

JUNE 2021

**UNDOING  
RACISM  
THROUGH  
SOCIAL  
WORK**

NASW Report to the  
Profession on Racial  
Justice Priorities  
and Action

As our nation turns more attention to addressing its long history of systemic racism, the National Association of Social Workers acknowledges that our profession has not always lived up to its mission of pursuing social justice for all. We apologize for supporting policies and activities that harm people of color and we will strengthen our efforts to end racism in the social work profession and in society. ***We hope this first report demonstrates NASW's commitment to racial equity and invite your feedback on our progress at [socialworkers.org/Racial-Equity](https://socialworkers.org/Racial-Equity).***

# CONTENTS

* APOLOGY STATEMENT .....	2
* YEAR 1 ACTION.....	6
* National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (NCORED)	7
* Public Statements on Racial Equity	8
* National Advocacy for Policy Action	14
* Chapter Leadership for Racial Justice	16
* Anti-Racist Training For Social Workers	28
* Collaboration with Social Work Partners	30
* YEAR 2 PLAN .....	33
* Framework for Achieving Anti-Racist Social Work	35
* Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	36
* Social Justice Priorities and Coalitions	37
* Policy Blueprint Racial Justice Priorities	39
* CONCLUSION.....	41
* REFERENCES & RESOURCES .....	42
* CONTRIBUTORS .....	44

# UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTHS: ACKNOWLEDGING AND UNDOING RACISM IN SOCIAL WORK

Like most professions and institutions since 2020, the field of social work has been grappling with the consequences of our nation's racist foundation. Continued violent tragedies and widespread public protests illuminated centuries of racial exploitation and trauma in the United States. Clearly, no discipline can escape scrutiny if we are to build a truly inclusive and equitable future together.

Social work is unique in its dual focus of enhancing human well-being and championing social justice. Yet our occupation's history is also linked to many shameful chapters in America's story. Despite visible leadership in our nation's most important social justice movements and in creating our country's social safety net, the social work profession has also contributed to ongoing discrimination and oppression of people of color through its systems, policies, and practices.

## THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE AND WE NEED TO MAKE AMENDS.

For 60 years, NASW has consistently worked to identify and correct industry standards and guidelines that do not align with our Code of Ethics. Core social work values include: service, social justice, human dignity, importance of relationships, as well as professional integrity and competence. Although social workers strive to improve the lives of others, we must also face some uncomfortable truths in the history of social work. For these grave mistakes we apologize to the clients, colleagues and communities of color who were harmed by our profession.

## #1 Progressive Era social workers built and ran segregated settlement houses.

The early social reformers of the late Victorian Age and Gilded Age began their work in earnest, challenging American leaders to make a space for the throngs of new immigrants from Europe. They used their wealth and social standing to push their husbands, brothers and fathers to commit resources for programs and services that served millions of ethnically diverse new neighbors in their towns and communities.

The country had survived the Civil War, but life in Southern and Northern cities alike for generations of free-born African Americans and the descendants of the nation's formerly enslaved people remained unbelievably harsh. Black Americans were helping to fuel the industrial growth of the country, but they were not welcome in the new social programs created for white immigrants. (Eastwood, 2002)

### More from this era:

- ▶ An avowed racist and father of modern medical education, Abraham Flexner, was invited to keynote the 1915 National Conference of Charities and Correction, forerunner of the National Conference of Social Welfare. (Flexner, 1915)
- ▶ Many of the leading U.S. social scientists and social reformers of the day supported eugenics theories that were later adopted by the Nazis. In North Carolina,

social workers participated in the involuntary sterilization of mostly women of color, women on welfare and in mental institutions. (Kennedy, 2008)

## #2: Social work suffragists blocked Black enfranchisement.

American women fought for decades to convince largely male legislatures that they had earned the right to participate in the country's democratic processes, both locally and nationally. On the eve of securing the right to vote for themselves, several prominent suffragists – including a social worker who was the first woman elected to Congress and other white social welfare leaders – blocked efforts of Black women to achieve the same. (Jones, 2020)

### More from this era:

- ▶ African American social reformers, including many anti-lynching activists, could not attend most of the first Schools of Social Work, even if they had the financial resources to do so. Most were not recognized as pioneers in the social work profession until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Platt, Chandler, 1988)
- ▶ Social workers helped lead religious and government sponsored “Indian Schools” and adoption programs that separated millions of Indigenous children from their families and cultures. (Estes, 2018)

## #3: Social work government leaders wrote regulations that excluded Black workers.

During the Great Depression, extraordinary public investments in employment and other social programs saved millions of Americans from destitution. Public works programs, arts and cultural funding and educational grants gave women and men new opportunities to support their families and build middle class lives following the war. Social Security insurance and minimum wage regulations were just two of the many important New Deal programs created by the leading social workers in the Roosevelt administration.

However, not all types of work were included in these generous social safety net programs. Low-wage occupations open to African Americans at the time – domestic work and farm labor – were largely omitted from Social Security. And the GI Bill did not desegregate universities, including those with social work programs. Black WWII veterans could not enroll. (Phillips, 1985)

### More from this era:

- ▶ The U.S. Public Health Service (part of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare) began the Tuskegee Experiment in 1932. Poor Black men in the 40-year study were recruited by social workers into fraudulent medical research. (Heintzelman, 2003)
- ▶ Social workers were part of intake teams at the internment camps for Japanese American families during World War II. (Park, 2008)

## #4: Bias among social work professionals negatively influences health care, mental health and social service delivery for people of color.

One of the most persistent challenges to anti-racist practice within social work is the disproportionate impact of the child welfare system on families of color. Research shows that African American, Latino/Hispanic and Native American children are still less likely to receive social support services, but more likely to be removed from their homes during interactions with the child protection system. (McRoy, 2004 & Cross, 2008) Society's criminalization of poverty and inadequate cultural awareness among many social work professionals often reinforces a deficit model in family crisis evaluations, contributing to overrepresentation in the system. (Bell, 2003)

### Related issues:

- ▶ Despite rapidly increasing diversity among social work students, the social work profession remains predominantly white and female. Financial barriers to higher education and licensure continue to limit admission to the field. (Salsberg, et al, 2017)
- ▶ Mental health clinicians over diagnose schizophrenia and disruptive behavior disorders among depressed Black male patients. (Gara et al, 2019, Merino & Hall, 2018)
- ▶ Many non-profit organizations that primarily serve communities of color lack diversity in their leadership and professional staff. (Castillo, 2018)

Acknowledging mistakes is critical to building a vision for anti-racist practice in social work. NASW and partner social work organizations are committed to dismantling all forms of racial injustice, especially within the profession's institutions.

Our collective anti-racism work in social work practice, education, research and regulation will continue to evolve. And while we know true equity will require many years of concerted effort and collaboration, we believe the nation's social workers are up to the challenge.

# APOLOGY STATEMENT REFERENCES

- Bell, L. A. (2003). Telling tales: What stories can teach us about racism. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 6(1), 3.
- Castillo, E. A. (2018, November 20). *Why Are We Still Struggling with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nonprofit Governance?* Nonprofit Quarterly (NPQ). <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/why-are-we-still-struggling-with-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-in-nonprofit-governance/>.
- Cross, T. L. (2008). Disproportionality in child welfare. *Child Welfare*, 87(2), 11-20
- Eastwood, C. (2002) *Near West Side Stories: Struggles for Community in Chicago's Maxwell Street Neighborhood*, 139-40.
- Estes, N., Brown, A. (2018) Where are the Indigenous children who never came home? High Country News. [www.hcn.org/articles/tribal-affairs-where-are-the-indigenous-children-that-never-came-home-carlisle-indian-school-nations-want-answers](http://www.hcn.org/articles/tribal-affairs-where-are-the-indigenous-children-that-never-came-home-carlisle-indian-school-nations-want-answers)
- Flexner, A. (1915) *Is Social Work A Profession?* Social Welfare History Project. <https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/social-work/is-social-work-a-profession-1915/>
- Gara MA, Minsky S, Silverstein S.M., et al. (2019) A Naturalistic Study of Racial Disparities in Diagnoses at an Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic. *Psychiatric Services*. 70(2):130-134. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.201800223.
- Heintzelman, C.A. (2003) The Tuskegee Syphilis Study and Its Implications for the 21st Century. *The New Social Worker*. 10(4). [www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/ethics-articles/The\\_Tuskegee\\_Syphilis\\_Study\\_and\\_Its\\_Implications\\_for\\_the\\_21st\\_Century/](http://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/ethics-articles/The_Tuskegee_Syphilis_Study_and_Its_Implications_for_the_21st_Century/)
- Jones, M. (2020). *Black Women's 200 Year Fight for the Vote*. Public Broadcasting Service. [www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/vote-black-women-200-year-fight-for-vote/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/vote-black-women-200-year-fight-for-vote/)
- Kennedy, A. C., Eugenics, "Degenerate Girls", and Social Workers During the Progressive Era. *Journal of Women and Social Work*. Vol.:23, Num.:1. February 2008. 22-37. DOI: 10.1177/0886109907310473
- McRoy, R. (2004). The color of child welfare. In Davis, K. E. and Bent-Goodley, T.B. (Ed.), *The Color of social policy* (pp. 81). Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education.
- Merino, Y., Adams, L., & Hall, W. J. (2018). Implicit bias and mental health professionals: priorities and directions for research. *Psychiatric Services*, 69(6), 723-725. <https://ps.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ps.201700294>
- Park, Y. (2008). Facilitating Injustice: Tracing the Role of Social Workers in the World War II Internment of Japanese Americans. *Social Service Review*, 82(3), 447-483. <https://doi-org.proxy-hs.researchport.umd.edu/10.1086/592361>
- Phillips, Norma K. (1985) Ideology and Opportunity in Social Work During the New Deal Years. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 12 : Iss. 2 , Article 3. Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol12/iss2/3>
- Platt, T., & Chandler, S. (1988). Constant Struggle: E. Franklin Frazier and Black Social Work in the 1920s. *Social Work*, 33(4), 293-297.
- Salsberg, E., Quigley, L., Mehfound, N. et al. (2017) Profile of the Social Workforce. Council of Social Work Education and The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute. [www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Initiatives/National-Workforce-Initiative/SW-Workforce-Book-FINAL-11-08-2017.aspx](http://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Initiatives/National-Workforce-Initiative/SW-Workforce-Book-FINAL-11-08-2017.aspx)



# YEAR ONE

**RESPONDING  
TO A CRISIS**



# YEAR ONE ACTION

NASW'S DECADES-LONG COMMITMENT TO RACIAL JUSTICE WAS TESTED IN NEW WAYS ON MAY 25, 2020, WHEN THE BRUTAL KILLING OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN BY A MINNEAPOLIS POLICE OFFICER ERUPTED INTO WORLDWIDE DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST RACISM AND RACIAL VIOLENCE IN THE U.S.



