

CONFRONTING ANTI-BLACK RACISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2024 – 2026 Proposed Work Plan

Meeting 2
Date: Friday, February 9, 2024

Overview

Members of the 2024-2026 City of Toronto Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee (CABRAC) will use a work plan to guide and inform their work. The work plan will serve as a benchmark to evaluate the outcomes of their advice and will inform the development of Committee agendas during their term-of-service.

Informed by the CABRAC’s 7-mandate areas, this document provides an overview of themes and issues for Committee action. The document was shaped by member feedback on issues of concern, and strategic topics and opportunities that City Council will be considering over the coming years. The work plan provides a brief summary of key issues across each mandate area and outlines the proposed outcomes and impacts that CABRAC members would like to advance through their advice to City Council, which will inform their meeting agendas and recommendations. This is followed by a section which identifies potential areas of Committee influence to inform and shape existing and forthcoming municipal, provincial and federal strategies, action plans, and initiatives, led by City divisions, agencies, commissions and government departments and ministries.

CABRAC WORK PLAN

Mandate Areas	Housing	Employment & Entrepreneurship	Child Welfare	Health	Policing	Education
Issues	Housing is a foundational pillar for Black wellbeing and can generate conditions of prosperity or disparity for Black residents. For that reason, it is a primary concern of the Committee to bring an anti-Black racism lens to this issue. Black populations in Toronto are overrepresented among the houseless population at 30 percent (2021 Street Needs Assessment) and have a greater likelihood of experiencing eviction and discrimination in the housing system. Primary	Black Canadians are the most overqualified racialized group when it comes to employment, while also being over-represented in precarious, temporary and low-paying jobs; and underrepresented in high-paying managerial positions. Referred to as a colour-coded labour market , this situation reflects the persistent discrimination in the Canadian Labour Market. This challenge also impacts new entrants in the Labour Market, such as Black youth, who experience a higher	Black children are nearly five times more likely to be placed in foster care than other Canadian children. In Toronto, 41 percent of the children in foster care are Black. Statistics show that Black families are 2.2 times as likely to be investigated, 2.5 times as likely to have claims of poor child welfare substantiated, 1.7 times as likely to be transferred to ongoing services, and 2.5 times as likely to be placed in care while an	There are significant health disparities experienced across the Black community, irrespective of various socio-economic factors and disparities that persist. However, populations such as seniors, queer and trans youth, people living with a physical disability or on a low-income, and newcomers experience distinct barriers to access healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated this in the disproportionate and more severe number of	Black residents are overrepresented in Canada’s criminal justice system as victims and survivors, and individuals who are accused or convicted of crime. There is limited Toronto-specific data, although the Toronto Police Services have begun publicly releasing disaggregated race-based data reporting since 2023. Canada-wide stats reveal that 6% of Black people 15 years and older reported experiencing discrimination, compared	The underachievement of Black students in Ontario (and Toronto’s) education system is well documented. A recent Ontario Human Rights Commission report recognized the need to recognize and address the rampant systemic anti-Black racism that underpins the student experience in the province, and identifies the burden that Black teachers, administrative staff, parents and students face. Key themes of concern, include the need for and importance of “accountability measures

