

CODE FOR THE PROTECTION & INCLUSION OF BLACK CONSUMERS



A publication without legal force,
but with social significance.

An

afroluxo

initiative

Production

L'ORÉAL
LUXE



Proposed Standards

BLACK SISTERS
IN LAW

Artwork

MULAMBÖ

With the Support of



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L'Oréal Luxury Brands

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SUMMARY

6	Preface - Mover		
8	Introduction		
11	Racism in Consumer Relations		
18	A Legal Perspective		
22	The Artist's Vision		
24	Code for the Protection and Inclusion of Black Consumers		
26	Judgmental Looks and Dismissive Service		
32	Making Customers Wait		
38	Restricting Movement		
44	Bag Searches		
50	Only White Staff		
		56	Using Childish Language and Treating Customers with Unwarranted Familiarity
		62	Offering a Cheaper Product or Installments
		68	Advertising with no Black Representation
		74	A Lack of Skin and Hair Products for Black Consumers
		80	A Lack of Knowledge about Skin and Hair Products for Black Consumers
		86	What to Do in Case of Racism or Racial Discrimination
		88	Conclusion and Reflections

PREFACE

Talking about how to address racism in Brazil—a country that was a central player in the transatlantic slave trade, was the last in the Americas to abolish slavery, and today is home to the largest Black population outside Africa—is both an ethical imperative and one of the keys to the nation's progress. But from a business standpoint, it is also strategic—especially for companies in the luxury segment.

Despite the structural socioeconomic inequalities between Black and non-Black Brazilians, the reality is that 37% of people in Brazil's upper-middle income brackets identify as Black or mixed race, according to the Locomotiva Institute. This represents a significant group of consumers with high purchasing power and growing cultural influence, driving sectors such as fashion, beauty, wellness, tourism, and gastronomy. In the imported

fragrance market alone, for example, approximately 40% of consumers are Black.

Even so, this reality is far from being fully recognized by brands. In many cases, Black consumers with purchasing power face subtle, yet persistent, barriers that undermine their consumer experience. From mistrustful looks to discriminatory treatment, and through product portfolios that overlook certain skin tones and hair types, there remains a gap between the discourse of inclusion and everyday practice.

This misalignment is not only unfair—it is inefficient. Ignoring Black consumers means forfeiting a significant portion of the market, risking reputational damage, and missing the opportunity to lead a necessary—and inevitable—transformation.

This guide builds on that analysis to offer actionable steps forward. It provides real-life experiences, market data, and practical guidance to help companies adopt more inclusive practices. And although it draws primarily on data from the luxury market, we know that racism in Brazil is structural and manifests systemically in consumer relations. It is, therefore, about more than just tackling inequality: it is about repositioning brands for a more competitive future, one that is in tune with Brazil's reality and better aligned with the expectations of a new type of consumer—discerning, informed, and increasingly critical of inconsistencies between purpose and practice.

If your company takes its commitment to diversity, equity, and innovation seriously, this guide is a must read.

Natália Paiva,
Executive Director, MOVER

ABOUT MOVER

Mover (Movimento pela Equidade Racial; Movement for Racial Equity) is a nonprofit association that aims at advancing racial equity through awareness-raising and by fostering the development of careers and businesses led by Black people. Today, it brings together over 50 companies that collaborate to catalyze progress toward racial inclusion through joint efforts and the sharing of best practices.

<https://somosmover.org>

INTRODUCTION

Racism in Brazil is so sophisticated that it operates silently—unspoken and undercover. While other countries resorted to codes and laws to separate white and Black people (white vs. Black neighborhoods; white vs. Black schools; white vs. Black drinking fountains; bans on interracial marriage), in Brazil, that was never necessary.

Here, racism relies on this silent mechanism to sustain itself, allowing the idea of a racial democracy—the notion that we are all equal—to take hold, and its effectiveness lies precisely in its invisibility.

Most of the time, it's subtle codes that perform the function of discrimination—a look, a word, a gesture—allowing the person behind them to avoid confronting their own conscience, and leaving those who experience it uncertain about what actually happened, and whether or not it could be understood as racism. These invisible codes, which govern

all social interactions throughout in Brazil, are inherently violent and become more evident in consumer settings. They are silent codes that determine who is welcome and who is turned away. Who is served and who is ignored. Who can move freely and who must be watched. Whose bag is searched and whose isn't.

They're not in manuals, they don't appear in training sessions, yet they operate between the lines of every consumer experience. Failing to name racism and its expressions is precisely how it sustains itself—because you can't fight what is not acknowledged.

For this reason, the study "Racism in the Luxury Beauty Retail Sector," conducted in August 2024 as part of the Afroluxo program to combat racism, played the essential role of naming what has been left unspoken. The program—led by L'Oréal Luxe, one of L'Oréal Group's business divisions in Brazil, and Mover (Movement for Racial Equity)—helped

break the pact of silence that sustains racism in the luxury market.

Twenty-one racist mechanisms were identified in the purchasing journey of Black consumers—that is, 21 ways of discriminating against, excluding, and demeaning Black people within luxury stores and commercial establishments. These experiences are not isolated incidents: on average, each consumer encounters 9.67 of these 21 racist mechanisms. Millions of consumers see their spending power ignored and their dignity harmed with each act of racism.

