

CBTU Stands in Solidarity with Black Federal Public Service Workers in Class Action Lawsuit

December 11, 2020

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) Canadian Chapter supports the legal action taken on behalf of past and present federal public service workers who identify as Black, Caribbean or of African descent.

As a coalition, we recognize that systemic and institutionalized racism is endemic within the federal public service/core public administration, and has not been acknowledged or addressed to its entirety as of now.

Anti-Black racism is one of the gravest injustices plaguing the Canadian federal public service, who claims to be a representation of its citizens using diversity as one of its core values.

The CBTU is calling on the current federal government to implement the several recommendations that they and their successors have received through various internal advocacy campaigns regarding how to address the glaring underrepresentation of Black employees in managerial, executive and assistant deputy ministers' roles, and to advocate for and implement the demands that the plaintiffs are seeking in their lawsuit. Black federal public servants are long overdue for justice as the federal public service has deep roots with systemic discrimination. Hiring and advancement practices must change. Stakeholders such as the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, Public Service Commission of Canada, Crown corporations or Separate Agencies under Financial Administration Act need to be held accountable.

In addition, modernization and amendments to the Public Service Employment Act (PSEA) and other legislation and regulations regarding staffing, promotions and appointments are needed and must be prioritized in order to address the inequities and barriers affecting disadvantaged public service employees. Staffing should be part of the collective bargaining process as clearly the federal government is failing its role, duty and responsibilities on this matter. Diversity, respect and inclusion should be a bona fide requirement in order to correct past malpractices and injustices.

The federal government has acknowledged that systemic racism is prevalent in Canadian society and within government institutions publicly. No more empty words or promises and push for a latter moment; the time is NOW to take responsibility, actions, and define the present and future of its public service.

Link to the class action lawsuit: www.blackclassaction.ca

In solidarity,

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) Executive Board