#BlackLivesMatter was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. George Floyd's death occurred in the early months of a global health pandemic and mirrored hundreds of other fatal encounters between law enforcement and people of color.

These painful tragedies sparked widespread outrage and galvanized the most protesters in fighting racial inequity in our nation since the Civil Rights Movement. In response to this unprecedented combination of national crises, NASW quickly accelerated anti-racism programming for social workers and strengthened its racial justice advocacy.

The purpose of NASW's racial justice priorities report is to share information about new resources produced by the social work profession and to continue building a focused and collaborative five-year social change initiative. Together we can create and achieve an anti-racist vision for the social work profession.

## Year One Focus

- ▶ Anti-Racist Training for Social Workers
- ▶ Chapter Leadership for Racial Justice
- ▶ Collaboration with Social Work Partners
- ▶ National Advocacy for Policy Action
- ▶ National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity
- ▶ Public Statements on Racial Equity



We've learned that  
quiet isn't always peace  
And the norms and notions  
of what just is  
Isn't always just-ice

AMANDA GORMAN  
American Poet & Activist

## NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY (NCORED)

Since its inception in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers has published books, media stories and scholarly articles addressing issues of racial inequity and discrimination against clients and social workers of color. NASW's National Committee on Minority Affairs (NCOMA) was established in 1969 after Whitney M. Young, Jr. was named the Association's first Black president (1969-1971). The committee was renamed NCORED (National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity) in 1994. Its primary charge is to "develop, promote and collaborate on methods of ensuring inclusion of racial and diversity issues on NASW policies and programs."

### Through NCORED:

- ▶ NASW's [Cultural Competency Standards](#) were established in 2001.
- ▶ During NASW's 50th anniversary celebration in 2005, more than 400 social work leaders adopted two imperatives that made fighting racism a priority for the profession.
- ▶ The NASW Delegate Assembly Policy on Racism was also enacted in 2005.
- ▶ In 2007, NASW published "Institutional Racism and the Social Work Profession: A Call to Action" by the Presidential Task Force Subcommittee on Institutional Racism.
- ▶ In 2008, the Delegate Assembly Policy on Language and Cultural Diversity in the United States was approved.
- ▶ In 2014, NASW published "[Achieving Racial Equity. Calling the Social Work Profession to Action](#)" by the NASW Foundation and Social Work Policy Institute.

In 2020, NASW widely shared its positions on ending systemic racism and promoting racial justice through a range of Chapter and National Office activities. It engaged thousands of members and millions of constituents through its publications, digital platforms, training courses, media statements, town halls, congressional briefings, conferences, community meetings, educational podcasts and videos, executive presentations and social justice partnerships. Volunteer NCORED leaders participated in many of these efforts, including proposing changes to cultural competence language in the NASW Code of Ethics and participating in a membership webinar for the June 2021 Code of Ethics Revision.

# PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON RACIAL EQUITY

NASW publishes statements and hosts live events to inform members, supporters, journalists and the general public about the organization's top priorities for advocacy and practice development. Approximately half of NASW's national statements in the last year addressed issues of racial justice and police reform in an effort to raise awareness and engage social workers in advocacy campaigns.

## NASW condemns yet another incident of lethal police force against an African American

**May 28, 2020**

Days after the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, NASW offered condolences and called for policing reforms. "It is equally clear that before America can end racial disparities in use of force, there must be a change in police culture. Police departments must root out the many officers who continue to view Black lives as being less valuable than that of other Americans. NASW will continue to fight for that cultural change." The NASW Minnesota Chapter expressed its outrage and sadness and called social workers to action to fight for social justice in the aftermath of the murder.

## Anti-Racism Now and Forever More

**June 10, 2020**

The NASW National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (NCORED), in the wake of the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and others, reaffirmed its commitment to anti-racism efforts. "We condemn racism. We condemn white supremacy. We condemn the devaluation of Black lives and Black humanity that pervades our society."

**“SOCIAL WORK MUST TAKE BOLD,  
DELIBERATE ACTIONS THAT BEND  
THE ARC OF JUSTICE TOWARD  
LIBERATION FOR ALL.”**

MILDRED “MIT” C. JOYNER  
NASW President

## **NASW Says Trump Administration’s Police Reform Executive Order is Inadequate**

**June 18, 2020**

NASW roundly criticized President Trump’s executive order to address police reform in the wake of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. Trump’s plan did not call for national use-of-force guidelines, curtail no-knock warrants, ban chokeholds, or acknowledge that systemic racism is a factor in the death of African Americans by police.

## **NASW Facebook Live Townhall: The Other Pandemic: Racial Injustice**

**June 19, 2020**

A Juneteenth conversation addressed the intersection of social work and racial injustice. It featured NASW Chief Executive Officer Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW; Karen Bullock, PhD, LCSW, Chair, NASW National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and Dawn Hobdy, LCSW, Vice President, Ethics, Diversity and Inclusion.

## **NASW Seeks to Dismantle Racist Policing**

**July 14, 2020**

NASW urged the Senate to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which was introduced by social worker Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA) and had passed the House. NASW would continue to urge Congress to pass the bill in the months ahead.

## Social Work Leadership Roundtable Town Hall on Racial Equity

**August 14, 2020**

Leaders from multiple professional and academic social work organizations met to discuss steps they are taking to achieve racial equity. Presenters addressed questions posted by a live social media audience.

## Social Workers Must Help Dismantle Systems of Oppression and Fight Racism Within the Social Work Profession

**August 21, 2020**

NASW acknowledged past racism in the social work profession, said that discrimination persists in the field, and urged social workers to take steps to become anti-racist.

## NASW Demands End to Excessive Use of Force by Law Enforcement

**August 26, 2020**

NASW again called for reforms to end systemic racism in policing after police shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back seriously wounding him and shot Trayford Pellerin 10 times in the back killing him.

## NASW Facebook Live Town Hall on Policing Reform

**August 28, 2020**

Panelists in this event: NASW CEO Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW; NASW President Mildred “Mit” Joyner, DPS, MSW, LCSW; Paige Fernandez, ACLU Policing Policy Adviser; Guadalupe Lara, LMSW, Director, LASED Senior Wellness Center; and Chad Dion Lassiter, MSW, national expert in race relations and Executive Director at the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

## NASW Kentucky Chapter on Grand Jury Decision on Breonna Taylor Murder

**September 24, 2020**

The NASW Kentucky Chapter was deeply disappointed a grand jury did not bring charges against three police officers in the death of Breonna Taylor. One was charged with wanton endangerment for shooting into a home next to Taylor’s. However, the chapter pledged to continue to fight for racial justice.

## NASW Affronted by President Trump’s Sinister Executive Order on Racial and Sexual Stereotyping

**September 25, 2020**

NASW protested President Trump’s executive order, which distorted U.S. history and denied that our nation is rife with racism and sexism.



## **NASW Facebook Live Town Hall: Economic Equity, Racial Equity and COVID-19**

**October 2, 2020**

Moderated by NASW CEO Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW, the panelists included Michael Sherraden, PhD, MSW, Founding Director of the Center for Social Development at the Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis; Deborah Weinstein, MSW, Executive Director, Coalition on Human Needs, and Mel Wilson, LCSW, MBA, NASW Senior Policy Consultant for Human Rights and Social Justice.

## **NASW Strongly Condemns Recent Police Misconduct**

**December 17, 2020**

In this Social Work Blog entry NASW condemns continued police misconduct against people of color, including the shooting death of Casey Goodson Jr. in Columbus, Ohio and the mistaken arrest of social worker Anjanette Johnson in Chicago.

## **NASW Releases its 2021 Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities**

**January 28, 2021**

The National Association of Social Workers released its 2021 Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities that articulates meaningful actions the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress should take to address issues, including eliminating systemic racism and ensuring civil and human rights for all.

## **NASW Pleased by Additional Biden Executive Orders to Address Systemic Racism, Improve Health Care Access and Reduce Climate Change Impacts**

**January 29, 2021**

NASW was pleased that President Biden shortly after taking office issued executive orders to address systemic racism, including increased enforcement of the Fair Housing Act and respecting the sovereignty of American Indian and Native Alaskan tribes.



## **Social Workers are Essential Chats with Mit | Episode 2: Remembering Past NASW President Whitney Young Jr.**

**February 26, 2021**

NASW President Mit Joyner held a special Black History Month conversation with the daughters of Civil Rights Leader and Past NASW President Whitney M. Young, Jr., Marcia Young Cantarella and Lauren Young Casteel. The event also highlighted the social justice work of other African American social work pioneers.

## **NASW Calls for an End to Hate, Racism and Gun Violence Against Asian Americans**

**March 18, 2021**

With violence against Asian Americans growing during the COVID-19 pandemic, NASW voiced support for the Asian American community and urged Congress to pass a law to prevent hate crimes.

## **NASW Relieved by Guilty Conviction of Former Police Officer Derek Chauvin for the Death of George Floyd**

**April 20, 2021**

NASW was relieved Derek Chauvin was found guilty of the murder of George Floyd and again urged Congress to pass policing reform legislation. A later NASW Social Work Blog entry expounded on our position. “We cannot let George Floyd’s death be in vain. We must not allow ourselves to celebrate the verdict but fail to fully commit our passion for justice and our resources to ending systemic racism in our criminal legal system.”

**“AS SOCIAL WORKERS COMMITTED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND WORTH OF ALL HUMANITY, WE RECOGNIZE THE PAIN, THE SUFFERING AND OUTRAGE RESULTING FROM A LONG HISTORY OF RACISM, OPPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION IN THIS COUNTRY.”**

**KAREN BULLOCK**  
NCORED Chair



## **On Anniversary of George Floyd’s Death, NASW Calls for Meaningful Police Reform**

**May 25, 2021**

On the first-year anniversary of George Floyd’s murder NASW sadly noted unarmed people of color continue to die at the hands of the police, reforms are still needed to end systemic racism in policing, and more work needs to be done to address racism in our society.

