

# APPLYING AN ANTI-RACISM LENS TO OUR WORK IN GOVERNMENT

**CURRENT REALITY:** Racism, at the systemic, institutional and individual levels, exists in Canada. Because of our history of colonialism, racist ideas have been built into the laws, policies and practices that formed the very foundation of Canadian society and government. This has caused generations of unequal access and outcomes for First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities.



**ANTI-RACIST PRACTICE:** Anti-racist practice seeks to understand how past actions have created current realities, and aims to make fully informed, accountable decisions at individual, institutional and systemic levels that address root causes and harms done, while creating barrier-free opportunities for equitable outcomes.



**AN ANTI-RACISM LENS** seeks to facilitate anti-racist practice in federal government thinking and actions in the development of programs, policies, services, laws and international agreements. The AR Lens is intended to be both a *framework* for planning and a *process* for implementation, monitoring and evaluation with the ultimate aim of eliminating systemic barriers and generating systems change.

The goal of the **Anti-Racism Lens** is to be a wraparound analytical framework and institutional process designed to accomplish two goals:



Empower public servants to advance systems change, from an intersectional anti-racism and equity perspective.



Strengthen institutional capacity to remove systemic barriers, identify gaps and design effective policies, programs, services and legislation that benefit all people in Canada.

**Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat:**  
[www.canada.ca/anti-racism-secretariat](http://www.canada.ca/anti-racism-secretariat)  
[pch.sdc-arsec.pch@canada.ca](mailto:pch.sdc-arsec.pch@canada.ca)



**VISION:**

A

Canada where everyone benefits from equitable access to and participation in the economic, cultural, social and political spheres.

**The Anti-Racism Lens aims to put in place a suite of instruments that:**

**Enable** public servants to grasp the historical roots and contemporary impacts of systemic racism.

**Prompt** them to almost instinctively incorporate this awareness into all facets of their work with the aim of generating system changes outcomes.

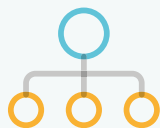
**Build** a foundation for a wraparound organizational infrastructure that guides entire federal institutions throughout the entire AR cycle.

**Generate** sustainability by facilitating an organization's ongoing and systematic use of AR in ways that can be adapted to their evolving needs and structure.

An Anti-Racism Lens would generate long-term changes across federal government systems. This would require building system capacity, competency and infrastructure to embed AR sustainably within government organizations.



1. A **policy statement** that would establish a clear mandate for AR implementation, senior level commitment to its usage, and an accountability framework.
2. AR **advisory committee** of external subject matter experts with lived experience to be consulted about AR considerations and their application.
3. An **internal mapping** exercise that could identify existing organizational capacity and resources to inform usage of the tool.
4. Application of the AR Grid and Planning **Instruments** with the goal of designing new or reviewing existing policies, programs, services and legislation.
5. Ongoing **monitoring** of progress that can highlight successes, best practices, and to identify gaps and new priorities.
6. Curricula, **training**, seminars and educational resources that can engender competency, access expertise, build capacity, and drive buy-in, through the organization.
7. Embedding **AR officers** in organizations, usually in anti-racism units or taskforces, that could be tasked with overseeing and assisting with the application and monitoring of AR usage, in conjunction with the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat and central agencies.



By using AR tools at their disposal, public servants could become at the heart of the systems change process, laying the groundwork and advancing innovative efforts to rid the Government of systemic barriers that have undermined the life chances of communities directly affected by racism.