

Annual progress report 2024: Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan

Learn about our progress in implementing our anti-racism strategic plan, and how we're building a stronger and more inclusive Ontario.

Message from the Minister

As Ontario's Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, it gives me great pride to lead the government's anti-racism and economic inclusion efforts as we work to build stronger, more inclusive communities. Following the launch of *Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario: Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan* in August 2023, our government has continued to take proactive measures to tackle racism and hate as we work to build stronger, safer and more vibrant communities.

The diverse backgrounds, faiths and cultures that define our communities are precisely what makes Ontario the best place to live, work and play. Our differences remain a source of great strength for our province. Over the last year, we have seen meaningful strides made in our efforts to build a province where everyone has the chance to contribute and participate in Ontario's prosperity, along with the tools and opportunities needed to build a better life for themselves, their families and their communities.

For all the progress that has been made, there are still those who continue to experience racism and hate because of who they are, where they are from, how they worship, or who they love. These acts are completely unacceptable and will never have a place in Ontario. This progress report stands as a symbol of our ongoing efforts to tackle these challenges. Through our cross-government efforts and engagement with community partners, sector leaders, and researchers, we are making significant investments to empower communities, overcome barriers and address areas of disproportionality through evidence-based policy and program decision-making.

The work does not stop here. Whether it is through investments made by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism or by partner ministries, these actions continue to have real impacts, helping unlock opportunities, provide Ontario's youth with the education and skills needed to fill the jobs of tomorrow, foster more inclusive communities, and enhance the quality of life for all who call Ontario home.

This progress report builds upon the strides we have made; while setting a course for future action as we work to build a better, brighter and stronger Ontario for all.

The Honourable Michael Ford
Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

Message from the Deputy Minister

The Anti-Racism Directorate (ARD) leads government policy and programs to dismantle systemic racism and advance racial equity. Through their guidance, Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-stronger-and-more-inclusive-ontario-ontarios-anti-racism-strategic-plan>) lays a clear path toward a better Ontario for all.

As a Black woman and a leader in the Ontario Public Service, I know first-hand how critical it is to have many tools in our toolbox to tackle systemic racism and hate.

This report highlights the work of incredible people and a breadth of initiatives across 14 ministries that focus on our key areas for action: economic empowerment; supporting children and youth; population-specific anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives; and policy and accountability. It demonstrates our ongoing efforts to remove systemic racial barriers impacting Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, as well as enhanced initiatives to combat hate — such as our ministry's additional investment to expand the Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant program. These milestones show that by working together across government, with community partners, sector leaders and others, we can drive meaningful change.

Although there is still more to be done, I'm encouraged by the progress we've made so far. We all have a responsibility to combat racism and through our joint actions, we've seen that collaboration and engagement are necessary to build a stronger, more equitable society.

I thank the ARD for their leadership and our partners across government and Ontario for their ongoing commitment to fight systemic racism. Together, we can continue this great work as we expand on the Strategy and its initiatives over the years to come.

Nosa Ero-Brown
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

Overview

This report reflects on progress Ontario has made towards delivering on the commitments outlined in *Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario: Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan* (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-stronger-and-more-inclusive-ontario-ontarios-anti-racism-strategic-plan>) which was released in August 2023.

The strategy represents our new approach and reflects the efforts being made to ensure every Ontarian can participate in, contribute to and benefit from social progress and economic growth. The report illustrates the cross-government approach we are taking, along with community partners, sector leaders and others, to concretely address racism and hate, eliminate barriers and advance racial equity.

Areas for action

The initiatives reported on in the following pages are aligned under the four areas for action presented in the strategy:

- economic empowerment
- supporting children and youth
- population-specific anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives
- policy and accountability

Economic empowerment

The province aims to remove barriers to enhance employment, business and entrepreneurship opportunities for Indigenous, Black and other racialized Ontarians.

Connecting newcomers and Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities to education, skills development and employment opportunities

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

School boards are encouraged to promote apprenticeships and support students that have typically been underrepresented in the trades such as Indigenous, Black and other racialized individuals. In 2022, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development launched a pilot of the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program in two First Nations schools. The pilot was expanded for the 2023–2024 school year to include eight First Nations schools.

Enhancing the Skills Development Fund to address challenges to hiring, training or retraining workers

The Skills Development Fund Training Stream offers funding to organizations for innovative projects that address challenges to hiring, training, or retaining workers, including apprentices, to drive Ontario's economic growth. This includes projects helping racialized persons and Indigenous peoples facing barriers to employment.

Last year, \$246.6 million was invested in 170 projects to help over 69,000 participants build the skills they need to find jobs. Of those 170 projects, 103 projects specified Indigenous Peoples as one of their priority participant groups.

Literacy and Basic Skills

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program gives adults in Ontario the opportunity to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills. The program helps those who have goals to successfully transition to employment, postsecondary, apprenticeship, secondary school, and increased independence. The program focuses on helping adults who are immigrants or racialized, unemployed, receiving income support, with disabilities, and who have had contact with the justice system. In the 2023–2024 fiscal year, there were 5,044 new LBS learners who self-identified as racialized (up from 3,952 in the previous fiscal year), and 1,309 self-identified racialized learners reported being employed upon exiting the program (up from 1,034 in 2022–2023). As well, pilot projects funded through the federal Skills for Success program (for fiscal years 2022–2023 and 2023–2024) enhanced LBS programming for Indigenous learners.

