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June 12, 2020

The St. Louis City Continuum of Care (CoC) sees the pain of Black communities in this country, especially our own community in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of the police, the weaponizing of police towards a black man by Amy Cooper, and the health disparities that cause Covid-19 to disproportionately affect Black people. We recognize the profound impact that these racially driven events have had on the individuals we serve and our Black colleagues. We support the Black Lives Matter movement and their fight for Freedom, Liberation and Justice.

Black lives matter!

While we see the pain, we also recognize that words of support must be accompanied by concrete and significant action. The CoC leadership acknowledges the responsibility we hold and the obligation we have to use our position to call out systems that overly affect the population we serve. While the city of St. Louis' population is roughly half Black, the unhoused population is 73.17% Black. The racial disparity in our unhoused population did not occur by accident, and shrinking the gap will not occur without recognizing the racist policies that brought us to this point in time and working to dismantle and rebuild our internal and external policies for a more equitable future. We are committed to doing the work.

These actions will be taken by the St. Louis City Continuum of Care:

1. By the end of 2020, publicly share and commit to fully implementing a racial inequity response plan currently under development.
2. Review local policies that criminalize homelessness.
3. Bring more Black people into the systems that serve the homeless population by:
  - a. Recruiting more Black people to serve on the CoC board.
  - b. Requesting CoC membership organizations to review their recruiting, hiring, and promotion policies to identify ways to promote more Black people to leadership positions within their organizations.

We are clear that tackling racial injustice is an ongoing process and are committed to it for the long-term.

In Solidarity,

Board of Directors  
St. Louis City Continuum of Care