

PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU
STATEMENT ON EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Our Mission:

To focus community resources on the unmet housing needs of the people of Portland

Our Vision:

The Portland Housing Bureau is committed to equity and social justice in its delivery of housing resources and opportunities to all residents from Portland's diverse and multicultural communities, including communities who define themselves as groups of people who share some or all of the following: geographic boundaries, sense of membership, culture, language, common norms and interests.

We envision a community where:

- All Portland residents can find, afford and retain safe homes in active, healthy neighborhoods of their choice.
- All Portland residents have equitable access to housing, housing resources and the opportunities that safe, stable housing provides.
- Housing discrimination and bias based on race and ethnicity is eliminated.
- Portland residents and neighborhoods thrive because the local housing sector aligns with other key sectors such as education, transportation, health and business to create a foundation for economic, social and cultural opportunity.

In Portland, people of color experience racism and encounter barriers to stable housing and housing resources at much higher rates than their White counterparts. This leads to people of color having more experiences of being in unsafe living conditions with less access to public goods, services and resources. Additionally, they have little or no power to influence the key policy decisions that directly impact them, and therefore, have diminished opportunities to thrive.

Equity is defined as: All residents from Portland's diverse and multicultural communities have access to the opportunities and resources they need to attain their full potential.

Inequity refers to differences in well-being between and within communities that are caused by barriers which are:

- Systematic
- Institutional
- Patterned
- Unfair
- **Avoidable**

Inequity is not random; rather it occurs because of past and current decisions, systems of power and privilege, policies and the repeated implementation of those policies in unfair ways.

Social Justice refers to all aspects of justice, including legal, political and economic. It demands fair distribution of public goods, institutional resources and life opportunities.

We acknowledge that, in addition to race and ethnicity, people also experience housing barriers because of other protected status', such as income, immigration status, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation or disability.

PHB will work towards eliminating housing barriers of all kinds, but we must recognize Oregon's history of housing discrimination and social injustice and address current-day disparities in access to the resources, programs and opportunities experienced by communities of color. **Therefore, our Statement on Equity and Social Justice focuses on eliminating housing inequities across Portland's diverse racial and ethnic groups.**

PHB will apply the principles of **equity and social justice** when developing policies and organizational priorities, and when making financial investment decisions. PHB will strategically target resources in a manner that will seek to correct identified patterns of inequity for people of color.

To put our **commitment to principles of Equity & Social Justice in action** The Portland Housing Bureau will:

- Provide historically marginalized communities with "seats at the table" to influence decisions and spur actions that promote equity;
- Ask for and listen to the diversity of perspectives of our staff and our community members regarding the actions PHB should take to address inequality among communities of color;
- We will engage with communities of color who are affected by inequities, as well as groups who hold institutional power, to identify policies, programs and actions that will make a difference in eliminating systemic and institutional barriers;
- Look beyond individual behaviors to the social, economic, physical and historic factors that shape behaviors in communities;
- Fearlessly examine our current structures, policies and practices for racial bias and systemic and institutional discrimination;
- Take a comprehensive and systems-level approach to the work of dismantling structures, policies, and practices that reinforce inequity, and implementing new structures, policies, and practices that support social justice;
- Develop policies and deliver housing services that create conditions for all people to reach their full potential, especially groups and individuals who have experienced inequities in the past;
- At every level of leadership, we will foster a culture that supports multicultural awareness and respect, promotes equity and social justice, and upholds values of fairness and social justice;
- We will measure and monitor the impact of our actions on communities of color.