## **Social Workers are Essential Chats with Mit | Episode 5: Impact of Racism on Social Work Leaders**

**June 4, 2021**

NASW President Mit Joyner held a conversation with social work leaders of color to get their personal reflections on how race has affected them and what the social work profession needs to do to achieve racial equity.

# **EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS RELEASED IN NASW SOCIAL MEDIA**

- ▶ **Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January)**
- ▶ **Pride Month (June)**
- ▶ **Black History Month (February)**
- ▶ **Hispanic Heritage Month (September-October)**
- ▶ **Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)**
- ▶ **Native American Heritage Month (November)**

# NATIONAL ADVOCACY FOR POLICY ACTION

Who America chooses to leave behind often has its roots in policies and practices grounded in racial decision-making. Social workers must collectively address the lingering impact segregation, colonization and structured inequality have on our profession, and we must consistently advocate for public policies that can drive different outcomes for the people we serve. With its state and national partners, NASW works to influence lawmakers and policymakers in passing legislation and writing regulations that expand who gets access, resources and protection in the United States.

A few national advocacy efforts include:

## Congressional Briefing

### **Black Lives Matter: Social Work and the Future of Policing. June 30, 2020**

Sponsored by NASW, Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy (CRISP) and the Center for Social Development, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis

<https://csd.wustl.edu/congressional-briefing-black-lives-matter-social-work-and-the-future-of-policing/>

Social Work and the Future of Policing: Key Points for Changes in Policy and Practice  
<https://csd.wustl.edu/20-14/>

## Congressional Briefing

### **Bringing the Power of Social Work to Schools. September 23, 2020**

Sponsors included NASW, CRISP, American Council for School Social Work, School Social Work Association of America, and the School Social Work Network

The briefing examined the merits of the bill, H.R. 7848 - Counseling Not Criminalization Act, introduced by Reps Ayanna Pressley (D-MA-7) and

Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5) in the House of Representatives. The event was about interrupting the school to prison pipeline and removing school resource officers (SROs) from schools and hiring social workers and other helping professionals.

## Public Education

Cancelling Federal Student Debt is a Tool for Gender and Racial Justice <https://realbankreform.medium.com/cancelling-federal-student-debt-is-a-tool-for-gender-and-racial-justice-22adcdb9a505>

NASW worked with our partners on this blog post which highlights the experience of social workers. "Many social workers and other essential healthcare workers on the frontlines of the pandemic are saddled with student loan debt. Social workers are providing critical mental and behavioral health services and social needs care to underserved communities and they are required to have a high level of education to practice and are among the lowest-paid professionals in the workforce." Sarah Butts, NASW Policy Director

<https://ourfinancialsecurity.org/2020/11/joint-statement-over-220-orgs-call-on-president-elect-biden-to-cancel-federal-student-debt-on-day-one-using-executive-action/>





## Public Education

### **NASW officials contribute to NPR story on police reform.**

Oakland Becomes Latest City Looking To Take Police Out Of Some Nonviolent 911 Calls.  
[www.npr.org/2021/05/18/997542990/oakland-becomes-latest-city-looking-to-take-police-out-of-nonviolent-911-calls](http://www.npr.org/2021/05/18/997542990/oakland-becomes-latest-city-looking-to-take-police-out-of-nonviolent-911-calls)

## White House Engagement

NASW issued its Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities to the White House in Jan. 2021. NASW also writes letters of support for political appointees and supports confirmations for leaders of color. NASW-PACE regularly endorses and contributes to political candidates of color.

NASW leadership met with the White House Domestic Policy Council on Jan. 21, 2020. Important topics of discussion were access to mental health, behavioral health and substance use services, clinical social worker reimbursement rates and billing code advocacy in Medicare. The Improving Access to Mental Health Act S. 782/ H.R. 1533 was a significant focus as this legislation would raise Medicare reimbursement rates for clinical social workers.

## Legislation

### **NASW Endorses the Community Based Response Act.**

NASW staff and policy experts were invited to review and provide input in the bill's development. NASW's CEO was quoted in the press release and

NASW endorsed the bill upon introduction. (Bass & Van Hollen, 2020) "We must re-imagine public safety and enact police reforms in our communities. Social workers and other health providers are frequently the most appropriate first responders for many calls to 911. Social workers have expertise in resolving the problems and crises akin to emergency mental health and social care needs." Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW, CEO of the National Association of Social Workers.

[www.vanhollen.senate.gov/news/press-releases/van-hollen-bass-introduce-new-community-based-crisis-response-legislation](http://www.vanhollen.senate.gov/news/press-releases/van-hollen-bass-introduce-new-community-based-crisis-response-legislation)

## Legislation

### **HR-1/S-1 For the People Act**

[S.1 - 117th Congress \(2021-2022\): For the People Act of 2021 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/1)

The act addresses voter protection and voting integrity, especially voter suppression in Black communities affected by race-based gerrymandering.

### **John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**

[www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/4](https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/4)

If passed, this bill will give the Department of Justice the power to prevent states from passing and implementing racially disparate voter suppression laws similar to those passed in Texas and Georgia.

### **Democracy Restoration Act (DRA)**

[S.481 - 117th Congress \(2021-2022\): Democracy Restoration Act of 2021 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/481)

Critical legislation that will restore voting rights to convicted felons. If passed, it will allow millions of mostly African American and Latino individuals to vote.

# CHAPTER LEADERSHIP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

NASW CHAPTERS CONVENED A RACIAL JUSTICE WORKGROUP IN JUNE 2020 TO COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER AND THE NATIONAL OFFICE ON EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS, ADVOCACY STRATEGIES AND MESSAGING THEMES THAT ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY IN ALL STATES. THIS IS A SAMPLE OF THE ADVOCACY, CAMPAIGNS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING AND FORUMS LED BY NASW CHAPTERS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MEMBER VOLUNTEERS, SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES OF COLOR.

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

### California

<https://naswcanews.org/category/events>

California Chapter DE&I Committee meets monthly and has a communications liaison. It released public statements on RBG passing, Breonna Taylor, Jan. 6 attack on U.S. Capitol, Biden win, and more. News alerts were distributed through naswcanews.org and all social media. DE&I strategic objectives include a toolkit: "How to Leverage Social Work for Impact" – a guide for public systems considering collaborations and hiring social workers. Events included a Fall 2020 Conference, Budget & Workforce Summit, Grassroots Advocacy 101 course, a member town hall, social work student town hall and exam prep workshops. The chapter wrote an advocacy letter to prioritize social workers for vaccines and advocated for Black social workers to replace former U.S. Senator Kamala Harris.

Chapter webinars included: Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health in 2021, Clinical Conversations about Race and Racism with Black Students, and Stop AAPI Hate.

## Colorado

<https://naswco.socialworkers.org/Events/Calendar-of-Events-Committees>

Colorado Chapter hosted a virtual DE&I Committee kickoff event in Feb 2021 with three keynote speakers. Its DE&I Committee now meets monthly. The chapter updated its Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, & Accessibility Plan in late 2020 and is working to develop a training module “Culturally Responsive Clinical Supervision for Colorado Social Workers.”

## Connecticut

<http://naswct.org>

Connecticut Chapter has a Diversity Committee, Clinical Network Steering Committee, Latino Committee, Membership Committee and an ELAN/PACE group for legislation and politics. It hosted online forums (instead of an annual conference) with content presented by different chapter committees. The chapter provided testimony on a police bill and the nursing home ratio for social workers.

## Florida

[www.naswfl.org/conference.html](http://www.naswfl.org/conference.html)

Florida Chapter’s Race and Justice Task Force is in development. Its 2021 Conference features a Juneteenth recognition event and numerous session topics on anti-racist social work practice including:

- ▶ Building White Women’s Capacity to Do Anti-Racism Work
- ▶ The Blacker the Brain: Creating Solutions for Black Bodies in Mental Health
- ▶ Providing Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Transgender Clinical Services
- ▶ Beyond Pride: A Dive Into the LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC Populations
- ▶ Immigration 101 and Working with Immigrant Families
- ▶ Death by 1,000 Nicks – Healing Racial Trauma
- ▶ Ethnic Minorities Passing Away with Dignity
- ▶ Social Work Responsibility Towards Children and Families Affected by Anti-Immigrant White Supremacist Policies During the Pandemic
- ▶ 2nd Alarm Project: Promoting Cultural Awareness & Behavioral Health Resources for Fire Services

## Illinois

[www.naswil.org/post/final-recommendations-nasw-illinois-chapter-task-force-on-racial-justice](http://www.naswil.org/post/final-recommendations-nasw-illinois-chapter-task-force-on-racial-justice)

A statewide Illinois Chapter Task Force on Racial Justice provided guidance to the chapter on how to approach racial justice initiatives across the state and propose effective measures of reform and increase accountability in policing.

## Indiana

[www.naswin.org/page/INnews](http://www.naswin.org/page/INnews)

Indiana Chapter is working with coalition partners to support legislation sponsored by the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus.

## Iowa

<https://naswia.socialworkers.org>

Iowa Chapter produced a "Cultural Considerations in Supervision" workshop.

## Kansas

[www.naswkansas.com/racial-equity](http://www.naswkansas.com/racial-equity)

Kansas Chapter held a training "Healing the Wounds of Racial Trauma" on the historical impact of racism and trauma and practice skills. It also held training on suicide prevention, assessment and intervention skills focused on communities of color and persons of color. The chapter developed an online toolkit of information and resources. It sent out emails and posted in social media about cultural competency and advocacy efforts.

## Maine

<https://naswme.socialworkers.org/Professional-Development/Continuing-Education>

Maine Chapter is in the process of establishing its Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. It hosted two "Antiracist Lens" clinical trainings and numerous Racial Justice Discussion Groups. The chapter has lobbied for several pieces of legislation to address structural racism including the Act to Require the Inclusion of Racial Impact Statements in the Legislative Process.