Investing in Women's Futures Program

The Investing in Women's Futures Program helps women, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized women, across Ontario secure employment, start their own businesses or pursue further training or education.

The addition of 11 new sites since 2022–2023 brings the number of service delivery locations across the province to 34. This provides more women with greater access to the program and helps to reduce barriers, ensuring more women and gender diverse individuals have access to services to enhance their wellness and gain financial independence. These services include gender-based violence supports, life skills and employment training opportunities.

Indigenous Transportation Initiatives Fund

Launched in 2021, the Indigenous Transportation Initiatives Fund (ITIF) is open to Indigenous communities and organizations to apply for funding for local transportation-related projects. Safe and reliable transportation is essential to connecting First Nation communities with real opportunities that will improve health and economic wellness.

In 2023–2024, almost \$584,000 was awarded through ITIF to 9 projects led by Indigenous communities and organizations in Ontario. In 2024–2025, almost \$675,000 was awarded to 9 new projects. Since its launch, ITIF has helped fund:

- the operation of public transit services
- road and trail upgrades
- driver's licence support
- technical training initiatives
- the installation of safety measures
- other community priorities

Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation's People and Talent Program

The People and Talent Program's Indigenous Workforce Development stream was established to strengthen and develop Northern Ontario's Indigenous workforce through business partnerships that offer internships to Indigenous persons. In 2023–2024, \$3.25 million was invested to support 81 Indigenous Internships. So far in 2024–2025, more than \$868,000 in funding has been approved to support 23 Indigenous Internships.

Supporting newcomers to Ontario

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development is investing \$100 million in fiscal year 2024–2025 in settlement services that help over 150,000 newcomers annually. These services help newcomers connect and contribute to their communities through:

- orientation and information services
- needs assessment and referrals
- language training
- employment-related services

Newcomer settlement services

Newcomer settlement services provide multilingual and culturally appropriate services that include:

- individualized needs assessments
- information and assistance to access a variety of community and employment services
- supports to effectively enter the labour market

In 2023–2024, over 120,000 newcomers and refugees received settlement supports and assistance to access:

- housing
- health care
- education
- training and employment services and resources

Ontario Bridge Training Program

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development funds 45 programs across Ontario to help highly skilled international immigrants overcome international qualification recognition barriers to find jobs where they can work to the full extent of their international education and experience.

In 2023–2024, 3,200 Ontarians received occupation-specific training, support for licensing requirements, work placements and mentoring. Approximately 23% (728) self-identified as belonging to a racialized group.

Adult Language Training

The Adult Language Training Program helps newcomers improve their English or French language skills to better communicate in their everyday life, find a job or go to school. The program provides:

- language proficiency assessments
- English and French as a Second Language from beginner to advanced levels
- workplace and occupation-specific language and communication skills programming in sectors, such as:
 - personal support work
 - skilled trades
 - customer service
 - manufacturing

In 2023–2024, over 60,000 newcomers participated in language training programs.

Employment Services Transformation

The Employment Services Transformation is focused on delivering the highest quality employment and training services for the people of Ontario, including job seekers from newcomer, Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development measures outcomes, including key performance indicators (KPIs) for Black and other racialized communities and collects data using the Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systematic Racism, known as Ontario's Anti-Racism Data Standards.

Through this integrated system, with social assistance employment programs, Ontario Works - Employment Assistance and Ontario Disability Support Program - Employment Supports, into Employment Ontario, the ministry is looking to improve employment services so that more people who are unemployed or on social assistance can find long-term, meaningful work.

In some cases, the transformation is exceeding the ministry's commitment to serve target groups. Compared to Statistics Canada population statistics, a larger portion of persons with disabilities, youth with higher needs, Francophones and Indigenous communities are being served.

Supporting Indigenous businesses, Black and other racialized businesses and entrepreneurs

Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Entrepreneurs (RAISE) Grant Program

The RAISE Grant Program (<https://www.app.grants.gov.on.ca/raise/#/main>) supports Indigenous, Black and other racialized entrepreneurs by providing access to:

- business development training
- culturally responsive and tailored business coaching
- networking opportunities
- a one-time grant of \$10,000

In 2023–2024, the program supported nearly 500 entrepreneurs in scaling their business through increasing customer reach, earnings and operational efficiency. By providing individualized services to participants throughout the program, the 2023–2024 round achieved a 95% completion rate. In 2024–2025, over 400 entrepreneurs are expected to be supported through the program.

Supporting Indigenous Economic Development

In June 2024, the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs became the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation to signal Ontario's commitment to economic reconciliation.

Capacity Funding and Training Supports for Indigenous Economic Development Officers through Ontario First Nations Economic Developers Association

Ontario is investing \$25 million from 2022–2025 to support First Nation communities' economic development needs. This includes \$6.8 million over 3 years to enhance training for Economic Development Officers and Indigenous businesses. As of February 2024, over 90 First Nation Economic Development departments and tribal councils have been successfully supported with critical capacity funding and equipment through the Ontario First Nations Economic Developers Association.

