

July 9, 2020

**Statement of The Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. on its
Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

The Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. issued the following statement on diversity and inclusion:

Throughout its 45-year history, the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. has been committed to valuing and supporting people—all people—as they age. That commitment has been evident in our network’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic as the Agency, our staff and partners have worked tirelessly to ensure that older adults have the supports and services they need to remain safely in their homes.

As we support the needs of older adults during the COVID-19 crisis, we are keenly aware of another, ongoing and long-standing danger: racism and oppression in our country, which harm the African American, Latins, Asian American, indigenous and other non-white older adults we serve. The damage wrought by racism includes social inequities, health care disparities and other tremendous harms.

The senseless murder of George Floyd was just one more example of the glaring fact that racism still exists in our country. There are no words to adequately describe the anger and anguish we collectively feel because of this injustice. However, silence and inaction are simply not an acceptable response.

AAA5, along with our state and national associations continue to work within our network, to work within their communities, to embrace diversity and to stand against the legacy of systemic bias, racism and unequal treatment of any person, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, nationality, sexual orientation or gender identity. We believe that everyone is created equal and we are committed to ensure that all Americans receive the opportunity to pursue what the Declaration of Independence promises, “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

This is a time to renew our support for social equity and equal justice, and to listen carefully to the diverse older adults and caregivers our network serves so that we can be the best possible partners and allies in communities across the country.