## Maryland

[www.nasw-md.org](http://www.nasw-md.org)

Maryland Chapter's Social Workers Undoing Racism Committee (SWUR) was formed after the death of Freddie Gray in 2015. This group meets monthly to discuss and work on anti-racist topics and activities. During the past year, SWUR was successful in petitioning the MD Board of Social Work Examiners to add a CEU requirement for anti-racism training for all Maryland social workers when they renew their licenses. SWUR also hosted workshops and Facebook Live events including:

- ▶ June 30, 2020: Community Conversation: "5 Years After Freddie Gray, What the #\$\$\$%\*!"
- ▶ Aug. 4, 2020: Community Conversations Part 2: White People, What the #\$\$\$%\*!" are You Doing About Racism?
- ▶ Sept. 10, 2020: Social Work's Response to Systematic Racism
- ▶ April 20, 2021: Changing the Lens Optics: The Science of Bias and Cultural Intelligence
- ▶ May 11, 2021: Dear Mother Earth: We're Sorry (a conversation on environmental justice with Mariah Davis of the Choose Clean Water Coalition)
- ▶ June 17, 2021: Racism: But What Can I Do? An Embodied Conversation for White Social Workers

At the fall leadership retreat the NASW-MD Board decided to focus on the issues of anti-racism and COVID-19 during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. As a result, the chapter devoted one day of its fall conference to an anti-racism keynote and workshops and offered numerous workshops throughout the year including:

- ▶ Sept. 30, 2020 : Understanding & Exploring the Trauma of Undocumented Immigrants
- ▶ Oct. 5, 2020: The Ethics of Addressing Cultural Competence in Trauma-informed Care
- ▶ Feb. 18, 2021: Black History Month Series: Examining the Oppression of Black People Through a Political/Historical Lens
- ▶ Feb. 19, 2021: Black History Month Series: Addressing Oppression in Clinical Practice with Black Clients
- ▶ Feb. 22, 2021: Empathy-Driven Mindset: Combating Social Injustice Through Introspection and Compassion
- ▶ Feb. 26, 2021: Teletherapy with Clients of Color: Cultural Considerations through a Social Justice Lens
- ▶ March 15, 2021: Emotional Intelligence: How to Use it to Combat the Racism Pandemic
- ▶ April 13, 2021: Conflict Prevention, Resolution, and Restorative Justice in Social Work Settings
- ▶ April 28, 2021: Achieving Social Justice: Empowering Young Black and Brown Minds
- ▶ May 14, 2021: Barriers to Care for Minorities/Underserved within the Veteran Population
- ▶ May 21, 2021: Understanding and Exploring the Role of Cultural Competency in Service Delivery
- ▶ May 21, 2021: Ethical and Cultural Issues in a Healthcare Setting
- ▶ June 4, 2021: Supervising for Culturally Responsive Social Work Practice
- ▶ June 11, 2021: Is This Us? Healing Individuals, Families and Communities in a Divided Society

In addition, during the 2021 legislative session there was an emphasis on supporting anti-racist and police reform legislation.

## Massachusetts

[www.naswma.org/racialjusticecouncil](http://www.naswma.org/racialjusticecouncil)

Massachusetts Chapter earned media coverage for a social worker appointment to the POST Commission that will create standards for police certification and decertification. Its Racial Justice Council meets monthly and the chapter regularly shares anti-racism and racial justice-related content on social, in magazine, e-news, annual report, etc. They publish statements in collaboration with the Racial Justice Council, developed a glossary and produced an internal DE&I hiring retention document. The Chapter Strategic Plan solidifies its commitment to racial justice work. Events have included the 7th annual MLK Forum on Racial Justice and Symposium '21, with a keynote by Dr. Joy DeGruy. They are hosting a quarterly Social Workers for Racial Justice book club and developed a legislative assessment tool that evaluates bills for racial justice impact. The chapter signs on to many advocacy letters related to criminal-legal reforms, racial equity in COVID responses and more.

## Michigan

[www.nasw-michigan.org/page/SocialJusticeAntiRacismCommittee](http://www.nasw-michigan.org/page/SocialJusticeAntiRacismCommittee)

Michigan Chapter has formed a member-led Social Justice & Anti-Racism Committee, which meets monthly and is working to develop a training series for the upcoming year. The staff and Board have all undergone an Undoing Racism training and participated in a book group that focused on anti-racism and racial and ethnic equity.

This fall the chapter developed and released a [Racial Justice Action Kit](#) and published several letters and newsletter articles, including:

- ▶ On Black Death - A Social Work Call to Action
- ▶ Checking Our Biases and Moving Social Work Forward
- ▶ Handing Off Jobs from Law Enforcement to Social Work Requires Careful Planning
- ▶ The ASWB Exam: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
- ▶ Social Justice Demands a Social Worker's Response
- ▶ NASW-Michigan Statement on AAHNPI Murder and Violence

NASW-Michigan Chapter earned a media award for the interview: "We don't need white saviors. A Black social worker calls her white colleagues to action" - authored by a staff member [www.michiganradio.org/post/we-don-t-needwhite-saviors-black-social-worker-calls-her-white-colleagues-action](http://www.michiganradio.org/post/we-don-t-needwhite-saviors-black-social-worker-calls-her-white-colleagues-action)

Dozens of educational, networking, and town hall events were offered. Some highlights include:

- ▶ Developing A Social Work Response to Racism, Hate Crimes, and Police Use of Force
- ▶ Ethical Considerations in Racial Justice/Injustice
- ▶ How Can Social Workers Help Reimagine Community Safety? A Virtual Town Hall
- ▶ Black Lives Matter: Social Work and the Future of Policing
- ▶ A Social Work Conversation on Racial Justice During COVID-19
- ▶ Virtual Social Work Student Roundtable
- ▶ Keynotes/workshops at Legislative Education & Advocacy Day and Annual Conference
- ▶ COVID-19 & Black Lives: An Opportunity to Create the New Normal
- ▶ Reimagining Community Safety: Social Work's Role in Policing and Abolition
- ▶ Dismantling Oppressive Systems: Toward a New Society Powered by Our Moral Imagination
- ▶ Crisis to Connection: an Imperative for our Black Boys
- ▶ The Importance of Understanding Health Equity
- ▶ Combating American Racism in The Era of Trump: Towards A Pedagogy of Justice
- ▶ Trauma Living in the Body: Race, Impact of Systemic Oppression and the Social Determinants
- ▶ Delivering African Centered Approaches: Practice and Ethical Considerations
- ▶ Reducing Health Disparities in Asian Americans: Real-World Perspectives
- ▶ Surrogate Decision Making and COVID-19: Ethical Dilemmas, Racial Disparities and How One Healthcare System Responded
- ▶ Latino Diversity: Roots, Current Reality & Its Future
- ▶ COVID-19 and the Black Community
- ▶ Reducing Health Disparities in Asian Americans: Real-World Perspectives

Legislatively, the chapter has signed on to several letters, including COVID-19 vaccines in jails and water restoration. Our Chapter coalition work with the Michigan Coalition to End Mass Incarceration has included drafting, passing, supporting or opposing all harmful legislation related to policing, jail, prison and more.

The chapter has also worked with the state's 36 schools of social work, the Governor's office, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Michigan Board of Social Work, the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, and a bi-partisan group of legislators in tackling juvenile restoration reform, voting rights, the ASWB exam pass rates, and the creation of new implicit bias training requirements for all health professionals, to name a few.

## Nebraska

<https://naswne.socialworkers.org>

Nebraska Chapter hosted a Legislative Day and Career Fair. Annual Conference sessions featured racial justice topics. They are speaking to several colleges and universities about diverse recruitment.

## New Hampshire

<https://naswnh.socialworkers.org/About/Committees>

New Hampshire Chapter has a Diversity and Equity Action Committee and has incorporated intentional diversity and inclusion into all of its committee work. The Chapter has held numerous racial justice discussions and workshops including A House is Not a Home: Homelessness and Racial Justice and The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire. Legislative action items include police reform, health equity and vehemently opposing the Divisive Concepts bill.

## New Jersey

<https://naswnj.socialworkers.org/News/Race-and-Justice>

New Jersey Chapter advocates for policies and legislation that advance racial justice in the state and offers many educational opportunities for social workers through its "Race, Responsibility and Reconciliation" campaign. Topics included:

- ▶ The Shared Experience of Grief and Trauma in Communities of Color
- ▶ Parents & Children: Processing the Insurrection of January 6, 2021
- ▶ Discussing Issues of Race with Young Children
- ▶ Race Through the Lens of Trauma
- ▶ Queer and Black: Politics, Identities and Movement
- ▶ Self Care for the Black Community During Covid-19 and BLM
- ▶ Myths Surrounding Immigration & Undocumented Clients
- ▶ Let's Talk About Whiteness: Understanding Racial Identity, Privilege and Fragility
- ▶ The School to Prison Pipeline
- ▶ Support for Parents of Color During a Racial Pandemic
- ▶ Human Rights Violations: Forced Sterilization of Women of Color in America
- ▶ Returning Citizens Resources for Incarcerated Individuals

## New York State

<https://naswnys.org/antiracism>

All New York State Chapter racial justice activities are free and open to all social workers except the CE series, which is only free for NASW-NYS members. Activities include:

- ▶ Revolutionize the Profession Monthly Town Halls
- ▶ Revolutionize the Profession Work Groups
- ▶ Revolutionize the Profession BIPOC Only Monthly Peer Support Group
- ▶ Racial Justice Forum (every 6 to 8 weeks)
- ▶ Monthly Racial Justice CE Training
- ▶ AANHPI Peer Support Group
- ▶ Anti Racist Resources
- ▶ Multiple Chapter Chats

## New York City

[www.naswnyc.org](http://www.naswnyc.org)

In July 2020, the New York City Chapter re-imagined its diversity group and launched a Building Organizing and Leading in Diversity (B.O.L.D) Committee. Every other month, the chapter holds open forums to address racial and social justice issues within and outside the social work profession. B.O.L.D. CE webinars follow each session to delve deeper into topics. The May 2021 topic was “Mental Health and Racial Trauma.” The chapter also held healing circles to support LGBTQ+ social workers and BIPOC social workers.

## North Carolina

[www.naswnc.org/AntiRacism](http://www.naswnc.org/AntiRacism)

North Carolina Chapter’s Equity & Inclusion Committee meets every other week. The full board and staff participate in the Racial Equity Institute. The chapter has issued multiple statements condemning racial violence and trauma and provided media interviews about police reform.