It is precisely to challenge this mindset that the Code for the Protection and Inclusion of Black Consumers was created—extending an invitation for companies in the luxury market to take responsibility for change and act as agents of their own transformation. This begins with recognizing the real importance of Black consumers and, from there, taking intentional and definitive action to combat racist

behavior in their consumer spaces, making the standards presented here their own. This is a call for genuine self-reflection. A call for accountability. A call to action.

The data and testimonials presented in this work come from the study “Racism in the Luxury Beauty Retail Sector,” conducted in August 2024 with Black Brazilian consumers from upper-middle-income households.

Scan to view the full study report :



RACISM IN CONSUMER RELATIONS

This statement proposes to advise the readers and reviewers of this book. This document was translated from Brazilian Portuguese into English and the content herein involves concepts, elements, and cultural constructions that are characteristic of the Brazilian population, and specific words do not have a direct match in the target language.

Given that the nature of this work involves the sensitive topic of racism, it is important to emphasize that the suggested translations proposed for any nomenclature in this file are not intended to qualify, judge, or discriminate against any individual of any race, but rather provide a linguistic match between the source and the target languages where possible.

Even though different human races do not exist, we do need to talk about race. In Brazil, race is the primary social marker. Being white or Black determines how a person is born, lives, and dies, because all social indicators—education, access to healthcare, life expectancy, and income—place white people ahead of Black people. It also determines how someone is served and treated in any commercial establishment.

This happens because Brazil is a structurally racist country. Race turns a difference (a physical attribute) into inequality, while racism creates the idea that there is a hierarchy among

races—where Black people are always at a disadvantage. It structures behaviors through repeated acts of violence against Black communities and employs a system of classification in which Black people are inevitably seen as “the other.”

In consumer interactions, racism appears when consumers are discriminated against based on skin color or tone, ethnicity, or racial features. This occurs through constant microaggressions at points of sale.

“To suffer racism is to experience a form of control based on a racialized body—a body that is socially categorized as soon as it appears: ‘There’s a Black person here in the store!’”

Roxy Manning, a psychologist specializing in nonviolent communication, defines microaggressions not for being minor or insignificant, but for being individual actions repeated countless times. Racist acts occur repeatedly and persistently, and they profoundly affect the sense of self of Black people. They create fatigue, tension, and a constant need to remain vigilant. The daily experience of Black people in Brazil involves enduring constant social pressure through looks, gestures, criticism, and exclusion.

The presence of exclusively white employees and customers, the lack of products or knowledge about the skin and hair of Black people, and inattentive or inadequate service toward Black customers undermine their confidence and, over time, turn Black people into their own main agents of exclusion: “I don’t belong here.” After repeated racist actions, the unease and negative expectations

begin well before entering the store. As a result, Black people end up being perceived as foreign bodies that do not belong.

Racist mechanisms target Black people, putting them in a constant state of vigilance and forcing them to continuously shape their behaviors as defensive strategies. These acts of violence disrupt the course of Black people’s lives, forcing them to deal with this tension—whether through resistance or submission.

Even a simple trip to a store requires a series of strategies: from preparation, to entering the store, and to how they act while inside. This entire process generates anxiety and brings up memories of past racist experiences.

“The way I would be watched for so long in spaces like shopping centers led me to develop certain protective strategies. Adopting a colder, more commanding demeanor seems to command respect and convey a sense of belonging to a higher social class, implying a perceived right to occupy certain spaces.”

“We were well dressed. The purse I chose was not a luxury brand, but it was one that carries a certain perceived status. In other words, I wasn’t trying to signal that I deserved to be treated well, but simply to be treated as a customer, not just as someone who could afford the items. These perceptions are exhausting for Black people, because they turn even a simple trip to a store into something that must be evaluated and considered from many angles.”

“Even before leaving home to go to any store, I go through a checklist: I carefully choose the type of store, consider the neighborhood or city where it is located, and decide on the best option for the situation, whether a standalone store or one inside a shopping mall. In addition to thinking about convenience and product variety, these initial decisions also serve as defensive strategies. Each choice is strategic, designed to anticipate how I might be approached when I enter these stores. Because unfortunately, the way I am perceived can change depending on the environment and the type of clientele that frequents the location.”

“It’s not just a shopping trip, but an experience loaded with expectations and precautions, where every detail matters in how I will be received and treated.”

“The tone of my voice, the words I choose, speaking ‘standard’ Portuguese, or using the correct intonation when talking about foreign-language products— all to show that, despite being Black, this is a space where I belong as a customer. It isn’t something I consciously thought about; it’s something I’ve automated over the years.”

“I notice that during a customer service interaction, some barriers begin to break down as I am seen as someone articulate. The tone changes, and I start to be recognized—even if only by a single salesperson—as a customer.”

“When I go to the mall, I make sure I’m well put together. I worry excessively about my appearance and about what people will think of me. This defensive posture acts as a protective mechanism in response to some embarrassing situations I’ve experienced.”

The image you project when entering a store environment is also crucial. What to wear and what to avoid—clothes, accessories, perfumes, and hairstyles—is always a concern that goes beyond simply looking ‘presentable’.

In this sense, we can say that Black people carry a double burden: in addition to being the target of violence, they are responsible for creating racial comfort through actions that begin long before arriving at the store—often mentally rehearsing their posture, words, and tone of voice to signal their suitability as customers, demonstrating that they are not a threat, that they won’t cause any trouble, and trying not to draw attention.