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areas of concern include: i) the physical conditions of rental housing (lack of thermal comfort, pests, dampness and mold, hazardous building and furniture materials, second-hand smoke, and risk factors for injury), which can cause health issues ranging from allergies and asthma to poorer mental health; ii) housing affordability, including rental and mortgage payments, which is directly linked to poorer outcomes such as worse self-rated health, hypertension, arthritis, and mental health, increased likelihood of food insecurity, poorer access to dental care and/or prescriptions; iv) residential stability, which reflects one's capacity to remain in their home, and considers the spectrum of temporary or insecure housing, including forced displacement from homes and communities; v) neighbourhood conditions, including the stability and access to adequate cultural supports and social networks nearby; and vi) the provision of targeted, relevant, culturally-informed programs, services and shelter spaces to ensure effective up-stream responses to prevent, limit	unemployment rate, lower employment rates and overall earnings when compared to other Canadian youth. Their unemployment rate rose by 4.4 percentage points from 17.5 percent from December 2022 to 2023. Similarly, Black residents may work in professions that compound mental stress or health risk. 1/3 of Black women work in the health or social assistance sector, compared to 22 per cent of nonvisible minorities, which may increase their risk of communicable disease. The non-profit sector also has a larger percentage of Black workers (8%) than either the public (5%) or private sectors (4%), where there is a greater likelihood of job security, and benefits. Research also shows that disparities among Black populations from different origin countries when considering education and employment. Although Black Canadians were just as likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher (compared to the non-Black country average), 42.2 percent of African-born populations have secured a	investigation is taking place. Reports by the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and other advocacy groups have highlighted that anti-Black racism is directly impacting how Black families and children experience the child welfare system. Cultural differences such as non-traditional family structures, or families living on a lower income may raise concerns because they aren't conditions expected by many of the aid workers. Schools and the police (or the justice system) are the most common sources that refer families for child welfare intervention, demonstrating the need for increased institutional awareness and anti-Black racism training to shift behaviour change and increase understanding.	cases reported in Black communities. This disparity existed prior to the pandemic, with Black men being five times more likely to die from HIV/AIDS than the white population. Similarly, Black women are 22 times as likely to experience death at the hands of HIV/AIDS as compared to their white counterparts. Additionally, there is a 10 to 70 per cent increased death rate for Black populations suffering from other illnesses, when compared to the white populations. Furthermore, Statistics Canada found that Black communities are more likely to die from diabetes, hypertension, stroke, kidney disease, endocrine disorders and prostate, stomach and uterine cancers, compared to their white counterparts. These inequities are linked to systemic discrimination and anti-Black racism in the health care system, challenges of mistrust of the Western health care system within Black communities; and disparate access to health care services in communities with the	to 16 percent of the non-Indigenous, non-racialized populations over the last 5 years. In 2022, police also reported an increase in race or ethnicity-based hate crimes. Overall, they reported that rates increased by 12 percent, with anti-Black racism increasing by more than double that figure, at 28 percent. Black residents were also twice as likely to be accused of crime and comprised 27 percent of homicide victims in 2020 and 2022. These figures are three times higher than their representation (of 4%) in the Canadian population. Black male homicide victims also accounted for 15 percent of all male victims, and Black female homicide victims accounted for percent of all female victims. Culturally appropriate legal advice and system navigation support is also needed for Black populations experiencing challenges with the justice system, including underhoused and asylum seeker populations, continental African	beyond mere data collection, extending to transparent reporting and swift action in addressing violence and discrimination" (OHRC, 2023). They also emphasized the need for ongoing and embedded professional development that focuses on the practical application and continuous evaluation. Participants viewed faculties of education and unions as barriers to dismantling anti-Black racism, and there was a call for dialogue and collaboration to ensure their role in upholding human rights and supporting accountability. Other key issues for consideration included increased cultural competency in schools and the education system overall; safe spaces for Black students; increased representation among education staff; from teachers to senior administrators (with an awareness of tokenism of Black leadership); immediate action and consequences in response to micro aggressions and harassment; and centring Black joy.
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	and transition Black populations from the shelter system into transitional, supportive and stable housing.	bachelor's degree or higher, while 46.3 per cent of children who had at least one parent born in continental Africa achieved the same level of education. In contrast, children with at least one Caribbean-born parent hit 28.5 percent, compared with 19 percent of Caribbean-born Black people.		highest density of Black residents further exacerbates this challenge. Moreover, the Ontario health-care system does not systematically collect, share or standardize the use of disaggregated race-based data in their decision making. As a result, there is limited foresight to identify those in greatest need to proactively deploy up-stream education and resources, or target and strategically invest in support. Similarly, healthcare providers are limited in the data they can use to identify and manage gaps in the system. Data governance systems that support community empowerment, decision-making, safe and accessible data storage, and the collection of data using a "no harm" principle are needed to better integrate and target local and regional health systems and resources. Additional issues to consider in relation to data collection include: the rates of food insecurity among Black Torontonians, linked to poor local access to cultural foods, the	populations and people living with mental health issues.	Additional issues identified under the education stream include: the academic the streaming of students; increased violence in schools and mentorship; and the need for shadowing programs for young people that will transition them into meaningful careers and enable the development of effective social skills to navigate life's challenges.
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				increased cost of food (and affordability in the city overall), contributing indicators of food (in)security, including living on a low income, living in a lone parent household and having a limited social safety network (especially among new immigrants).		
Impacts	Develop targets for affordable housing, supportive housing and rent-to-own housing programs for Black residents, with a focus on meeting the needs of high-risk Black populations, including people living with disabilities, seniors, lone-parents and queer and trans youth.	Standardize the collection of disaggregated race-based data to support City decision-making and investment in small business.	Increase disaggregated race-based data transparency and accountability in CAS reporting on child welfare reporting.	Track and provide strategic advice to enhance and target the City's Mental Health initiatives.	Review and increase support for Transformative Justice programs and initiatives.	Increase workforce development and inclusive, equitable, and anti-Black racism-informed entrepreneurship programs.
	Advocate for increased rent-control supports to support Black households to remain in place and maintain stable housing.	Increase entrepreneurship supports and workforce pathways.	Mandate education and ABR training for CAS workers to embed ABR in their work to reduce discrimination.	Advocate for the widespread implementation and use of race-based disaggregated data to inform decision making, improve services and programs and to directly benefit Black residents, accountability, transparency and local community governance systems.	Identify opportunities to deliver increased post-incarceration supports.	Continue to engage the Toronto District School Board to advocate about the issue of academic streaming, and transparent public reporting on Black student success, learnings and challenges.
	Advocate for increased rent-control supports to assist Black households to remain-in-place and maintain stable housing.	Increase access to small business funds, mentorship, microloans, and procurement opportunities at the City.	Evaluate and enhance programs to pro-actively educate and support parents, families, and children in Care.	Advocate for tracking and consistent reporting on Black food insecurity and climate-induced health issues.	Increase awareness and access to legal supports for Black communities, with a focus on vulnerable populations, such as newcomers, refugees,	Support the capacity of Black leaders and community members to sit on City boards and agencies, by providing mandated orientation

