



ANTI-RACISM POLICY

As ratified by Provincial Council, June 2021

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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Purpose

Anti-racism is the active opposition to racism through advocacy for political, economic, and social change targeted at confronting and addressing racism everywhere it is present. An anti-racist asserts that people from all racial groups are equal, and that other racial groups are not in need of development. They accept others as they are and for who they are. They are willing to take steps to address racist beliefs and actions in the world around them, in the organizations they belong to, and within themselves.

The purpose of this Policy is to orient the Manitoba NDP as an explicitly anti-racist organization. To that end, this Policy defines key terms and responsibilities, establishes procedures for reporting and disrupting racism, and codifies our shared commitment to fostering an environment of safety and inclusion for all our members.

This Policy applies to everyone in our Party, from rank-and-file Members through Party Leadership.

This Policy supplements and informs the **Code of Safety and Respect** (found within the **Codes of Conduct**) that outlines the Manitoba NDP's process for dealing interpersonal and institutional conflict within our Party.

This is a living policy document that is subject to revision and update as required. This policy is also subject to systematic review every three years.

Background

The Manitoba NDP has a history of supporting policies and legislation that further the causes of racial, social, and economic justice. We have often been a place where otherwise marginalized peoples could find a political voice and platform in our province. We are a political party that strives for equality and aspire to have our Constitution, policies, practices, and training reflect this aspiration.

But merely not being racist isn't enough: we need to be anti-racist. We have not always gotten things right, we have not always been as inclusive as we should have been, and we have not always taken steps to address or root out racism where it has existed. We have an obligation as the progressive political Party in our Province and as a grassroots movement of activists to define and address the multiple forms of racism that exist within our Party and set out the procedures for reporting and disrupting racism.

The Manitoba NDP should be the political home to people of all backgrounds and we should be leaders in making a society based on cooperation, equity, and access to opportunity. Only when we are committed as a Party to the important and essential work of anti-racism can we be part of the solution to the systemic and interpersonal racism in our society that serves to oppress and suppress the lives and livelihood of Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Colour.

The Manitoba NDP Provincial Council at its regular meeting on September 12, 2020 passed the following motion:

That, in order to address structural racism and oppression and to align Party policy with the principles of anti-racism, the Manitoba NDP will develop an Anti-Racism Policy in consultation with the Members of Colour Committee, Multicultural Committee, Aboriginal Talking Circle, and the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) members of Caucus.

To respond to this direction from Council, an Anti-Racism Working Group has been struck to take on the core work of developing a policy in consultation with the Membership. The Anti-Racism Working Group, supported by the Provincial Secretary, consists of:

- Kim Milne, Aboriginal Talking Circle Chair
- Derek Dabee, Multicultural Committee Chair
- Mohamed Alli, Members of Colour Committee Chair
- Julius Chester, MYND Co-Chair
- Lorene Mahoney

A working draft policy was prepared in the fall of 2020 and circulated to Provincial Council and all Constituency Associations for feedback. Based on this feedback, a new draft was prepared and provided to interested Members, Caucus, and subject-matter experts. A report on the Working Group's activities was presented to Convention in February 2021. A final draft was proposed to Provincial Council in March 2021 for ratification at the June 2021 Provincial Council meeting.

The intention of the Working Group is that this policy be a living document, updated and improved as needed.

DEFINITIONS

BIPOC

An initialism referring to individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Colour. This nomenclature is currently the preferred language in the discourse, but it is recognized that better/more inclusive language may become available.

Discrimination

Failing to individually assess the unique merits, capacities and circumstances of a person and instead making stereotypical assumptions based on a person's presumed traits having the impact of excluding persons, denying benefits, and or imposing burdens.

Treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by other.

Intersectionality

Refers to the ways that racism, racial discrimination, harassment, and vilification are frequently linked/shaped/informed by other elements such as sex, gender, sexuality, class, economic status, ability, etc.

Members

Refers to Members in good standing of the New Democratic Party of Manitoba, as defined by the Manitoba NDP Constitution.

Microaggression

A subtle, ~~often unintentional~~, form of prejudice. Rather than an overt declaration of racism, a microaggression often takes the shape of an offhanded comment, an inadvertently painful joke, a pointed insult, or other such action/comment. Microaggressions can also take the form of so-called 'dog-whistling' or coded language, where the meaning of a statement or action may appear harmless, but the true meaning is clear to an intended audience.

Party Leadership

Refers to the Manitoba NDP Provincial Executive. Additional individual in Party Leadership roles include Members of the Legislative Assembly, Committee Chairs, Constituency Association Presidents, and staff.