## Ohio

[www.naswoh.org/BLM](http://www.naswoh.org/BLM)

In 2018, the Ohio Chapter developed a new Anti-Oppression-Informed Practitioner certificate program and has trained 500 social workers and related professionals in the foundational principles of embodying anti-oppressive values and ethics in direct practice. Ohio staff meet weekly with the local chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) and have co-facilitated three separate trainings on racism and white supremacy within the social work profession. NASW Ohio regularly encourages social workers to be involved in community organizing, policy and direct action (demonstrations, civil disobedience) in support of the families grieving loved ones killed by police. The chapter has launched a new anti-racism working group that will develop standards and procedures for ensuring that anti-racism is infused in every continuing education offering managed by the chapter.



Trainings:

- ▶ Abolition as Transformative Justice
- ▶ Harm Reduction: An Institutional Framework for Uprooting White Supremacy in Social Work Practice
- ▶ Anti-Oppression-Informed Practitioner - Foundation & Supervision courses

## Oregon

<https://naswor.socialworkers.org>

The Oregon Chapter advertised and participated in May 2021 virtual training: “Latinos and Mental Health” and “Effective Practice Promoting Culturally Responsive Care.” It also advertised and participated in a four-hour statewide virtual summit on “A Community Call to Confront Hate” with tracks. Recorded sessions include:

- ▶ Stronger Together: Using Bias Awareness to Increase Critical Self-Reflection Practices for Seeing and Being our Most Authentic Self
- ▶ The Mainstreaming of Anti-Semitism in America
- ▶ Latinos Confronting Oppressive Systems in Oregon: A Discussion About the Intersectionality between Racism in our Institutions, Immigration Processes, Schools and Beyond
- ▶ How Conspiracy Theories Threaten Inclusive Democracy
- ▶ How Do You Reconcile a Lynching?
- ▶ Oregon’s Tribal History - Racism, the Pandemic and Our Future + The Evolving Threat of White Nationalism
- ▶ Implicit Bias - Raising our Awareness
- ▶ Four Avenues to Stopping Asian Hate
- ▶ Confronting White Nationalism at Home, at School, and In Our Communities
- ▶ From Holocaust Denial to QAnon: The Rise of Online Hate
- ▶ THIS America: Exploring anti-Asian attitudes and how “omitted stories” shape our understanding of American history
- ▶ Present Tense: Anti-Trans Backlash in 2021
- ▶ How to be an Ally: A Portland Youth Perspective
- ▶ Uncovering Hidden Aspects of Islamophobia in Oregon and Beyond
- ▶ Combating Hate: The Intersection of Racism and Anti-Semitism in the Fight for an Inclusive Democracy

## South Carolina

<https://naswsc.socialworkers.org>

South Carolina Chapter, in partnership with Winthrop University, offered a five-part series on social justice issues during the Covid-19 pandemic and a five-hour training on race and health disparities. Upcoming training covers stereotypes in the social work profession. The South Carolina Fall Conference 2021 focus is ethics, diversity and race. Public statements included the George Floyd murder, attack on the U.S. Capitol and voter suppression. The first NASW-South Carolina DE&I Committee was created this year.

## Tennessee

[www.naswtn.com](http://www.naswtn.com)

The Tennessee Chapter Board and Staff issued a joint statement on its commitment to social justice for all and to ending racism. They added a new anti-racism resources section to the chapter website, including Tennessee historical sites such as the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

Jointly designed and co-hosted with Tennessee Coalition of Black Social Workers a five-part workshop series. Topics included: 1) Anti-Racism: An Ethical Mandate; 2) Understanding Implicit Bias and Structural Racism; 3) Ally Training; 4) Real Talk: Panel Discussion with Black Social Workers; and 5) Is Anti-racism Enough? Work continues with CBSW on future activities.

The “Anti-Racism: An Ethical Mandate” workshop was offered a second time later in the year. The University of Tennessee College of Social Work will offer a modified version of this workshop free for all Field Supervisors this summer.

## Texas

[www.naswtx.org](http://www.naswtx.org)

Texas Chapter continues its member-driven Race Equity Accountability & Leadership (REAL) work: Held chapter webinars during COVID-19. Presented at the 2020 conference and will present at the 2021 conference. A member-driven Diversity Analysis Committee (DAC) developed a set of recommendations provided to the NASW/TX Board at the April Meeting. Conference speakers focused on racial justice. The plenary speaker at the 2020 conference was Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis.

The chapter’s legislative priorities included multiple items related to racial justice: police reform and accountability; improving mental health crisis response to limit unnecessary police involvement; and supporting health equity. Focused legislative efforts on race equity by filing two bills: Studying mental health crisis response (bill did not pass) and creating grant program for mobile crisis outreach teams (bill did not pass).

## Vermont

<https://naswvt.socialworkers.org/News/Call-to-Action-Against-Police-Violence>

Vermont Chapter has a JEDI Committee that leads ongoing racial injustice conversations and workshops. The chapter has hosted numerous workshops including Cultural Diversity, Cultural Competence, and Ethical Social Work Practice and Cultural Humility and Awareness: Working with Specific Populations. The Legislative Committee has actively lobbied for legislation addressing structural racism and police reform.

## Washington

[www.nasw-wa.org](http://www.nasw-wa.org)

Washington Chapter Policy Conference (February 15, 2021) included fact sheets and more related to legislative priorities – including reimagining public safety/police accountability, restoration of voter rights, promotion of economic inclusion, creation of health equity zones, adding health equity continuing education requirements. The Chapter also supported legislation to remove Marcus Whitman statue from U.S. Capitol and replace with late tribal treaty rights activist Billy Frank, Jr.'s statue.

NASW Washington implemented an updated Chapter Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan and created a strategic plan that incorporates DE&I into programming for future chapter activities. It hosted town halls: Reimagining Public Safety Listening Sessions on Sept 15 (NASW members), Sept 16 (students), and Sept 17 (community members) to help inform legislative priorities. The Chapter implemented a call for presenters RFP application outlining the need for cultural awareness/humility trainings and a nominations forms that ask for additional details for volunteer leadership to ensure diversity and inclusion on chapter committees and boards.

NASW Washington sponsored Whatcom County Human Rights Commission Annual MLK Conference that included speakers and CE offerings related to anti-racist work and organizing and co-sponsored the University of Washington's 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Recognition Award. 2021 Social Work Month activities celebrated the accomplishments of NASW members and community members. A robust and diverse awards ceremony was presented virtually.

### **Workshops included:**

February 15, 2021: Policy Conference: Focused on legislative priorities including reimagining public safety

Monthly, beginning January 2021: Social Justice Practice Area Network - discussion of local actions including anti-racist work focus in June 2021

February 26, 2021: Workshop - "When Race/Racism is the Elephant in the Room: How to Bring Up Race in Therapeutic Conversations and Not Come Undone"

March 19, 2021: Workshop - "Clinical Implications for Working with Populations of Color, Complex Trauma, and Dissociation in the Age of COVID 19"

April 16, 2021: Workshop - Understanding How to Help Your Client Use Their Cultural Background to Remain Resilient in Their Community"

September 10, 2021: Workshop - "Digging Deeper: When Race/Racism is the Elephant in the Room: How to Bring Up Race in Therapeutic Conversations"

## West Virginia

[www.naswwv.org](http://www.naswwv.org)

The opening address at West Virginia Chapter 2020 and 2021 Virtual Conferences focused on racism and what NASW and the profession can do. Multiple conference breakout sessions focused on issues such as addressing racism and white supremacy in the workplace, and creating a safe space for Black social workers in Appalachia to gather.

The chapter signed on to a letter by West Virginia NAACP on use of COVID relief funds to support minority health and communities. It advocated legislatively against anti-voter rights and 'divisive concepts' legislation (which did not pass) and for minority health improvement (passed enhanced Medicaid postpartum benefits).

The chapter worked with coalition partners on public and social media statements regarding public access to the WV legislature and distributing ARPA funds to affected minority communities of color. Media interviews include City of Charleston Hires New Mental Health Coordinator Amid COVID Concerns | WVPB ([wvpublic.org](http://wvpublic.org))

## Wisconsin

[www.naswwi.org/anti-racist-resources](http://www.naswwi.org/anti-racist-resources)

Wisconsin Chapter created an anti-racism section on its website and posted a public statement on policing. It held a forum on race and offered specialized training on race, racism and diversity and created a Scholarship Membership Program for students of color. The Annual Conference featured Anton Gunn, former Obama advisor and expert on socially conscious leadership.

**Learn more about other NASW Chapter activities and resources**  
[SocialWorkers.org/About/Chapters](http://SocialWorkers.org/About/Chapters)



# ANTI-RACIST TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

NASW consolidates access to state and national continuing education webinars through its Online CE Institute platform. Social workers can find a wide range of content to support their professional growth and anti-racist journeys. Many courses are free and all webinars are available on-demand. NASW worked to significantly expand its training library this year with training on institutional racism, ethics, police reform, trauma, privilege, as well as diversity, equity and inclusion strategies. The following is a sample of recent racial justice training titles available through the Institute. Additional courses are highlighted on the Chapter Racial Justice pages in this report and are posted online.