This cycle makes any consumer environment—especially luxury ones—intimidating and requiring of courage. Even a simple visit to a store can cause insecurity, anxiety, and trigger traumas linked to previous experiences of racism.



A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

In our African philosophy there is a proverb that says, “When two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.” This reminds us that the cumulative effects of various actions can affect, harm, and silence future possibilities, as well as prevent the empowerment of marginalized groups. In our ideal world—through the lens of our *Wakanda*—everyone would be treated equitably, without reproducing the systemic power that upholds the myth of racial meritocracy.

For this reason, we are immensely proud of the outcome of this partnership between *Black Sisters in Law* and L’Oréal Luxe, as part of a larger movement within the Brazilian diaspora, resulting in this groundbreaking work. This initiative arose from the need to broaden the discussion around the rights of Black consumers, highlighting that current legislation, although it guarantees rights in general terms, is insufficient to address the inequalities affecting this population.

Brazil’s Consumer Protection Code (CDC, in Portuguese) has as its primary purpose to regulate consumer relations on an equal basis, as established in Article 4. Although it includes provisions that guarantee non-discriminatory treatment regardless of color, as it was drafted in broad terms, it cannot cover all possible manifestations of racism. Just as criminal legislation has evolved and adapted—creating new laws that effectively protect Black people—we hold that the CDC must evolve in the same way.

Drawing on a review of the CDC, the Code for the Protection and Inclusion of Black Consumers was created with the purpose of addressing racial inequalities perpetuated by discriminatory practices in the luxury consumer market, which directly affect the respect for the human dignity of Black consumers. To this end, we referenced key provisions of the 1988 Federal Constitution and the CDC (Law No. 8,078/1990), expanding on their interpretation to ensure more effective protection for Black people.

We are also faced with the challenging task of drafting effective regulatory proposals that address the enduring effects of nearly 400 years of slavery in our country.

As in all other sectors, the timeline of Law in Brazil is also marked by prejudice and attempts to exclude Black people. In 1824—even though we were forced to serve the country—we were not yet recognized as “Brazilian citizens.” Later, we turned our attention to another part of this difficult struggle and asked: how many legal filings and defenses did our true abolitionists need before the Golden Law was finally signed in 1888? This law, summarized in just two lines, marked the end of a long period of slavery, yet it did not provide housing, access to education, or financial reparations—much less the right to stop being treated as “things” in the many forms of social interaction.

Since then, time has passed, but the legacies remain. In 1988, our Constitution was updated, followed by additional complementary legislation over the decades, including the CDC. Although it came into effect in 1990—35 years ago—it was created, drafted, and enacted mostly by white legislators, without taking our existence or our voices into account, and certainly without consulting on the major challenges faced in the struggle to be recognized as consumers. For this reason, Black people gained their space, but without achieving the desired effect, as we continue to be faced with the toxic mindset of a nation shaped by the customs and ambitions of the oppressor.

We have therefore organized this Code into clear, straightforward proposals that guide readers to understand the actions necessary to eliminate racist violence from the everyday experiences of Black consumers in high-end retail spaces, as well as the structures that perpetuate racism in even the most subtle ways that violate the fundamental right to exist.

Our approach has been to establish practical, concrete standards aimed at reducing harm and eliminating all discriminatory behavior, conduct, and actions in our country. These can be implemented by any company that wishes to do so, as part of a self-regulation process, since what we propose here does not override the law but rather complements it.

It is also worth highlighting that we, as members of *Black Sisters In Law*, work to open up future possibilities, and we have already impacted more than 7,000 female lawyers and law students working in diverse fields, across borders. In many ways, we are

part of a larger movement to combat and overcome racism against Black people.

Dione Assis,
Founder, Black Sisters in Law

ABOUT THE BLACK SISTERS IN LAW

An initiative to promote the social and economic mobility of Black women in the legal field, through professional opportunities that allow them to practice law with dignity.

Today, the project supports over 7,000 Black women working in the legal profession.

www.blacksistersinlaw.com.br



THE ARTIST'S VISION

It's projects like this one that make everything I've overcome to embrace my identity as an artist truly worthwhile.

I, along with the people I love, have experienced many of the situations discussed in this book. Being able to use the voice that art and my work have given me to confront these daily acts of violence is what gives meaning to my words, my body, and my hands when I say, "I am an artist." I was able to become an artist because so many paved the way before me, and I do this so that others may follow and continue

long after I'm gone.

When I accepted the invitation to create the visual and artistic component of the Code for the Protection and Inclusion of Black Consumers, everything unfolded very naturally, since the experiences explored here are deeply present in my own life. And visually bringing to life the insights and strategies presented in this book aligns with the way I've always worked as an artist.

The idea that inspired me and served as the starting point for all my creations was that we—our bodies, our desires, and our stories— can no longer be constrained by the acts of violence inflicted upon us in so many spaces. The artwork here is a blend of protest, affirmation, and intentionality.

The intention was to celebrate who we are—our complexities, our richness, our inner lives—and to show that we belong in these spaces. That's why we will always carry our stories with us in every step we take forward.

Art cannot erase the pain, but if it offers even a measure of comfort to those who feel it, then it has served its purpose.

