

# Statement of Commitment to Anti-Racism

*Commonwealth of Kentucky*

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**CHFS**

KENTUCKY  
Cabinet for Health and  
Family Services

# Statement from DBHDID

Racism is a public health issue with roots in historical trauma such as slavery and the onslaught against the indigenous peoples of this land. In creating and sustaining systems of power that dehumanize, marginalize, and kill Black people and people of color, each of us is diminished. The recent murders of Black Americans including Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and David McAtee is a painful reminder that those roots have produced realities that impede quality of life at best, or are deadly at worst. We are making a comprehensive commitment to becoming an Anti-Racist organization. This means we take an active position on identifying, addressing, and eliminating outcomes that are the result of systemic and structural racism. This journey requires our urgency, our courage, our intentionality, and our vulnerability. We will make mistakes along the way, we will learn from those mistakes, and we will continue to build back better than before. We also know that implementing an Anti-Racism framework will have universal benefits in addressing all forms of discrimination and inequities; this is an inclusive strategy. We stand ready to support all staff in this commitment, and will work to ensure that everyone has the skills, tools, and capacity to utilize an Anti-Racism framework in the work that they do. Be sure to communicate with your supervisor or with leadership should you have any questions or concerns. This effort will not rest on the shoulders of any one leader, but demands leadership from each of us. This is all of our work, and rather than being a separate initiative, will influence the way we fundamentally do business. We need your ideas, your dreams, and your bold vision for a department where race will never influence experiences or opportunities. The following commitments articulate what it means for us to implement an Anti-Racism framework. Though not exhaustive, it is a starting point for us to have shared language. Please read them and think about how they resonate with you. Thank you for your partnership and for the inspiring work that you do.

# Commitment 1:

## We commit to declaring that Black Lives Matter.

Black people in our country continue to experience police brutality, systemic, and structural racism.

We do not seek to invalidate the value of other lives, instead, to ensure that Black life is valued in all of the meaningful ways we value other lives.

## Commitment 2:

We commit to recognizing and operationalizing the intersection of Trauma-Informed Care and Anti-Racism.

To be Trauma-Informed is to be Anti-Racist, and to be Anti-Racist is to be Trauma-Informed.

One cannot occur without the other, and therefore we must integrate both into all aspects of our work.

## Commitment 3:

We commit to inserting Anti-Racism language into our mission, vision, and strategic plan.

We must be clear, explicit, and concise with our commitment.

Adding Anti-Racism framing to these documents supports efforts for sustained focus and accountability.

# Commitment 4:

We commit to building and sustaining internal capacity, including change teams, to advance and sustain Anti-Racism in our organization.

Anti-Racism requires sustained commitment.

We cannot respond only in moments of crisis; we must obligate structure, strategy, and resources for the foreseeable future to ensure we create an environment where Anti-Racism is always a part of the way we do business.

# Commitment 5:

We commit to disaggregating our data by race and engaging in continuous quality improvement activities to reduce racial inequities.

Disaggregating data by race allows us to clearly identify disparities and where efforts must be concentrated.

We must inspect what we expect.

# Commitment 6:

We commit to building an organizational management culture that honestly and courageously acknowledges and addresses racial injustice and centers the emotional needs of Black staff and staff of color in the workplace.

The silence of leaders and colleagues in the face of racial injustice is painful and diminishing.

In order for our organizations to demonstrate commitment to Anti-Racism, leaders have to articulate a desire to support racial justice and create safe spaces for staff to focus on their healing and access needed supportive resources.



# Commitment 7:

We commit to having all staff and leadership immersed, trained, and engaged in an Anti-Racism framework.

Organizational staff and leaders need new skills and capacity to achieve an Anti-Racism framework.

Training, learning, and development should be an ongoing process for the organization to respond to emerging needs.

## Commitment 8:

We commit to ongoing communication, learning, and dialogue to deepen our progress towards being an Anti-Racism organization.

Ongoing learning communities should complement new training.

This can take the shape of book clubs, lunch and learns, team meetings, conferences, or other external learning opportunities.

# Commitment 9:

We commit to developing and maintaining partnerships with community led organizations that are committed to Anti-Racism, racial justice, and social justice.

Our organizations exist with  
and for community.

An Anti-Racism commitment incorporates and centers the experiences of the communities with lived experience who are directly impacted. It is imperative that we strengthen partnership with organizations that have been addressing injustices for years.

# Commitment 10:

We commit to engaging, influencing, and advocating with our cross-sector organizational partners to adopt an Anti-Racism framework within their structures and across our broader shared systems.

We understand that race-based inequities are driven and sustained by systemic and structural racism.

Our organizations have a responsibility to understand how we are part of that cross-sector eco-system, and leverage our connectivity to other institutions to achieve comprehensive progress towards Anti-Racism.

# ABOUT DBHDID

**The Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, and Intellectual Disabilities'** mission is to provide leadership, in partnership with others, to prevent disability, build resilience in individuals and their communities, and facilitate recovery for people whose lives have been affected by mental illness, intellectual disability or other developmental disability, or substance abuse.

Through our continued efforts we hope to help Kentuckians in any way we can.

