



June 4, 2020

On behalf of NASW-Florida,

First, we send our deepest sympathy to the family, friends, loved ones, and community of George Floyd. We will never forget witnessing the brutal and inhumane way his life was taken from him. This blatant disregard for human life and the pervasive belief in Black and Brown people's inferiority is an all too familiar occurrence in America. Although we do not discount the human atrocities and sacrifices made by others before us that resulted in changes to public policies, we also acknowledge the deep-seated racism that still exists. We see the microaggressions and injustices that Black and Brown people experience at the hands of individuals and organizations daily that continues to marginalize progress.

What we are witnessing this week, is the cumulative impact of #Ahmaud Arbery, #Breonna Taylor, #Sean Reed, #Sandra Bland, #Philando Castile, #Eric Garner, #Michael Brown, #Emmett Till and so many other whose names and humanity never made it to become a hashtag. It is both the actual murders of Black and Brown people and the weaponizing of the police by threatening to call them on Black and Brown Men and Women when they are walking, cooking, listening to music, bird watching and just trying to live.

In the current political climate, we witness cultural intolerance, disregard, and disrespect for people with different views and opinions. Organizations that perpetuate racial superiority continue to operate with an emblazoned assurance that they will be protected. We have reached a new low, and we are disappointed, angry, and disillusioned, yet we are not silenced. As social workers, we are called to serve others, to advocate for those who

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are oppressed, and never to give up. As a unified body, we will engage in the following actions:

- We stand in solidarity with the Black and Brown community.
- We acknowledge the need for real reform in this country.
- We will assume responsibility for our words, thoughts and actions.
- We will speak out on the issues of racial discrimination and injustice.
- We will challenge racist remarks that occur in our presence.
- We will vocalize the absence of Black and Brown people in civic and organizational leadership gatherings.
- We will view racism and discrimination as our collective responsibility to change.
- We will support leaders, businesses, and organizations that practice anti-racism.
- We will listen and learn from experiences of Black and Brown people.
- We will engage in community activism that supports anti-racist values.
- We serve as allies for Black and Brown people.
- We will take the responsibility to vote for Leaders that support equality and the elimination of racism.
- We will not succumb to fear.
- We will not continue with business as usual.
- We will not look in the other direction.
- We will not wait for others to act.

Social workers have a legacy of civil rights engagement and activism that we call on now as we join other groups committed to anti-racist agendas and social justice. We believe that NASW-FL in partnership with other social work organizations can create a response based on the principles of our code of ethics.

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We all need each other if we are to achieve a just society. We urge you to move beyond conversations and take actions that promote real and lasting change. **Social Workers Denounce Racism.**

In Solidarity,

The NASW-FL Staff, Board of Directors, and Leaders

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