**João Gabriel Silveira da Motta,
Mulambö**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

He was born João Gabriel (1995) and grew up as Mulambö in Praia da Vila, Saquarema, Rio de Janeiro, where he still lives and works. In his art, he explores themes such as racism, social inequality, and the Black experience in Brazilian society. He has participated in major national and international exhibitions, including "Direito à Forma" (2023) at the Inhotim Institute and "Histórias Brasileiras" (2022) at the MASP, as well as solo shows such as "MUCHOS MÁS" (2021) at Das Schaufenster in Seattle, and "Punta de Lanza" (2023) at Homesession in Barcelona. His works are part of collections such as the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, the Museu de Arte do Rio, MAC Niterói, and Inhotim.

www.mulambeta.com.br

CODE FOR THE PROTECTION AND INCLUSION OF BLACK CONSUMERS

1.

JUDGMENTAL LOOKS AND DISMISSIVE SERVICE

Racism operates on many fronts and employs many strategies, one of which is to create a climate of exclusion without saying a single word—simply through behaviors that are often practically invisible to those who are not its target. Slow service, a sigh, a tone of voice that conveys disdain and skepticism.

The “look” is one of the main tools of racism: it’s harsh, subtle, fleeting, and only fully felt by those on the receiving end. Most of the time, these acts of violence aren’t blatant—they’re subtle, hovering just short of being overt—which makes them especially effective, since it’s difficult to call them out or counter them.

Beyond the “look,” the way people speak when serving Black customers is also a means of distancing and diminishing them. It is very common for Black people to receive monosyllabic service—that is, short, curt responses limited to yes/no answers or overly brief replies that demonstrate an unwillingness to understand or attend to the needs

and desires of the customer. Like the look, dismissive service also “absolves” those who exhibit it from being accused of violence, since nothing is stated explicitly.

How can you accuse someone of giving a judgmental look or of making another person feel inferior? How can you show that the way someone spoke created the sense that the person did not belong there? And yet, these expressions are effective—precisely because people can’t be held accountable for them.

I felt I was being looked at in a judging way:

55%

I was served with disdain, dismissed, or given curt, one-word responses:

51%

“It’s a judging look, like they’re really watching you. It follows you, and if you turn down an aisle, it goes with you.”

“I felt like I was being a bother. I wasn’t offered any options, nor was I treated with the same attentiveness as the white woman served earlier by the same salesperson.”

“What stands out most is the look—that look of disdain—or, sometimes, you call a salesperson for help and they don’t come.”

“The salesperson didn’t treat me badly per se, but she didn’t make any effort to understand or answer my questions. She didn’t treat me with obvious contempt, but she didn’t offer other options or try to understand what I was looking for.”

“It can be a look that sizes you up, one that scans you from head to toe. It can be a look of disdain or indifference. It can even be a look of mockery, of questioning, or even of surprise and curiosity, as if to ask, ‘What is she doing here?’”

A large, stylized graphic of a human eye, rendered in shades of brown, tan, and black. The eye is looking towards the left. The iris is a solid black circle, and the surrounding areas are composed of concentric, overlapping semi-circular bands in various shades of brown and tan, creating a layered, organic effect.

ICY STARES THAT SCREAM OUT: THIS PLACE ISN'T FOR YOU.

Proposed Standard:

Article 1. Establishments must provide at least six hours of annual racial literacy training for its employees and staff, conducted by specialized external consultancies, aiming to eradicate racist biases and practices (both verbal and nonverbal).

2.

NOT SERVING CUSTOMERS OR MAKING THEM WAIT, PRIORITIZING OTHER CUSTOMERS

Racism creates the mistaken perception that Black people do not belong to affluent social groups, lack purchasing power, do not consume, and therefore are not customers. This factor alone often leads to Black customers being ignored or overlooked.

But the discriminatory mindset that shapes customer service goes even further. In retail settings, sales staff are expected to make sales—after all, their income often depends on it. As a result, the quality of service tends to depend directly on the salesperson’s assessment of a customer’s socioeconomic status, since that determines their perceived likelihood of making a purchase.

This approach overlooks two very important factors that challenge the logic behind it. First, a sale does not necessarily depend on the customer’s purchasing power. Today, there are countless ways to make a purchase even without immediate resources: payments can be made in installments, costs can be shared with others, and various lines of credit are available through different institutions, to name just a few.

Secondly, this line of thinking ignores the fact that the socioeconomic reading a salesperson makes of someone entering the store can be mistaken: a person may have purchasing power even if they don’t conform to the expected social class norms.

It is because of this dynamic that Black customers find themselves having to justify, prove, or demonstrate their purchasing power in order to be served and to ensure their presence is not ignored.

There are other reasons, beyond an assumed lack of purchasing power, for why Black customers may not be served. Ignoring or taking longer to serve Black customers is also a way of reinforcing a slaveholding mentality in which Black people’s role is to serve. It is a highly effective way of signaling that Black people do not belong in that space—that they are foreign bodies in the environment—putting pressure on them to leave. In practice, it renders the Black customer invisible, as salespeople don’t look at them, diminishing their importance and denying their presence.

Using this strategy of ignoring and refusing to serve Black customers is a form of discrimination that, although it involves a “non-action,” is quite insidious and effective, since it cannot be called out.

