

ACNM Maine Affiliate Statement Concerning Black Lives Matter Movement:

As midwives with a commitment to social and environmental justice, our Maine ACNM Affiliate is called to examine and challenge the thought patterns and practices of white privilege and policies of oppression. The distorted sense of superiority among white people has infected this land since first contact over 500 years ago. This systemic racism is perpetuated by generations of complicit silence and active implementation of racist policies. We fully support the right of Americans to peacefully protest police brutality and all its consequences. We acknowledge the many burdens of racist policies on African Americans and other people of color, including: immense inequities in health care, mass incarceration, police violence and shooting, everyday insults small and large, implicit and explicit bias, being unheard or not believed, inferior schools and education experiences... the list goes on and on.

Genocide of Indigenous Peoples and slavery of African Americans have been present since the very beginnings of this nation. It is time for us to examine that toxic history and its current manifestations and deeply reflect on our accountabilities for it. We need to begin the necessary healing process so that true equity and justice exists for all midwives in our profession. Black and brown people have been speaking out and demanding change to right these wrongs for decades. Yet the divisions and racism continue, due to entrenched policies and continued action to maintain those policies. The work of transformation belongs to white people. White people need to understand that racism is not a few bad people who do terrible things, rather a systemic foundation that perpetuates injustices.

We, the Maine Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives, stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and embrace the diversity of all peoples. We commit to breaking down the policies and practices that support institutional racism. Each of us with European heritage must exchange guilt, paralysis and silence, for knowledge, thoughtful action and right relationship with those who have been crushed by our acceptance of the status quo, our complacency, and an unwillingness to act. It is incumbent on us to act **now**.