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***WORDS TO DEEDS XIV – OUT OF BOUNDS OR  
OUTSIDE THE BOX? SILVER LININGS  
LEARNED FROM COVID-19***

**Centering Racial Equity in the Pandemic Response  
& Beyond - National, Statewide & County  
Perspectives**

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020



# National Alliance to End Homelessness

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- NAEH is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose sole purpose is to end homelessness in the United States
  - We use research and data to find solutions to homelessness
  - We work with federal and local partners to create a solid base of policy and resources that support those solutions
  - We help communities implement solutions

# Outline

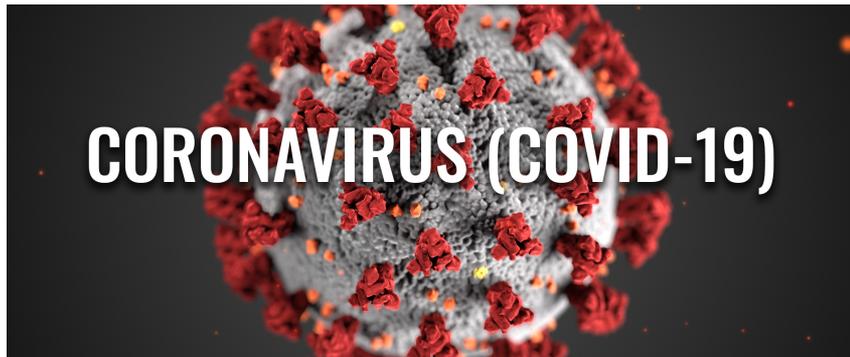
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- ***Overview: Reflection on Racism and a Call to Action***
- ***Understanding COVID-19 and Racial Inequity***
- ***Homelessness, Race and COVID-19***
- ***What the Homeless System Can Do to Address Equity***
- ***Looking Ahead: Using Data to Assess Outcomes***
- ***Action Steps***

**There's a lot of talk  
about racism these  
days**

# What has sparked the change?

**COVID-19 and racial and ethnic disparities**



**The murder of Mr. George Floyd**



# “If ever there were a time” has always been a constant

## Racial Disparities and COVID-19: *Current Crisis*

- Inadequate access to health care
- Underserved areas/food deserts
- Poverty
- Employment – positions that don't allow for telework
- Criminalization

## Minority Overrepresentation in Homelessness: *Ongoing Crisis*

- Poverty
- Criminalization
- Inadequate access to health care
- Employment – underemployment
- Underserved areas

# Justice Requires a Movement – not a Fad!

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**If we fail to address structural racism, we will always land in the same place:**

**Hurricane Katrina, homelessness, overcriminalization, COVID-19 and so on**

# Race and COVID-19

- **Black people are (especially) disproportionately impacted by COVID-19**
- **Black people account for 13.4% of the general population (Census Bureau)**
- **Counties with higher Black populations accounted for more than half of all cases and almost 60% of deaths at onset of pandemic**

The likelihood of COVID-19 increased with the proportion of Black residents

<https://ehe.amfar.org/inequity>

# **Black people are 2 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than White People**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-race-ethnicity.html>

**According to the CDC – Black people  
are almost 5x likely to be hospitalized**

**(Indigenous groups are 5x likely-  
followed by Hispanic or Latinx persons  
who are at 4x the rate)**

**Black and Brown  
people are at higher  
risk due to health,  
social and economic  
disparities**

# Race and Homelessness

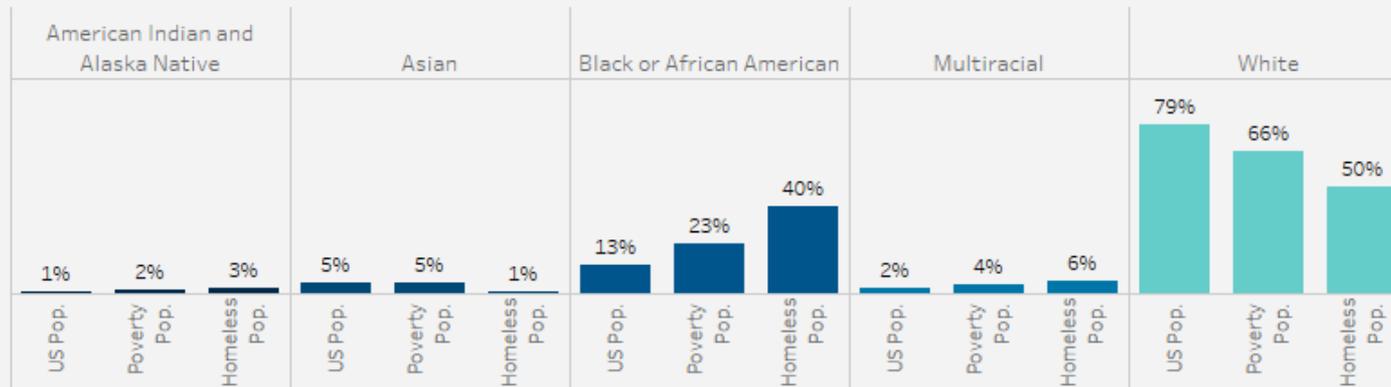
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- Most minority groups in the US represent a disproportionate share of the homeless population
  - The most striking disproportionality can be found among African Americans
    - **African Americans** make up **40%** of homeless population, but only **13%** of general population