Loans and Grants to Indigenous businesses through Indigenous Financial Institutions

From 2022–2025, Ontario is providing \$10 million to increase access to low-interest loans and grants of up to \$50,000 for Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs in sectors such as:

- construction
- manufacturing
- health and social services
- tourism

E-Commerce Grants through Indigenous Financial Institutions to support digitization

From 2022–2025, Ontario is providing \$2.5 million over 3 years to increase digitization and support e-commerce development for small to medium size Indigenous businesses, including the growth of start-ups and early-stage online businesses. Now in its third year, demand for continued e-commerce grants is high among many Indigenous Financial Institutions.

Creating public- and private-sector partnerships to support communities and grow Ontario's economy

Small Business Enterprise Centres

Ontario's 47 Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECs) provide entrepreneurs and small businesses, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized entrepreneurs, with access to information and expertise to help them start, grow or purchase a business.

In 2023–2024, Ontario SBECs supported over 37,000 entrepreneurs with consultations. In addition, with the help of Starter Company Plus (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/starter-company-plus>) and Summer Company (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/start-summer-company-students>), Ontario SBECs created 1,623 jobs and helped 1,437 participants to start, grow or purchase a business. On top of ongoing funding for the 47 SBECs, Ontario is investing an additional \$6.8 million over the next 2 years to enhance the Starter Company Plus program and support the Summer Company program.

Supporting children and youth

The province is taking actions to ensure Indigenous, Black and other racialized children and youth have equal opportunity to succeed and achieve their full potential.

Improving child welfare, education and justice systems to better support children and youth

Indigenous Student Success Fund

Indigenous students are most successful when they have culturally appropriate supports and services. The Indigenous Student Success Fund provides \$18.2 million in funding annually to develop and deliver programs in 24 colleges and 21 universities. These supports and services are provided to Indigenous learners in a culturally appropriate manner, including:

- recruitment
- Elders-in-Residence
- Indigenous Student Centres
- partnerships and community engagements
- academic enrichment

Children at Risk of Exploitation Units

Children at Risk of Exploitation (CARE) Units are specialized intervention teams of police officers and child protection workers. They identify and locate children and youth ages 12–17, including from Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, who are being or at high risk of being sexually exploited and trafficked to intervene earlier and provide support and resources.

CARE Units were implemented in Toronto and Durham in 2021. In 2024, a third CARE Unit will be implemented in the Kenora area in collaboration with Indigenous representatives and community-based organizations, children's aid societies and police services to develop a model that reflects the unique needs of the region.

Youth Opportunities Fund

Through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Youth Opportunities Fund provides grants and capacity building supports to family and youth-led grassroots groups and system partners serving young people (12–29) to improve economic outcomes and social well-being.

In 2023–2024, \$14.2 million in grants were awarded to 39 youth-focused grassroots projects across the province. These grants support community organizations to overcome barriers and create better social and economic outcomes for populations including Indigenous, Black and other racialized children, youth and families.

De-streaming

In July 2020, as part of its efforts to ensure all students can reach their full potential, the government announced the de-streaming of Grade 9 students into applied and academic courses. As of September 2022, all Grade 9 subjects are offered in one stream.

In 2023–2024, the Ministry of Education invested more than \$100 million in staffing to hire over 660 teachers to support de-streaming and the transition to high school. De-streaming Grade 9 ensures First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black and other racialized students, as well as students from low-income households and/or who have disabilities and special education needs have the opportunity to succeed and are no longer limited by applied courses.

Youth Justice Services Redesign for Black and Indigenous Youth

The Youth Justice Services Redesign for Black and Indigenous Youth supports programs that help prevent and reduce the instances of Black and Indigenous youth being involved in the youth justice system. In response to calls from Black and Indigenous communities to enhance culturally relevant programs, a Call for Proposals for new programming was launched in January 2024, and implementation of the new programs is targeted for late Summer 2024. The new programs will help youth, their families, and communities while revitalizing youth's sense of purpose, self-esteem and value.

Targeted education supports for Indigenous, Black and other racialized students

Ontario funds a variety of programs to enhance educational opportunities for students, including for Indigenous, Black and other racialized students.

Expansion of Dual Credit Programs

This expansion provides additional opportunities for those who face challenges in completing the requirements for graduation or who left school before graduating. In 2023–2024, approximately 811 additional students facing challenges were approved to take approximately 866 Dual Credits in 50 programs, and approximately 172 additional Indigenous students were approved to take approximately 200 Dual Credits in 13 programs.

Licences and Supports for Reading Programs and Interventions

Indigenous, Black and other racialized students are often overrepresented in special education programs. These licenses and supports provide students access to systematic, evidence-based reading programs or interventions for struggling readers. In the 2023–2024 school year, at least 109,000 students benefited from evidence-based reading programs across the province.

Early Intervention in Math for Students with Special Education Needs

Indigenous, Black and other racialized students are often overrepresented in special education programs. The Dedicated Continuing Education Fund for this initiative continues to prepare students with special education needs for a Grade 9-destreamed math environment. Data from 2022–2023 show that, on average, 22% fewer students with special education needs required a modification to the math curriculum and 26% more students with special education needs met the grade level.

Graduation Coach Program for Black Students

Black students are being supported through this program to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. In 2023–2024, an additional five coaches were added to the program compared to 2022–2023, bringing the total to 41, and the number of school boards involved increased from 22 to 26. In addition to providing direct supports to students, coaches advise leaders at both the school and school board level to help affect system changes so that Black students feel welcome, included and have a better school experience.

