

Leading retailers take the pledge to stand up to racism

A group of Aotearoa New Zealand's biggest retailers have joined forces to take a stand against racism and discrimination in their workplaces.

Z Energy, The Warehouse Group, Foodstuffs, Mitre 10 and Countdown have signed the 'NZ Retailers Against Racism Pledge' to confirm an ongoing commitment to proactively address racism and other forms of abuse at work.

Z Energy's Head of Community and Sustainability and convenor of the group, Gerri Ward, says the pledge recognises that large retailers have a big role to play in promoting inclusion.

"Our place of work should be a safe place, no matter who we are, where we're from, or what we believe in. Unfortunately, this is not the case for many New Zealanders. Many people on the frontline of retail business face racism, bigotry, verbal and physical abuse, and intimidation on a regular basis.

"Z has been working for some time with our frontline staff on a set of policies and practices designed to ensure they're safe at work, including how to support those who have been subjected to racism. The pledge is the result of that," says Gerri.

Retail NZ CEO, Greg Harford says that many retail businesses want to act against discrimination and the pledge will help them to do so.

"We're a diverse and multicultural nation and Retail NZ wants to see that celebrated and supported. It's really important that everyone working in retail can go to work and feel safe. The policies that support the pledge will help our retailers create a 'toolbox' for action on racism."

The other pledge partners say they've signed as part of their ongoing commitment to safe and supportive workplaces that reflect the diversity of New Zealand.

The Warehouse Group CEO Nick Grayston says The Warehouse Group has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion which is cemented in their Diversity and Inclusion policy.

"We stand against racism, prejudice and discrimination of any kind and are dedicated to ensuring our team is provided with a safe environment in which to work."

Countdown's Head of Corporate Affairs, Safety and Sustainability, Kiri Hannifin says that with a diverse team of 20,000 Kiwis working across their business, signing the pledge sends a clear message.

"We want our team to always feel safe at work and the same goes for customers shopping in our stores. By signing the pledge, we're letting people know that Countdown stores are places of tolerance, respect and safety. Places where racism or hateful conduct or any kind will not be accepted."

Supporting the Human Rights Commission

The pledge has been released in support of the Human Rights Commission's latest anti-racism campaigns, Racism is no Joke and Voices of Racism, which highlight the harmful comments directed at real New Zealanders in their everyday lives, with a focus on the experiences of Chinese and Asian citizens and residents in the wake of COVID-19.

The Race Relations Commissioner Meng Foon welcomes the support of major retailers saying that, "When businesses step up to the plate, everyone benefits. I congratulate these retailers for taking this important and bold move. It will mean a safer shopping experience for all. Safer workplaces for all in Aotearoa are something that we can all agree to."

The NZ Retailers Against Racism Pledge:

We, the undersigned, pledge to:

Take a leading role in creating an inclusive New Zealand, where our workplaces are free of racism, prejudice and intolerance of any kind.

We will continue to develop and embed the policies and practices needed to proactively address racism and other forms of abuse at work. We are committed to a culture of empathy, and ensuring our team and customers always feel safe and welcome in our workplaces.

foodstuffs NORTH ISLAND

FOODSTUFFS
South Island Limited


countdown

MITRE 10

THE WAREHOUSE GROUP

 IS FOR NEW ZEALAND

Retail  NZ

For further information: www.retail.org.nz

