



MICHIGAN'S CAMPAIGN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Racial Equity Action Plan

Focus Area

- 1. Racial Disparities for Households Experiencing Housing Instability and Homelessness** *(Aligned with MCTEH State Plan Goal 3: Collaborate with local and statewide systems that are crucial to preventing and ending homelessness and Goal 4: Improve equity within the homeless system and reduce racial disparities among households experiencing homelessness)*

Strategies	Action Steps
<p>Address CE Process at the Local Level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the support of state departments and funders to create an equitable assessment and prioritization process that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ considers factors that impact marginalized populations to prevent disparate outcomes (such as employment and housing discrimination, overrepresentation in the carceral system, history of eviction, etc.) ○ incorporates household strengths & preferences ○ creates opportunities for effective case conferencing ○ is trauma-informed and client centered • Document and share the progress being made and the impact in communities that are shifting (or have shifted) their assessment and prioritization processes
<p>Improve Experiences of People Using the Homeless Response System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop standards of care across state funded programs that center the lived experiences of people using those programs and develop accountability structures (auditing, collection of qualitative data, etc.) to ensure effective, person-centered, and respectful service delivery • Quarterly collection and reporting of regional qualitative data (e.g., through listening sessions) to understand if the changes are having the desired effect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop and share tools statewide that support communities to build best practices in collecting qualitative data (https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/7053/people-with-lived-experience-and-expertise-of-homelessness-and-data-decision-making/?utm_source=HUD+Exchange+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=048a329081-PLIEE Toolkit Now Available 2024%2F04%2F16&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-048a329081-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D) • Quarterly review and public-facing reports of disaggregated system performance data • Develop a public facing dashboard that can be filtered, in live time, by different demographic groups, regions, programs, etc. and update data sharing agreements to allow for CoC level data to be accessed by all end users • Engage and partner with culturally specific advocates and advisors (e.g., the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Hispanic Center of West MI, Black Leadership Advisory Council, etc.) to ensure low barrier access and culturally responsive services for Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic households

Strategies	Action Steps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentives to organizations and CoCs that demonstrate their staffing is racially and ethnically representative of those most disproportionately impacted by homelessness in their communities • Expand MCAH pilot program statewide (currently in 6 counties, provides a fee waiver to people experiencing homelessness allows use of alternative forms of ID to obtain a state ID)
Increase Capacity of Providers to Deliver Culturally Responsive Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to improve wages and better retain frontline staff (without the requirement that agencies cover part of the wage increase) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educate providers about the Equal Pay Package plan introduced by MI House of Representatives in March 2024 (https://www.dykema.com/news-insights/michigan-introduces-comprehensive-equal-pay-package.html) • Help communities address the workforce crisis by incentivizing the hiring and support of people with lived experience. Ensure communities are providing partners with lived experience opportunities to participate in a variety of ways and that they are paid accordingly (e.g., system planning partners, full time staff who function as peer navigators, outreach workers, consultants, etc.) • Create and maintain a directory of organizations that have culturally specific services (provide clear definition of what culturally responsive services are and their benefit)
Continued Learning and Application of Racial Equity Principles and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities for continued learning across CoCs, in relation to advancing equity. This includes opportunities to share successes and build on what is working well in some regions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., host a regular statewide convening specifically for frontline providers to share resources and build on best practices • Create a shared virtual space to house resources and tools that will promote more equitable practices (e.g., tip sheet for engaging partners with lived experience, sample job descriptions, training, and onboarding materials for new CoC partners, etc.) • Work to understand the knowledge gaps of providers and invest in continued learning for providers based on identified need (e.g., anti-bias, cultural humility, trauma-informed care, etc.) • Develop Communities of Practice for network providers and funders to ensure deep learning and application of anti-racist practices