Indigenous Graduation Coach Program

This program supports the well-being and achievement of Indigenous students in obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The program also provides supports to First Nations students as they transition from federally funded/First Nations-operated schools to provincially funded secondary schools as well as into post-secondary education, training or labour market opportunities. In 2023–2024, a total of 38 coaches were funded in 30 school boards.

Elimination of discretionary suspensions for JK–Grade 3 students

In the past, discretionary suspensions had disproportionately impacted Indigenous, Black and other racialized students, and students with special education needs. By eliminating discretionary suspensions for students in JK–Grade 3, opportunities to develop and practice important social and emotional skills and develop positive views about learning, school, teachers and their community are increased.

Strengthening racial equity in education

Board Action Plans (BAP) on Indigenous Education

The BAP is developed annually by district school boards in collaboration with the boards' Indigenous Education Council. The BAP identifies and monitors targeted programs and initiatives supporting Indigenous Education within their board. Boards receive funding to support implementation of their Board Action Plans through the Board Action Plan Component of the Core Education Funding.

In 2023–2024, the Ministry of Education is investing more than \$118 million to school boards to fund the implementation of programs and initiatives that support the academic success and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and build the knowledge of all students and educators on First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, cultures, perspectives and contributions.

Intensive Human Rights Program for School Board Leaders

Virtual professional learning opportunities for trustees, superintendents and Directors of Education were offered by the Ministry of Education. These sessions provided foundational understanding of disability rights in public education in Spring 2023, and hate activity in schools in Fall 2023, by engaging and consulting with community groups representing Black, Indigenous, Jewish, Muslim, Asian, South Asian, disability, and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, plus (2SLGBTQIA+) communities.

Removing barriers and improving access to culturally relevant programs in early learning and child care, education, child development, health, sports and recreation

Black Youth Action Plan

The Black Youth Action Plan (BYAP) (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/black-youth-action-plan>) was created to help Black children, youth and families across Ontario overcome barriers and address disparities. The BYAP culturally adapted youth programs continue to be successfully implemented across Ontario, providing Black children, youth and their families with culturally relevant prevention and early intervention supports to improve well-being, overcome barriers, and increase their chances of success.

In 2020, the BYAP Economic Empowerment Program was launched as a suite of initiatives to help Black youth acquire in-demand skills to launch their careers and access employment opportunities. In 2023–2024, over 50 Economic Empowerment Programs were funded, serving over 17,000 participants. In 2024–2025, Ontario is investing an additional \$30.5 million in the BYAP Economic Empowerment Program.

Community Indigenous Recreation Activator Program

The Community Indigenous Recreation Activator Program supports Indigenous children, youth, adults and seniors to participate in community-driven sport, recreation and physical activity programming to:

- Improve their physical and mental health and well-being
- build self-esteem and resilience
- increase engagement and connection with their community and partners

In 2022–2023, over 10,590 Indigenous children, youth, adults and seniors participated in 354 program-supported activities and events across the province.

Inclusive Grassroots Recreation

In 2023–2024, the Inclusive Grassroots Recreation initiative provided accessible, affordable and inclusive sport and recreation programming for an estimated 25,000 children and youth, creating more opportunities for underrepresented groups, especially children and youth from Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, to benefit from the positive effects of sport and recreation.

Sport Pathway for Ontario Native Wellness

The Sport Pathway for Ontario Native Wellness initiative supports an integrated network of opportunities for Indigenous peoples of all ages and abilities to participate in sport at recreational levels and advance to their desired level of competition. In 2023–2024, an estimated 5,697 Indigenous persons, including 3,690 youth, had the opportunity to participate in 50 programs, activities and events, including physical literacy and introductory sports programs, youth multi-sport camps, athlete and coach development workshops, regional and provincial sports tournaments and family wellness programs.

Youth Cultural Camps

The Youth Cultural Camps (YCC) program is delivered in partnership with up to 10 Indigenous organizations to support programming opportunities that help Indigenous youth to expand their understanding of traditional knowledge and languages and develop leadership skills through experiential and land-based activities.

In 2022–2023, over 7,900 youth and their families participated in more than 360 YCC-supported activities across the province, including:

- language workshops
- traditional drumming
- gardening and harvesting
- hunting and trapping

Community partnerships to combat racism, hate and discrimination

The Ministry of Education is working with various community partners to enhance and provide culturally relevant and responsive support, services and resources to students and educators to combat racism, hate and discrimination.

EDGE tutoring program

Parents of Black Children provided tutoring services for Black students via its EDGE Tutoring Program. Through this funding, 90 kindergarten to Grade 12 students received culturally responsive tutoring twice weekly in French, math and English.

Pinball Clemons Foundation

The Pinball Clemons Foundation partnered in collaboration with the One Voice One Team Youth Leadership Organization to provide mentorship and in-school and after-school programming. This initiative supported a total of 265 students.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre

To combat antisemitism, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center equipped educators in elementary schools with resources that share stories of Holocaust survivors. The organization noted that participants had reported an increase in educational engagement and a strong commitment to learning and understanding antisemitism.

Focus on Youth

Focus on Youth, a program funded to provide employment, training, mentorship, and wrap-around supports, is a collaborative effort designed to assist secondary school students who face multiple barriers to success, including systemic discrimination/bias.