*2021 Revisions to the NASW Code of Ethics: Self-Care and Cultural Competence National Office* – NASW National

*A Conversation About Healing Racism* – NASW Illinois Chapter

*Abolition Town Hall Part 1: Are Social Workers Abolitionists?* – NASW National

*Abolition Town Hall Part 2: Creating the World We Wish to See* – NASW National

*Addressing Racial Equity in Social Work: The Way Forward* – NASW National

*Advocacy for Immigrants & Refugees* – NASW National

*Affirmative Practice with Transgender Clients* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Affirming Practice with LGBTQ Youth and Families* – NASW Illinois Chapter

*Anti-Semitism and the Modern Social Worker* – NASW Specialty Practice Sections

*Antiracism and Anti-Oppression in the context of Social Work Ethics* – NASW Iowa Chapter

*Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Social Work Practice* – NASW New Jersey Chapter

*Clinical Implications of Identifying and Treating Race Based Trauma* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Cultural Competence and Racial Justice: Working to Undo Racism* – NASW National

*Decision 2020: An Election Forecast* – NASW National

*Empowering Clinical Social Work Practice: Understanding the Complexities of Race, Poverty, & Aging* – NASW Iowa Chapter

*Ethics and Boundaries: Social Work and Race* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Fight for Civil Rights in an Era of Pandemics* – NASW National

*How to Develop an Effective Antiracist Lens Within your Clinical Practice* – NASW Colorado Chapter

*How White Supremacy Shows Up in Nonprofit Organizations* – NASW Minnesota Chapter

*Immigration and the Role of Social Workers* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Integrative Approaches to Dismantle Biased Policing: Why Social Work and Law Enforcement Collaboration is Crucial for Creating Ethical and Equitable Law Enforcement Policies* – NASW North Carolina Chapter

*Intersectionality of Black Lives: Advancing a Conversation of Blackness in Learning Spaces* – NASW Specialty Practice Sections

*Leadership: Racial and Cultural Considerations* – NASW Massachusetts Chapter

*“Let’s Keep It Real”: Addressing Expressions of Racism and Racial Prejudice in the Context of Social Work Practice* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Personal Faith and Professional Ethics: Best Practice with the Families of LGBT Youth* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

*Police and Police Social Workers: A Collaborative Effort toward Social Justice* – NASW Specialty Practice Sections

*Racial Equity Through a Clinical Lens* – NASW National

*Race and Health Disparities* – NASW South Carolina Chapter

*Recognizing and Working through Anti-Blackness in Clinical Settings* – NASW Minnesota Chapter

*Rethinking Advocacy Through a Different Lens* – NASW South Carolina Chapter

*Social Justice, Civility and Dialogue* – NASW Utah Chapter

*Social Work and Advocacy* – NASW National

*Teaching Children About Race and Ethnicity* – NASW Specialty Practice Sections

*The Intersection of Ethics and Racial Equity* – NASW National

*The Way Forward: Be a Part of the Solution* – NASW National

*Town Hall on Racial Equity: Eradicating AAPI Hate* – NASW National

*Town Hall on Racial Equity: White Privilege Part I* – NASW National

*Town Hall on Racial Equity: White Privilege Part II* – NASW National

*Trans-Inclusive Care in Social Work Practice* – NASW Minnesota Chapter

*Understanding The Federal Court System and its Importance for Social Justice* – NASW National

*Voter Mobilization: Social Workers Vote!* – NASW National

*We Tell Your Story: Conducting Assessments to Support Asylum Seekers* – NASW New York State Chapter

*When Politics Enter the Room: Ethical Challenges for Social Workers* – NASW Wisconsin Chapter

<https://naswinstitute.inreachce.com>



**In addition to state and national legislative advocacy, NASW participates in multiple amicus briefs that address racial justice issues heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. Recent cases have addressed the death penalty, elections and voter registration, employment discrimination, juvenile justice, housing discrimination, affirmative action and Medicaid requirements. Details on each case are found in the NASW LDF amicus brief database.**

**[www.socialworkers.org/About/Legal/Legal-Briefs/About-the-Amicus-Brief-Database](http://www.socialworkers.org/About/Legal/Legal-Briefs/About-the-Amicus-Brief-Database)**

# COLLABORATION WITH SOCIAL WORK PARTNERS

COLLABORATIVE WORK BETWEEN NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK ORGANIZATIONS ABOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC QUICKLY EVOLVED INTO COORDINATED EFFORTS TO TACKLE RACISM WITHIN THE PROFESSION.

The National Association of Social Workers, Council on Social Work Education and the Association for Social Work Boards used a new joint publication, [Social Work Responds](#), to provide updates and guidance to the profession's practice, education and regulation communities about racial justice initiatives.

Through its participation on the Social Work Leadership Roundtable, NASW also coordinated racial justice strategies with the National Association of Black Social Workers, the National Association of Deans and Directors, the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education, Society for Social Work Research, the St. Louis Group, Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors, and the American Association for Social Work and Social Welfare which publishes the Grand Challenges for Social Work.

These and other social work groups launched dedicated programs and initiatives to lead important racial equity discussions in the profession this year. A few of those efforts include:



## **National Association of Black Social Workers - NABSW**

The National Association of Black Social Workers in 2020 launched a Wellness Warrior campaign to support social workers of color in their fight to be well—individually and collectively. In the spirit of Sankofa, this campaign's objective is to eliminate all items that separate people of color and to re-

member that “the ties that bind us are much stronger than the hands that try to break us apart.” NABSW recognizes that racism and discrimination are designed to prevent self-actualization; therefore, liberation is the core objective. NABSW calls on all Black social workers to be instruments for social change and servant leaders—through lived and learned experiences—in pursuit of wellness for themselves and the people social workers serve.

**[www.nabsw.org](http://www.nabsw.org)**





COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

## Council on Social Work Education – CSWE

The CSWE Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism in Social Work Education is currently working to organize and condense more than 150 distinct recommendations on accreditation, data, training and curricula into clear guidance for social work education to become actively anti-racist. The Task Force includes four workgroups who each shared initial recommendations in the CSWE Membership Meeting at the virtual 2020 Annual Program Meeting (APM) in November. These presentations are available on CSWE’s YouTube channel.

CSWE’s Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice and its four councils also provide teaching resources and encourage greater research diversity in the field. [www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Center-for-Diversity.aspx](http://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Center-for-Diversity.aspx)



## Association of Social Work Boards – ASWB

In February 2021, the Association of Social Work Boards adopted an anti-racism statement. It stated “...the association will hold itself accountable in denouncing racism, intolerance, exclusion, and other forms of discrimination and bias in carrying out its mission.” One of the first steps the ASWB board took in 2020 was to approve a DE&I initiative that focuses on three areas: internal operations, external efforts, and member engagement and support. [www.aswb.org/a-commitment-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-2](http://www.aswb.org/a-commitment-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-2)



## Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy – CRISP

CRISP works to expand social workers’ engagement with Congress and the federal government and raises visibility about social work research among federal policymakers. It also works to expand opportunities for students to find field placements in federal government offices both on the Hill and in district offices near their schools. CRISP coordinates briefings, seminars, conferences and webinars. Specifically, CRISP engages young social workers of color in federal advocacy work and raises visibility among Congressional staffers about social justice issues most important to the profession. Recent advocacy activities have focused on police reform, improving social services for African American men and boys, and anti-poverty programs in the Biden administration. [www.crispinc.org/our-story](http://www.crispinc.org/our-story)



## Network for Social Work Management – NSWM

The Network for Social Work Management created its Changemakers of Color program to empower people of color seeking leadership positions in healthcare. NSWM believes that by increasing the number of diverse leaders in the health and human services sector, the social work profession can improve access to care in underserved communities, increase patient choice and satisfaction, improve health outcomes, and enhance healthcare quality for vulnerable populations. NSWM has amplified the voices of emerging leaders of color during the pandemic through social media. [www.socialworkmanager.org](http://www.socialworkmanager.org)



## International Federation of Social Workers – IFSW

This year's World Social Work Day theme "Ubuntu: I Am Because We Are" celebrated African principles of humanity, diversity, compassion, dignity, peace and community. IFSW's biannual conference with the same theme drew more than 20,000 social workers online for a week's worth of virtual content. [www.ifsw.org](http://www.ifsw.org)



## Grand Challenges for Social Work and Social Welfare

In May 2021, the Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative released its first working paper for the newly added challenge "Eliminate Racism." The paper reviews the work of all previous 12 challenges with an anti-racist and inclusion lens, citing limited research about and with communities of color. Although social work has provided considerable leadership in the civil rights and race equity movements, much more work is needed internal to the profession and for society as a whole. The Grand Challenges Initiative, and its coordinating body the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, proposes a model that identifies evidence and practice-based interventions that will end racism and ameliorate the negative outcomes of our nation's history of racism. <https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/eliminate-racism>



## Social Work Helper – Racial Equity Summit 2021

Social Work Helper, a popular social work blog and website, hosted two Global Social Welfare Digital Summits this year, one in September 2020 and the other in March 2021. The first summit was hosted by Salisbury University; the second summit was co-hosted by CSWE and sponsored by multiple Schools of Social Work. Content for both events focused on supporting communities of color through social justice and social work. Speakers for the 2021 Anti-Racism Virtual Summit featured anti-racist writer and MSNBC contributor Tim Wise, and Chicago activist and founder of Café Social Work Anjanette Young.

<https://swhelper.org> and <https://globalsocialwelfaresummit.com>



# YEAR TWO

**PLANNING  
NEXT STEPS**



# YEAR TWO PLAN

JUNE 2021 MARKS THE FIRST FULL YEAR OF A REINVIGORATED FOCUS ON RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY AND ANTI-RACIST PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AT NASW.



In the last 12 months we have listened to stories of pain from our clients and colleagues of color. We have learned new ways of identifying and confronting personal and institutional racism in our lives. We have lobbied local, state and national lawmakers to support policies and programs that address the social inequities and racial violence traumatizing so many of our communities.

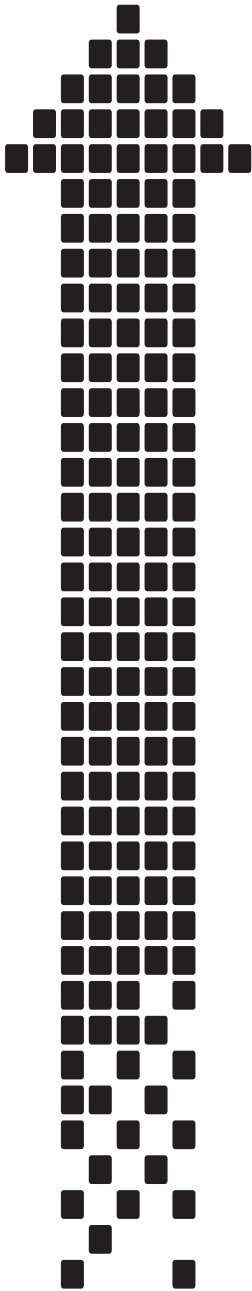
NASW also took an honest look inside our own organization of 200 professional staff, more than 5,000 volunteer leaders and approximately 120,000 members to assess how we can better demonstrate our values and ethics through daily action.

As we begin the second year of NASW's anti-racist and racial equity journey, we have identified several new areas of focus. We invite you to share with us your expectations and hopes for NASW and the social work profession and commit yourself to personal actions that lift up and liberate people of color in our nation.

