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<https://intranet.justice.govnet.qld.gov.au/divisions-and-branches/corporate-services/human-resources/people-management/performance-management2/performance-improvement/role-of-a-support-person>

Role of a support person

The role of a support person is to give moral and emotional support only. They cannot act as an advocate or speak on the employees behalf.

Reasonable attempts will be made to arrange a meeting at a time convenient to support person, however it may not be possible to schedule or reschedule this meeting to accommodate their diary.

In these situations the employee will be encouraged to have an alternate support person available.

Choosing a support person

A support person can be a union representative, colleague, supervisor, friend or family member. However they cannot be:

- involved in any aspect of the matter being discussed
- someone who may disrupt the process, such as an ex-employee.

During a meeting all parties are to act in accordance with the principles and values of the Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy .

This will allow open, honest and respectful communication to occur.

Using a support person

Employees are able to invite a support person to attend conversations on:

- performance improvement matters
- disciplinary matters
- health and well-being matters
- domestic and family violence matters

Role of a support person

During a conversation a support person can:

- assist the employee by taking notes
- provide advice and support before and after the conversation by making sure the employee understands the process and information required
- if appropriate, request a small break in conversation to discuss a matter privately.

A support person cannot:

- join in the conversation

- suggest answers or lead the employee
- answer questions on behalf of the employee.

Denying a request for a support person

Yes, managers have a right to discuss daily work matters with their staff. They have a legal obligation under the *Public Service Act 2008* to pro-actively manage the performance and personal conduct of their staff and it would not be appropriate for a support person to attend a conversation on:

- day-to-day business matters
- standard performance management feedback in line with the performance effectiveness plan
- workplace change
- general staff meetings and information sessions.

Last reviewed - 15 Oct 2018
Last updated - 08 Feb 2019



CASUAL RACISM

What is casual racism?

Casual racism is one form of racism. It refers to conduct involving negative stereotypes or prejudices about people on the basis of race, colour or ethnicity.

Examples include jokes, off-handed comments, and exclusion of people from social situations on the basis of race.

How is it different from other types of racism?

Some associate racism with a belief in racial superiority or deliberate acts of discrimination. Casual racism concerns not so much a belief in the superiority of races but negative prejudice or stereotypes concerning race.

Unlike overt and intentional acts of racism, casual racism isn't often intended to cause offence or harm.

Doesn't the lack of intent mean that casual racism isn't really racism?

One of the obstacles to having an open conversation about race is the tendency to downplay things as not "truly" or "really" racist. This can embolden or encourage prejudice.

You don't need to subscribe to doctrines of racial superiority or incite racial violence to say or do something with racist implications.

Racism is as much about impact as it is about intention. We shouldn't forget about those who are on the receiving end of discrimination.

Why should we care about casual racism?

Like other forms of racism, casual racism can marginalise, denigrate or humiliate those who experience it. Harm can occur even if conduct isn't motivated by hate or malice.

Research demonstrates that racism can have adverse effects on people's physical and mental health. It can cause anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and high blood pressure.

Racism can also exclude the target from wider society. It sends a message that they aren't welcome. It reinforces social barriers and attacks the dignity of the victim as an equal member of society. It can undermine civility and social cohesion.



"In many cases people do not recognise their words and deeds are racist. It's simply seen as part of Australian culture to 'take the piss' out of people. I don't see that casual racism, via ignorant commentary or jokes, is acceptable. People who perceive they have the right and luxury to engage in racist practices do not understand that they are adding to a lifetime of injury for those of us who have had to navigate racism."

Does this mean I can't joke about things?

Being aware of casual racism involves recognising that we are all accountable for the things we say or do. Making casually racist jokes or comments can have a negative impact upon a target individual or group. Casual racism can fuel prejudice and discrimination. Joking about matters of race – particularly of people of a different background – can also lead others to form unfavourable impressions of you.

What should I do when I encounter casual racism?

A change in social attitudes is necessary for combatting casual racism. Everyone can contribute to this change through speaking up against racism when they encounter it.

You could start a conversation with a friend, family member, colleague or teammate. This could, for example, involve pulling them aside to ask them what they mean by their comment. Or to ask them how they would feel if they were subjected to stereotypes.

For more information on what you can do to take a stand against racism, take a look at our ['Tips for Bystanders' \(/respond-racism\)](#).

Sign up for updates and our supporters newsletter

Sign up to our supporter newsletters to find out what's going on with the 'Racism. It Stops With Me' campaign.

