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CR-TTAC Responds to Recent Violence Targeting the Black Community

A message from the Jail Diversion Program Director:

We condemn the actions -and inaction - of Minneapolis law enforcement, which directly resulted in the death of George Floyd. We stand with the many voices calling for continued reform of policing, and we are proud of our decades-long contributions to these reform efforts in Massachusetts.

Guided by an unwavering commitment to improving police responses to individuals in crisis, Advocates is grateful to our 15 partner police agencies for welcoming us in. We stand committed to guiding communities willing to collaborate with law enforcement to deliver a safer, more compassionate response to individuals in crisis.

Please read on for a response to the recent violence targeting the Black community from Advocates President & CEO, Diane Gould, and Chief Diversity Officer, Barbara Holland.

Sincerely,

A message from Advocates President & CEO and Chief Diversity Officer:

George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, died in Minneapolis police custody after a white officer pinned him to the ground with his knee on his neck.

This is a tragic example of the racism, oppression, and violence that Black people live with every day, and reminiscent of the deaths of Eric Garner, and more recently Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and Dreasjon Reed in Indianapolis, Indiana. According to the Washington Post database, Black Americans are killed in police fatalities at more than twice the rate of White Americans.

In February, Ahmaud Arbery was killed while out jogging in Brunswick, Georgia; three white men have been charged with his murder. And the day of George Floyd's death, a white woman in a New York City park called the police and said that an African American man was threatening her life after the man simply asked her to leash her dog. These incidents are part of a pattern of systemic racism that has existed in the U.S. for 400 years, resulting in Blacks being targeted and marginalized simply because they are Black.

We know that most people in law enforcement take pride in doing their job the right way, every day. Advocates has strong partnerships with police departments across Massachusetts, training, and working alongside officers to respond to crises and achieve the best possible outcomes. And yet it is heartbreaking that incidents such as these occur with frightening regularity and are not limited to interactions with law enforcement.

benefits and core values. The Advocates way philosophy requires that we treat everyone with dignity and respect, welcome differences of all kinds, and honor the rich diversity of our communities. We strive every day to be a more diverse, inclusive, and culturally competent organization. We envision communities in which there is justice, a place for all of us to thrive, and opportunities for everyone to make a contribution.

As part of our commitment to creating an agency-wide culture that embraces diversity and equity, our Diversity Advisory Council and Senior Leadership Team identify and address racism and oppression in our communities. We hold forums and create opportunities for our employees to share thoughts, express feelings, challenge our structures, and promote change. We support all efforts to break the silence that has contributed to so many people of color not being able to “breathe”.

At Advocates, we reject all forms of racism and hope you stand with us on breaking the silence, too. We invite you to [visit our Justice and Social Action Resource page](#).

Sincerely,

Diane Gould
President & CEO

Barbara Holland
Chief Diversity Officer

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