

National Housing Advocates Statement on Policing and Black Communities

As organizations dedicated to ending America's homelessness and housing crisis, we stand in support of Black people and the Black organizers who are working on housing justice including the Movement for Black Lives, Moms 4 Housing, and others during this time of reckoning and transformation. **We echo their demands to divest from criminal legal systems and invest in Black communities.**

The injustice of homelessness cannot be decoupled from the legacy of centuries of systemic racism. The white supremacy and racism that devalue Black lives in the context of policing are the same that make Black people more likely to experience homelessness. Black Americans make up 13% of the population, but represent 40% of people experiencing homelessness. Any meaningful response to homelessness moving forward must address racism as a fundamental root cause.

Re-envisioning public safety also creates an opportunity to reshape how communities support their neighbors struggling with housing. Criminalizing homelessness and investing in police as a front-line response to homelessness only opens the door to more brutality and discrimination and worsens the devastating effects that police have in Black and brown communities. Instead, these funds could be used to create thriving communities with affordable, accessible housing. We applaud communities already taking steps to end this, and we look forward to supporting any that are committed to centering equity and racial justice in their work to end homelessness.

We commit to using our platform and resources as national organizations to dismantle racist institutions, advance just policies, and amplify Black voices and solutions. Because #BlackLivesMatter and because it's the only way to truly solve America's homelessness and housing crisis.

