National Fair Housing Alliance
Tools for Achieving Racial Equity

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WE HAVE UNITED

center for social inclusion
Government Alliance on Race and Equity

A national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

- Lead network – 81 members
- Expand network – 30 states / 150+ cities
- Provide tools to put theory into action
Objectives

• Develop a shared racial equity analysis, including definitions of key terminology

• Gain understanding of tools to advance racial equity, using your role as a fair housing leader

• Develop ideas about potential next steps for advancing racial equity
Our learning environment

- Take space, make space
- What is said here, stays here
- What is learned here, leaves here
- Brave space
- Offer what you can, ask for what you need
- One mic one diva
Values and realities

- All men are created equal
- With liberty and justice for all
- Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth
History of race in the United States

Initially explicit

Government explicitly creates and maintains racial inequity.

Became implicit

Discrimination illegal, but “race-neutral” policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Government for racial equity

Proactive policies, practices and procedures that advance racial equity.
National effective practice

Normalize
- A shared analysis and definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

Operationalize
- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

Organize
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships

Visualize
Laying it on the Line
Laying it on the Line

1. People who engage in public meetings are the ones who care most about the issues.

2. Hiring and promotion decisions should be based solely on merit.

3. I believe we can end racial inequity.
Normalizing
Equity? Equality?
What’s the difference?
Why we lead with race

• Racial inequities deep and pervasive
• Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
• Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
• Specificity matters
Racial inequity in the U.S.

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do...
Racial equity means:

• “Closing the gaps” so that race does not predict one’s success, while also **improving outcomes for all**

• To do so, have to:
  ✓ Target strategies to focus improvements for those worse off
  ✓ Move beyond “services” and focus on changing policies, institutions and structures
The Unconscious Mind

**Schemas:** the “frames” through which our brains help us understand and navigate the world:

1. Sort into categories
2. Create associations
3. Fill in the gaps
Schemas

Help us organize information into broader categories. They largely reside in the sub-conscious.

✓ Objects
✓ Human beings

Schemas are social. They exist in and are shaped by our environment.
What color are the following lines of text?

• Cvur zxyq brrm

• Xoc jbnioew mne

• Vqeb peow ytro

• Vqeb peow ytro
What color are the following lines of text?

- Black
- Red
- Blue
- Green
What color are the following lines of text?

- Green
- Black
- Yellow
- Blue
How We Think

Humans need meaning.

- Individual meaning
- Collective meaning

Only 2% of emotional cognition is available consciously

Racial bias tends to reside in the unconscious network

We unconsciously think about race even when we do not explicitly discuss it.
Bias

The evaluation of one group and its members relative to another.

We all carry bias. Acting on bias can be discriminatory and create negative outcomes for particular groups.

Source: Unconscious (Implicit) Bias and Health Disparities: Where Do We Go from Here?
Explicit bias

Expressed directly

Aware of bias / operates consciously

Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “whites only”

Implicit bias

Expressed indirectly

Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously

Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.
What to do with bias?

• Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.

• Openly acknowledging and challenging biases allows us to develop strategic interventions.
What creates different outcomes?
Institutional / Explicit

**Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.**

*Example:*
Police department refusing to hire people of color.

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Institutional / Implicit

**Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.**

*Example:*
Police department focusing on street-level drug arrests.

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Individual / Explicit

**Prejudice in action – discrimination.**

*Example:*
Police officer calling someone an ethnic slur while arresting them.

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Individual / Implicit

**Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.**

*Example:*
Police officer calling for back-up more often when stopping a person of color.
Examples from your own organization –

**Institutional/Explicit**
- Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.

**Institutional/Implicit**
- Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.

**Individual/Explicit**
- Prejudice in action – discrimination.

**Individual/Implicit**
- Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.
Individual racism:
• Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:
• Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Structural racism:
• A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.
Operationalizing
Race in governmental policies

Federal Housing Administration

Location of city facilities

Streetlighting
What is a Racial Equity Tool?

Process

Product

Actively inserts racial equity into decision making processes
What is a Racial Equity Tool process?

1. Desired results
2. Analysis of data
3. Community engagement
4. Strategies for racial equity
5. Implementation plan
6. Communications and accountability
Racial Equity Toolkit
An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity

http://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/racial-equity-toolkit-opportunity-operationalize-equity/
Scenarios
Table talk: Using a Racial Equity Tool

• Pick one of the scenarios
• Our desired result: **All people have quality, affordable housing**
• Discuss:
  ✓ What data would you examine / analyze?
  ✓ What communities would you engage?
  ✓ What strategies can you imagine? Who would they benefit? Who would they burden? How could you mitigate unintended consequences?
Communicating Effectively on Race
Dog Whistle Racism
How race gets triggered

Implicit Bias:
Unconscious bias developed through networks of association on race

Symbolic Racism:
The use of images, code words, and metaphors that implicitly signal race

Triggering race
Talking about Race Toolkit

Download the toolkit

https://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/talking-race-toolkit/
Communicating about race
It’s more than just talk – ACT

Affirm
- Start with the heart
- Explain why we are all in this together

Counter
- Explain why we have the problem
- Take on race directly

Transform
- Reframe winners and losers
- End with heart and a solution
Scenarios, part 2
Practicing with ACT

1. “Why do you keep bringing up race, it all comes down to poverty. Our best strategy is to reduce income inequality.”

2. “I know about redlining and housing discrimination, but that’s a thing of the past. What I see is a lot of people not working hard enough – people not taking personal responsibility.”

3. “I don’t know why I should pay taxes so that other people can live off the system.”
Communicating about race
It’s more than just talk – ACT

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Next Steps
Pair-share

What are the opportunities to advance racial equity:

• Under your direct purview?
• For your organization?
• For NFHA?
Our organization has committed — along with many others across the United States — to not just learn about racial equity, but to shift our own policies and practices so that we are actively driving better racial outcomes, and partnering with other organizations in our field, in our communities, and in our sector to advance a common racial equity agenda.

Take the next step at https://www.racialequityhere.org/
Closing
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