



# Promoting anti-racism to ensure cultural safety

A guide for community sports clubs

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## How to use this resource

This resource provides practical guidance on anti-racist actions you can take in your club.

We encourage you to collectively discuss the actions and determine which actions your club is already taking and areas for development.

You know your club and its circumstances so will be well placed to prioritise a few key actions and build from those.

We encourage you to develop an action plan for your anti-racism practices that specifies timeframes, roles and responsibilities, and measures of success.

# Key terms

## Racism

Racism is the process by which systems, and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race.

Racism is more than just prejudice in thought or action. It occurs when this prejudice – whether individual or institutional – is accompanied by the power to discriminate against, oppress, or limit the rights of others (Australian Human Rights Commission).

## Anti-racism

Anti-racism involves actively combating racist policies, practices, culture, and ideas.

Anti-racism is more than being 'not racist'. It involves conscious decisions that seek to challenge injustice and promote racial equity.

It can be helpful to think of anti-racism as a skill set that we can all develop and use to promote a better, more equitable society. (Racism It Stops with Me).

## Cultural Safety

Cultivating an environment where individuals feel respected, valued, and supported in their cultural identity, with systems fostering equity by actively addressing power imbalances and embracing cultural differences to minimise harm and racism within Victorian communities (VicHealth).

Anti-racism work is essential in creating culturally safe environments.

## Race

The idea that humans can be organised into distinct biological 'races' with defined physical and social traits.

Today, it is widely accepted that biological categories of race do not exist. However, that does not mean that race, as a concept, is no longer relevant.

This is because ideas of race (and ideas that are racist) were foundational to the development of many of today's laws, cultures and societies, with certain racial identities perceived and positioned as superior to others (Australian Human Rights Commission).





# Guiding principles

Creating culturally safe community sport clubs free of racism requires an ongoing commitment and practices must be embedded across all levels of club operations and culture.

Through proactive and consistent leadership, clear policies, inclusive practices, and culturally responsive coaching, clubs can foster spaces where all members feel respected, represented, and supported.

This must extend beyond surface-level gestures to include meaningful engagement with Indigenous and culturally and racially minoritised communities.

When anti-racism work becomes a shared responsibility that is upheld in club values, championed by leaders, embedded in daily practice, and reflected in visible actions, community sport can become a powerful vehicle for anti-racism and belonging.

Anti-racism work also leads to vibrant, thriving clubs with a strong, culturally safe membership base. A culturally safe club is one that has anti-racism embedded within all the work it does.

Club leaders play a vital role in preventing racism and promoting cultural safety. This resource contains a series of evidence-informed, practical actions you, as club leaders, can take to make a positive impact.





## Establishing an anti-racist club culture to promote cultural safety



Ensure a commitment to cultural safety is embedded within the club's mission statement and values, and visible on club websites, social media accounts, and other public-facing materials.



Champion cultural safety within the club. Ensure the club's commitment to anti-racism is regularly communicated with all members and parents/guardians.



Communicate clearly to members that club leaders will support members who promote anti-racism and challenge racism at all times.



Ensure that cultural safety and anti-racism is a standing item at club committee meetings.



Engage in education to develop club members' understanding of cultural safety and anti-racism. This includes building their awareness of the unique experience of racism experienced by First Nations peoples because of ongoing colonisation.



Engage in education to learn about the First Nations communities who are the Traditional Owners of the lands on which your club resides. Connect with First Nations organisations within your local area to develop your knowledge of how to ensure welcoming and supportive environments for First Nations members and leaders at the club.



Develop your knowledge of Multicultural communities living where your club is located. Connecting with Multicultural organisations can help build your knowledge and establish links with Multicultural communities. Connecting with your local council can also be useful to get information about the make up of your local community and key community groups.



Assess the level and nature of cultural, racial, and religious diversity within your club's committee and leadership. For example, consider practical, culturally safe strategies for diversifying leadership. Develop mentoring and support systems to create pathways to leadership within the club.



Get to know the cultural background of club members and be aware of wider social and political events that may have a significant impact on your club members. This might be conflicts or other significant world events. Regularly engaging with members who may be impacted by such events to provide appropriate support can ensure members feel supported and valued.



Actively encourage and provide support mechanisms for Multicultural and Indigenous club members to move into positions of leadership and coaching within the club.



## Policies and Codes of Conduct



Ensure that your club has an anti-racism policy that states its commitment to cultural safety and provides a clear directive that racism will not be tolerated. This policy should link to existing member protection policies.



Actively communicate with members that the club has an anti-racism policy and ensure it is visible and readily available on the club website. Ensuring committee members are familiar with the policy and the processes it outlines, and aware of their responsibilities in implementing the policy. Ensure new committee members are made aware of the anti-racism policy as part of their induction.



Ensure your club's code of conduct specifically states that racism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the club. Codes of conduct need to be proactively shared with everyone connected with your club, including players, spectators, and parents



Ensure flexible uniform policies are in place that are responsive to cultural dress requirements. This may be allowing players to wear long sleeves or leggings to cover skin or religious and cultural dress such as hijabs.



## Responding to racism



Decisive and rapid action when racism occurs is crucial for developing culturally safe environments.



