

# Boston CoC Racial Equity Statement of Intent- Final Draft, 10/16/2020

## **Our Commitment to Ending Racism in Boston's Homeless System**

The Boston Continuum of Care (CoC), the group of stakeholders working to end homelessness in Boston, commits to dismantling racism in our policies and practices with the recognition that groups of people are also marginalized based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, and many others. Our ultimate goal is to achieve racial equity and social justice in our homeless programs.

## **Why?**

We know that Black, African American, Indigenous and People of Color (BAIPOC) consistently experience worse outcomes across areas of health and well-being such as housing stability, income/wealth attainment, physical and behavioral health conditions. We see this pattern regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, or other identities. People who are Black, African American and/or Latinx disproportionately experience homelessness in Boston. Boston's general population is 25% Black/African American and 19% Latinx<sup>1</sup>, but of those who accessed homeless services in Boston in 2018, 41% of people were Black/African American, and 26% were Latinx.<sup>2</sup>

## **How will we lead our work with racial equity?**

As a CoC and as individual organizations within it, we agree to hold ourselves and our partners accountable to create, implement, monitor, and continue to follow anti-racist policies that advance racial equity in the areas we oversee which include:

- Housing admissions, evictions and/or terminations
- Supportive service models
- Hiring practices and professional development in our homeless system
- Funding processes and decisions

## **To create and put into action anti-racist policies, we will commit to the following:**

- Make sure everyone feels comfortable and included to express their voices
- Use people's stories, focus groups, consumer councils, surveys and data to create anti-racist solutions to homelessness.
- Include people who are affected by our decisions early in the decision-making process.
- Provide our staff the training needed to understand cultural nuances, language, trauma-informed care and how to identify unconscious bias.
- Actively seek out and create opportunities for people with lived experience and people of color to advance in influential and leadership roles
- Hold ourselves accountable by creating an action plan; measuring the outcomes of the action plan; and providing regular updates to the entire CoC on successes and challenges we are facing.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: 2015 American Community Survey data

<sup>2</sup> (Source: Boston HMIS Warehouse data, using demographic categories set by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's data standards)