



Community Development Council Durham Standing Together Against Anti-Black Racism and Committing To Social Change

As I watched the news around the tragic and senseless losses of Black lives, such as **George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Regis Korchinski-Paquet**, and countless other victims in the U.S., in Canada, and all over the world, my reaction was a mixture of anger, deep-seated grief, and fatigue. From the confines of our homes and offices and in the silence of our minds, we are witnessing the impact of systemic racism that has oppressed Black, Racialized, and Indigenous peoples, and spans across centuries – all this in the midst of a global pandemic that disproportionately impacts Black and marginalized lives.

Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) **reaffirms our commitment** to stand together in allyship against racism in all its forms and to use this moment as a catalyst for change.

What do we mean when we speak of systemic racism?

While we may have seen or renounced the more visible forms of racial discrimination, there are underlying and pervasive social and structural systems that impact how we think and act. It plays out in our communities, our conscious and unconscious biases, our decision-making, and our cultural norms. Systemic discrimination and oppression exists in many forms be it: anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-LGBTQ+ and too many more to name, and flourishes in environments that are resistant to change.

The urgent call for systemic and social change is sweeping across the global landscape of humanity.

What can we do to stand against systemic racism?

The first step in this work requires introspection - as individuals, as a community, and as Canadians. Every day, each and every one of us can stand up against racial prejudice, discrimination and intolerant attitudes. Some examples are:

- We can recognize that this is a [local](#) issue as well as a [global](#) one
- We can be aware of our thoughts, words, actions and [inaction](#) that contribute towards racism
- We can commit to [difficult conversations](#) about racial inequities
- We can [educate](#) ourselves and know our history
- We can support local Black [businesses](#)
- We can create space for our Black friends, neighbours, and co-workers to take [care](#) of themselves
- We can [donate](#) funds to support Black causes
- We can all be [human rights](#) champions

There are [many ways](#) that we can advocate with the Black community.

This work is hard, and we must **continually and actively recommit ourselves to ending systemic racism** by making inclusion a priority in every aspect of our work.

As the agency lead of the Welcome Centre Immigrant Services – Ajax, and through collaborations with the Congress of Black Women Ajax, Pickering and Whitby chapters an annual Black History Month event is hosted to educate and foster a better understanding of the black community, and to shine a positive spotlight on prolific black leaders in Canada. We are also committed to elevating the many Black voices and groups doing amazing work in the Durham region by sharing resources and providing support.

CDCD works to enhance the quality of life for all individuals, families, and communities in Durham Region for the last 50 years. As agents of change, we turn to our colleagues, service-users, partners, community leaders and policy-makers to listen, authentically engage and bring together our collective voice and power. Together let's create a kinder and better world that is safe for ourselves, our children, partners and loved ones.

CDCD stands in solidarity with black residents and allies in Durham and beyond.

#BlackLivesMatter

We would like to thank our Black activists and allies in developing the resources shared in the list above.

Hermia Corbette

Executive Director

Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)