Focus Area

2. State Policies, Mandates, and Regulations

Strategies	Action Steps
<p>Amend Statewide Policies & Processes to Address Inequities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear guidelines for CoCs that are still using the VI-SPDAT to ensure it is not being used to prioritize individuals and families for housing resources • Share monthly communication with CoCs about policies that impact housing/homelessness funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., Educate providers about legislative policies/bills that may be opportunities to increase affordable housing (e.g. HB4947, https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1641787) and work to strengthen local level advocacy by sharing information and aligning priorities across the state. • Develop a regular auditing process and racial equity impact assessment to identify policies and practices with both historical and contemporary negative impacts for communities of color and all marginalized identities disproportionately represented in homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure there is a tool that can be used for reviewing policies with a racial equity lens to ensure accessibility and determine who the policy is benefiting, who it may be harming, and who it is leaving out • Develop a unified advocacy effort that includes state representatives, local CoC members, and partners with lived experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convene local and state government officials to identify priorities for unified advocacy ○ E.g., develop legislative asks that may better support the housing needs of asset limited, income constrained, and financially burdened households (as identified in the ALICE report, https://www.unitedwaylakeshore.org/sites/unitedwaylakeshore/files/2024-05/2024-ALICE-Update-MI-FINAL.pdf) ○ Share, elevate, and support existing advocacy efforts like the Source of Income Discrimination campaign and Tenant Right to Counsel movement ○ Support communities to understand how they can impact local zoning regulations (e.g., ensure there is a shared understanding MI Zoning Enabling Act and MI Planning Enabling Act) ○ Advocate for flexibility in establishing fair market rents, area median incomes that are reflective of existing need, etc. that change with the actual economy and is more reflective of people's needs • Develop an inclusive policy development process that includes both state representatives, local CoC members, and partners with lived experience • Examine statewide processes for funding opportunities and other opportunities that may be restrictive, inflexible, and make it difficult for communities to engage

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., ensure communities are given enough time to fully explain things that are open for public comment to all partners ○ Develop RFPs with PWLE and frontline providers to set more realistic expectations for deadlines ○ Examine the federal and state regulations and reporting requirements that surpass the capacity of smaller organizations to alter policies or support capacity building

Focus Area

3. Relationship Building and Deep Community Engagement *(aligned with MCTEH State Plan Goal 5: Authentically engage people with lived experience (PWLE) of homelessness, especially in the form of ongoing partnerships rather than time-limited, one-sided engagements)*

Strategies	Action Steps
Diversify Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding and resources for CoCs to develop onboarding processes and TA for minority-led organizations, culturally specific social service organizations, smaller grassroots organizations, etc., that want to be better positioned for federal or state funding so CoCs can have more inclusive membership • Partner with fair housing advocates across the state to research promising anti-displacement measures, tenant protections, and policies that undo historic patterns of segregation and ensure fair housing choice (e.g., Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing/AFFH, etc.)
Address Power Imbalances by Sharing Power with Community Members and Partners with Lived Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a source of funding to compensate partners with lived experience, especially for smaller CoCs that have struggled to secure additional resources • Hire Black, Indigenous, and people of color with lived experience as full-time staff and/or consultants to engage in policy development and the state-level efforts to end homelessness. Provide any needed supports to ensure authentic engagement and retention. • Develop RFPs with people with lived experience and frontline providers so they can inform program design and grant process (e.g., set more realistic expectations for deadlines, etc.) • Establish sustainable resources to implement leadership academies that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthen the knowledge and skills of partners with lived experience to engage fully in the local and statewide efforts to end homelessness ○ Destigmatize experiences homelessness or housing instability to disrupt biases and ensure authentic partnerships ○ Equip system leaders and ready the environment/culture to support, retain, and empower partners w/ lived experience

Improve and Strengthen Communication, Transparency, and Decision-Making Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the work and progress of MCTEH workgroups using various channels and identify ways to elicit feedback and keep community members engaged. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide transparency around decisions made by state partners, especially when they impact people on the frontlines. Be clear about how and why these decisions are being made ○ Share accountability measures publicly • Host statewide townhall meetings, rather than webinars, to give communities a way to share freely, ask questions, and build inclusivity of local expertise (e.g., when there is a policy shift)

