



LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
LOUISVILLE METRO BOARD OF HEALTH

GREG FISCHER
MAYOR

KAREN COST, Ph.D.
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

June 25, 2020

The Louisville Board of Health is deeply saddened, although not surprised, by the recent losses in our community. We extend our sympathy to the families of Breonna Taylor, David McAtee and to all members of our community affected by police violence and systemic racism. We also recognize that our sympathy is not enough.

The demonstrations that we are seeing in our community are a result of a system which concentrates resources, opportunity and good health for some by concentrating scarcity, lack of opportunity and poor health for others. In Louisville, some neighborhoods have up to a 12-year difference in life expectancy, which means that too often, the lives of our residents are cut short of their full human potential. This is not the result of personal behaviors, but rather the result of a system designed to fail Black communities and other communities of color.

It is incumbent upon those of us in positions of power to work to create equity and opportunity for all. To that end, the Board makes the following commitments:

1. The Board of Health will be trained in Advancing Racial Equity by the Center for Health Equity to learn how to better support the analysis provided by their work.
2. The Board will review our legal authority to determine how best to advance health equity in matters under our purview.
3. The Board will advocate within our networks with which we are affiliated to develop coordinated, antiracist, systemic strategies for advancing health equity.
4. The Board supports, and will advocate for, the recommendations proposed in the FY20 Budget Equity Assessment released by the Center for Health Equity. We believe in the importance of a city budget which offers all Louisville residents the opportunity to thrive and will provide expertise to continue guiding Louisville Metro Government towards a city budget which offers all Louisville residents the opportunity to thrive.
5. The Board, in partnership with the expertise of the Center for Health Equity, will continue to identify ways to incorporate equity into our work and identify mechanisms to hold ourselves accountable for doing so.

In order to achieve health equity in our community, systemic change is necessary. The Board of Health adds our voice to the call for an end to institutional racism, from our budgets to our policies and practices. More importantly, we commit to taking action to achieve our mission to act as a champion of equitable physical, behavioral and environmental health.

Karen M. Cost, PhD
Chair, Louisville Metro Board of Health