## Year Two Focus

- ▶ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- ▶ Policy Blueprint Racial Justice Priorities
- ▶ Framework for Achieving Anti-Racist Social Work
- ▶ Social Justice Priorities and Coalitions

# NASW FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING ANTI-RACIST SOCIAL WORK



## Society

Draw community attention to racial equity issues, raise awareness about the history and systems behind the issues. Offer action steps through our social justice briefs, policy statements and social justice advocacy. Create momentum towards systemic changes that reduce disparate outcomes by race.

## Profession

Stay solution-focused and forward thinking in addressing the systemic barriers to equal opportunity and equal justice. Host national and local discussions on race, post resources and policy briefs for social workers, collaborate with social work leaders and offer learning forums. Pursue our social justice priorities.

## Association

Hold ourselves accountable to addressing systemic racism and the root causes of inequity, internally and externally. Facilitate genuine discussions across the organization, strengthening our diversity and inclusion capacity and infrastructure. Emphasize transformative solutions that impact multiple systems.

## Teams

Evolve our workplace culture to truly value all people's contributions through authentic discussions among team members. Formulate a shared affirmative vision of a fair and inclusive society.

## Individual

Do the work to understand white supremacy and the oppressive logic used to justify violence, exclusion, exploitation, and negative messaging through self-examination and reflection. Work through personal fears, biases, and complicity.



**“NOT EVERYTHING THAT IS FACED CAN BE CHANGED,  
BUT NOTHING CAN BE CHANGED UNTIL IT IS FACED.”**

JAMES BALDWIN  
Novelist & Activist

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DE&I)

**NASW is the largest social work organization in the United States and represents a diverse group of professional social workers and students across the country and globally. Our members serve diverse communities—large and small—with integrity, competence, respect for human relationships, respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all people, and a commitment to promoting social justice. NASW exists to support our members' work.**

We can only meet our goals by caring for our staff, members and volunteers. Creating a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is ethical and the right thing to do. It is also critical to our organization's continued success. NASW is committed to becoming a leader in attracting and retaining diverse talent, creating an environment based on just policies and practices, and fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging. Our goal is to become a DE&I model for other associations. But we acknowledge that we have not always celebrated the unique gifts and talents that make up the NASW family. We are committed to doing better and growing together.

## **Our objectives:**

- ✓ Listen and learn from all staff, volunteers, members and partners.
- ✓ Develop and support a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Committee.
- ✓ Assess the workplace culture at NASW, analyze relevant DE&I data and set priorities.
- ✓ Expand our diversity and inclusion training and education opportunities.
- ✓ Find intentional and innovative ways to celebrate the rich diversity within NASW and in the communities our profession serves.
- ✓ Enhance DE&I communication efforts within NASW and with our partners.
- ✓ Create spaces for brave conversations to support and hold each other accountable.
- ✓ Hold leaders accountable for implementing the organization's DE&I vision, setting goals, achieving results and being role models.
- ✓ Attract the best talent and honor each employee's unique attributes, experiences, perspectives, and viewpoints to serving our members.

# SOCIAL JUSTICE PRIORITIES AND COALITIONS

NASW follows a Board-approved social justice agenda and aligns its national and chapter work through a staff-led Social Action Committee. Some of this team's goals in the upcoming year include:

- ▶ Reviewing and updating the NASW Social Justice Priorities to reflect nationwide social justice urgencies.
- ▶ Bringing real and measurable changes to injustices through national interdisciplinary coalitions.
- ▶ Developing and disseminating comprehensive written policy positions on all social justice priorities and emerging issues of national consequence.
- ▶ Pursuing a social justice legislative agenda.
- ▶ Enlisting all NASW Chapters on social justice mobilization and action alerts to ensure high participation by members.
- ▶ Expanding relationships with key national coalitions.

## KEY COALITIONS

**Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights (LCCHR)-  
200+ member organizations**

### **LCCHR Taskforces:**

- ▶ Voting Rights
- ▶ Criminal Justice
- ▶ Fair Courts
- ▶ Immigration
- ▶ Census
- ▶ Stop Hate
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Health Equity

**Justice Roundtable – 100+  
member organizations**

### **Justice Roundtable Working Groups:**

- ▶ Reentry
- ▶ Law Enforcement
- ▶ Sentencing
- ▶ Drug Policy
- ▶ Prison Reform
- ▶ Racial Justice
- ▶ State Issues
- ▶ Pre-Trial
- ▶ Restoration of Voting Rights of Convicted Felons

## Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD) 150+ member organizations

### Issues: Election Integrity and Voting Protection

**Main Legislative Priorities** – Passage of For the People Act (HR-1/S-1) and Passage of the John Lewis Voting Advancement Act (HR-4/S-4)

### DFAD Work Groups

- ▶ Grassroots Mobilization
- ▶ Legislative
- ▶ Diversity and Inclusion

## National Low-Income Housing Coalition - 100+ member organizations

### Main Initiative: Opportunity Starts At Home (OSAH)

- ▶ 20-member Steering Committee (NASW is on it)
- ▶ End Systemic Racism in Housing (NASW is on the work group)
- ▶ Legislative Work Group (NASW is on this work group)

## Coalition for Human Needs (100+ Members)

**An alliance of national organizations working together to promote public policies which address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations.**

- ▶ Budget Appropriations
- ▶ Food and Nutrition
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Housing and Homelessness
- ▶ Immigration
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Social & Economic Justice
- ▶ Social Services

## Immigration Hub (Amigos) - 150+ members

### Issues Covered:

- ▶ Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- ▶ Racial Inequity for Black and Muslim Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- ▶ Unaccompanied Migrant Children
- ▶ Family Detention
- ▶ Immigration-related Foster Care and Family Reunification
- ▶ Temporary Protective Status (TPS)
- ▶ Dreamers

## White House COVID Vaccine Confidence Initiative

### Made to Save Coalition – 100+ organizations.

A national grassroots effort to ensure communities hardest hit by the pandemic have access to the COVID-19 vaccines and accurate, timely information.

## Gun Violence Coalition

### Partner with Brady Gun Violence Coalition

- ▶ Collaboration with Brady on:
  - › Webinars
  - › Social Justice Briefs
  - › Mobilization on Gun-related Legislation

## Marijuana Justice Coalition - 20 member organizations

### Objectives:

- ▶ Pass the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act (MORE) – The bill has the support of Democratic leadership and the marijuana industry.
- ▶ Decriminalize marijuana
- ▶ Create a trust fund from special tax on marijuana industry for drug treatment and addiction prevention.
- ▶ Expunge arrest and prison records for those convicted on low-level marijuana possession charges. (Marijuana Justice Coalition)



# POLICY BLUEPRINT RACIAL JUSTICE PRIORITIES

NASW developed a 2021 Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities outlining urgently needed policy solutions in 21 issue areas. Organized according to the Grand Challenges of Social Work, the report has been shared with the Biden-Harris Administration, aligns with White House priorities and guides NASW national legislative advocacy work. The following sections of that resource are directly related to NASW's racial equity advocacy agenda.



## Improve Access to Mental and Behavioral Health and Social Services

Mental and behavioral health are crucial components of overall health. Social workers play an essential role in promoting mental and behavioral health and do so in a broad range of settings and communities, and with a wide array of populations. It is unacceptably difficult for many individuals and families to find mental and behavioral health care that is accessible, affordable and covered by insurance. Transforming our mental health system involves integrating physical, mental and behavioral health care and could save the country up to \$32 billion annually.

## Provide High Quality Healthcare for All

Research demonstrates that achieving health equity requires approaches that address the social determinants of health – the social, economic and

environmental factors that influence health. Racial disparities in health can be reduced through strategies that help bridge health care and community health, increase focus on prevention and primary care, and support testing and spreading of new delivery and payment arrangements. In addition, initiatives that foster increased workforce diversity; maintain accurate, complete race and ethnicity data to monitor disparities in care; and set measurable goals for improving quality of care are needed for achieving better health for all racial, ethnic and gender identity groups.

## Build Healthy Relationships to End Violence

Interpersonal violence has a traumatizing impact across the lifespan on individuals, families, communities and society. Developing and broadly implementing interventions to promote healthy relationships and reduce violence should be a high

priority for policy action. Women from marginalized groups are at higher risk for violence and homicide. An overreliance on carceral responses such as arrests instead of intervention or mediation likely increases harm, trauma and escalation of violence in communities.

## **Advance Long and Productive Lives**

As much of the U.S. population lives longer, healthier lives, many of us are affected by physical illness and disability and lack the economic security to meet our basic needs. Health and economic disparities related to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation often have a cumulative effect in later life. Building a system with universal access to affordable, comprehensive high-quality health care and long-term services and supports could create a society in which older adults and people of all ages thrive.

## **End Homelessness**

On any given night, there are over half a million people in the United States who experience homelessness. Of that number, over 50,000 are family households. Families or individuals who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered “cost burdened” and can have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, medical care, and saving for the future. Almost half of renter households and 21 percent of owner households are cost burdened, with Latino and Black households experiencing higher cost burdens. Racial and economic inequities are deeply rooted in housing segregation and discrimination, with 25 percent of African American families and over 16 percent of Hispanic families living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty compared with only 7 percent of white families. Black households are also more than twice as likely as white households to be evicted.

## **Eliminate Racism**

Building a more inclusive society and rooting out the inequities so deeply imbedded in our history and institutions will require sustained multifaceted commitment by individuals, organizations, communities and our nation’s leaders. The evidence of institutional racism is undeniable and overwhelming. Poverty rates, unemployment rates, life expectancy and school suspensions are just a

few of key indicators demonstrating that racial inequities persist at an institutional level and remain closely related to economic and educational disadvantages. Disadvantages that are disproportionately borne by African Americans and other people of color, largely due to centuries-old institutions of racial oppression, have received insufficient structural redress.

## **Achieve Equal Opportunity and Justice**

The United States has the largest prison population of any developed country in the world, with almost 2.2 million people in prison or jail. In addition, more than 4.5 million people are on probation or parole, and more than 70 million people have conviction histories that subject them to lifelong collateral consequences. People of color make up 37 percent of the U.S. population but 67 percent of the prison population. The high incarceration rate for communities of color in this country means there is an equally high arrest rate that is caused by over-criminalization and racial profiling. There are far too many encounters between police and members of Black, Brown and Native communities, many of which involve use of force or result in death. In addition, mandatory minimum penalties continue to have a significant impact on the size and composition of the federal prison population. Almost half of federal inmates are drug offenders.

