



Statement of Racial Equity Considerations

Below are considerations COHH is asking providers and partners to take into consideration in order to center race equity in our communities and overall COVID-19 response:

- Conduct our work in a way that centers equity in all decisions, strategies, goals, and outcomes.
- Keep in mind that we are making decisions for individuals who are not adequately represented in leadership and understand that the decisions we make could have a disparate impact: we will encourage applications and hiring priorities and committee selections for people who are representative of the communities we serve.
- Understand that the persons on the frontlines and the persons in the homeless system are disproportionately persons of color, particularly in urban cities. Racial minorities are overrepresented in many vulnerable groups and may feel the impact of COVID-19 in greater way.
- Strive to understand how this pandemic will affect different populations/minority groups. For example, where are isolation and quarantine facilities located and accessibility to people of color?
- Research (1) shows that persons of color may not receive the same level of care and service as others in private and public US institutions, including social welfare, judicial, economic, and healthcare systems. Ensure you are advocating for individuals to be served with the highest standards.
- Understand the historic issues (2) that have caused distrust between minority groups, specifically persons of color, and the US healthcare system, and how this might play out when working with clients who present with symptoms, but may be resistant to going to the hospital.
- The lack of fair credit and banking services for persons of color play a significant role in housing discrimination. Ensure you are advocating for fair access to credit and other banking services. Encourage financial institutions to proactively reach out to communities of color.
- Remove barriers to housing where possible, especially in terms of client experience with the criminal justice system. persons of color are incarcerated at far higher rates than other groups (3) and, therefore, may need more help finding housing.
- Remove barriers to shelter related to employment and work schedules. Racial minorities make up a large portion of essential workers, which places them in more danger of exposure to COVID-19 (4).
- Significantly reduce dependence on law enforcement in matters pertaining to civil, non-emergency dispute resolution thus mitigating the risk of potentially exposing Racial minorities to jail or prison time resulting in reduced exposure to COVID-19 in Federal and/or State prisons.
- Lastly, solutions should emphasize transformative and long-term solutions that impact multiple systems. Here's what that might look like:
 - Identifying/supporting undervalued and under-resourced organizations that are led by or in deep relationships with racial, ethnic, and other minorities.
 - Building equity into the structure of the response system by gathering input, advice and recommendations on an on-going basis.
 - Encourage public and private institutions that serve persons of color who are impacted by COVID-19 to proactively work to reduce institutional barriers to equitable service.
 - Prioritizing the creation of new permanent housing solutions that ensure housing stability and protections for the lowest-income renters, and not just during times of crisis.

Advocacy organizations, nonprofits, and media outlets are highlighting how communities of color, low-wage workers, and incarcerated or otherwise detained and homeless populations are at disproportionate risk of being affected by the coronavirus and response to its spread. In times of crisis, we tend to push

matters of this nature further down our priority list. Race equity work should not be the can we kick down the road, but rather the work we lift up and center in these unprecedented times.

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3540621/> Health Disparities: Gaps in Access, Quality and Affordability of Medical Care by Wayne J. Riley, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP
2. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/racial-differences-doctors.html> The 1619 Project
3. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/color-of-justice-racial-and-ethnic-disparity-in-state-prisons/> The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons by Ashley Nellis, Ph.D
4. <https://www.aclum.org/en/publications/data-show-covid-19-hitting-essential-workers-and-people-color-hardest> by Lauren Chambers
- 5 <https://www.10tv.com/article/union-president-says-ohio-department-rehabilitation-and-correction-not-preparedcoronavirus> by Bennett Haerberle