

# ONA's Community and Group Engagement Guidelines

## Introduction

As Ontario's leading healthcare union, we believe in the equal treatment of our members and their right to be free from any form of racism, discrimination, and harassment in work and learning environments.

We know we must challenge ourselves to deepen and expand our understanding of what it means to be a truly inclusive organization. We are committed to fostering an environment of equity and inclusivity for our members and the staff that support you.

We recognize that conversations about intersectional forms of racism, including anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism and anti-South Asian racism, and discrimination and marginalization, are deeply challenging.

We acknowledge that our members and staff with direct lived experiences of racism and marginalization are impacted by these conversations (e.g. triggers, emotional labour, and intergenerational trauma).

## Community and Group Engagement Guidelines:

- Hold space for each other during each session together.
- Recognize that we are all on our different learning journeys as it relates to anti-racism, anti-oppression, human rights and equity. Please take the time to understand and reflect that we all learn at a different pace and enter these conversations at different points.
- Be mindful of the different types of power and privilege you may hold in this space, within ONA, and in broader society.
- Be mindful of the different lived experiences of your colleagues when you share your insights, knowledge and opinions.
- During interactive segments or when sharing your personal perspective about an issue or topic related to racism, discrimination and exclusion, please refrain from using 'Devil's Advocate.' Remember to speak from a place of who you are, your worldviews, and focus on using 'I' statements.

- When sharing a story about anti-Indigenous racism and anti-Black racism, please be mindful of the diverse lived experiences of the folks sharing this space, virtual and/or in-person.
- Please do not use the 'N' word or any racial slurs or jokes when you share a story, your experience, examples or ask a question.
- Please be aware that phrases such as “all lives matter” and “... is playing the race card” cause harm to individuals who have lived experiences of racism and marginalization.
- If you disagree with a comment made by a colleague, please focus on the comment and not the person.
- Making assumptions about someone’s gender identity can often lead to exclusion and harm. To be inclusive and respectful of gender diversity, use the gender-neutral pronoun set, “they”, “them”, “their”, when referring to any person whose pronouns you do not know until you have a chance to find out what they are.
- If you have trouble remembering someone’s pronouns, it is always best simply to ask for the reminder! It is also important to ask if you may use these pronouns in front of other people.
- In general, use person-first language when speaking about a person with a disability, condition or diagnosis, unless a person states their preference for identity-first language.