This form of violence also relies on a deceptive tactic, making the victim feel like the guilty one, prompting thoughts that attribute the incident to the Black customer’s own perceived shortcomings: I wasn’t helped because I was dressed the wrong way, because I didn’t act the right way, etc.

Taking reparative action by ensuring prompt service to Black customers is key to breaking this pattern.

54%

I was ignored or made to wait,
while other people went ahead of me.

“There are some stores where no one comes over to ask if you need help. These people assume you can’t afford to buy anything. Sometimes it’s salespeople who haven’t had any training—they look you up and down but have no idea how much money you have. This happens a lot to people with Black skin. The staff just don’t know how to interact with a Black customer.”

TIME
IS RELATIVE:
BLACK
CUSTOMERS
ARE
LEFT OUT
WAITING.



Proposed Standard:

Article 2. Establishments have a duty to provide prompt service to Black customers, ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect, thereby addressing the issue of social invisibility.

Paragraph 1. Employees must be instructed to provide prompt service to Black customers entering the establishment, except when they are already helping another customer. In such cases, the Black customer must be assisted as soon as a staff member becomes available.

3.

OBSTRUCTING FREE ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Racism causes Black people to be routinely perceived as a threat, with their presence viewed as a risk to the mall, the store, and those around them.

Some situations are more obvious than others. It's blatant when a security guard follows a Black customer or searches their bag, and more subtle—and harder to notice—when a salesperson stands in front of a Black customer, blocking their way while politely asking what they would like.

Black people often face situations where their right to move freely is violated, feeling watched and restricted, and having to avoid ordinary gestures in a store, such as handling products or reaching into their bag.

Racist violence has a lasting, traumatic effect, leading Black customers to internalize caution in their gestures so much that these restrictions can feel natural even to themselves. Often, they adopt

defensive behaviors or avoid certain areas of the store without any prompting from staff, in an effort to prevent “misunderstandings.”

A Black customer doesn't even need to be the direct target of these subtle forms of exclusion to be affected. The intimidating effect also arises from witnessing other Black people being monitored: what happens to others is experienced as if it were happening to oneself, shaped by past experiences.

I was prevented
from entering
certain places:

18%

I avoided opening/handling my
purse or bag to avoid giving the
wrong impression:

30%

I avoided touching/
handling products
in the store:

36%

I felt watched
in certain
establishments:

74%

“The tall security guard at the store entrance opens the door before I can even reach the handle, greeting me coldly and asserting his presence in an almost intimidating way.”

“The lady greeted me at the door shortly after I entered, politely, but blocking my way until I said something. Once I was inside, I saw that she stayed nearby, though she was occupied with other things.”

“I’m watched almost constantly, as if I had a second shadow, with a vigilant eye whenever I handle products, which inevitably makes me feel uncomfortable and restricted while trying to make a simple purchase.”

“The presence of that man (a security guard) makes me feel unsettled. It reminds me that I’m Black and could be subjected to hostility, that I’m being watched.”



FREEDOM OF
MOVEMENT,
IS A RIGHT
NOT A LUXURY.

Proposed Standard:

Article 3. Establishments must not impose physical or symbolic barriers that restrict Black customers' access to products on display or available to other customers, nor limit their free movement or presence within the commercial space. Equal access must be guaranteed, without time limits.

Paragraph 1. Staff must clearly and verbally inform Black customers that they are free to move throughout the establishment and handle products on display, actively ensuring their full freedom and safety within the environment.

4.

ASKING TO SEARCH MY BAG

Racism relentlessly casts Black people as a threat. Over centuries, the idea that Black people—especially men—are violent, dangerous, or criminals has been built and reinforced. Consequently, in Brazil, Black people are the ones whose bags are constantly searched.

This violates personal space, and privacy, and it reverses the usual assumptions: rather than assuming someone is innocent until proven guilty, they are presumed guilty until a bag search proves otherwise. This is racism and stereotyping in action.

It's no surprise, then, that Black customers are constantly thinking about their bags and backpacks. Depending on the store, they carefully choose which bag to bring, question its size, or even consider going out without one. They make sure to keep their bag closed while in the store, avoid opening it at all costs, and refrain from handling products—or even their own belongings—while inside, carrying receipts for their most valuable items (for example, to prove that their phone wasn't stolen).

I've been asked to have my
bag or backpack searched:

18%

“We were at the mall with our backpacks, and security guards were following us. At the time, since we were younger, we didn’t understand what was happening. But now I understand: because of our clothing, because we had backpacks, like workers—not shoppers; like some ‘petty thieves.’ Two teenagers, at 2 p.m., without shopping bags or anything—they must be up to something.”

“When I go shopping with my girlfriend, who is also Black but has lighter skin, I give her my bag, because I’m darker skinned and I know that in any uncomfortable situation, I’m more likely to be targeted. When I go alone, I avoid carrying bags—just my wallet, card, or cash that’s easy to access, preferably within easy reach.”



IF YOU
SEARCH MY BAG,
YOU'LL ONLY FIND
YOUR OWN RACISM.

Proposed Standard:

Article 4. Establishments must exercise caution when approaching a Black customer to request a bag search. Such a request should occur only when there is clear and unequivocal evidence, which must be presented to the customer prior to any search and in strict compliance with established protocols.

I – When the security alarm is triggered.

II – When there is an eyewitness, that person must be a company representative.

