LAHSA Equity Initiatives and Progress:

Where We Are

October 26, 2021

01 The Committee's Groundbreaking Work

02 Progress Towards Implementation

03 Equity Framework

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01 The Committee's Groundbreaking Work

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Committee Formation & Purpose

LAHSA Commission launched the Committee in April 2018 in response to:

1. The persistent overrepresentation of Black people experiencing homelessness, and
2. The impact of the Ad Hoc Committee on Women & Homelessness

The Committee's purpose was to:

1. Examine the factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black people among the population experiencing homelessness,
2. Identify opportunities to increase racial equity within the homeless service delivery system, and
3. Develop recommendations to more effectively meet the needs of Black people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

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Overview of the Process

The Committee engaged in monthly, thoughtful discussions exploring the impacts of structural and institutional racism.

Public meeting topics included:
- ✓ Criminal justice system involvement and re-entry
- ✓ Cost of living and lack of employment opportunities
- ✓ Foster care and child welfare system involvement
- ✓ Coordinated Entry System (CES) access and assessment
- ✓ Permanent housing and retention

The Committee developed 67 recommendations, informed by community leaders and advocates, service providers, policymakers, and people with lived experience of homelessness.

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02 Progress Towards Implementation

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Laying the Foundation

Creation of additional staff positions in LA County, LAHSA	Investment of resources	Attention and prioritization of these issues	Coordination and incorporation of voices of people with lived experience

Development and internal implementation of racial equity initiative within LAHSA	Framework for national conversations	Created a policy agenda centered on this work

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Recommendations Completed to Date

Recommendation 1 Develop and Launch a racial equity initiative at LAHSA	**Recommendation 2** Establish a countywide racial equity initiative	**Recommendation 8** Enact a Civil and human rights ordinance in the City and County	**Recommendation 9** Reconvene the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness
Recommendation 15 Advocate for reform of state and federal benefit programs to prevent loss of subsidies	**Recommendation 17** Advocate for reform of state and federal benefit programs to remove barriers	**Recommendation 26** Enhance education and coordination between child welfare and homeless services	**Recommendation 27** Coordinate and work with partner agencies to leverage resources
Recommendation 32 Enhance Strategy B6 (Family Reunification Subsidy) to include broader supports	**Recommendation 33** Increase investments in family preservation initiatives	**Recommendation 39** Improve system coordination	**Recommendation 43** Identify available DCFS resources

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Recommendation 1: Launch a Racial Equity Initiative at LAHSA

LAHSA Equity Committee

- Serves as the equity lens of LAHSA by instituting and ensuring DEI mechanisms influence and shape training, policy, programming, resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, decision-making processes, and all other related areas consistent with establishing fair and inclusive governance.
- Goal: Promote and establish institutional change within LAHSA by ensuring DEI is integrated in all aspects of the organization.
- Rebranding/ Replacement of GARE Cohort
- Reopening Selection Process

Training

- Completed first iteration of racial equity trainings for Service Provider Network via CTA

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Recommendation 1: Launch a Racial Equity Initiative at LAHSA

Equity Dialogue Series	Employee Resource Groups
• Provides the opportunity for staff to build a bridge of understanding around critical equity issues. • Serves as a platform for developing shared language regarding commonly used social justice terms. Each discussion followed by an evaluation survey to track learning. • The discussions are an instrument for shaping culture and education.	• Serve as a source for leveraging the diverse mix of LAHSA employees. • Will inform and provide education around core topics essential to their shared identity; this could be in the form of trainings or events. • ERGS will instruct the development of professional development opportunities, providing leadership with input and ideas about culturally appropriate programs. • ERGs will inform leadership regarding equity matters through Executive Sponsors. • ERGs will be the formal mechanism for common groups to review and enhance LAHSA's equity aims, ensuring they are culturally sound and relevant.