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Racism – tips for bystanders

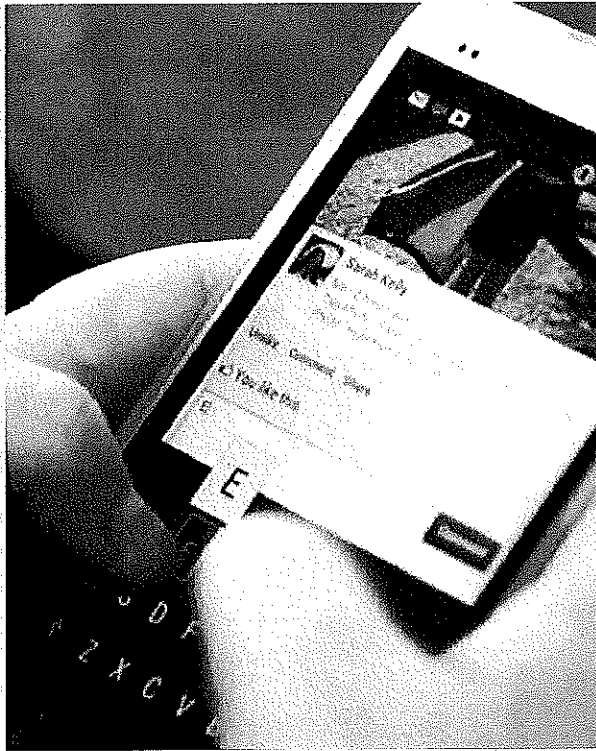
We've all been a bystander at one time or another. You hear or see something racist, feel uncomfortable, want to say or do something but aren't sure what.

Standing up to racism shows the target of the racist behaviour that you don't support it and can be a powerful sign of support. It can also make the perpetrator think twice about what they're saying or doing. But often people don't stand up because they fear becoming the target of abuse themselves.

What you decide to say or do will depend on the situation. You should never put yourself at risk but there are lots of actions you can take that don't involve confrontation. Even a simple gesture can be powerful and shows the person on the receiving end of the behaviour that they're not alone.

If you see racist behaviour in public, you could ...

Say something if it feels safe to do so. It doesn't have to be aggressive, in fact it's often more effective if it's not. It could be as simple as saying *"Why don't you just leave him/her alone?"*



If it doesn't feel safe to say something, you could ...

Tell someone responsible such as the driver if it's happening on a bus or tram or a security guard if it's happening at a club or venue.

Think about how you can **support the target of the abuse** – for example, you could go and sit or stand next to them and check if they're OK.

Call the police on 000 if you think that you or somebody else may be in danger.



If you see racism directed towards a classmate, colleague or team-mate, you could ...

Suggest they talk to someone. Most schools, workplaces and sports clubs will have a policy for dealing with bullying and harassment, including racism. You might like to suggest to the person experiencing the racist behaviour that they seek advice from the contact person named in the policy such as the student welfare officer at school, human resources in the workplace or manager or club official in a sports club.

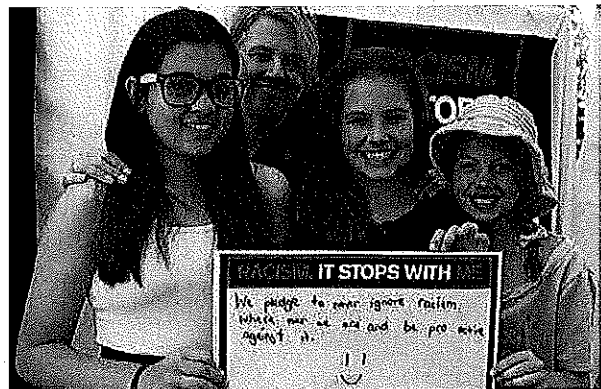
Say something. Check out the "Speak UP" handbook at: www.splcenter.org/get-informed/publications/speak-up-responding-to-everyday-bigotry for ideas of things to say to counter prejudice in any situation.

Let them know they can complain. The Australian Human Rights Commission can investigate and resolve complaints of race discrimination in areas including employment, education, sport, accommodation and the provision of goods and services. The complaints process is free and confidential. For more information go to: www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints-information

If you see racist material online, you could ...

Report it. Most social networking sites have policies for dealing with offensive content and enable users to report this material. More information is usually available on these sites under "guidelines", "standards" or "terms of use".

Say something. Check out www.antihate.vic.gov.au for messages to post in response to "haters" online.



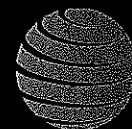
What else can you do?

Take a stand against racism by joining the Racism. It Stops with Me campaign. Upload your photo and share the message with your friends and family at: itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/it-stops-with-me/individual-supporters



**RACISM.
IT STOPS
WITH ME**

RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME is a campaign which invites all Australians to reflect on what they can do to counter racism, wherever it happens.
For more information go to <http://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au>



**Australian
Human Rights
Commission**