III – When the incident is recorded on security cameras.

IV – In such cases, access to the recordings must be ensured.

Paragraph 1. A search may only be conducted if there is clear evidence of theft and the protocols outlined above are followed. If the suspicion is unfounded, the Black customer has the right to refuse the search and immediately contact the police so that the search can be conducted by officers.

5.

ONLY
WHITE
SALES
PEOPLE

In a country where 56% of the population is Black, it is unjustifiable to claim that hiring Black people for customer service positions is difficult. In reality, these claims are used as an excuse, and Black employees remain underrepresented: the more an establishment caters to wealthier customers, the lower the representation of Black staff.

When a shop has only white employees, it reinforces white presence and marginalizes Black customers, conveying that they do not belong and that their needs and preferences will not be understood or adequately addressed.

In contrast, when a store employs Black staff, it shows that Black people belong, subtly signaling that Black customers are welcome and fostering a more inclusive space.

I avoid shops with only white salespeople:

21%

“In high-end stores, there are very few Black or mixed-race employees. And I think the owner’s aim is to create a sense of belonging for the brand’s target audience: white customers.”

“Some of the staff are Black, which makes me feel more at ease. I don’t feel completely out of place.”

“I notice a variety of people, though most are white, and even some foreigners browsing the store. That makes me feel a bit uneasy.”

THERE WAS A BLACKOUT IN HR: THEY FORGOT TO HIRE ANY BLACK PEOPLE.

Proposed Standard:

Article 5. Establishments must implement inclusive measures to promote the hiring of Black employees, aiming for Black representation comparable to that of the local population.

Paragraph 1. There should be at least one Black employee on every shift.



6.

USING CHILDISH LANGUAGE AND TREATING CUSTOMERS WITH UNWARRANTED FAMILIARITY, USING NICKNAMES, OR INVADING PERSONAL SPACE

Racism is the belief that differences establish a hierarchy, meaning that being Black makes a person inherently inferior to everyone else.

Language is a powerful way to show someone that they are regarded as inferior. Using diminutives or nicknames is one way this happens, conveying that the person being addressed can be treated with less formality and is not entitled to the same standard of service and respect as other customers.

Addressing someone as “sweetie” when a friendly rapport—however fleeting—has been established is a sign of affection. But using the same term with someone with whom no friendly exchange has yet taken place is a way of showing that the person has no power to determine how they will be spoken to or their role in the interaction, thereby signaling their inferiority.

Another example is the use of diminutives, which, in addition to belittling, infantilizes the person being addressed, signaling not only their inferiority but also their supposed inability to understand what is being said. This also includes condescending language, in which

the speaker assumes the person lacks the basic knowledge to discuss a topic. The speaker may also frame the person as exceptional when they demonstrate the expected vocabulary and understanding, treating them as remarkable simply for possessing material or intellectual resources not typically expected of a Black person.

Another way of marking social boundaries is through body language. Everyone has “personal space”—a distance that should be maintained when approaching others. This distance is, of course, variable: the closer we are to someone, the smaller the space can be; conversely, the less we know someone, the greater the distance. Invading this personal space is, therefore, a clear demonstration of disrespect and devaluation.

I was treated with too much familiarity, using nicknames or invading my personal space:

27%

I noticed they used a different way of speaking with me, as if I couldn't understand what they were saying:

37%

"Sometimes the salesperson thinks that just because we're Black, they have to address us with terms like "girl," "auntie," "honey," or "sweetie." If a blonde woman walks in, they don't do this—it's "ma'am" or "Ms."

"Sometimes the person adjusts their speech, assuming we won't understand or lack the education to grasp what they're saying."



I'LL LET
YOU IN ON
A SECRET:
WE ARE NOT
GIRLFRIENDS.

Proposed Standard:

Article 6. Black customers must be treated with respect and dignity. Any discriminatory behavior is strictly prohibited, including the use of stereotypes or offensive language.

§ 1. It is strictly forbidden to use nicknames or any other form of derogatory language when interacting with Black customers.

§ 2. Physical contact with Black customers is not permitted, unless it is explicitly requested or consented to.

7.

WITHOUT
ASKING,
STATING THE PRICE,
OFFERING A
CHEAPER PRODUCT,
OR SUGGESTING
INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS,
ASSUMING THE
CUSTOMER CANNOT
AFFORD IT

With Black customers, doubts about their ability to pay often appear in how staff interact with them, seemingly inoffensive at first but reflecting ingrained biases.

One frequent example is placing immediate emphasis on the price when a Black customer expresses interest. Rather than presenting the product's features and benefits, the salesperson focuses on the cost, sending an unspoken message: "See if you can afford this first."

Another way this happens is by offering a sale item or cheaper alternative without the customer requesting it. For example, when a customer asks for a specific product or brand, the salesperson may suggest something else, saying it's cheaper or on sale. This often unconscious behavior reflects a snap judgment that, for this customer, price matters more than their real needs and preferences.

All of these are ways of expressing judgments about a Black customer's competence, value, and worth.