Race

Race is an idea that has been created and accepted by society and it exists because people think that it exists. Race is a socio-historical and social construct that impacts human and social interactions and system, but has no scientific basis as method of categorization. Race is one of the fundamental components of descriptive systems of difference in society, along with sex/gender, class, ability, and sexuality. At its inception, 'race' was defined as a natural or biological difference, indicated by physical features such as skin colour, hair texture, and other bodily features. The creation of race as a key system of classification occurring during European imperial and colonial domination as a means to justify hierarchies of humanity.

Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination occurs both interpersonally and institutionally. It can be the result of overt intentional actions and/or inactions and as a by-product of systems and structures. Racial discrimination as a form of harassment can manifest as:

- Differential treatment of an individual because of race, colour, nationality, religious expression, or ethnic origin;
- An action or policy which has an adverse impact on an individual because of their race, colour, nationality, or ethnic origin;
- Use of stereotyped images or language (including jokes and anecdotes) which suggest that all or most members of a racial or ethnic group are the same, thereby denying their individuality as persons, when such conduct has the purpose to affect or substantially or unreasonably interfere with a Member's participation with the Party or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or
- Patterned behaviour of microaggressions.

Experiences of racial discrimination, harassment and vilification can be affected by its intersection with other elements of identity such as sex-gender, sexuality, disability, economic condition and age.

Racial Equity

Refers to the systematic fair treatment of all people resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. It contrasts with formal equality where people are treated the same without regard for racial differences, as it recognizes the impacts that the socio-historical and social construct of race has on the lived reality of people.

Racism

Racism the different treatment of various human racial groups by a dominant racial group rooted in the belief of the superiority of one group over another. Racism takes many forms, some of which include

symbolic, embodied, psychological, institutional/systemic, socio-religious, everyday, and interpersonal. Racism in Manitoba is often the living legacy of colonization or imperialism.

Both individual people and institutional policies can be racist.

PROCEDURE

The Manitoba NDP is committed to taking necessary steps to ensure that no Member of our Party is subjected to racism, racial discrimination, racial vilification, and racial harassment as a result of our Party institutions/structures, at Party events, and among interpersonal interactions with other Members. The Manitoba NDP strives to provide an environment which is free of racism, sexism, discrimination and bias, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

The Manitoba NDP will follow a model of disruption, education, and remediation to address racism. As Members and as a Party, we are responsible to disrupt racism and racist incidents as they occur (if it is safe to do so). The Party has an obligation to educate Members about Racism, and to authorize and support remedial measures when they are required. We want to build our movement as a safe and inclusive Party for all peoples, and demonstrate that meaningful change can happen.

I. Addressing Interpersonal Racism

Interpersonal racism arises between individual Members or groups of Members and may be occur as a single incident, or a pattern of behaviour. Interpersonal Racism is always a violation of our Code of Safety and Respect.

Examples of Interpersonal Racism

Examples of Interpersonal Racism include, but are not limited to, the following actions which the person experiencing them believes are based on perceived race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, ethno-religious (e.g. anti-Semitism or Islamophobia), or national origin of an individual or group:

- Racial stereotyping or racial profiling
- Subjecting an individual to racially or ethnically offensive remarks, names, slurs, racial epithets, or jokes
- Singling out an individual for teasing or jokes related to race, ancestry, place of origin, or ethnic origin
- Circulating racially offensive jokes, pictures, or cartoons by email/social media
- Comments ridiculing individuals because of race-related characteristics, religious dress, etc.
- Characterizing normal communication and physical attributes from Indigenous, Black, and Members of colour as rude or aggressive
- Treating normal differences of opinion as confrontational or insubordinate when involved with Black, Indigenous, and Members of Colour.
- Racist graffiti
- Using a racial epithet
- Disparaging an individual based on their race

- Attributing the same characteristic(s) to all members of a group, regardless of individual differences
- Contrasting how a Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour was treated with how others were treated in a comparable situation.
- A non-existent contradictory or changing explanation for why a Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour was targeted.
- Subtle or indirect instances of racism (microaggressions).
- Inappropriate cultural appropriation.
- Subjecting a Black person, Indigenous person, or Person of Colour to threatening gestures, verbal abuse, belittling, insulting, ridiculing, or yelling or speaking in a sarcastic manner in public or private.
- Belief in the inherent superiority of one racial group over another, through actions or criticism conducted in public.
- Exclusion from formal or informal networks or opportunities, and neglecting or leaving out Black, Indigenous, or Person of Colour Members from communications
- Committing an act of physical abuse or violence of any kind
- Making unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, innuendos, or taunting remarks.
- Subjecting an individual to inappropriate references to racist organizations.
- Failing to deal with racial incidents or downplaying the seriousness of such conduct, for example statements like ‘that was not their intent’.

