

REAL Equity Resolution & Talking Points

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES THROUGH ITS RACE, EQUITY AND LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (REAL) ENCOURAGES LOCAL LEADERS TO INTRODUCE AND ADOPT AN EQUITY RESOLUTION THAT PUBLICLY AFFIRMS THE MUNICIPALITIES' COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

SAMPLE EQUITY RESOLUTION

A resolution of [municipality name] affirming its commitment to equity in the wake of the combined disparate effects of COVID-19 on our community and the long history of police violence against African Americans.

Whereas, **[municipality name]** condemns acts of brutality, racial profiling, and the use of excessive force by law enforcement officers.

Whereas, **[municipality name]** supports strengthening efforts to promote accountability for individual law enforcement officers and police departments.

Whereas, the global pandemic COVID-19 has impacted the health, social and economic fabric of the **[municipality name]** community;

Whereas, the disproportionate impact of the novel coronavirus has been on communities of color;

Whereas, **[municipality name]** is committed to equity, fairness, justice, protecting its most vulnerable residents;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by (municipality name) as follows:

[name of municipality] supports strengthening efforts to promote accountability for individual law enforcement officers and police departments.

[name of municipality] supports immediate steps to analyze police department structures, policies, and budgets and to reimagine how they support local elected leaders' primary responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of their residents.

[name of municipality] is committed to centering our community's responses to the COVID-19 global pandemic in racial equity.

Our municipality will dedicate our resources, platforms, political will and authority to identifying and addressing the ways that the novel Coronavirus may exacerbate existing inequities in our communities.

[name of municipality] is committed to not using fear, a common tactic throughout history to scapegoat communities perceived to be "other," and setting a tone that will reject these tendencies.

Our municipality will lift up the medical and social needs of the most marginalized and demonstrate how centering their needs ensure the safety and health of all.

This resolution confirms our commitment to local actions that promote equity.

These values will be reflected in all local government institutions.

Passed and adopted by _____

Date: _____

TALKING POINTS

REAL Action:

MUNICIPALITIES' COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

Stating your community's shared values is only the first step in ensuring that local leaders fulfill their primary responsibility to ensure the health and safety of ALL their residents. These values must be reflected across every city's institutions and require a commitment to local action.

POLICE VIOLENCE RESPONSE PRIORITIES

- Embed common values in local responses to racial tension:
 - Empathy
 - Transparency
 - Authenticity
 - Partnership and Collaboration
 - Consistency
- Improve oversight and independent investigations to hold individual law enforcement officers and police departments accountable.
- Support efforts to establish transparent civilian oversight boards to investigate officer use of force violations and incidents of police misconduct to ensure community-level oversight, accountability, and disciplinary action of police officers.
- Establish transparent civilian oversight boards to investigate officer use of force violations.
- Adopt sound and unbiased law enforcement policies that reduce the disparate impact of police brutality, racial profiling and use of force on Black and Brown people and other historically marginalized communities.

COVID-19 RESPONSE PRIORITIES

- Call for Disaggregated Data: Numbers shine light on historical inequities
- Ensure Adequate Funding: Apply resources where the need is greatest
- Sustain Equity in Recovery: Reinforce the commitment to equity for all residents through systemic and structural Change

DATA: *Even before COVID-19, we knew that race was the strongest predictor of one's success in the United States. From infant mortality to life expectancy – you just have to look at the data.*

- With more than 2 million cases and more than 124,000 deaths, COVID-19 impacts every community across this country.
- Elected officials at all levels of government are calling on the CDC and the federal government to collect data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Data sheds light on the intersecting forces of racial disparities, underlying conditions, and poverty that affect how the virus spreads and how the pandemic is disproportionately impacting Black and Latinx residents

FUNDING: *Municipal budget cuts will have lasting effects on the lives of the American people.*

Facing an urgent financial crisis, cities will see dramatic reductions to their workforces, threatening critical public-sector employees and first responders at a time when many Americans may need their local governments' help the most. ([Washington Post](#); 4/29/2020). Fair and direct funding allocations are essential for every local government, with no exclusions based on population. NLC's [Cities Are Essential](#) campaign calls for:

- Equal funding overall for municipal governments and county governments.
- Extend maximum flexibility for the use of funds to address the budget consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Center racial equity in approaches to employment, housing, education, access to healthcare, public safety. Cities signing on to NLC's Recovery Ready Coalition will receive a recovery planning toolkit that centers racial equity.

SYSTEMS CAN CHANGE: *The legacy of institutional and structural racism is playing out in front of our eyes. COVID-19 is the virus, but systems failure is the crisis. Local leaders must call it out, request data, and make data-informed decisions about the city-wide initiatives to be prioritized.*

This crisis is shedding light on what is possible and local officials are meeting community members' basic needs in ways previously considered impossible:

- Offer eviction moratoriums and foreclosure protections to reduce the number of people evicted from housing
- Suspend evictions and foreclosures for people living in Housing and Urban Development properties, and single-family homeowners backed by FHA, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
- Suspend arrests of community members for non-violent offenses ([Philadelphia](#))
- Release individuals being held pre-trial for non-violent offenses because they are unable to pay bail
- Release individuals incarcerated for non-violent offenses if they have pre-existing health conditions
- Provide 14 days of paid sick leave to all employees; emergency wage assistance for residents who are losing income as a result of coronavirus.
- Provide students with computers and Wi-Fi hotspots to increase their access to internet and broadband for distance learning
- Suspend water shutoffs due to non-payment
- Use empty hotel rooms as housing for homeless individuals

As we prepare for recovery, it will be critical to look carefully at what policymakers were able to do during COVID-19 to address the inequities and commit to ensuring that these policy and system changes are sustained.



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