Without me asking, I was told about discounts, installment plans, sales, and payment options:

69%

I was given the price before I even asked, implying that I couldn't afford it:

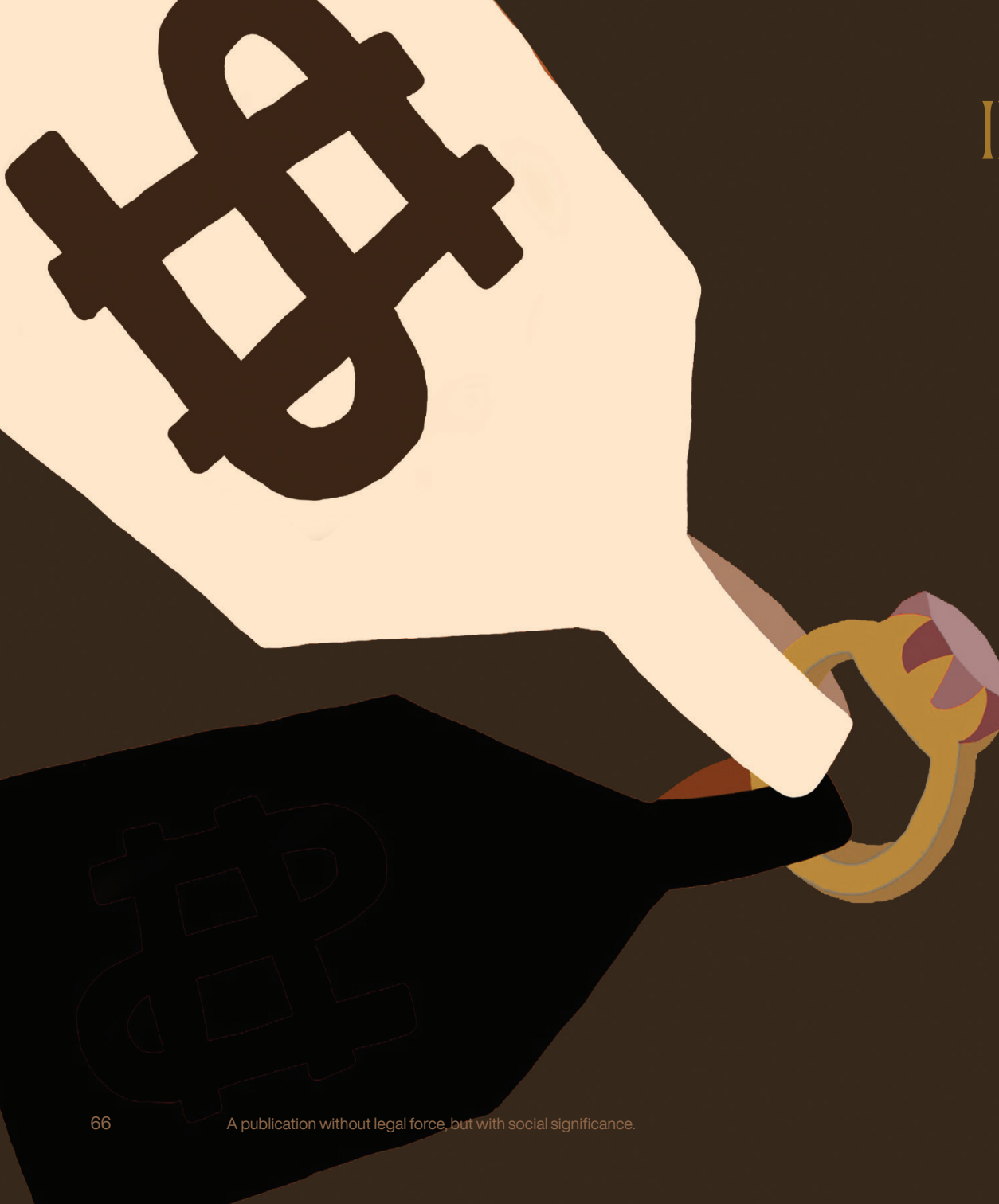
58%

I was presented with a cheaper alternative to the item or service I had requested:

57%

“When I got into the store, a young woman noticed me looking at a product and came over. I explained what I wanted, and she led me to a section with ‘affordable’ items. That’s when I understood how race and socioeconomic status are connected. Staff adjust how they treat customers based on these signals, and it ultimately shapes the service they receive.”

“I usually walk into the store knowing I’ll buy something, because the way staff treat me makes it clear that they don’t expect me to be able to afford anything.”



IF THE FIRST THING THEY MENTION IS THE PRICE, THEIR PREJUDICE IS LOUD AND CLEAR.

Proposed Standard:

Article 7. All information on prices and payment conditions must be made clear and accessible, in accordance with applicable law. However, staff may not verbally provide the price of a product unless the customer specifically requests it.

Paragraph 1. Details about payment plans, installments, and discounts may be shared during or at the end of the interaction, but should not be mentioned when first approaching the customer.

8.

ADVERTISING WITH NO BLACK REPRESENTATION

The historic lack of Black representation in advertising has serious effects. Walking into a store where all images and advertisements show only white people sends Black customers the implicit—even if unintentional—message that they don't belong there and aren't welcome.

In a country where Black people make up the majority of the population (56%), this absence of representation highlights a disconnect with the reality of society. Advertising, as a mirror of society, should represent Brazil's diversity in an authentic and inclusive way.

In recent years, as discussions around diversity and inclusion have grown, the presence of Black people in advertising has increased. Yet these portrayals often rely on racist stereotypes, presenting exoticized or clichéd images that, rather than fostering inclusion, reinforce exclusion.