In the 2022–23 program year, approximately 2,200 students were hired, and more than 79,500 children and youth participated in programming.

Toronto District School Board

Toronto District School Board (TDSB) addresses incidents of school violence by supporting inclusion and engagement in schools. TDSB worked with community partners to expand learning and recreational program offerings. Community partners delivered cross-curricular programming that included learning in literacy, numeracy, and the arts, as well as initiatives intended to support healthy active living, fitness, well-being, team building, leadership, and conflict resolution. More than 4,600 students were engaged in programming, and 15 agencies were involved in the program implementation and delivery.

Student mental health funding for First Nation, Métis and Inuit, racialized and marginalized students

In 2023–2024, programming funding was distributed to various organizations to support underserved communities with culturally relevant and responsive mental health and addiction support and services. The Ministry of Education provided \$3.75 million in 2023–2024 to First Nations Political Territorial Organizations, urban Indigenous organizations, and targeted community organizations to provide culturally relevant and responsive mental health, addictions and well-being supports and services for Indigenous, racialized and marginalized students.

Indigenous Youth Entrepreneurship Program

With the support of the Martin Family Initiative, school boards and schools identify and liaise with local business leaders to mentor Indigenous students. For the 2023–2024 school year, 80% of students have completed the program requirements and reported more awareness about how to start a business. As a result of their participation, Indigenous students are supported to succeed in their education or training, entrepreneurial ventures, the workplace and daily life.

Population-specific anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives

The province continues to address the adverse impact of different forms of racism and hate, including but not limited to anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Creating and supporting targeted strategies, initiatives and resources that promote anti-racism and address hate-driven behaviours

Anti-Black Racism Strategy

The Anti-Black Racism Strategy (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-black-racism-strategy>) was launched with a vision to eliminate disparities in outcomes for Black Ontarians in the child welfare, education and justice sectors. The strategy targets systemic racism in policies, decisions and programs, and helps promote long-term systemic change. See Appendix for a special focus on the progress of the Anti-Black Racism Strategy.

Makwa Patrol

The Kenora Makwa Patrol is a community-driven, culturally responsive grassroots initiative that is committed to the safety of Indigenous Peoples and others in the City of Kenora, connecting them to services that support their well-being. In 2023–2024, the Makwa Patrol completed 3,025 wellness checks, provided 6,218 safe rides, and collected 18,064 needles.

Seniors Safety Line

The Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility has invested \$770,000 in 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 for the Seniors Safety Line (SSL), a province-wide 24 hour a day, 7 days a week, crisis and support line for seniors (or persons acting on their behalf), including Indigenous, Black and other racialized seniors, who are experiencing or at risk of abuse. In 2023–2024, almost 32,000 calls were answered.

Population-specific curriculum resources

The Ministry of Education also continues to work with communities to develop curriculum-related resources, for example, classroom resources, to promote diversity and better reflect the population of Canada.

Liberation75

Liberation75 was funded to provide Holocaust and antisemitism education resources for educators and support for students. Through this funding, 4,000 Grade 6 to 8 students attended live performances about the Holocaust and the dangers of antisemitism and hate, and 25,000 Grade 6 to 8 students live streamed into the live performances.

Supporting community- and sector-specific needs through strong proactive and reactive actions

Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant

The government is investing \$25.5 million over 2 years in the Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-anti-hate-security-and-prevention-grant>) program to help faith-based and cultural organizations enhance or implement measures to ensure community spaces remain safe and secure. Ontario invested an additional \$20.5 million in 2023–2024 to help address the rise of hate incidents against religious and minority groups, particularly amid a spike in antisemitism and Islamophobia. To date, 1,682 recipients have been funded. The grant will be open for applications in Fall 2024.

Hate Crimes and Extremism Investigative Team

The Hate Crime and Extremism Investigative Team (HCEIT) is a network of police services that provides specialized investigative support and conducts multi-jurisdictional strategic and tactical intelligence operations targeting individuals or organized groups to help reduce hate crime and keep Ontarians safe. In 2023–2024, the HCEIT added a Provincial Hate Crimes Coordinator and in 2024–2025, increased their membership from 18 to 21, which currently includes 19 municipal police services, the Parliamentary Protective Service and the Ontario Provincial Police.

First Nation Mobile Crisis Response Teams

The First Nation Mobile Crisis Response Team (FNMCR) Grant provides funding to First Nation police services to hire mental health and addiction workers to support their Mobile Crisis Response Teams. This funding allows police services to work with local mental health professionals when responding to mental health and addictions related calls. Between 2021–2024, Ontario allocated \$5.04 million over three years to First Nation police services through the FNMCR Grant.

Working with community partners to develop and enhance community-informed initiatives to eliminate all expressions of racism and hate

City of London Anti-Hate Response Project

In Spring 2023, the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism announced a \$500,000 investment over 2 years to support the City of London's development of an anti-hate campaign. Since the beginning of 2024–2025, the City of London has been engaging with over 80 community organizations to inform the development of an online portal for anti-hate resources and a local anti-hate public education and awareness campaign about the different forms of hate, ways for the public to report hate, supports for bystander intervention and the intersectional identities of those who experience hate.