Focus Area

4. Affordable Housing Inventory and Access *(Aligned with MCTEH State Plan Goal 1: Increase amount of safe, accessible & affordable housing targeted to households experiencing homelessness)*

Strategies	Action Steps
Expand Affordable Housing Inventory and Access to Safe, Quality Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that any new building developments w/state funding assistance and capital tax credits have set aside units for people experiencing homelessness as a requirement • Complete an audit of all counties within MI to determine which communities have rental occupancy at 90% or greater. Work with local municipalities with rental occupancy rates over 90% to develop and fund large scale multi-family affordable housing (multiple hundred-unit spaces of diverse housing types) to better address lack of available housing, and ultimately provide housing opportunities for unhoused individuals. • Develop a mechanism for cross community sharing (such as learning labs or clinics) that would allow counties across the state to share practices that are working to increase affordable housing opportunities (e.g., shared housing, additional dwelling units, master lease programs, putting CDBG toward homeless planning or service capacity, etc.) • Advocate that CoCs are prioritized in the Governor’s regional taskforce meetings for the statewide housing plan (rather than focusing primarily on households with higher income brackets) • Work with private developers to ensure that deeply affordable housing is accessible to people with extremely low income (i.e., when resident selection criteria is 60% AMI and less, private developers often select families at 60% AMI, but not lower) • Examine feasibility of more upstream efforts that lead to homelessness prevention and promote generational wealth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., Building awareness of Lady Bird Deeds, Property Tax Hardship exemptions, and fair lending/appraisal practices

Focus Area

5. Implementation, Sustainability, and Accountability *(Aligned with MCTEH State Plan Goal 2: Prevent homelessness whenever possible, targeting resources to households most at risk of becoming homeless, Goal 3: Collaborate with local and statewide systems that are crucial to preventing and ending homelessness, and Goal 6: Use data to measure progress and create accountability)*

Focus Area	Focus Area
<p>Ensure Accountability to Local & State Racial Equity Action Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources and funding for regular staffing of this racial equity initiative at the local level • Develop a public dashboard to highlight progress in addressing racial disparities in the homeless response system (i.e., disparities in experiences, access, and outcomes) • Regularly convene an oversight committee (inclusive of providers and partners with lived experience) to ensure successful implementation of the racial equity action plan (i.e., to prioritize strategies for implementation, acquire needed resources, monitor, and evaluate progress, address barriers to implementation, report progress, and shift strategy as needed) • Define the roles and responsibilities of other statewide agencies and cross-sector partners to support the racial equity action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop MOUs with partners that define committed funding, staffing, and resources from each organization to strengthen shared accountability to racial justice ○ Seek commitment from all engaged statewide partners to examine and shift the makeup of their structured committees and governance to ensure they are representative of those served • Develop a statewide Racial Equity Advisory Committee to support successful implementation and monitoring of local racial equity action plans, build connections, share what is working, and address challenges in implementation, etc.
<p>Conduct More In-Depth Data Analysis to Determine Future Areas of Focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine program level disaggregated data regarding length of time homeless, housing exits, returns, etc. to determine if there are agency level issues that can be addressed • Look at housing retention and eviction data by zip code to determine if homelessness prevention and diversion resources can be targeted more effectively (e.g., assess communities needs for ongoing post-pandemic support of eviction diversion programs and target advocacy efforts and resources to areas that are experiencing the greatest impact) • Examine system performance data by race and ethnicity at intersections of gender, family composition, age, etc. to see how specific subpopulations are faring and determine needed supports • Evaluate the impact of changes to the coordinated entry assessment and prioritization process in each community to ensure the shifts being made are not perpetuating or worsening racial disparities