The promotional materials in
the store didn't represent me:

47%

*“We’re not represented there. It’s always
the same European-style models.”*

*“I see that the luxury market is more
open to Black representation in images,
runway shows, and ads, but it still frames
Black people as exotic, fashionable, bold,
creative, and innovative—rather than as
real human beings or consumers. It’s not
representation that allows Black people to
truly see themselves there.”*

NO DIVERSITY, NO DEAL.

Proposed Standard:

Article 8. Establishments must ensure that visual communication (advertising) at their points of sale includes Black people, without perpetuating exoticized or racist stereotypes.

9.

A LACK OF SKIN AND HAIR PRODUCTS FOR BLACK CONSUMERS

The absence of products specifically for Black hair and skin in beauty establishments is an effective, though often subtle, way of discouraging the presence of this population in these spaces. The lack of options sends the message that Black bodies are not considered important—or that Black beauty is neither desirable nor profitable.

A common justification—the supposed low demand for these products—seems paradoxical in a country where most of the population is Black. How can demand be measured if there is no supply? This creates a vicious cycle: the lack of products prevents an accurate assessment of real demand, which in turn perpetuates the scarcity.

This is more than just a market issue. The absence of representation and the limited range of products for Black consumers expose a form of social exclusion that upholds Eurocentric beauty ideals and sustains historical inequalities.

Excluding Black women and men from the worlds of consumption and beauty sends the message that they are undeserving of attention, care, or admiration.

There were no products for
my skin tone/color or
hair type:

37%

*“I always go to buy makeup,
and they rarely have my color.
It’s really hard to find, and
sometimes I even felt hesitant
about asking the sales staff. You
get a look that says, ‘What does
she want? There’s nothing here
for her.’”*

NO REPRESENTATION ON THE SHELVES: LACK OF STOCK OR LACK OF INTEREST?



Proposed Standard:

Article 9. Beauty product retailers must keep sufficient stock, proportional to the size of the store and customer traffic, ensuring the availability of products suitable for Black consumers, including various skin tones and hair types.

Paragraph 1. If a product is out of stock, retailers must not offer substitutes or larger quantities than the consumer intended to buy, especially if these do not fully meet the consumer's specific needs, which could lead them to the wrong choice.

Practical Example | Makeup

When the exact shade of foundation, concealer, or powder is unavailable, staff must not offer lighter or darker alternatives, nor suggest buying two shades to mix, as this would make the consumer spend twice as much to get the result they would have achieved with the correct product.

10.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT BLACK SKIN AND HAIR

Brazil is home to the largest Black population outside Africa — around 120 million people. This diversity is reflected in a wide range of skin tones (55 of the 66 classified globally) and hair types (all eight recognized types are found here). For those working in the beauty industry, understanding this diverse consumer profile is essential to building connection, loyalty, and achieving better business results.

It's important to recognize that the quality of customer service is shaped long before a client even steps into the store, and one of the key factors is training. Investing in technical training on products, skin tone and hair variations, and practical skills—such as properly applying makeup on Black skin or mastering techniques specific to Afro-textured hair—determines how well professionals are prepared to serve Black clients, significantly increasing customer satisfaction and the perceived value

of the brand.

Ignoring these needs directly affects the quality of service. Without proper training, staff tend to offer generic experiences, which can alienate an important and growing customer base. Even worse, the lack of preparation may be seen as indifference or even neglect toward these consumers.

Including diversity in customer service and training strategies is not just a matter of representation — it's a smart business decision.

The staff didn't have the knowledge to be able to recommend products suited to my skin or hair type:

43%

"I think the saleswoman should have a general understanding of the products in the store, but often they don't know how to recommend a cream that works for my curly hair or a shampoo that fits with what I'm looking for."



IF YOU CARE, KNOW MY HAIR.

Proposed Standard:

Article 10. Establishments that sell beauty products or services must adopt inclusive measures, ensuring the technical training of all employees and staff, with proper education and specialization to serve Black consumers, taking their specific needs into account.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF RACISM OR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

1. Record the incident:

Write down the store name, date, time, and describe what happened.

2. Find witnesses:

If possible, ask for statements from others who witnessed the incident or record it on video.

3. File a report:

. PROCON: Report the situation to the consumer protection agency.

. Specialized police stations: Some cities have police units dedicated to discrimination crimes.

. Public Prosecutor's Office: File a formal complaint to have the matter investigated.

4. Take legal action:

Seek a lawyer or public defender to file a lawsuit based on the CDC, Law No. 7,716/1989 (the Anti-Racism Act), and Law No. 14,532/2023 (which treats racially offensive remarks as equivalent to the crime of racism.).

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

In 2025, 137 years after the abolition of slavery in Brazil, there is still a need to create regulations that ensure dignified, fair, and respectful treatment for Black people. The Code for the Protection and Inclusion of Black Consumers does not aim to grant special privileges, but rather to ensure the effective exercise of rights already provided for in the Brazilian Constitution and yet still routinely denied.

This code is a tool for defending a population historically subjected to exclusion, discrimination, and violence. It represents a refusal to remain silent and an invitation to dialogue, grounded in the belief that meaningful change can only be achieved through strong, resonant voices capable of creating a lasting echo in society. This code exists so that, one day, it will no longer be necessary.

