



FEDERATION
OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES VIC.

Statement from the Federation of Community Legal Centres: 50% RISE IN RACIST ATTACKS.

Across Victoria, our centres have reported an over 50% increase in racist attacks on African-Australians and other communities of colour this year.*

Community members are scared. We are hearing reports of escalating verbal abuse and even horrific racist assaults.

To outline just a few of the stories our centres have reported to us:

- In Melbourne's inner north, two Caucasian men seized a young African-Australian mother's pram and rattled it, with her baby inside, yelling racist abuse.
- In Melbourne's west, an African-Australian teenager was stabbed by a Caucasian man who told him to 'go back to where you come from'. He is still hospitalised.
- In Dandenong, a Burmese-Australian man was violently assaulted by a Caucasian man with a pick axe. He was hospitalised and still bears serious injuries from the attack.

It isn't only individuals who have been stirred up by political scapegoating. Our centres have reported that racism is also on the rise in the police force.

African-Australian men are being stopped for arbitrary searches 2.5 times more often by police than Caucasian men.

In just one of many recent cases, a young South Sudanese Australian man was forced by police to leave a party, then immediately arrested for being drunk in public when he stepped outside the door. He was the only black person present. All other party-goers were allowed to disperse freely.

Make no mistake. These experiences of discrimination and abuse result from deliberate choices made by some politicians and media outlets who are prepared to vilify people for the sake of political point-scoring.



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These are real people, with real lives, experiencing serious harm because of the deliberate choices of politicians and media outlets. We call on all politicians to listen to what we, your communities, are telling you, and keep racism out of politics.

* As reported by centres with high migrant populations, including Fitzroy Legal Service, Flemington-Kensington CLC, multiple CLCs in Melbourne's West and Springvale Monash Legal Service.

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