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## **A Call to Action for Human Services** ***APHSA Special Statement – June 3, 2020***

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As we grieve as a nation, we must confront that the very systems we helped build and operate have enabled, and far too often exacerbated, structural inequities that trace race and income lines. Together, we must bridge this untenable divide by confronting racism and racial disparities.

The unconscionable murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and hundreds of Black men and Black women before them bring into focus the stark inequities and systemic racism that persist today in the systems that are meant to protect people—not harm them. These include not only law enforcement but health, housing, and human services. We need only look to the disproportionate death rates of COVID-19 on communities of color to see just how deeply intertwined these systems are and to find irrefutable evidence of the disproportionate conditions that have been plaguing our communities for too long.

APHSA is committed to being an accountable actor and supportive ally in systematically eliminating structural racism and the resulting inequities.

We believe that dismantling these inequities and the institutional racism embedded within them must be at the heart of our systems' work until one's racial identity has no influence on how one fares in society.

We need to reverse engineer the programs and structures we have built, step-by-step, to see what is underneath them and remove structural flaws in design and implementation. We must establish systems that allow open dialogue and collaborative solutions. Using all of the levers available to us—policy, fiscal, practice, operations—we must redouble our commitment to building equitable health and economic outcomes as the foundation for thriving communities.

If we are to realize this vision, we must mobilize our [Call to Action for Human Services](#), moving forward with relentless resolve to work with communities across the nation for a better future. This is a noble and necessary charge. As human services leaders, we have what it takes to tackle racism and social inequities. It is up to all of us to do more to end racism and structural inequities in our systems.

Together we can build a brighter future for generations to come.