

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Corporate Services Committee  
**Report From:** Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager  
**Meeting Date:** May 27, 2021  
**Report Code:** CR-21-034  
**Subject:** Anti-Racism Training Action Plan

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-034 respecting Anti-Racism Training Action Plan, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to arrange the training as outlined in the report.

### Highlights:

- The City of Owen Sound is committed to fostering a safe educational, working, and living environment, where all community members experience an authentic sense of inclusion and belonging.
- All staff and Council will complete anti-racism training
- Foundation for a corporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

### Strategic Plan Alignment:

Safe City – KR4 Create a comprehensive equity, diversity and inclusion strategy by December 2022.

### Background:

Racism is real. Histories of slavery, colonization and institutions of our past continue to shape the present and create a further gap between racialized and Indigenous people and others. We recognize that this is not acceptable.

Social movements calling for racial justice remind us that these calls are by no means new. They serve as further reminders to us that systemic racism is present in our day-to-day lives and that we must ensure that the institutions we all rely on for critical public services are free of systemic racism.

The City of Owen Sound has a role to play in eliminating systemic racism. We are responsible for ensuring all benefit equally from City policies, programs and services.

### **What is systemic racism?**

Systemic racism occurs when an institution or set of institutions working together creates or maintains racial inequity. This can be unintentional, and doesn't necessarily mean that people within an organization are racist. Systemic racism is often caused by hidden institutional biases in policies, practices and processes that privilege or disadvantage people based on race. It can be the result of doing things the way they have always been done, without considering how they impact particular groups differently.

The City of Owen Sound is committed to fostering a safe educational, working, and living environment, where all community members experience an authentic sense of inclusion and belonging. This Training Plan outlines some of the key initiatives that will be taken to confront individual biases, and increase awareness of systemic racism, by all City employees and Council.

### **Analysis:**

Staff researched a variety of anti-racism, diversity and inclusivity training opportunities suitable for Council, committees and staff, for consideration and noted many cost effective online opportunities which would be suitable under the present circumstances of COVID-19. The first training session will be the Call It Out through Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Call It Out is a thirty-minute online interactive course that offers a foundation for learning about race, racial discrimination and human rights protections under Ontario's Human Rights Code. The course is offered free of

charge through the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and is based on the Commission's "Policy on Preventing Racism and Racial Discrimination". The focus of the course is on practical examples and it encourages dialogue around exclusion, discrimination and harassment based on race. The course also offers a historical overview of racism and racial discrimination, explains what "race", "racism", and "racial discrimination" mean, and provides approaches to preventing and addressing racial discrimination.

After the baseline training, the City will continue to provide Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias training for the senior leadership and management teams. Training will highlight anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, anti-bias, anti-oppression, and discrimination against equity-seeking groups and communities, with hopeful plans to have a local lens on some perspectives via the Grey Roots Museums' local history and exhibits. The Ontario Human Rights Commission also provides in-person training sessions on the protected grounds, and this may be an option once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

### **Build a Foundation for an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

With staff completing the baseline training, it will provide a common understanding and terminology for staff to utilize while developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy for the City of Owen Sound. Providing a more rounded, more inclusive culture for employees is an essential first step in improving overall employee engagement, and aligning diversity, equity and inclusion the City's strategic plan.

### **Financial Implications:**

The current course offering from the Ontario Human Rights Commission is offered free of charge and will be a 30-minute commitment of time for each employee and member of Council.

Additional training session costs will be addressed in future budgets.

### **Communication Strategy:**

Training requirements will be communicated to all Council, and City employees and followed up on for completion by managers and supervisors.

**Consultation:**

Ontario Human Rights Commission

**Attachments:**

None.

**Recommended by:**

Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager

**Reviewed by:**

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

**Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager at [mclancy@owensound.ca](mailto:mclancy@owensound.ca).