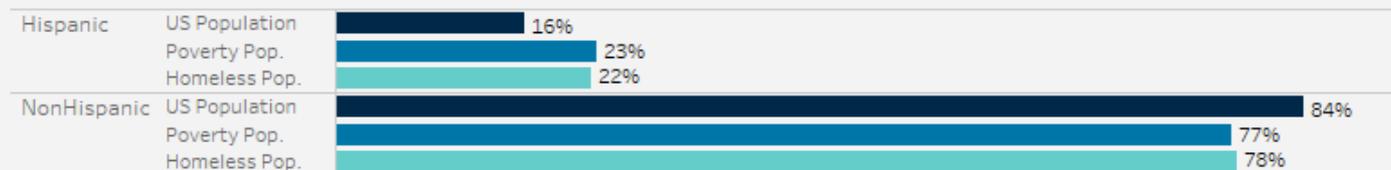
# Race and Homelessness Cont.

## 2018 Race & Ethnicity Data: Homeless Population Compared to US Population

### Racial Comparisons

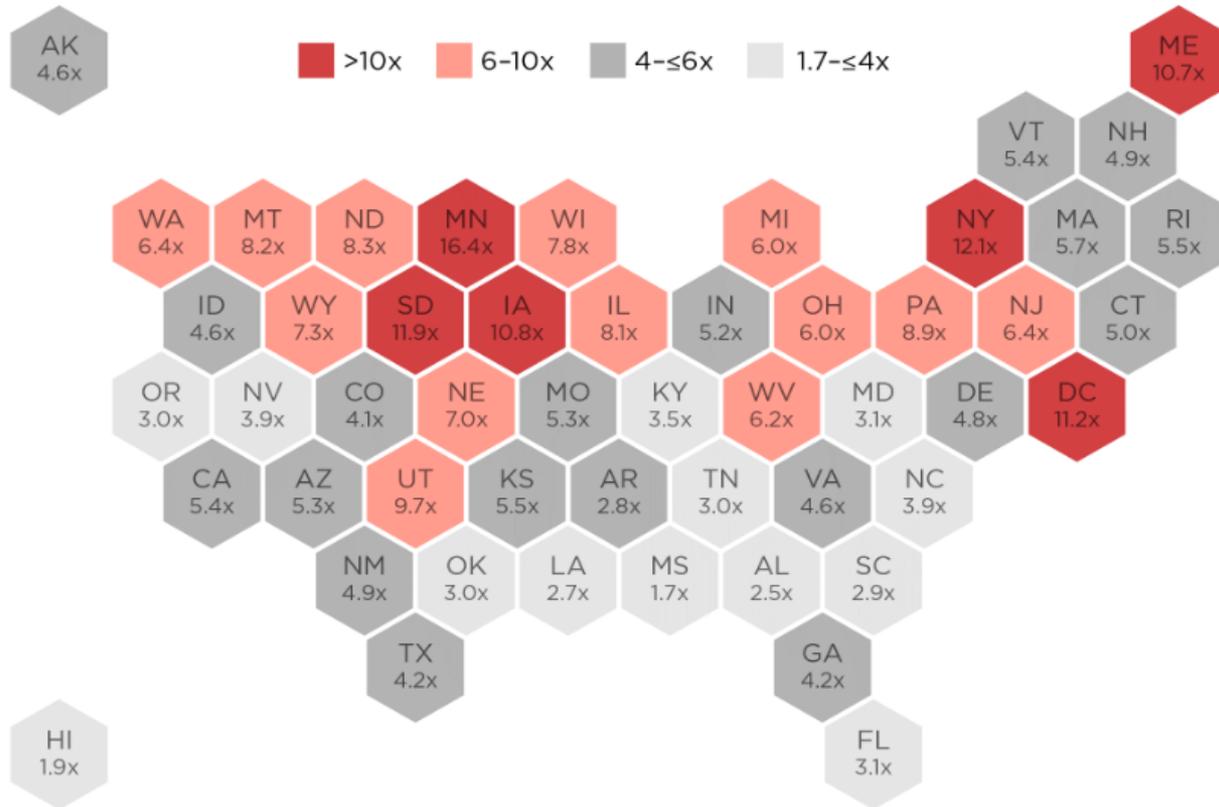


### Ethnicity Comparisons



# In Every State, African Americans Are More Likely Than Whites to Experience Homelessness

Ratio of Black-to-White homelessness rate by state, 2018



Source: NAEH analysis of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2018 Point-in-Time Count data