## **Advance Political Justice**


Conservative politicians and advocacy groups have for many years made judicial nomination a top priority for advancing their political objectives. The result of the effort is a federal court system that is skewed in its political philosophy and racial make-up. Of the 218 federal judges confirmed under the Trump administration, 75 percent are white and 83 percent are men. And while court dockets continue to swell, no new judgeships have been added for 30 years, curtailing certain types of civil cases. In addition, since the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was gutted by the conservative Supreme Court in 2013, there has been a concerted effort by many states to suppress the votes of Black and Brown people using unreasonable voter ID laws, massive purges of eligible Black voters from voting rolls, and limiting voting places in heavily Black and Brown districts. Our increasingly inequitable voting system favors the rich and powerful.

# CONCLUSION

The social work profession's Code of Ethics offers a vision in which all people are respected, supported and valued for their humanity. Race, class and hierarchy, however, shape all American institutions and too many of us participate in systems that may harm the diverse people we serve. In the next decade, social workers have an important opportunity to improve our support for and partnership with communities of color.

Although we live in a country with a troubled legacy of inequality and racial division, we can use our social work skills and strengths to dismantle exploitative, oppressive and racist policies, systems and practices. We can build new systems that prioritize the lives and well-being of those our society often neglects. Most importantly, we can make ending discrimination, oppression, poverty, trauma and racism central themes in our education, advocacy, research and practice.

There is much work to be done, but history has shown us that what seems impossible in one generation can become the accepted standard in another. As a social worker, you are an integral part of NASW's anti-racist future. Help us truly achieve anti-racist social work by sharing your hopes, ideas and commitment to action at [socialworkers.org/Racial-Equity](https://socialworkers.org/Racial-Equity)



**“I BELIEVE SOCIAL WORKERS, IF WE SPEAK TRUTH AND SPEAK IT IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY, CAN BE PART OF LEADING AND CREATING LASTING POSITIVE CHANGE.”**

ANGELO McCLAIN  
NASW CEO



# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- Americans for Financial Reform. (2020, November 18). *Joint Statement: Over 235 Orgs Call on President-Elect Biden to Cancel Federal Student Debt on Day One using Executive Action.* <https://ourfinancialsecurity.org/2020/11/joint-statement-over-220-orgs-call-on-president-elect-biden-to-cancel-federal-student-debt-on-day-one-using-executive-action/>.
- Center for Diversity. (n.d.) Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). [www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Center-for-Diversity.aspx](http://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Center-for-Diversity.aspx)
- Center for Social Development (csd.). (2020, July 1). *Congressional Briefing – Black Lives Matter: Social Work and the Future of Policing.* Brown School Center for Social Development. <https://csd.wustl.edu/congressional-briefing-black-lives-matter-social-work-and-the-future-of-policing/>.
- Commitment to Diversity Equity and Inclusion. (n.d.) Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). [www.aswb.org/a-commitment-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-2/](http://www.aswb.org/a-commitment-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-2/)
- Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy (CRISP). (n.d.) [www.crispinc.org/our-story/](http://www.crispinc.org/our-story/)
- Hirtle, E. (2021, March 31). *Cancelling Federal Student Debt is a Tool for Gender and Racial Justice.* Medium. <https://realbankreform.medium.com/cancelling-federal-student-debt-is-a-tool-for-gender-and-racial-justice-22adadb9a505>.
- International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW). (n.d.) [www.ifsw.org](http://www.ifsw.org)
- NABSW. (n.d.) [www.nabsw.org](http://www.nabsw.org)
- National Association of Social Work (NASW). (n.d.). *2021 Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities.* [www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KPDZqY60t4=&portalid=0](http://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KPDZqY60t4=&portalid=0).
- NASW CA. (n.d.) <https://naswcanews.org/category/events/>
- NASW CO. (n.d.) <https://naswco.socialworkers.org/Events/Calendar-of-Events-Committees>
- NASW CT. (n.d.) <http://naswct.org/>
- NASW FL. (n.d.) [www.naswfl.org/conference.html](http://www.naswfl.org/conference.html)
- NASW IL. (n.d.) [www.naswil.org](http://www.naswil.org)
- NASW IN. (n.d.) [www.naswin.org/page/INnews](http://www.naswin.org/page/INnews)
- NASW IA. (n.d.) <https://naswia.socialworkers.org/>
- NASW KS. (n.d.) [www.naswkansas.com/racial-equity](http://www.naswkansas.com/racial-equity)
- NASW MA. (n.d.) [www.naswma.org/racialjusticecouncil](http://www.naswma.org/racialjusticecouncil)
- NASW MD. (n.d.) [www.nasw-md.org/](http://www.nasw-md.org/)
- NASW ME. (n.d.) <https://naswme.socialworkers.org/Professional-Development/Continuing-Education>
- NASW MI. (n.d.) [www.nasw-michigan.org/page/SocialJusticeAntiRacismCommittee](http://www.nasw-michigan.org/page/SocialJusticeAntiRacismCommittee)
- NASW NC. (n.d.) [www.naswnc.org/page/AntiRacism](http://www.naswnc.org/page/AntiRacism)
- NASW NE. (n.d.) <https://naswne.socialworkers.org/>
- NASW NH. (n.d.) <https://naswnh.socialworkers.org/About/Committees>
- NASW NJ. (n.d.) <https://naswnj.socialworkers.org/News/Race-and-Justice>
- NASW NY State. (n.d.) <https://naswnys.org/antiracism/>
- NASW NYC. (n.d.) [www.naswnyc.org](http://www.naswnyc.org)
- NASW OH. (n.d.) [www.naswoh.org/BLM](http://www.naswoh.org/BLM)
- NASW OR. (n.d.) <https://naswor.socialworkers.org/>
- NASW SC. (n.d.) <https://naswsc.socialworkers.org/>

NASW TN. (n.d.) [www.naswtn.com](http://www.naswtn.com)

NASW TX. (n.d.) [www.naswtx.org/](http://www.naswtx.org/)

NASW VT. (n.d.)  
<https://naswvt.socialworkers.org/News/Call-to-Action-Against-Police-Violence>

NASW WI. (n.d.) [www.naswwi.org/anti-racist-resources/](http://www.naswwi.org/anti-racist-resources/)

NASW WA. (n.d.) [www.nasw-wa.org](http://www.nasw-wa.org)

NASW WV. (n.d.) [www.naswwwv.org](http://www.naswwwv.org)

Network for Social Work Management (NSWM). (n.d.)  
[www.socialworkmanager.org](http://www.socialworkmanager.org)

Racial Equity Summit. (2021). Social Work Helper.  
<https://swhelper.org> and <https://globalsocialwelfare-summit.com>

Sherraden, M. (2020, June). *Social work and the future of policing: Key points for changes in policy and practice* (CSD Policy Brief No. 20-14). St. Louis, MO: Washington University, Center for Social Development. <https://doi.org/10.7936/885h-rh13>

Social Workers Hold Congressional Briefing To Highlight Benefits They Bring to Public Schools. (2020, September 21). [www.socialworkers.org/News/News-Releases/ID/2235/Social-Workers-Hold-Congressional-Briefing-To-Highlight-Benefits-They-Bring-to-Public-Schools](http://www.socialworkers.org/News/News-Releases/ID/2235/Social-Workers-Hold-Congressional-Briefing-To-Highlight-Benefits-They-Bring-to-Public-Schools).

Teasley, M. L., McCarter, S., Woo, B., Conner, L. R., Spencer, M. S., & Green, T. (2021). *Eliminate racism* (Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative Working Paper No. 26). Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare. <https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/eliminate-racism/>

Van Hollen, Bass Introduce New Community-Based Crisis Response Legislation. (2020, October 1). *Chris Van Hollen U.S. Senator for Maryland*. [www.vanhollen.senate.gov/news/press-releases/vanhollen-bass-introduce-new-community-based-crisis-response-legislation](http://www.vanhollen.senate.gov/news/press-releases/vanhollen-bass-introduce-new-community-based-crisis-response-legislation).

Westervelt, E. (2021, May 18). Morning Edition. *Oakland Becomes Latest City Looking To Take Police Out Of Some Nonviolent 911 Calls*. broadcast, Washington, District of Columbia; National Public Radio (NPR). [www.npr.org/2021/05/18/997542990/oakland-becomes-latest-city-looking-to-take-police-out-of-non-violent-911-calls](http://www.npr.org/2021/05/18/997542990/oakland-becomes-latest-city-looking-to-take-police-out-of-non-violent-911-calls).

## Additional Resources

Craig de Silva, E., Clark, E. (2007). *Institutional Racism & the Social Work Profession: A Call to Action*. National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: [www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=SWK1aR53FAk%3D&portalid=0](http://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=SWK1aR53FAk%3D&portalid=0)

Goodman, J. A. (1973). *Dynamics of Racism in Social Work Practice*. National Association of Social Workers.

National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. (2021). NASW. Retrieved from: [www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English](http://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English)

Wilson, A., Wilson, M. (2020). *Social Justice Brief: Reimagining Policing: Strategies for Community Reinvestment*. National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: [www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=GjXJr6rDzss%3D&portalid=0](http://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=GjXJr6rDzss%3D&portalid=0)

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Report Production

Sarah Butts  
Dawn Hobby  
Paige Jones  
Anna Mangum  
Kyle Northam  
Paul Pace  
Martha Rothblum  
Raffaele Vitelli  
Rita Webb  
Mel Wilson  
Gail Woods Waller  
Greg Wright

## Report Review

Valerie Arendt  
Duane Breijak  
Beryl Cohen  
Colleen Dempsey  
Karen Franklin  
Rebekah Gewirtz  
Vivian Jackson  
Daphne McClellan  
Lynn Stanley  
Betsy Vourlekis  
Algeria Wilson

## Town Hall Panel

Gary Bailey  
Mildred "Mit" Joyner  
Angelo McClain  
Yolanda Padilla  
Karina Walters  
Janlee Wong

**NASW is grateful to the numerous volunteer leaders and staff members who contributed to the activities described in this publication. Thank you!**





**SOCIALWORKERS.ORG/  
RACIAL-EQUITY**



750 First Street NE, Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20002-4241  
[www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)