Safer and Vital Communities Grant

Successful applicants to the Safer and Vital Communities Grant collaborate with local police services to implement projects that address regional issues, such as hate crimes. The Ontario government has invested more than \$1.4 million through the 2022–2024 cycle of the Safer and Vital Communities Grant, which supported 17 projects, five of which focused on combatting hate motivated crime online.

Seniors Active Living Centres Program

In 2023–2024, through its Seniors Active Living Centres Program, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility invested approximately \$14 million across 316 local community programs that support greater health and well-being for older adults, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities in Ontario. In 2024–2025, Ontario will increase its investment in the program to provide approximately \$15 million across the 316 programs.

Seniors Community Grant Program

Seniors Community Grants, ranging from \$1,000 up to \$25,000, help support community organizations in providing opportunities for greater social inclusion, volunteerism, and community engagement for older adults, including those from Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities. Through this program, in 2023–2024, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility invested approximately \$6 million across 283 local community projects aimed at supporting greater community engagement for older Ontarians.

Restorative Justice Programs

Restorative Justice Programs are focused on reducing the likelihood of Indigenous people's future involvement with the justice system by promoting healing, building resiliency and reconnecting Indigenous people with their cultural identity. The program increases access to pre- and post-charge diversion programs and alternative options informed by Indigenous worldviews, laws and dispute resolution processes.

Gladue Writer Program

The Gladue Writer Program is part of a \$13.8 million investment over four years by the Ministry of the Attorney General. The program provides Gladue Reports to sentencing judges with a holistic account of an Indigenous person's unique circumstances, which are required to be considered during sentencing to help address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system. The Ministry of the Attorney General continues supporting these programs by seeking additional funding opportunities to complement Ontario's funding.

Indigenous Cultural Safety Training

To address anti-Indigenous racism in the health care system, the Ministry of Health provides \$1 million in annual funding to the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council (IPHCC) to deliver an Indigenous Cultural Safety Training program. In November 2023, the

ministry announced an enhancement to the IPHCC's training program, with an additional \$1 million in 2023–2024 and 2024–2025.

In addition, through the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health offers thirteen online Indigenous Relationship and Cultural Awareness courses that provide knowledge about the history and culture of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous people and communities.

The Ontario government is investing multi-year funding to support several locally-designed and delivered Indigenous cultural safety training projects, including almost \$2.7 million in 2023–2024, \$5.6 million in 2024–2025, and \$5.5 million in 2025–2026. It is expected that over 27,000 individuals will be trained in the 3 years.

Indigenous relationship building

To address anti-Indigenous racism and hate, the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-citizenship-and-multiculturalism>) continues to build relationships with First Nation, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous partners and provided funding to 10 Indigenous organizations in 2023–2024 to support capacity building and engagement, as well as community-based Indigenous-led anti-racism and anti-hate projects.

Policy and accountability

The province continues to improve and expand anti-racism tools and strategies to enhance accountability, address systemic racism and advance racial equity.

Identifying and eliminating racial disparities

Strengthening standards and education for teachers

Anti-Black racism professional advisory for teachers

Professional advisories serve as guidelines for teachers looking to enhance their professional practice, promote ethical behaviour, and address emerging issues. The anti-Black racism professional advisory provides teachers with guidance on how to create more inclusive learning environments and address discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping.

Anti-Black Racism Additional Qualifications (AQs) training for teachers

Ontario teachers will be able to obtain culturally responsive and relevant pedagogical training on teaching students about Anti-Black racism through a three-part AQ. The latest data indicates that 112 teachers completed Part 1 of the AQ in 2022. No data is currently available for Part 2 and the Specialist. Additional data will soon be available and more educational providers will offer Part 2 and the Specialist Qualification of the Anti-Black Racism AQ.

Additional Qualifications (AQ) training for teachers related to issues faced by Jewish communities

The Ontario College of Teachers released guidelines on Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism in June 2024. Providers will use the guidelines to develop a three-part AQ that will provide Ontario teachers with culturally responsive and relevant pedagogical training on teaching students about the Holocaust and antisemitism.

Regulation 304, School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days

Through the mandatory Professional Activity (PA Days) for 2024–2025, the Ministry of Education has indicated that supporting students with special education needs, as well as anti-racism, anti-discrimination and inclusion of all students, should be integrated across all professional learning topics. PA Days can be a full day or a half day, and they generally take place within school hours and can include teacher directed time. In total, there are seven PA Days within a school year.

Professional misconduct

Ontario Regulation 437/97, Professional Misconduct, was amended in November 2020 to recognize hateful remarks and behaviour as professional misconduct within the teaching profession.

School board teacher hiring practices

Revocation of Ontario Regulation 274/12 and implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 165, School board teacher hiring practices to direct school boards to implement fair, consistent and transparent teacher hiring policies based on teachers' qualifications,

merit and the ability to meet the diverse needs of all students. School boards are expected to make hiring decisions in accordance with this PPM and in accordance with applicable laws, including the *Human Rights Code*, and with school board collective agreements.

High Priority Communities Strategy (HPC Strategy)

The HPC Strategy was developed to implement culturally responsive and community-led services and strategies to improve access to a variety of healthcare services.

With over 740,000 community engagement interactions, the HPC Strategy offered flexible funding tailored to meet the emerging and evolving needs of their communities. In addition, Indigenous lead agencies informed the Urban Indigenous Mental Health Model and supported over 400 individuals with mental health and addictions counselling services as part of the strategy.

