



## Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.

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### **SUBJECT: Racism has caused trauma for generations. We're committed to systemic change.**

For hundreds of years, racism has forced People of Color to endure unrelenting trauma.

With every painful personal experience and every public tragedy – like the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many others – the trauma builds or is reignited.

We must also recognize that systemic racism and the discrimination experienced throughout one's life are continuously traumatizing forces – ongoing stressors that cause deepening harm.

Racism's impact on Black Americans' mental health cannot be ignored. Effective mental health advocacy must embrace and advance the fight for racial equity and social justice.

As an organization of providers, peers, family members, clinicians, and advocates, the Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS) is committed to taking action that addresses inequities in health, education, housing, poverty and other human services. We will ensure our work is informed by an understanding that Black lives matter and Black mental health matters. We are determined to do our part to drive systemic change.

Alongside our affiliates, we will listen and empower communities across the state to champion reform. In our work with state and local lawmakers, we will advocate for legislation that supports the mental health and wellness needs of New York's BIPOC communities.

In this moment, when so many are in pain and experiencing re-traumatization, we need to be there for each other and care for one another's mental health – because our collective wellness will strengthen our resilience for the work ahead.

Remember that help is available if you, your family, or your friends need it.

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### **HEALTHY MINDS FOR A HEALTHY NEW YORK**

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