

FBEC Self-advocacy Checklist

Dos

- ❑ Join FBEC: learn more about us, come to our meetings, become a volunteer.
- ❑ Tell other Black employees about FBEC and encourage them to join.
- ❑ Talk with your manager about your career interests and ask them to keep you informed of opportunities (selection processes, developmental opportunities and training) to advance them. Meet in person then follow up in writing.
- ❑ Sign up for career alerts on jobs.gc.ca, check out FBEC's [Career Development](#) page.
- ❑ Seek assistance when applying for promotions. Many successful public servants have someone knowledgeable and experienced review their cover letters and resumes before they submit them during a selection process. They also get help preparing for interviews. If you don't know someone in the right category and level, then consider a Career Coach or Executive Coach who has appropriate public service experience. FBEC is working on a list of trusted resources who can help with this important work. Ideally, the cost of this service will be covered under your annual professional development budget.
- ❑ Educate yourself, and share information with your manager, about the [New Direction in Staffing](#) that facilitates appoint people without competition.
- ❑ Find out who your union representative is and arrange a meeting with them to discuss your concerns about harassment and/or discrimination.
- ❑ Question (with the help of your union representative) discriminatory behaviour in writing and say that, as an FBEC member, you're helping the Government of Canada fulfill its diversity and inclusion commitments, especially those related to the UN Decade for People of African Descent.
- ❑ Document the responses you receive after notifying management of discrimination or harassment. This can be done by keeping emails; recording meetings; making your own written notes of verbal responses and who else would have heard those responses and making Access to Information and Privacy requests.
- ❑ Document the impact the negative workplace environment is having on your mental and physical health. Using your private email account, make notes and email them to yourself so that they are date and time stamped.

Self-advocacy checklist (continued)

- ❑ See your family doctor and explain what is happening to you at work. They can monitor your blood pressure and other indicators. They can also give you referrals for Registered Massage Therapy and Clinical Psychology. Both services can help you with stress management. Therapists and doctors will make progress or treatment notes that may become useful forms of documentation. Although “free”, the mental health providers who work through the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) may not be equipped to provide documentation regarding the impact of racial harassment or discrimination.
- ❑ Assist other employees and become a union representative.
- ❑ Participate in FBEC surveys. Participants remain anonymous and data is not stored by the government. In addition, the data FBEC collects will be used exclusively to document the unique experience of being Black federal employees. The data the government collects data is typically about visible minorities that obscures the experience of Black employees.
- ❑ If you are in a toxic work environment take discrete action to move out of that environment and into an organization that is more psychologically safe. Discreetly ask other managers you work with about opportunities.
- ❑ Be aware that the Office of Conflict Management, often presented as an objective 3rd party, is run by Labour Relations in your department.
- ❑ Be aware that the harassment process is handled by Labour Relations and most complaints are dismissed.

Don'ts

- ❑ Inappropriate treatment is upsetting but Don't react in a way that could be labelled as “aggressive”. Be calm. Be cool.
- ❑ Don't plan to stay in a hostile work environment for too long. It's detrimental to your mental and physical health.
- ❑ Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself. FBEC and your union are there to support you.
- ❑ If you face discrimination or harassment in your workplace Don't keep it to yourself, seek peer support.