

Lumumba sues Collingwood and the AFL over racism claims

Heritier Lumumba is suing Collingwood and the AFL over racist abuse he says he was subject to during his time as a player.



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By Anthony Colangelo
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In documents filed in the Supreme Court on Wednesday, Lumumba alleges Collingwood breached their "duty of care" toward him to provide a safe working environment because of the abuse.

The documents go on to allege the AFL "owed a duty to the plaintiff [Lumumba] to take reasonable steps to prevent players subjecting other players to racial abuse and racially-offensive conduct, and to impose sanctions on players who breached those rules".

"On numerous occasions during his employment, the plaintiff was subjected to racial abuse or racially-offensive conduct," the court documents read.

"[Collingwood] failed to take any or any sufficient steps to provide and maintain a safe working environment, including by protecting the plaintiff from racial abuse or racially-offensive conduct.

Lumumba alleges the AFL did not take any steps to stop the abuse or "racially offensive conduct".

"By reason of the matters set out above, the plaintiff has suffered loss, damage, and injury including trauma, humiliation, distress, and loss of enjoyment," the claim reads.

He says the abuse and racially offensive conduct stopped when he was traded to Melbourne in 2014.

In June the Pies appointed Indigenous professor Larissa Behrendt to lead an independent review into the culture at Collingwood during Lumumba's time at the club.

The findings will be handed to the club's integrity committee which comprises chief executive Mark Anderson and board members Peter Murphy and Jodie Sizer.

The AFL, Collingwood and Lumumba have been contacted for comment. But the AFL chose not to comment.

The documents do not detail any specific examples or circumstances where Lumumba was allegedly vilified.

However, in the past, Lumumba has claimed he was nicknamed "Chimp" while at the club.

Lumumba first detailed his time at the club and the AFL and the alleged treatment he was subject to in an SBS documentary called Fair Game.

Since then he has repeatedly used social media to voice his claims and seek an apology from Collingwood.

President Eddie McGuire spoke about the club investigation in June.

"We're going to do this forensically but we're not looking to prosecute," McGuire said.

"We want to find what's gone on. I've spoken to some people and I've found different things, the nuances that I had no idea [about].

"This is a search for the truth, this is something that's felt very deeply by everyone at the club and we want to find the truth and that will probably be everyone's truth."