

Definitions of Key Terms for purposes of the 2022 A Home for Everyone Continuum of Care Renewal Project Survey *[NOTE: This document is the same as the Definitions of Key Terms from the 2021 Survey]*

Assertive Engagement: An approach to helping relationships based on research into human behavior and particularly what promotes positive behavior change. Assertive Engagement builds hope, leadership and community by:

- Articulating a clear hierarchy in which the people needing or seeking help are seen as the experts with power over their own choices and lives
- Viewing the people needing or seeking help as capable of choosing the solutions to their own problems
- Using hope as a source of motivation and strength for finding solutions
- Requiring persistence and creativity on the part of anyone in a helping relationship
- Recognizing that how helpers offer help is far more important than what help they offer
- Employing active listening as a powerful resource

In Assertive Engagement, services are offered in an attractive, persistent and creative way so people can draw on their unique strengths and resources and select the level of support they desire. Helpers work to keep people engaged in a process that supports them in making changes in their lives that move them toward prosperity as they see it. Assertive Engagement services are not passive. Assertive Engagement demands that helpers see both asking for help and making life changes as difficult processes that are the job of the person served. The helper's job is to work creatively and persistently to make those processes easier even for the most fearful, mistrustful and reluctant.

(Developed by Multnomah County)

Culturally Responsive Services: Services that are respectful of, and relevant to, the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse consumer/client populations and communities whose members identify as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home. Cultural responsiveness describes the capacity to respond to the issues of diverse communities. It thus requires knowledge and capacity at different levels of intervention: systemic, organizational, professional and individual.

(Developed by the Coalition of Communities of Color and presented in Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations, Portland, OR: Center to Advance Racial Equity, Portland State University, 2014.

<http://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-data-tools/protocolfororgs>)

Culturally Specific Services: Services that are informed by specific communities, where the majority of members/clients are reflective of that community, and use language, structures and settings familiar to the culture of the target population to create an environment of belonging and safety in which services are delivered. These services and programs reflect the following characteristics:

- Programs are designed and continually shaped by community input to exist without structural, cultural, and linguistic barriers encountered by the community in dominant culture services or organizations AND designed to include structural, cultural and linguistic elements specific to the community's culture which create an environment of accessibility, belonging and safety in which individuals can thrive.

- Organizational leaders, decision-makers and staff have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to work with the community, including but not limited to expertise in language, core cultural constructs and institutions; impact of structural racism, individual racism and intergenerational trauma on the community and individuals; formal and informal relationships with community leaders; expertise in the culture's explicit and implicit social mores. Organizational leaders and decision-makers are engaged in improving overall community well-being, and addressing root causes.

(Developed by Multnomah County through a collaborative county-wide work group)

Housing First: an approach to homeless assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold. Projects using a housing first approach often have supportive services; however, participation in these services is based on the needs and desires of the program participant. Specific steps to support a community-wide Housing First approach include removing barriers to program entry, using a centralized or coordinated assessment system, using client-centered service delivery models tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual or family presenting for services, and prioritizing households most in need, and demonstrating inclusive decision-making that ensures that service delivery is both client-centered and culturally competent. Recovery Housing can be Housing First if it aligns with HUD's guidance in the [Recovery Housing Policy Brief](#).

Intersectionality (Intersectional Identities): Coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, this term describes the ways in which race, class, gender, and other aspects of our identity "intersect" overlap and interact with one another, informing the way in which individuals simultaneously experience oppression and privilege in their daily lives interpersonally and systemically. Intersectionality promotes the idea that aspects of our identity do not work in a silo. Intersectionality, then, provides a basis for understanding how these individual identity markers work with one another.

Racism: Racism refers to a variety of practices, beliefs, social relations, and phenomena that work to reproduce a racial hierarchy and social structure that yield superiority, power, and privilege for some, and discrimination and oppression for others. Racism takes representational, ideological, discursive, interactional, institutional, structural, and systemic forms. At its core, racism exists when ideas and assumptions about racial categories are used to justify and reproduce a racial hierarchy and racially structured society that unjustly limits access to resources, rights, and privileges on the basis of race. Racism also occurs when this kind of unjust social structure is produced by the failure to account for race and its historic and contemporary roles in society. Racism is just as damaging in obvious forms as it is in less obvious and subtle forms, and is still called racism whether intentional or unintentional.

- **Institutional Racism:** Policies, practices, and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, whether overtly or covertly. Institutional racism preserves and fuels racial gaps in wealth, education, and social status, and serves to perpetuate white supremacy and privilege.

(These definitions combine definitions developed by: Nicki Lisa Cole, Ph.D., presented in Definition of Racism in Sociology: A System of Power, Privilege, and Oppression, 2017, www.thoughtco.com/racism-definition-3026511; Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) presented in Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action, 2015, https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf; and Tina Lopes and Barb Thomas presented in Dancing on Live Embers: Challenging Racism in Organizations, 2006.) The Intersectionality definition comes from the Joint Office Of Homeless Services (JOHS) Equity Definitions internal document.