# Pileup of Inequities = Disproportionality in Homelessness

- **Poverty**
  - Black people are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than Whites
- **Segregation/Rental Housing Discrimination**
  - government supported housing discrimination/redlining that discouraged investment in Black neighborhoods and NIMBYism
- **Overcriminalization**
  - studies show Black people are more than two times likely to be arrested, 3 times more likely to be in jail and 5 time more likely to be in prison
- **Access to Health Care**
  - gains have been made with the ACA, but gaps still occur, including outcomes

# What Can the Homelessness System Do?

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- Disproportionality influenced by historical and structural racism; including feeder systems such as criminal justice
  - *The homeless sector can and should contribute to these efforts to address disproportionality*
- **Homeless systems have the responsibility to make sure they are not, themselves, having a disparate impact on people based on race or ethnicity**

# Step 1: Assess Disproportionality and Disparity

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- **Tool:** HUD [CoC Analysis Tool on Race and Ethnicity](#)
  - Allows you to examine what percentage of people in your CoC are poor, homeless, sheltered and unsheltered based on race and ethnicity

# Step 2: Assess Data for Disparate Outcomes

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- **Tool:** NAEH Race Equity Tool
- The Alliance's Racial Equity Network created a tool to help you measure whether the outcomes of your program or system vary depending on the race or ethnicity of a homeless person or family
- Simple dashboard measuring key portions of a homeless program or system

<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/the-alliances-racial-equity-network-toolkit/>

# Data Elements

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Who experiences homelessness?

Who gets into Crisis housing (emergency shelter and transitional housing)?

Who gets into permanent housing?

Who returns to homelessness?

# What's in the COVID-19 Data Tab?

- The COVID-19 tab of the Racial Equity Tool helps communities analyze the racial component to the COVID crisis.
- Asks several questions to help you determine if and where equity issues exist
  - 1a - How many people experiencing homelessness in your system are symptomatic for COVID-19 (have fevers and other symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing)?
  - 1b - Of those people, how many were tested?
  - 2a - How many people experiencing homelessness in your system have tested positive for COVID-19?
  - 2b - How many of those positives have received treatment?
  - 3 - How many people experiencing homelessness have been referred to isolation and quarantine “beds” within your system?
  - 4 – How many people experiencing homelessness who have either appeared symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19 have received permanent housing?

# Use Data to Make Changes

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- Without racial data we cannot see whether disparities exist
- If we don't see disparities, then we typically don't factor them into our decision-making or response
- Be intentional and committed for the long haul
- **Now what?**

# Step 3: Use Data to Make Changes

## Who Experiences Homelessness?

### Immediate Steps:

- Make your data visually known internally/externally
- Add race/ethnicity data to CoC reports for continual tracking

### Long-term Steps:

- Convene other stakeholders of feeder systems (e.g., child welfare, criminal justice) to share data and strategize how to reduce disparities of minority groups experiencing homelessness

# Step 3: Use Data to Make Changes

## Who Gets into Crisis Housing?

*If you notice a disparity in clients accessing shelter and transitional housing (TH)*

### Immediate Steps:

- Convene a group of staff members and guests in the shelter/TH, including community stakeholders to review policy and procedure for barriers that might cause a specific racial group to avoid shelter (e.g., if African Americans are not accessing shelter proportionately, examine rules on dress code, criminal records and so on)
- Review data on bans/termination of services (e.g., is there a disparity with who is getting terminated from shelter and for how long?)

### Long-term Step:

- Work with other community partners that largely serve minorities with outreach and assessment resources

# Step 3: Use Data to Make Changes

## Who Gets into Permanent Housing?

*If the number of people accessing permanent housing is disproportionate to the number of people experiencing homelessness*

### Immediate Steps:

- Does your model address discrimination that may occur in the market (e.g., landlord engagement)?
- Does your model take into account culturally-responsive, community based supports the client/tenant might need?

### Long-term Steps:

- Get technical assistance to re-design your coordinated entry processes if found to have disparate outcomes

# Step 3: Use Data to Make Changes

## Who Returns to Homelessness?

*If the number of people returning homelessness is disproportionately high by race/ethnicity to those who experience homelessness*

### Immediate Steps:

- Dedicate more intensive services to those with previous experiences in homelessness

### Long-term Steps:

- Explore other systems to engage to connect people with mainstream resources to help maintain stability

# There's More You Can Do!

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- **Organizational**

- designate a staff person or a team to address racial equity in your organization
- commit resources
- annually train staff
- hold ongoing opportunities to discuss racial equity

- **Listening to People with Lived Expertise**

- provide opportunities for those in your system to give feedback and expand opportunities for policy participation

# Resources

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<https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/REN-Action-Steps-final.pdf>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/economy/2018/10/10/faces-poverty-social-racial-factors/37977173/>

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200713110849-az14m/>

<https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/July-2019/Racial-Disparities-in-Mental-Health-and-Criminal-Justice>

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/usc-brookings-schaeffer-on-health-policy/2020/02/19/there-are-clear-race-based-inequalities-in-health-insurance-and-health-outcomes/>

# THANK YOU

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