



Our Pledge to Advance Racial Equity

Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future and its member organizations share a mission of creating and preserving healthy, sustainable affordable rental homes that foster equity, opportunity, and wellness for people of limited economic resources. Home is powerful. It is the cornerstone of our identities and our individual and collective well-being. However, centuries of racially unjust policy has created inequity in every aspect of society including housing, making home less affordable and less accessible for many people of color.

SAHF member organizations have deep commitments to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion to create a just world that values all people and enables them to thrive. While as part of this work, many SAHF members have been working to advance racial equity for decades, the disparate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, and the most recent national civil rights movement demanding justice and an end to systemic racism, has created long overdue urgency. Advancing racial equity and ending systemic racism is a mission imperative for SAHF as a collaborative and for its member organizations; we are called to do more.

Advancing racial equity means closing the gaps in employment, education, health, housing and wealth so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all people. To affect this systems change we recognize that we must not only target strategies to close gaps so that all people can thrive, but also leverage our collaborative and share resources with the field to move beyond services to focus on changing policies, institutions and structures.

As a collaborative and as developers, owners and operators of affordable rental homes, we have leveraged the power of our collective commitments to effect significant change in our field, from energy and water efficiency to how we center residents and measure the impact of stable homes and services. We now seek to use the same power and accountability of the collaborative to deepen our work to advance racial equity.

Accordingly, we have created this pledge under which SAHF and each of its members commit to actions that will advance racial equity across six focus areas. SAHF will take actions in its own work, serve as a platform for aggregating and sharing tools, practices and lessons learned broadly across the affordable housing field and will create accountability by tracking and reporting on its own work and the work of the members.

1. **Board and Leadership Commitment and Transparency-** The public commitment of the boards of SAHF and its member organizations to advance racial equity and to improve transparency and accountability across the organizations so that opportunities to further advance racial equity may be identified.
2. **People and Culture-** Within SAHF and its member organizations and the broader field, taking steps to seek out and include people from any number of demographic backgrounds and identities, but especially black, indigenous and other people of color, and value the collective strength of their experiences, beliefs, values, skills, and perspectives. Further working to create an environment of involvement, respect and connection that values the diversity of ideas, backgrounds and perspectives.

Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future



3. **Real Estate, Investment and Partnerships-** Acknowledging the role of systemic racism as a driver of the housing affordability crisis, a barrier to wealth creation and a force in limiting access to community resources or a safe environment and examining how our practices in developing and preserving homes, investing corporate funds and partnering with community-based organizations and developers who are people of color can help address these inequities and create more just communities.
4. **Contracting and Spending-** Identifying the universe of parties that financially benefit from the activities and properties of the SAHF members and not only seeking opportunities to engage with organizations owned and/or lead by people of color, but also exploring how we can create an opportunity for self-examination and accountability for equitable inclusion for all vendors and partners.
5. **Resident Experience-** Acknowledging the myriad impact of centuries of systemic racism on residents, including the development of policies and practices that have devalued the voice and eroded the agency of resident from the predevelopment stage through lease up and stabilized property operations. Seeking opportunities to center residents and their voice in decision making and operational policies and forge resident services and other partnership that help identify and address inequities in housing, health, wealth building pathways and other areas.
6. **Policy-** Recognizing that systemic racism can only be dismantled and racial equity meaningfully advanced if we address the federal, state and local policies that enable justice and equity. Growing our understanding of how a racial equity lens can inform policy solutions for creating affordable homes that give residents choice and power where they live and access to things they want and need to thrive. Advocating for these policies that dismantle systemic racism and advance equity and supporting organizations that advance them.

SAHF and its member organizations recognize that the work of advancing racial equity is a movement not a moment in time and that while it is our responsibility to advance this work, it must be done in collaboration with a wide range of partners. We welcome that perspective and partnership and look forward to engaging with local and national actors, especially those led by and serving people of color. We invite those committed to this work to join us for discussions on how we can advance towards a more equitable and just society together.