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Recommendation 1: Launch a Racial Equity Initiative at LAHSA

National Innovation Service

- Priority Action 01: Shift Organizational Culture In Small And Big Ways
- Priority Action 02: Invest In Transformative Relationships, Programs and Policy Design
- Priority Action 03: Equitable Accountability Policies and Practices

Professional Development Committee

- Create and institute professional development program(s) that seeks to advance the careers of BIPOC, particularly frontline staff within LAHSA
- HET workers will be the focus of the initial program, and learnings will be applied on widening the scope of the program's next iteration.
- There is an assumption that LAHSA "always" hires from outside the organization (at least at the Coordinator/Assistant level). Any program will require a direct promotion to a new position at LAHSA.
- This program is intentionally BIPOC focused.
- Soft skills development will be the initial competency focus

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Equity Department Initiatives

Employee Resource Groups

Ad Hoc Committee BPEH Implementation Workgroup

Equity Dialogue Series

HET Frontline Listening Sessions

Professional Develop Committee

LAHSA Equity Committee

Equity Based Decision-Making Framework

Racial Equity Trainings

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Four Pillars of Equity Framework

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EQUITY FRAMEWORK:

Four key areas form the pillars of our work to end inequity, improve the quality of homeless services, enhance our cultural responsiveness, and support our departments to increase their impact in communities:

○ Assessment – Develop and use LAHSA and community data to inform and achieve equitable employee relations, community engagement, and service delivery.

○ Personnel, Training, and Policy – Improve equitable treatment of personnel by creating a culture of inclusion; remove obstacles in hiring and promotion opportunities; increase awareness and understanding of implicit bias; and facilitate equitable practices to ensure full inclusion across all LAHSA agency policies, protocols, and practices.

○ Contracting and Procurement – Ensure contracted/procured services are equitably awarded, implemented, and delivered; and opportunities are shared equally among businesses representing the communities we serve.

○ Community and External Engagement – Ensure LAHSA information, processes, and services are equitably accessible to all communities.

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Equity Guiding Questions

Assessment:	What tools or mechanisms are we using to identify racial gaps/challenges?
	Are we capturing the accurate data to ensure equity internally and externally ?
	How are we evaluating how resources are being distributed specific to SPA?
Contracts and Procurement:	Are we executing contracts with providers with the greatest need?
	What is the racial make up of our existing providers/vendors/sub recipients ?
	How do we ensure that less established, smaller vendors have an equitable chance at securing a contract?

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LEAD WITH EQUITY

Equity Guiding Questions

Training, Personnel, & Policy:

Are we offering mandatory racial equity trainings for all staff?

Is our leadership staff reflective of the communities we serve?

Are our hiring policies and practices in line with current best practices?

Do our policies ensure that providers have racial equity interventions?

External Stakeholder, Communications,& Community Engagement :

How are we ensuring external stakeholders participate in the decision-making process ?

Are we engaging with community members, providers, and clients in a way that responds to social and racial inequities?

Do we employ communication strategies that effectively address racial inequities across the LA CoC?

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LEAD WITH EQUITY

Philosophical Approach

Equality means everyone has an equal opportunity at attaining the best possible life outcome

Equity is ensuring that applicable resources are available to answer any inequities that could preclude anyone from reaching their best possible life outcome

Equality + Equity = Best Outcome

We're tasked with ensuring that everyone has an equal access and opportunity at housing

We must ensure that we have developed and instituted all the applicable resources and interventions to facilitate housing and housing retention

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Measuring Housing Success

Assess Current Metrics → **Identify Key Performance Indicators** → **Implementation & Lesson Learns**

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Key Performance Indicators

Quantitative Measures

- Number/Percentage of clients who remain in a housing program for 6 or more months
- Number/Percentage of clients who have successfully completed housing program
- Number/Percentage of client who have successfully completed program and transitioned back to shelter within 6 months or more

* Racial/Ethnic Demographic Breakdown

Qualitative Measures

- Housing Program Experience
- Feeling of Safety
- Quality of Housing
- Financial Stability
- Relationship with Case Manager/Housing Navigator
- Sense of Community

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