



British Columbia's
Office of the Human Rights
Commissioner

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commissioner welcomes *Anti-Racism Act* following extensive consultation

Vancouver B.C. – B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, is welcoming the B.C. government's introduction of anti-racism legislation today. The *Anti-Racism Act* (ARA) was tabled in the B.C. Legislature this afternoon, following extensive consultation with Commissioner Govender's Office.

The ARA builds on the *Anti-Racism Data Act* (ARDA), which was implemented many of the Commissioner's recommendations from her 2020 report, [Disaggregated Demographic Data Collection in British Columbia: The Grandmother Perspective](#). The Grandmother Perspective report provided guidance on the collection and use of data to reveal systemic racism and inequities in the province, without further perpetuating racist stereotypes and stigma.

"Today's unveiling of the *Anti-Racism Act* (ARA) represents a significant stride toward addressing systemic racism in our province," said Commissioner Govender. "Building on the groundwork laid by the *Anti-Racism Data Act*, the ARA is important for ensuring that B.C. uses disaggregated demographic and race-based data to spotlight disparities and propel human rights to the forefront, and that it does so under the guidance of Indigenous peoples and other racialized communities. When Indigenous and racialized communities are harmed by our public systems because of deeply embedded racism, they must be able to count on public authorities to not just research those harms, but also take action to address them."

The Commissioner is supportive of the ARA's requirement that government develop a provincial Anti-Racism Action Plan for addressing systemic racism, including anti-Indigenous racism. The Action Plan must include actions to be taken, targets to be met and indicators by which progress will be assessed. The *Act* provides that Indigenous peoples and a Provincial Committee on Anti-Racism will guide the government in developing and implementing the plan. Importantly, the Committee can make its advice to the government and other public bodies public, which is an important transparency measure.

"While the ARA represents a significant step in the right direction, much remains to be seen about how this legislation will be implemented and whether it will be effective in addressing the significant racial inequities and discrimination in B.C.," said the Commissioner. "I am hopeful that the *Act* will increase transparency about how government is using the data it collects on the impact of racism to address the problem.

"I will be watching closely to ensure systemic racism is properly identified and that the public bodies responsible are tasked with taking meaningful action. I also look forward to when municipal police forces, school boards, health authorities and other public bodies are brought within the purview of the *Act*."

Resources

- Report: [Disaggregated demographic data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective](#)
- Educational video: [Introduction to systemic discrimination](#)

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Media contact

To request an interview with Commissioner Kasari Govender, please contact Lindsey Bertrand, Manager, Communications, at media@bchumanrights.ca or 604-306-7369.

Media kit

[Visit our media kit](#) for images of Commissioner Kasari Govender, pronunciation guidance, bios and more.

About BCOHRC

BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner exists to address the root causes of inequality, discrimination and injustice in B.C. by shifting laws, policies, practices and cultures. We do this work through education, research, advocacy, inquiry and monitoring. Learn more at: bchumanrights.ca

About the Commissioner

B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, started her five-year term on Sept. 3, 2019. As an independent officer of the Legislature, Commissioner Govender is uniquely positioned to ensure human rights in B.C. are protected, respected and advanced on a systemic level. Her work through BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner centres listening deeply to British Columbians to inform educational materials, policy guidance, public inquiries, interventions, community-based research and more that protects marginalized communities, addresses discrimination and injustice and upholds human rights for all.

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