



MaMHCA

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June 6, 2020,

Statement by the Board of the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association on Racism and Attacks Against People of Color

Both individual and systemic racism are social determinants of health. MaMHCA sees all attacks against people of color as a public mental health emergency undermining the collective stability and well-being of all Americans, and especially our citizens of color. It is our duty as health professionals to name and address the problem at hand, as doing otherwise would be contrary to the nature of our calling. We stand ready to provide whatever mental health assistance is asked of us.

We recognize that the social supports we offer have developed within a broad culture that actively oppresses people of color and thereby discourages them from seeking help from a framework that has historically been dangerous and quick to turn on them.

MaMHCA knows that the current racial conflict is bigger than itself. It is based on centuries of inter-generational trauma and denied history. It impacts each of our members and clients differently. It is our mission to listen, ask the hard questions, and provide support to those in need. We join with the American Mental Health Counselors' Association (AMHCA) in standing with our clinicians and clients of color as well as all people of conscience seeking change for the good. We strongly support peaceful protest and positive actions and condemn any and all forms of systemic violence and oppression.

The Board of the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors' Association (MaMHCA) recognizes that there is a disproportionate lack of access to both mental health support and clinicians of color in most communities in MA and throughout our entire country. We recognize there are both cultural and historical roadblocks to accessing mental health services. Psychology and counseling have had a reputation for being on the wrong side of civil rights/social justice/equity. For example, in the 1850s, slaves' attempts to escape captivity were characterized as symptoms of mental illness. Such betrayals under the guise of diagnosis still echo down the years in our profession today.

The Massachusetts Mental Health Counseling Association



MaMHCA Board of Directors 2019-2020