

From Stark DD: United for Equal Rights

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities stands united with our community and nation in the call for equal rights and equal treatment, ending the systemic bias and institutional racism in our society that has devastated so many Black lives throughout our country's history. We have witnessed the horrific killings of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Breonna Taylor in Louisville, KY and this weekend's killing of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta, adding to the senseless violence against Black Americans. As advocates for social justice in our work on behalf of people with developmental disabilities since 1967, we cannot stay silent.

Through our Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan we will ensure everything we do is done in a culturally sensitive manner that increases access. The plan is comprehensive and addresses the people we support, the provider community and our employees; as well as assessing our organizational structure, hiring practices, policies and procedures, to make sure there are no institutional biases within them. The plan's action steps will be regularly reviewed with regard to goal attainments, challenges and additional areas needing attention.

We remain committed to constructing a culture of access and equality, creating an environment where all people feel safe to express their culturally based values, perceptions, and experiences. We are listening to the voices of our employees and people we support through our services. We know we have more work to do.

As an agency that maintains the values of integrity, dignity, and respect, we encourage self-advocates, families, employees, educators, providers, and our community to come together and work towards a more just society.

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