

REI Guiding Principles



Health Care for the Homeless, including its Board, leadership and staff, commits to being anti-racist. It is not enough to be “not racist”. We acknowledge that this will take time and dedicate ourselves to this work over the long haul. It will be a process of continual personal growth and learning. In doing so, we will carry out the following actions:

1. **Be explicit about race:** We embrace the need to be explicit about our focus on race. To be explicit about race is not at the exclusion of other identities. Conversely, we recognize that intersecting identities exist within the construct of race.
2. **Act with intention:** We must act with intention when addressing racism within ourselves, our practices, policies, programs and procedures. We didn’t end up with a system of white supremacy by accident and we will not dismantle it by accident.
3. **Embrace discomfort:** We recognize and embrace the discomfort that is critical and inherently a part of self-examination. We will not use our privilege to opt out when we feel challenged or uncomfortable.
4. **Apply a racial equity lens:** Before finalizing important decisions, we must consider who benefits from those decisions and who is excluded, forgotten and/or harmed. This involves applying a racially equitable and cultural lens to the way we deliver care and, in doing so, we realize this will require us to reimagine how we approach policy and procedure development. It also requires us to keep in mind the impact of our good intentions.
5. **Create pathways for staff leadership:** We will explicitly encourage BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) to apply for employment, volunteer and internship opportunities. We will intentionally seek and nurture relationships with organizations that can help us to create a diverse workforce.
6. **Create a culture of inclusion:** We must move beyond racial representation to a culture of racial inclusion, where diverse people are not just seen, but where their voices and perspectives are regarded as a necessary ingredient to achieve our mission. We must view inclusion as a signal to BIPOC clients and staff that they are welcomed.
7. **Center client voice:** We commit to centering client voice in the work we do. Rather than including their voice, insights, thoughts and feedback once a plan is in progress or completed, we will seek it at the onset in order to inform the direction of our work. We recognize that clients’ perspectives and lived experience should inform our equity work.
8. **Support BIPOC-owned businesses:** We will use our financial resources and investments to support BIPOC-owned businesses when feasible as an intentional effort to reinvest in the communities of the people we serve. We will develop equitable processes to help us determine feasibility.
9. **Promote a climate for honest feedback:** We will create and maintain systems that facilitate sharing of both positive and constructive feedback in our REI work. We will create a climate where all feedback, including that which is less than favorable, can be shared without the fear of retribution.