

# Equity Statement

HomePlate works to uplift young people who are marginalized, particularly those who are experiencing **houselessness** or poverty. We recognize that racism is a compounding factor in all aspects of inequity. We offer programs where youth can come as they are and connect to the supports they need.

Housing instability impacts tens of thousands of people in Washington County, the most racially diverse county in Oregon, and disproportionately affects Black and Indigenous people and communities of color. Oregon is on stolen land from more than 60 tribes and has a long, violent history of **exclusion, anti-Blackness, anti-immigrant bias** and other forms of racism deny access to housing & other necessary resources.

Additionally, youth transitioning out of foster care and youth who identify as **LGBTQIA2S+** and lack acceptance for who they are, find themselves in unsafe or unstable housing situations. Housing instability leads to **homelessness**. As a consequence, young people are disproportionately represented in not only the homeless population but in jail and the **prison-industrial complex**. Homelessness is a tragic and traumatic experience that interrupts education, employment, personal and emotional development, and ultimately hope.

HomePlate acknowledges the role of **white supremacy** in historic **settler colonialism** and its current-day legacy in policies and practices that continue to exclude Black and Indigenous people and communities of color and other marginalized groups and individuals from accessing housing and basic services. We are committed to dismantling these systems of white supremacy both within our organization and in the broader community.

Homelessness and housing instability are not normal and we can do better. HomePlate acknowledges that housing is a human right and we are committed to making equitable housing access a reality. As a community, we must leverage our individual positions to facilitate mutual healing and recovery. The health and safety of the individual can not be separated from the health and safety of the community and uplifting those most disadvantaged helps us thrive more as a whole.

**We're working towards a beloved community, where we all feel a sense of belonging. We accept and acknowledge that creating a more just and equitable world is an ongoing process.**

**Considering the work is never done, we are committed to continual learning and striving to do better until our community, and the world is free of racism, and racial or socioeconomic disparities, where homelessness is eliminated, with safe, sustainable, and supported homes.**

## We envision a community in which:

- Resources are distributed equitably;
- Young people are not criminalized based on their economic status;
- Healthcare – including mental healthcare – is available and accessible;
- Those tasked with keeping our community safe are held accountable for their actions;
- Young people have a voice in all things that affect them;
- Housing is a right rather than a privilege;
- Transphobia and homophobia are not tolerated;
- Misogyny – which often leads to cycles of domestic violence – is confronted, and support and resources are made available;
- Reproductive freedom is a right;
- HomePlate staff, board, and volunteers mirror the diversity of the community that we serve;
- Homelessness is a short-term circumstance and not a chronic condition;
- People with physical disabilities are treated with the same respect and consideration that able-bodied people receive (**ableism**);
- **Racism** and **xenophobia** are abolished and not tolerated;
- A person's self-agency is not determined by their age (**ageism**);

See page 2 to learn the definitions of the words in **bold** from the statement.

# Important Definitions

## Houselessness

**Houselessness** refers to the condition of being without a house or home, the absence of safe and secure shelter. We use this instead of **homelessness**, as “home” is community, social connection, a person, and much more than a physical space.

## Exclusion

**Exclusion** refers to restrictions based on race which have the effect of impairing the recognition of human rights as fundamental freedoms.

## Anti-Blackness

**Anti-Blackness** is the name for the specific kind of racial prejudice directed towards black people.

## Anti-Immigrant Bias

**Anti-immigrant bias** is characterized by or expressing opposition to or hostility toward immigrants.

## LGBTQIA2S+

**LGBTQIA2S+** is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit, and the countless affirmative ways in which people self-identify.

## Prison-Industrial Complex

The **prison-industrial complex** is the overlap of government and industry surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.

## White Supremacy

**White supremacy** is a political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.

## Settler Colonialism

**Settler colonialism** is an ongoing system of power that perpetuates the genocide and repression of indigenous peoples and cultures.

## Ableism

**Ableism** refers to discrimination in favor of able-bodied people.

## Ageism

**Ageism** refers prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age.

## Xenophobia

**Xenophobia** refers to the dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.

## Racism

**Racism** refers to prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people based solely on their particular racial or ethnic group.