Racial Equity Action Steps

FY 2024 CoC Scoring Submission Instructions

Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH), the Cincinnati/Hamilton County OH-500 Continuum of Care (CoC) and The CoC Racial Equity Workgroup acknowledges that we are operating within a system that perpetuates racism within our homelessness system, and that many factors impacting Racial Equity metrics are outside of our control. Despite this, these metrics were implemented in order to take accountability and identify areas where we as a community can make improvements.

In 2023, the Racial Equity Workgroup developed, distributed, and presented the Racial Equity Action Step document to CoC-funded agencies. All CoC funded projects applying for renewal for Fiscal Year 2024 are required to complete at least one item from at least four of the five identified categories in the attached Racial Equity Action Step document and provide appropriate documentation for each item completed. The five categories include:

1. Committees
2. Creating Liberated Spaces
3. Staff Equity
4. Trainings/Information Sharing
5. Systemic Strategies

An additional **bonus point** will be awarded to agencies that complete and provide appropriate documentation of an Action Step in the "Other Category."

Examples of acceptable documentation is noted on the attached Racial Equity Action Step Document. If you are unsure if a document is acceptable, please contact NOFAS@end-homelessness.org by Monday, July 1, 2024. The Racial Equity Action Steps documentation is due **Monday, July 8, 2024, at 4PM**. A maximum of up to 5 points will be rewarded as described below:

Category of Action Step	Points Awarded
Completed at least 1 Action Step within 4 of the 5 different Categories	1 point each (total of up to 4 points)
Completed Action Step within "Other" Category	1 bonus point

Racial Equity Action Steps for Scoring

Agencies must complete and provide documentation of completion of at least one item from 4 out of the 5 identified categories. Agencies may receive a Bonus Point for completing and providing documentation from the "Other" Category:

Category 1: Committees

1. Ensure your organization is represented at the Racial Equity Workgroup. The group meets on the third Thursday of every month from 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM. Reach out to STEH staff for the link. All are welcome but come ready to roll up your sleeves and work!
Documentation: STEH Documents this utilizing attendance. Must attend 80% of meetings.
2. Start a book club that chooses books on racial justice and facilitate discussions with staff. Ensure an inclusive representation within the authors of the chosen books. Some suggestions to get you started:
   a. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness – By Michelle Alexander
   b. So You Want to Talk About Race – By Ijeoma Oluo
   c. Do Better: Spiritual Activism – By Rachel Ricketts
   d. White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of our Racist Divide – By Carol Anderson, Ph.D.
   e. What If I Say the Wrong Thing: 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People – By Verna Meyers

   Documentation: Agency provides meeting/book schedule and attendance/participation records for at least 2 meetings
3. Establish an official structure within the organization to address equity issues. This could be a DEI/Equity core team made up of a cross section of staff, or other staff-led group.

   Documentation: Agency provides meeting schedule and attendance records showing at least 2 meetings.

Category 2: Creating Liberated Spaces

1. Develop a process for staff to provide feedback, suggestions, or report concerns such as microaggressions experienced, ensuring as much flexibility in the process as possible. Ensure every submission received is addressed timely and appropriately.
Documentation: Agency submits policy/procedure
2. Review structure of agency all staff meetings to find ways to lift up voices of all staff; give time to share and get to know one another on a more personal level.
Documentation: Agency submits at least 3 copies of meeting agenda and minutes
3. Conduct regular pulse checks or assessments with all staff to track progress. Ensure anonymity whenever possible for most accurate feedback. Documentation:
Documentation: Agency submits results of at least 2 pulse checks/assessments.

4. Engage in a cultural assessment process such as Ellequate (https://www.ellequate.com/) or hiring an outside organization to provide technical assistance in increasing racial equity within your organization.
   Documentation: Agency submits results of assessment/TA action plan

Category 3: Staff Equity

1. Conduct pay equity audits at least every 5 years.
   Documentation: Agency submits most recent results (within last 5 years) of pay equity audits
2. Start tracking racial demographics of staff and board and seek training on racially equitable hiring practices. Review your agency's hiring practices for unintentional biases that may exist, such as asking applicants about certain criminal history and make updates, as necessary.
   Documentation: Agency submits RE demographics of staff and board, racially equitable hiring practice training materials, date and attendance of training, and policy on hiring practices with noted changes.
3. Develop a mentorship program that supports staff of color in developing leadership skills.
   Documentation: Agency submits meeting schedule and attendance OR other documentation showing leadership development opportunities
4. Review agency polices to identify ways to be more flexible for staff with dependents challenges, medical needs, and other work/life balance issues. Review agency Employee Handbook for assumptions and/or biases and make updates, as necessary.
   Documentation: Agency submits policies and employee handbook with noted changes.
5. Engage your board around this work and make sure the board makeup is moving closer to the racial demographics of the homeless population.
   Documentation: Agency submits Board demographics AND plan to increase racial diversity of Board.
6. Ensure professional development opportunities are available to staff at all levels to support staff of color in promotion of roles.
   Documentation: Agency submits emails/other communication sent to all staff with leadership development opportunities

Category 4: Trainings/Information Sharing

1. Regularly share articles and relevant materials with all staff.
       Not sure where to start?
           https://naacp.org/
           https://www.aclu.org/issues/racial-justice
           https://www.raceforward.org/

   Documentation: Agency submits emails/other communication sent to all staff, at least 3 examples.

2. Ensure all staff, including Board members have a shared understanding of vocabulary by attending Racism 101 trainings.
   Documentation: Agency submits Racism 101 training materials, date and attendance of training, and communication to all staff and board members.
3. Ensure all staff, including Board members, participate in Implicit Bias assessments and trainings.
   Documentation: Agency submits Implicit Bias assessments, training materials, date and attendance of training, and communication to all staff and Board members.

Category 5: Systemic Strategies

1. Name race equity work as a strategic imperative for your organization and commit to identifying strategies to address the priority root causes of racial inequities.
   Documentation: Agency submits strategic plan with race equity work included
2. Get familiar with the data: review disaggregated data at least quarterly. Ask the HMIS Team if you need help creating a report to pull.
   Documentation: Agency submits at least 3, date and time stamped, disaggregated data reports
3. Establish Juneteenth as an officially recognized organization holiday. Even for residential projects, ensure staff who have to work are paid as a holiday, or offer additional time off.
   Documentation: Agency submits holiday calendar/policy to include Juneteenth
4. Reach out to the Racial Equity Workgroup Chairs or Strategies to End Homelessness if your agency would like to schedule a one-on-one peer learning session with members of the workgroup! This group is here to help the community and wants to help you reach your goals in racial equity!
   Documentation: STEH documents

Bonus Category: Other

Provide suggestion for at least one additional action step that could be used to track progress in organizational equity that could be included in future scoring. Encourage soliciting ideas from full staff to include perspectives from more than just leadership.

Documentation: Agency must show that they asked staff for feedback (email, results, agenda item, meeting minutes)