



STATEMENT ON ANTI-RACISM

For many decades, Whistler has thrived as a community built by those from near and far. Ever since its beginning as a Resort Municipality, it has been long term locals and seasonal workers who have made this wonderful place what it is: a playground for the world, residing on the unceded territory of the Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation; and a place where new discoveries and experiences of a lifetime happen. The energy in the resort as new people arrive each season is palpable and exciting. New friendships are made, and adventures unfold, creating memories that last a lifetime.

But Whistler is not without its challenges; it is not immune to difficulties stemming from poor mental health, poverty, homelessness, racism, and displacement of the marginalized and underserved. 2020 brought a reckoning to the world unlike any other most of us have ever seen. The global pandemic; the strengthening of the Black Lives Matter and civil rights movement; deeper conversations around what it means to be privileged; and confrontation of the colonial past and longstanding mistreatment of the First Peoples of this land. Through it all, WCSS has been a constant in serving our community: feeding the hungry, supporting those in crisis, diverting our community's waste and engaging in continued conversations around how we can all do better as citizens of Whistler and of the world. We work with everyone. If you need help, you will find it at WCSS.

Given all of this, we have recently been saddened and deeply disappointed by several incidents of racism directed towards our staff at WCSS and members of the community. To be clear, we do not tolerate racist actions and they are strictly against our code of conduct as it governs our clients, patrons, vendors, and staff. We are not naïve and realize these incidents do happen and have never gone away; we are working hard to look at ourselves, our place in the community and how we can be more inclusive and equitable to those we serve. We are taking on training, we are listening to a broad range of voices and we are engaged in a lifelong journey in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Despite these efforts, incidents of racism - whether outright or more insidious and systemic - are happening. They are being directed at our staff at WCSS. We must not turn a blind eye to them. None of us can afford to be complicit, we all deserve better.

We, the board of WCSS, ask that you, our community, stand with us in condemning any instances of racism, hate speech, and any action that serves to denigrate, dispossess and disempower anyone who is BIPOC (Black, Indigenous People of Color). We continue to educate ourselves on issues of race and inequality, and we ask you to do the same. Learning together, from, and with each other empowers us all to continue to shape our home as a place we all want to be and where all are welcome.

So, what next? Listen and engage with your neighbours, your friends, your co-workers, your staff, your family. Undoubtedly, there will be individuals amongst them who belong to a marginalized and underserved group and have experienced mistreatment in their lifetime. Listen with the intent to learn what we can do together to address racism in all its forms. As we find ourselves in the midst of this civil rights movement, we all have to ask ourselves what role we want to play in this history. We must be committed to do this important work, this cannot wait, the time is now.

The WCSS Board of Directors
May 2021

