

Date: **13 July 2016**

Dear Employer

You will have seen recent reports of a marked increase in race hate incidents following the EU referendum. There are concerns about an emerging climate in which hostility towards migrants and ethnic minorities in Britain is increasing. There is uncertainty about the future position of EU nationals working in the UK.

These issues may have a direct effect on some of your employees.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has therefore joined together with the Confederation of British Industry, the British Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, Acas, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, the Employers' Network for Equality and Inclusion and the TUC to ask you to show leadership in challenging intolerance and ensuring that your employees feel supported at this time.

What you can do

- Be clear that racism and racial harassment will not be tolerated. Employers have duties to ensure their employees can work in safe and healthy conditions, without discrimination or harassment.
- Make sure your employees understand the standards of behaviour they can expect from colleagues and customers and that are expected of them. If there is a recognised trade union in your workplace, include them in discussions.

- Be vigilant in spotting and dealing with any behaviour which could amount to discrimination, harassment or hate incidents in your workplaces.
- Any discussion of contentious political issues at work should be conducted sensitively and with respect for the views and positions of others. While freedom of expression is protected by law, this does not extend to the protection of speech that discriminates against, harasses or incites violence or hatred against others.
- Line managers have a particularly important role in managing difficult situations that may arise and supporting employees who may be feeling vulnerable and facing uncertainty, and it's essential that they have access to appropriate information and training to help them do this in the right way. Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law. This includes advice on dealing with [race discrimination](#) and [bullying and harassment](#).
- Make sure your employees know what to do if they experience discrimination, harassment or a hate incident. Enclosed is [information](#) about sources of help, advice and support. Please share this with your employees and display it on noticeboards in your workplaces.

Yours sincerely

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Chair

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