and procedures](#) and [our race discrimination prevention plan guide](#).



9. Reporting and response

Outline the reporting and/or complaints process.

- Either direct staff to the existing process or explain it here.

Detail the disciplinary actions and/or consequences for these behaviours.

- How will breaches of the policy be managed?



10. Other relevant policies

Outline any other policies or procedures relevant to anti-racism.

- This may include:
 - internal complaints processes for discrimination/harassment
 - organisational values or code of conduct
 - inclusive recruitment and/or procurement policies
 - flexible work and/or health and safety policies.



11. Review and governance

**Establish a timeline to review and evaluate the policy.
The Commission recommends yearly.**

- When will the policy be reviewed and how often will subsequent reviews be undertaken?
- What form will the review take?
- Who will perform the review?

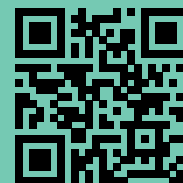
Provide a governance framework for how the policy will be managed.

- Who is responsible for managing the policy?
- How will the organisation report progress on implementation and intended outcomes?
- How will changes to the policy be made?

<i>Policy drafted by:</i>	
<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Signature:</i>	



For more information, download the Commission's *Guideline: Race discrimination in the workplace* available at humanrights.vic.gov.au/resources or via the QR code.



This information is intended as a guide only. It is not a substitute for legal advice.



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