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					non-English speaking residents, people living with mental health issues and members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities.	training and service navigation supports.
	Advocate for the development of dementia-friendly communities and green spaces in neighbourhood planning initiatives.				Identify opportunities to deliver increased post-incarceration supports.	
	Advocate for the collection, reporting and use of race-based data collection to inform decision making.					
	Provide advice to enhance neighbourhood plans to address displacement.					
	Advise on the implementation of a Black Housing Framework.					
	Advocate for more targeted supports for Black populations in the Shelter System to transition into stable housing, including, service navigation supports to access programs such as EPIC and Rent Bank, refugee, asylum seeker and affordable housing supports, and general evictions information and services.					

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Influence	HousingTO Action Plan	Social Procurement 2.0 (forthcoming)	Adverse Childhood Outcomes Strategy (forthcoming)	Toronto's Seniors Strategy 3.0 (forthcoming)	Canada's Black Justice Strategy (2023)	
	The Black Housing Framework (forthcoming)	Action Plan for Toronto's Economy (forthcoming)	Ontario Child Welfare Redesign Strategy	The Data for Equity Strategy: A Black Race-Based Data Governance Model	Safe TO	
		Community Benefits Report (Update report forthcoming)				
		Inclusive Economic Development: City of Toronto Workforce Development Approaches (forthcoming)				

United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (UNIDPAD)

The UN International Decade for People of African Descent (UNIDPAD, or The Decade) was established as a way for the international community to recognize people of African descent as a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected. The principles that underpin the Decade are recognition, justice, and development. The United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent have expressed their support for the City of Toronto to join the international community in formally recognizing the Decade in 2019 and congratulated the City on its early efforts to confront anti-Black racism through the creation of a dedicated office and implementation of the action plan.

As part of its commitment to advancing this work, the City has advanced targeted projects and initiatives to benefit Black Torontonians, including the Patterns of the People Toronto Sign Wrap in 2020, the Little Jamaica Initiative, the Recognition and Renaming Review, as well as other strategic investments. The City is also encouraging public and private sector organizations to make their own commitments until the end of The Decade in 2025, with the goal to:

- (1) Embodying the International Decade of People of African Descent in curriculums, in policy making, in programmatic areas of focus;
- (2) Incorporating the Decades' goals of justice, recognition and development into long- term strategic planning and reflect on how it can transform everyday practices; and
- (3) Finding new ways to stand with people of African descent in Toronto by working to transform the barriers that place true justice, recognition and development out of reach.

Through its work, the Committee will endeavour to identify opportunities to advance these goals to advance a meaningful legacy of this work across all action areas; and assess the extent to which the City of Toronto has realized its commitment to the Decade at the end of the Decade in December 2024.