

NASW ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT

Founded in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies. Our members represent a diverse group of professionals committed to the values of integrity, competence, service, the importance of human relationships, dignity and worth of the person, and social justice. The mission of social work is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. To honor this mission and realize our core professional values we must understand and commit to doing our part in abolishing racist and oppressive systems.

NASW adheres to its commitment of being an anti-racist organization. Anti-racism is defined as uplifting the innate humanity and individuality of Black, Latin A/O/X, Indigenous, Asian and Pacific Islander, and other People of Color; demonstrating best practices in diversity, equity and inclusion; and taking conscious and deliberate actions to ensure equal opportunities for all people and communities. Anti-racism requires active resistance to and dismantling of the system of racism to obtain racial equity.

Anti-racism involves a commitment to personal and professional action. It requires that NASW, which includes all related entities, in accordance with our Code of Ethics, take a stance against racial hatred, bias, systemic racism, and the oppression of specific groups on an individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural level. It also requires that NASW analyze the role of institutions and systems in racial inequities and work within our organization, our networks, and our institutions to challenge them consciously and consistently, personally and professionally.

NASW is committed to:

1. Taking conscious and deliberate actions to ensure that we provide equal opportunities for all people and communities served. These actions include:
 - a. Ensuring that individuals in decision-making positions and key stakeholders across the association represent the diversity of Black, Latin A/O/X, Indigenous, Asian and Pacific Islander, and other People of Color and demonstrate best practices in diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - b. Providing financial means within the Association's budget to support and advance its commitment to being an anti-racist organization.
 - c. Examining best practices to eradicate poverty and close wage gaps within communities of color.
 - d. Acknowledging the existence of racism in the history of the profession and committing to learning from and correcting our mistakes.
 - e. Addressing the empathy gap between White social workers and clients of color.
2. Promoting anti-racism through professional development, public education, and racial justice advocacy. Maintaining an ongoing commitment to continue our conversations with our staff, members and partners about action and advocacy that builds the goal of being an anti-racist organization.
3. Confronting and working to change policies, practices, and procedures that create inequities amongst racial groups, understanding these systems of oppression are based in and uphold white supremacy. This would include examining best practices to eradicate poverty and close wage gaps within communities of color and working to address biases that exist among social work professionals.

4. Confronting leaders in positions of authority and key stakeholders in government, private, and non-profit organizations who have upheld racist institutions and structures and offering our social work skills to help establish anti-racist policies, practices, and procedures that promote racial equity.
5. Challenging racist and discriminatory legislation and working to introduce legislation that addresses the impact of racism on people and their social, economic, health and environmental conditions.

Board Governance Committee
January 2022