Reporting Procedure

Section III of the Code of Safety and Respect governs reporting procedures for improper behavior, including interpersonal racism as defined above. When interpersonal Racism is reported, in addition to the provisions of the Code, the Safe Persons Committee must consider these multiple factors when making recommendations for remediation:

- Input from the impacted person(s) who experienced racism
- The circumstances of the incident(s)
- The seriousness of the behaviour
- The frequency or duration of the behaviour
- Any other mitigating factor the Committee deems relevant

Remedies

In addition to the remedies contemplated by the Code, the following list of remedial measures may also be considered by the Safe Persons Committee:

- Attendance at educational sessions on antiracism with evidence of reflective learning

- A restorative justice-based approach to mediation when all parties are willing
- Prohibited or restricted access to Party events or meetings
- Disciplinary consequences, as authorized by the Constitution
- Recommend a review of practices/policies/structures for institutional/structural racism.
- Reporting to legal authorities if the actions represent a potential violation of the Canadian Criminal Code

II. Addressing Institutional/Structural Racism

Institutional/Structural Racism exists when systems, policies, and procedures are designed or imposed without consideration to matters of race and intersectionality. It can also exist when unconscious biases or assumptions inform decision-making. Unlike Interpersonal Racism, Institutional/Structural Racism does not need to have a specific perpetrator to occur, but nevertheless causes real harm to Members who are Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour.

Examples of Structural/Institutional Racism

Examples of Structural/Institutional Racism include, but are not limited to, the following institutional responses that disproportionately impact individuals or groups of people based on race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, ethno-religious (e.g. anti-Semitism or Islamophobia), or national origin of an individual or group:

- Failure to address racial incidents or downplaying the seriousness of racially-motivated negative conduct.
- Treating an Indigenous, Black, or Persons of Colours' responses to racial incidents or bullying as a disciplinary problem without dealing with the underlying incident or considering the underlying incident as a mitigating factor
- Differential disciplinary action for BIPOC individuals
- Penalizing a person for failing to get along with another Member, when one of the reasons for the tension is racially discriminatory attitudes or behaviour
- Denial of mentoring, training, employment, or other development opportunity and training that were made available to others.
- Subjecting a Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour to excessive performance monitoring and documentation, or deviation from written policies or standard practices
- Treating differences of opinions or failures to get along with other Members as more serious when a Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour is involved
- Disproportionate blame for an incident or singling out a BIPOC individual for arbitrary punitive treatment
- Failing to plan for religious or spiritual practices or observances other than Christian holidays.

- Patterned exclusion from networks or opportunities, thereby providing advantages to the racial majority while disadvantaging others

Incident-Based Reporting and Review Procedure

As above, Section III of the Code of Safety and Respect governs reporting procedures for improper behavior, and many instances of Structural/Institutional racism will be uncovered as part of a review of a matter arising out of an incident of Interpersonal Racism. If, in the course of their review, the Safe Persons Committee identifies that Institutional/Structural Racism was a contributing or primary factor in the incident, they must report on this matter to Provincial Executive in addition to their regular reporting requirements.

On receiving a report from the Safe Persons Committee on Structural/Institutional racism, Provincial Executive must undertake a review of the circumstances and all relevant policies, practices, and training to propose amendments and remedies to avoid future occurrences. The results of any such review should be communicated to the Safe Persons Committee, and the Safe Persons Committee may opt to share these results with the original complainant through the Safe Person assigned to the matter.

Institutional Review

Institutional/Structural Racism can exist as structural to an organizations policies and practices, without any specific racist incident. Provincial Executive is responsible to ensure that all new policies, practices, and training is developed with due consideration for anti-racism and intersectionality, and to similarly review existing policies, practices, and training. Executive will direct changes where possible, and submit proposals to Provincial Council for approval when necessary. If any Member believes that a Party policy, practice, or training requires changes in order to better comply with the principles of anti-racism, they may provide a written submission to Provincial Executive for review.

Executive will be aided and supported in the work of reviewing policies, practices, and training by an Anti-Racism Working Group, and through consultation with subject-matter experts if necessary.

SOURCES & RESOURCES

The following sources were consulted while developing this policy:

- Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022, *Government of Canada*, 2019
- CCR Anti-Racism Policy, *Canadian Council for Refugees*, November 1996.
- Disruption of All Forms of Racism, *University of Manitoba: Rady Faculty of Health Policy*, August 25, 2020
- Educate Yourself, *Black Lives Matter, Canada*, <<https://blacklivesmatters.carrd.co/#educate>>, Accessed February 2021
- Fact Sheets, *Manitoba Human Rights Commission*, <<http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/v1/education-resources/resources/fact-sheets.html>>, Accessed February 2021
- Racial Equity Tools – Glossary, *Racial Equity Tools* <<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary> >, Accessed November, 2020
- Microaggression, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/basics/microaggression>
- Ontario Public Service Anti-Racism Policy: An Overview, *The, Province of Ontario*, February 2018