



## **AZ Balance of State Continuum of Care Social Justice & Race Equity Committee Notes**

**August 31st, 2023, 9:00 am-11:00 am**

### **Attendees:**

Anthony Cruz (CCCS)  
Cristina Benitez (ADOH)  
David Bridge (ADOH)- *absent*  
Holly Figueroa (BCBS/AZ)- *absent*  
Joanna Carr (AZ Pet Project)- *absent*  
Joselyn Wilkinson (AHC)- *absent*  
Maria-Elena Ochoa (Against Abuse)- *absent*  
Ross Schaefer (FSS)- *absent*  
Stephanie Crum (Solari)- *absent*

Due to lack of attendance, the Equity Statement was added to/commented on through Google Docs. the Governance Advisory Board will give input that will be incorporated into the statement:

**Anthony:** Our mission is to foster a just, equitable, diverse and inclusive society by promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination, and amplifying underrepresented voices. We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where every individual is treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, regardless of their background, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status. Through education, advocacy, and collaboration, we aim to dismantle systemic barriers, challenge biases, and ensure equal access to resources, opportunities, and representation for all. Together, we can create a society where justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are not just principles but everyday realities.

**Joanna -** *(Attempted a draft in alignment with the AZBOSCO purpose and vision):*

The Arizona Balance of State Continuum of Care Equity Statement

The Arizona Balance of State Continuum of Care (AZBOSCO), believes that all individuals and families in the Arizona Balance of State have the right to safe, affordable housing in healthy communities with access to a network of supportive services. The AZBOSCO recognizes that there are disparities in housing outcomes across the Balance of State region, linked to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status or other factors, that are perpetuated by historical and structural inequities within the homeless response system. To truly achieve the CoC mission of ending homelessness within the communities it represents and serves, and to meet the purpose of planning and managing homeless

assistance resources and services effectively and efficiently, the AZBOSCOG understands the needs to both identify and intentionally address these inequities within the homeless response systems region-wide.

The AZBOSCOG commits to the following:

- To identify the landscape of inequities within the homeless response system across the Balance of State region, and how policies, procedures and biases may contribute to inequitable outcomes among people of color and other socio-economic groups, using a data driven approach
- To create an intentional and long-term action plan to dismantle system inequity and disparities in housing outcomes region-wide
- To effectively engage the expertise of individuals with lived experience into the identification and action related to system inequity
- To strive to apply diversity, equity, and inclusion practices to all aspects of the AZBOSCOG work

## EXAMPLES

“We strive to include diversity, equity, and inclusion practices at the center of our daily work. We commit to using these practices for our business and our communities. Join us in embracing diversity, equity and inclusion for every person in every community.”

<https://health.uchicago.edu/deij-statement>

“We take this moment to affirm our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ). We write to acknowledge the grief, pain, and anxieties that these events have caused and stand in support of our community members, including those affected by racism, discrimination, and violence on the basis of their color, immigrant and indigenous status, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation, or disability. At the same time, we recognize the fruitlessness of only bearing witness to these events over and over again without radical action toward urgently needed systemic reform at all levels. We hope to foster bold ideas and support meaningful changes that will lead to the realization of a more just society for all.”

**From the Yuma LCEH’s JEDI subcommittee:** “The purpose of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Subcommittee of the Balance of State Continuum of Care is to provide leadership and guidance to the Governance Advisory Board to establish comprehensive and evolving processes that ensure equity. The Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion shall be transparent, trauma-informed, and representative of the community served. The scope of work shall include addressing board processes, procedures, policies, documents, outcomes, membership work groups, and so on. Members should have lived experience within the scope of this work, to provide insight, knowledge of the diverse issues within the communities and people served, including homelessness, domestic violence, mental illness, substance, abuse, etc.”

### Examples:

<https://magnoliaconsulting.org/justice-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-jedi-statement/>

[https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/17311/CoC-Equity-Statement\\_7520\\_FINAL?bidId=](https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/17311/CoC-Equity-Statement_7520_FINAL?bidId=)