The success of the strategy is attributed to placing communities at the centre of policy and program design, by enabling them to identify their priority needs and how to best address them. This resulted in 1,812 individuals successfully being attached to primary care, and over 21,563 individuals being connected to receive updated cancer screenings, and 9,892 individuals receiving mental health and addictions supports directly from lead agencies.

Development and promotion of anti-racism resources

The Anti-Racism Impact Assessment (ARIA) Framework has been updated into a streamlined and customizable three-step process and is utilized across the Government. The ARIA framework supports ministries in identifying, mitigating and monitoring the racial equity impacts of policies, programs, and service delivery.

Engaging with communities and increasing the public awareness of the government's anti-racism initiatives

Engagement with community partners

Ontario continues to actively engage diverse communities, including racialized communities, through the Advocate for Community Opportunities and the Premier's Council on Equality of Opportunity. These help identify on-the-ground community needs and inform the development of responsive policies and programs to address barriers and improve outcomes.

Continuing Ontario's race-based data collection processes and supporting accountability by assessing the progress of anti-racism efforts and the Anti-Racism Strategy

Implementing race-based data collection in the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* (ARA)-regulated areas and initiatives

The Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism oversees the implementation of the Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/data-standards-identification-and-monitoring-systemic-racism>). As of January 1, 2023, all nine regulated areas in the child welfare, education and justice sectors are collecting race-based data and are working toward compliance with the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17a15>) and the Data Standards. Collecting such data helps public sector organizations make better evidence-based policy and program decisions to improve outcomes for Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities.

Targets and indicators

Targets and indicators (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-3-year-anti-racism-strategic-plan-targets-and-indicators>) were established in 2019 to enable the province to track the progress of race-based data collection. The 9 regulated areas are required to report their annual compliance and response rates. Compliance rates refer to the percentage of programs, services and functions regulated under the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17a15>) that collect race-based data. Response rates refer to the percentage of responses from individuals who voluntarily provide their race-based personal information, or in the context of the Use of Force reports, the percentage of police officers reporting their perception of subjects' race.

Child welfare sector

Children's Aid Societies

In Ontario, under Policy Directive: CW003-21 (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/child-protection-service-directives-forms-and-guidelines/policy-directive-cw-003-21-collection-and-reporting-identity-based-data#:~:text=Guiding%20principles&text=Voluntary%20participation%20%26%20capacity%20to%20consent,reasonable%20grounds%20to%20believe%20ot>), all non-Indigenous children's aid societies (societies) are required to collect self-reported and voluntary identity-based data from the

children and youth they serve. This includes race-based data in alignment with Ontario's *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* and the Anti-Racism Data Standards.

The overall compliance rate for 2023–2024 is 100%. As of June 21, 2024, the response rate from all 37 non-Indigenous societies is 54.7%.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is updating the way it collects identity-based data so that it is collected, reported, and used across programs to promote equity. This is done to support the preparation of meeting reporting obligations under the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* and Anti-Racism Data Standards, improving data's uptake, accuracy and fostering trust in the collection process.

Education sector

For 2023–2024, there has been a 100% compliance rate within all 72 school boards engaged in race-based data collection in Ontario, with response rates varying across school boards from 7% to 83%. School boards collect data at different times and frequencies based on their locally established process.

The Ministry of Education continues to support school boards in building their capacity to collect, analyze, report on and use voluntary student demographic data, including race-based data. To ensure consistency in how school boards measure and report progress on student outcomes, the Ministry set out Provincial Priorities for student achievement (O. Reg. 224/23) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/230224>) and released a Student Achievement Plan framework to guide school board improvement planning. School boards are expected to analyze voluntary race-based data concerning the standardized measures and create action plans to address identified disproportionalities.

Justice sector

Bail Process

Since July 1, 2021, on behalf of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG), Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) has been collecting race-based data from LAO Duty Counsel clients charged with an offence and are to appear in bail court. LAO has updated its lawyers' portal to collect data about case outcomes, such as bail court releases, to improve its ability to collect race-based data.

From July 2023 through June 2024, the compliance rate was 12%, indicating that LAO sought to collect data from 12% of Ontario's total bail population (Note: not all accused persons in bail are served/seen by LAO). Of this portion, 62% of respondents agreed to participate in LAO's data collection and have those data shared with MAG. Thus, under the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017*, approximately 7.4% (i.e., 62% of 12%) of Ontario's bail population agreed to share their LAO-collected data with MAG.

Special Investigations Unit

Since October 1, 2020, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has been collecting race-based data. On October 17, 2023, the SIU publicly released an analysis of the race-based data conducted by researchers at Wilfrid Laurier University between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021. The SIU is reviewing the recommendations for improving the quality and quantity of available data and, where feasible, will work towards their implementation.

As of March 30, 2024, the compliance rate is 100%, and the response rate is 18.5%.

Law Enforcement Complaints Agency (LECA — formerly the Office of the Independent Police Review Director)

As of April 1, 2020, LECA has been collecting race-based data to identify racial inequities, inform the development of policies and procedures, and ensure our investigations and decisions are bias-free. LECA has completed the analysis of three years' worth of data and is preparing to publish the data set and the analysis.

For 2023–2024, the overall compliance rate is 100%, and the response rate is 78%.

