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From: OEA Engagement Team <OEAEngagement@novascotia.ca>
Sent: July 3, 2024 2:18 PM
To: OEA General Inquiries
Subject: Notice of Approved Regulations: Equity and Anti-Racism Plans for Municipalities and Villages

COURRIEL EXTERNE – FAITES PREUVE DE PRUDENCE
EXTERNAL EMAIL – USE CAUTION

The following message is being sent on behalf of Minister Barbara Adams, Minister responsible for the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism

Dear municipal and village leaders:

Our province is on a journey to become more inclusive and equitable. The *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* ([the Act](#)) recognized that systemic hate, inequity, and racism can be caused by government and public bodies through policies, practices, and procedures that appear neutral but have the effect of disadvantaging underrepresented and underserved groups. The Act further provided authority to prescribe public sector bodies through regulations to require them to develop plans to address systemic hate, inequity, and racism.

Recognizing the vital role that municipalities and villages play in shaping the daily lives of Nova Scotians, regulations were recently approved that prescribe municipalities and villages as public bodies under the Act. **Under the Regulations, municipalities and villages will be required to have plans to address systemic hate, inequity, and racism by April 1, 2025.**

To help municipalities and villages understand and meet this requirement, the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism (OEA) has developed guidance and resources. This includes:

- [Equity and Anti-Racism Plans Guidance for Municipalities and Villages](#)
- [Equity and Anti-Racism Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Equity and Anti-Racism Primer](#)

OEA is partnering with the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) who will provide dedicated support to municipalities and villages over the next four years. This means that staff and resources will be available from AMANS to assist with the development and implementation of your equity and anti-racism plans. In the coming months, several training and information sessions will be scheduled for staff who are supporting the development of your plans.

OEA and the Accessibility Directorate are working collaboratively to support municipalities and villages to meet requirements under both the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and the *Accessibility Act*. Recognizing that municipalities and villages are also required to update their accessibility plans by April 1, 2025, municipalities and villages can develop a single equity, anti-racism and accessibility plan. Like accessibility plans, municipalities and villages can collaborate and develop joint plans that cover more than one geographic area. Unlike requirements under the *Accessibility Act*, you are not required to establish a committee to develop your equity and anti-racism plan.

As you embark on this journey, we urge you to consider the diverse needs of all members of your community, including Mi'kmaw and persons of Indigenous descent, African Nova Scotians and Persons of African descent, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+, newcomers (immigrants & refugees), faith-based communities, persons with disabilities, persons who are neurodivergent, and seniors. Equity and anti-racism plans must be informed by community engagement and aim to address systemic barriers that contribute to inequitable outcomes.

In summary:

- Municipalities and villages are required to develop plans to address systemic hate, inequity and racism by April 1, 2025;
- Meeting this requirement and the requirement for an updated accessibility plan can be met through a combined "equity, anti-racism and accessibility plan";
- OEA and partner AMANS will provide dedicated resources and ongoing support as you work to meet this legal requirement; and
- Joint equity, anti-racism and accessibility plans can be developed by multiple municipalities and/or public bodies to meet requirements.

In closing, I want to recognize that municipalities and villages play vital roles in our province. With your tailored equity, anti-racism and accessibility plans, we can break down barriers and create a more inclusive and vibrant society for all Nova Scotians. Together, we can work towards a future where every individual feels valued and respected.

Sincerely,

Barbara Adams
Minister of Office of Equity and Anti-Racism

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