



## MMF DECLARATION AND STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY AGAINST RACIAL INJUSTICE

June 10, 2020

Dear MMF Employees, Partners, and Community Members

**Whiteness must not be weaponized. Instead of being part of the problem, white privilege must be part of the solution. Those of us on this letter, who are white, give you our word that we commit to increasingly self-educate, assist others to learn, and will “put something on the line for someone. Take a risk to see how to use (our) whiteness, to spend it, to cash out...to put something on the line for someone” (Bettina Love, June 24th, 2019, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4804332/user-clip-conspirators>).**

Murray McKinnon Foundation aspires to encourage and support the potential of all the young persons in our care. We believe in acting as advocates to ensure that the unique needs of young persons are met.

We are appalled at events over the last few weeks, specifically individual and organizational overt and covert uses of power to intentionally suppress others. Racism is deeply rooted in colonization and continues to permeate across North America. As an agency, we continuously bear witnesses to:

- racial injustice occurrences at a local, provincial, national and global level
- the over-representation of oppressed populations within welfare and criminal justice systems
- deadly acts of violence taking place based on the colour of one's skin
- horrific losses of too many Black and Indigenous lives

**Let this moment in time be the tipping point** that provides the momentum to work together to initiate ways to finally stop the perpetuation of past racial injustice. We are heartened by the extent and immediacy of so many white persons to say 'No More'. Together we can promote positive social change.

**As an agency we are committed to stand strong in our solidarity against racial injustice in all its forms.** We will use this moment in history as our call to know better, to do better, to be better. We know this work is hard, it involves reflection and understanding of our own bias. From discomfort can come new ways of being in this world with others.

For some of our employees the issue of systemic racism is all too familiar and very personal. The experiences of racist behaviours have been shared with them by grandparents, parents and one that hurts to the core that they have had to repeat to their children or will need to share with their children. In solidarity we can change this narrative. Resisting, we can all demand more of those in power, those who are to serve and protect and to expect more of ourselves. We must lift the burden from those whose shoulders have carried the load and let them know “we’ve got you!”.

**We pledge to being and always becoming co-conspirators of dignity and rights for all persons.**

*In-Process, with increasing focus*

That the young persons, in our care, see themselves reflected in our staff team. Currently, two of the six person senior leadership team, one of the five person residential administrative team (ie. supervisors), and multiple direct care staff are Black persons.

DEI Charter for Agency

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Community of Practice Participation

*\*External*

Promote and support one another in the removal of systemic barriers to the incorporation of DEI principles and practices within member organizations.

*Objectives:*

- Leadership – to enhance the ability of member agencies to provide consistent and evidence-informed DEI best-practices to the work of its respective member agencies and to be advocates and allies for DEI and Anti-Oppression.
- Collaboration – to provide a forum for support, affirmation, communication, collaboration between members and the wider community.
- Learning and knowledge exchange - to highlight trends, share demographics, leverage resources. [*for future consideration: to speak as one voice on behalf of the young people, families and communities we work with within the context of the wider community.*]

Self-Education Resource Hub Folders, relevant to Youth Justice work  
Anti-Oppression & Privilege

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NjiQhITak3OaNI3f6FaotcEvBKhcCefi?usp=sharing>

Black Knowledge

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Q1cF2IXk5Ubuol\\_V0zEI2ebC61QYwigw?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Q1cF2IXk5Ubuol_V0zEI2ebC61QYwigw?usp=sharing)

Indigenous Knowledge

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SMtQnUR0P3czi6cpTcdldLbwfATw58Wg?usp=sharing>

Upcoming

Virtual Town Halls, Internal and External, for the purpose of collective education and action planning.

We affirm, acknowledge, and value the worth of all oppressed persons, #BlackLivesMatter #SilenceisCompliance #YouthJustice. We must amplify their voices and walk alongside one another to bring about systemic change in the oppression of young persons, families, colleagues, communities and the world.

For further information or to provide insight into improved operations, please communicate via [mmf@murraymckinnon.ca](mailto:mmf@murraymckinnon.ca)

Sincerely,

Board of Directors

Kevin Pumphrey, Chairperson

Senior Leadership Team:

Suzette Lewis, Executive Director

Marlene Niskala, Director of Residential Programs

Angela Dell, Director of Community-Based Programs

Jeremi Bittorf, Assistant Director of Residential Programs

Heather & Peter, Agency Clinicians