Use of Force, Policing

As of January 1, 2020, Use of Force Reports have included information about a police officer's perception of race when they have used force in the performance of their duties. The ministry has successfully begun reporting on the provincially mandated police Use of Force Reports in 2023. The compliance rate for the program currently is 100%.

Correctional Services

The Solicitor General (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-solicitor-general>) has collected race-based data since August 1, 2020. On May 30, 2024, The Ministry revised the consent script/form outlined in the Data Standards to enhance the quality of data used to identify and monitor potential racial disparities and to help close gaps, eliminate barriers and advance fair treatment of justice-involved individuals.

As of March 2024, the compliance rate for the program is 100%, and the response rate for the program is 66.8%.

Youth Justice

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' Youth Justice Division has been collecting identity-based data since March 2018. The Youth Justice Division continues to collaborate with ministry partners and gather feedback through engagements to inform report design and analysis. Preliminary baseline analysis is underway to assess data quality and completeness.

For 2023–2024, the overall compliance rate is 100%. As of March 12, 2024, the response rate of young persons providing race-based personal information is 71%.

Looking ahead

Ontario will continue to work across government and with community partners and organizations to address racism and hate in the province. The commitments of *Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario: Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan* (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-stronger-and-more-inclusive-ontario-ontarios-anti-racism-strategic-plan>) will not be accomplished in one year alone. These commitments will be an ongoing priority in the months and years to come.

The Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism will continue to support the implementation of race-based data collection across the justice, education and child welfare sectors and to provide annual reports to share information about the strategy's progress as we work to build an Ontario where all have the tools and opportunity to succeed and build a better future for themselves, their families and communities.

Appendix — Focus: Progress on Ontario's Anti-Black Racism Strategy

The Anti-Black Racism Strategy (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-black-racism-strategy>) was created in alignment with the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent. The Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism continues to make progress towards eliminating disparity for Black Ontarians in the child welfare, education, and justice sectors. Through this strategy, partner ministries have identified baseline data and publicly reported measures and targets, which has informed the development and implementation of policies, programs, and services to combat systemic racism and support outcomes for Ontario's Black population.

Child welfare sector

Ontario invests \$800,000 annually to support the One Vision One Voice (OVOV) Program, which works to address anti-Black racism and improve outcomes and access to culturally appropriate services to Black children, youth and families in the child welfare system. There have been several advancements made over the past year, including:

- Establishing a Youth Action Committee (YAC) to ensure that youth voices are incorporated into the development of policies, practices and initiatives meant to foster positive outcomes across the child welfare system.
- Facilitating an expanded PowerUp! Symposium, which brings together Black youth with lived experiences in the child welfare system to help support them in building connections and ensures they are heard and empowered.
- Developing *Kujali: Caring for Black Children — Training for Foster Caregivers*. The training is designed to empower foster parents with essential skills and knowledge to increase their capacity to care for the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of Black children and youth.

Black Youth Action Plan

This year, Ontario is investing \$30.5 million in the Black Youth Action Plan (BYAP) which is implemented by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

The BYAP strives to achieve better outcomes for Black children, youth and families in Ontario. It involves several prevention-focused initiatives specifically designed to support Black children, youth and families in target communities across the province.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services has continued to successfully support culturally adapted programs to support at-risk and high-risk Black youth:

- Stop Now and Plan (SNAP)
- Youth Mentorship Program (YMP)
- Youth Outreach Worker Program (YOWP)
- Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) (including an Economic Recovery and Resiliency Grant)

The culturally adapted youth programs under BYAP (for example, SNAP, YMP, YOWP and YOF) provide Black children, youth and their families with culturally relevant prevention and early intervention supports to improve well-being, overcome barriers, and increase their chances of success in education, employment and community inclusion.

Education sector (JK–Grade 12)

All school boards in Ontario are engaged in the collection, analysis and use of demographic data and are at different stages of development. School boards are leveraging this data to support the professional learning and development of staff to:

- target supports and programming for communities
- inform strategic plans
- inform community outreach practices

The government is collaborating directly with school boards to help improve education outcomes of Black students. Funding is provided to select school boards, including the TDSB and Peel District School Board, to build senior leader and educators capacity for culturally relevant teaching practices in classrooms by addressing systemic racism and discrimination in classrooms.

Justice sector

Justice divisions in government have initiated several culturally responsive initiatives to support Black justice-involved individuals and correctional staff.

- The Black Employment Support Program, launched at two Correctional Institutions, and one Youth Justice Facility, aims to assist Black justice-involved individuals with their successful reintegration into the community.
- The African Canadian Excellence Program provides educational resources to empower and support participants to navigate challenging situations and achieve success against systemic discrimination.
- The Afrocentric and Indigenous Library project is a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of the Solicitor General and a Black-led community group to circulate literature written by and about Black and Indigenous populations in correctional institutions.
- The Black Speaker Series provides Black justice-involved individuals with access to Black role models, business, and community leaders, and those with relatable lived experiences.

Looking ahead

It has been an impactful decade as Ontario presses on to make progress in its commitment to an Anti-Black Racism Strategy. Ontario carries on engaging with Black communities and Black-led organizations in multiple sectors. Through policy and program reforms, Ontario will continue to eliminate the disparities and disproportionalities that negatively affect Black individuals and communities. Together, we will help to create a more inclusive Ontario that is a better place to live for everyone.