Work with your league or association to ensure a clear process is identified for reporting and responding to racism that occurs during competitions.



Establish a clear mechanism on how to respond to incidents of racism, which should be communicated to all members. Clearly describe the process to be followed to manage transgressions by club members and to support victims of racism.

Incidents of racism can be reported anonymously through a range of tools.

Options for club members include:



- [Racism Register](#)
- [Call It Out](#)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission [Community Reporting tool](#)
- [Islamophobia register](#) and
- [Victorian Community Security Group](#).

Ensure these options are actively promoted to all club members.



Develop the knowledge and capacity of club volunteers to respond to racism through training and education.



Develop a clear procedure within the club for responding to incidents of racism during competitions and matches.

The Australian Sports Commission's [Dealing with the Moment: Anti-Racism in Community Sport course](#) is a good starting point. Consider treating racism in the same way as any other on field incident.

## Consultation and collaboration



Consider whether your club's membership reflects the cultural and racial diversity that exists within your local communities.

If not, consider why and identify ways to liaise with local community groups to discuss how your club can better engage the rich diversity of residents and develop its membership base.



Provide opportunities for open and supportive conversations with Indigenous and culturally and racially minoritised club members about their experiences of the club and provide opportunities for them to share ways to reduce racism and enhance cultural safety at the club.



## Enhancing the club environment



Consider what images and pictures are displayed in your club spaces and whether they reflect cultural and racial diversity.



Display posters within your club spaces that demonstrate the club's commitment to cultural safety and anti-racism. [Some existing templates are available here.](#)



Social activities are important for promoting club members' belonging and social connection. Social events should be safe spaces for all club members. Consult with club members to determine their preferred social events and ensure that these events cater to their cultural and religious needs.



Consider events that do not involve alcohol and provide food options that reflect diverse cultural requirements, such as halal, kosher, or vegetarian.



Be mindful of significant [cultural and religious dates](#) that members of your club may celebrate and consider recognising these within the club.

Recognise that cultural and religious events may impact members' participation. Members may be unable to attend training or games temporarily, or have reduced capacity to participate, for example, Muslim club members who fast during Ramadan.



## Marketing and communications



Ensure the club's website and social media convey your commitment to anti-racism.



Review who is visually depicted on the club website and social media to ensure cultural and racial diversity is visible.



Consider making information about your club available in languages that are relevant to the local communities in which you are located.



Ensure the club's website has an Acknowledgement of Country to recognise the Traditional Owners of the Lands on which your club is located.



## Anti-racism and coaching

Coaches hold a highly influential position within clubs in ensuring cultural safety and supporting anti-racism. Practical actions coaches can take to promote cultural safety include:



Learn the correct way to pronounce the names of the players that you coach. You can clarify with players how to pronounce their name and ensure you adopt the pronunciation they prefer.



Be mindful of racial and cultural stereotypes that influence how you view the players you coach. For example, do not assume that certain players will have 'natural' talent, be more suitable for particular positions, or be more/less aggressive based on their race and ethnicity.



Be mindful of assumptions you may make about your athletes depending on their cultural and racial background for example assuming that they not have the commitment or support to progress to an elite level, or that they will have limited family support.

Make it clear to players that racial discrimination is unacceptable.



Be prepared to step in immediately if any of the players you coach express racist views. This may be direct slurs, even if this occurs as a supposed joke or 'banter', such as mocking a player's accent, or more subtle forms of racism, for example, not involving some players in discussions or decisions.

Call out racist behaviour regardless of the perpetrator's status or ability within the team.



Foster opportunities for the players and athletes you coach to share experiences and talk about their culture and background.



Captains and high ability players can be important influences on team culture and behaviour.

Actively work with influential players to ensure they also convey anti-racism messages and make it clear that they do not tolerate racism within their team.

## Additional resources

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/publications/guide-addressing-spectator-racism-sports-2021>

[https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity\\_in\\_sport/inclusive-sport/anti-racism](https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/inclusive-sport/anti-racism)

<https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/news/integrity-blog/2024-03/racism-sport>

<https://antiracismsport.ca>

<https://www.theredcard.org>

[https://www.cmy.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Game-Plan-Resource-Kit\\_2015.pdf](https://www.cmy.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Game-Plan-Resource-Kit_2015.pdf)

[https://www.cmy.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Tip-Sheet-1\\_Attracting-and-retaining-diverse-junior-members.pdf](https://www.cmy.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Tip-Sheet-1_Attracting-and-retaining-diverse-junior-members.pdf)

[https://www.sportaus.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/1161857/ASC-Multicultural-Engagement-Playbook\\_Action-Plan.pdf](https://www.sportaus.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1161857/ASC-Multicultural-Engagement-Playbook_Action-Plan.pdf)

[https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/report/How\\_can\\_multicultural\\_cricket\\_teams\\_thrive\\_Practical\\_strategies\\_for\\_players\\_team\\_leaders\\_parents\\_and\\_cricket\\_administrators/29510027?file=56076278](https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/report/How_can_multicultural_cricket_teams_thrive_Practical_strategies_for_players_team_leaders_parents_and_cricket_administrators/29510027?file=56076278)

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