



*start*

MAP THE TRUTH

# COVID-19/Coronavirus Social Justice Guide

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**#MapTheTruth**





*start*

## MAP THE TRUTH

We *listen* because  
we *care*.



And because we  
care, we *learn* to  
*unlearn*.

The best way to dispel  
misconceptions and  
lies is to **uplift the truth**  
with care.





# PRESENTED BY

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



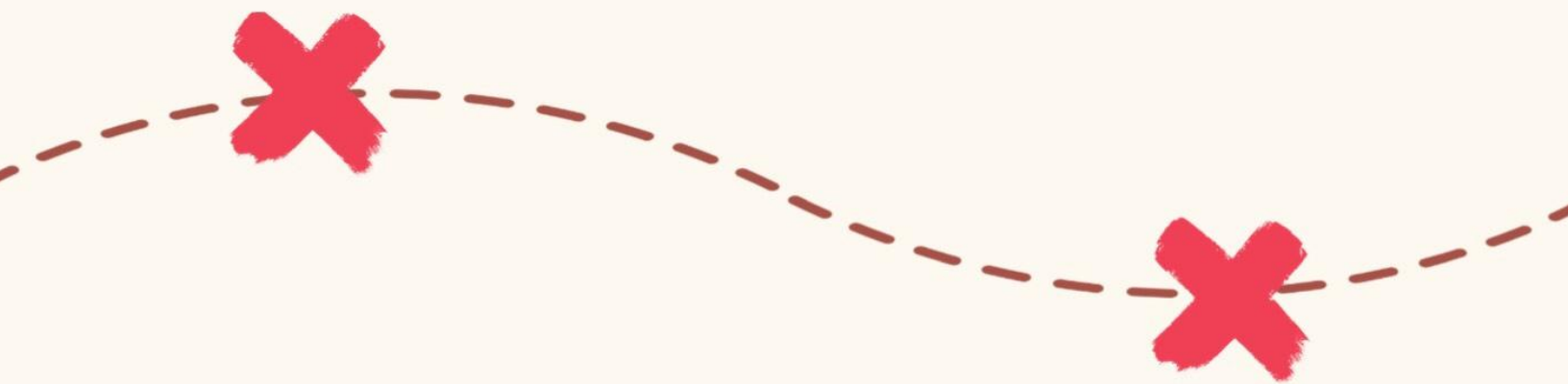
The **Opportunity** Agenda





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope .....	5-12
Taking Action, Finding Solutions and Living Our Values — Together .....	12-15
Leading with Truth and Positivity .....	15-29
Making Comparisons .....	29-38
Imagery Guidance .....	38-40
Additional Resources .....	40-42





# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope

## Unprecedented Impact of Racism and a Global Pandemic

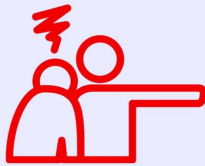


Long before the coronavirus pandemic, our country struggled to understand and practice the duty of caring for our neighbors in community. With the onslaught of COVID-19, 44 million people lost employment and even more are facing underemployment.

# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope

## Unprecedented Impact of Racism and a Global Pandemic

Why tear  
one  
another  
apart...

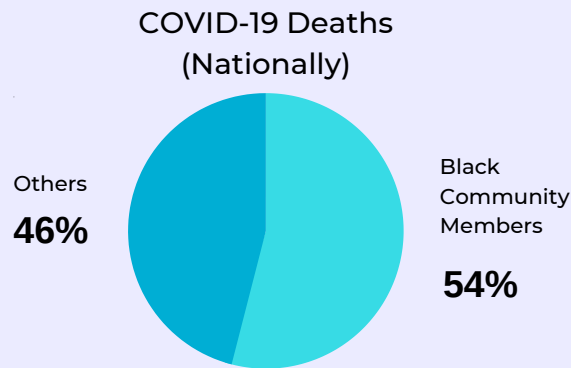


When we  
can build  
one  
another up?



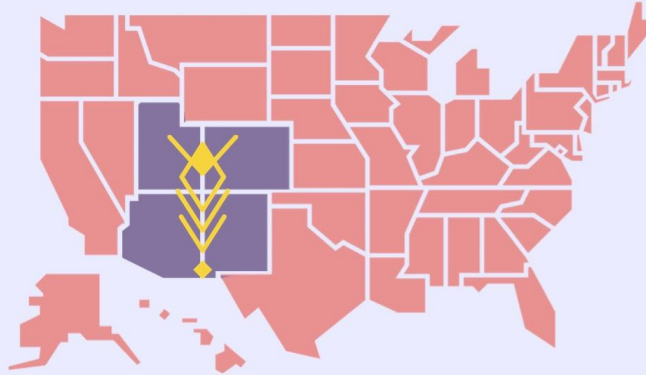
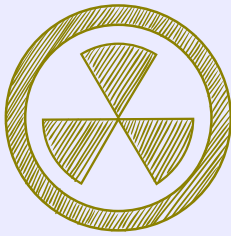
Tens of millions will lose their health insurance and those who continue to have coverage will likely have difficulty accessing services, including testing. While many Americans have lost employment, health care, and stability during this public health crisis, a global health pandemic is no excuse for racism and bigotry.

# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope



People of color are disproportionately contracting and dying from COVID-19 in comparison to other populations. A recent [study](#) found that counties with higher populations of Black residents accounted for 54% of COVID-19 diagnoses and 58% of deaths from the virus nationally. Members of the Latinx community are dying at [higher rates](#) in states like California and New York.

# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope



Another report showed that rates of infection were **particularly high** for the Navajo Nation and other Native communities in the Southwest. There continues to be a **lack of comprehensive data**, particularly for smaller groups like Native Americans including Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, which means **gaps in knowledge** of impact.

# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope

## WE ARE IN THIS **TOGETHER**



A vast majority of workers on the **frontline** of this global health crisis are **women of color** who are **more likely** than men of color to **live in poverty**, or **not be paid a living wage**. Undocumented immigrants face increased challenges with **fear of deportation**, or heading to hospitals to receive care. Due to a lack of access to health care and quality food, along with the realities of living with poverty, people of color have **higher rates** of pre-existing conditions that lead to **increased risk** when contracting COVID-19. The impact of COVID-19 is also **disproportionately felt** among women and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) folks, especially for those who live at the **intersections of multiple identities**.

# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope

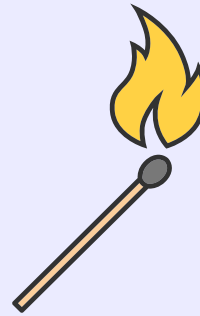


As with other crises, a **set of perceived villains** and heroes tend to emerge in the discourse. The COVID-19 pandemic **juxtaposes heroes like nurses, doctors**, and other essential workers with those who identify as Asian - specifically Chinese - as the villains, since the coronavirus is widely thought—and **still not substantiated**—to have originated in China. As with the bigotry against American Arabs and Muslims in the aftermath of 9/11, we have witnessed an **increase in xenophobia and anti-Asian racism** around the globe.



# In Chaos and Crisis We Can Find Solutions and Hope

Hate  
**fuels**  
violence.



Today, the language of disease has prompted hateful violence with more than 2,066 Asian Americans (as of June 3, 2020) reporting racist incidents to the [Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council and Chinese for Affirmative Action](#).



# BRIDGE

Let's cross *together*.

From  
**PROBLEMS**

To  
**SOLUTIONS**





# Taking Action, Finding Solutions and Living Our Values — Together



On their own, each of these issues can be challenging to address. But, it is important to consider the narrative frames and stories that we are trying to convey - that **together we can address these challenges**, that they are born from **systemic oppression and racism**, that we must work together to **change**, and that the realities brought by this disease can be managed by looking out for one another. We must **uplift the values** that we should aspire to, especially during times of crisis. We must look for ways to **uplift the future over fear**, solutions over darkness and vitriol.

# Taking Action, Finding Solutions and Living Our Values — Together



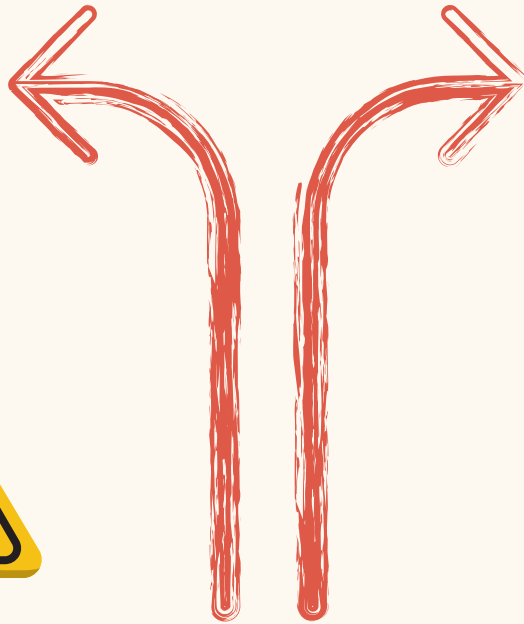
This COVID—19/Coronavirus Social Justice Phrase Guide builds on a [previous effort](#) led by Advancement Project National Office and The Opportunity Agenda, and **provides recommendations** on how we can ensure our language **affirms, uplifts and reflects truth**, instead of language that attacks, criminalizes, or reinforces negative racist stereotypes. **We will not allow** people of color and working class communities **to be divided** by language during this pandemic. It's our aim to offer options that **unify and affirm** folks in these trying times.



# STOP

With **every** action,  
with **every** statement,  
we have 2 **choices**:

~~Submit to the  
**toxicity** and **bigotry**  
of promoting  
**hateful** language &  
**false** stereotypes.~~



**Break** the  
chains of **hate** by  
fighting back with  
**accurate** and  
**affirming positivity**,  
which will lead us to  
**solutions**.



It **starts** and **stops**  
with us.

Join us as we  
map out the **truth**



# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Refer to COVID-19, the pandemic, or the coronavirus. Terms like “Chinese Virus,” “Kung Flu,” or “chop fluey” are **racist** and **scientifically inaccurate**. The World Health Organization (WHO) also notes that while the first cases of coronavirus were reported in Wuhan, China, WHO employs the name COVID-19 so as **not to stigmatize** any ethnic group or nationality and give rise to harmful stereotypes which leads to verbal and physical violence. The use of a term other than coronavirus or COVID-19 also goes **against recommendations** of every leading public health official.

## DO NOT:

Use:

~~“Chinese Virus,”~~

~~“Kung Flu”~~

~~“Chop Fluey”~~



# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Affirm that no one brought the virus - it is a contagion that spread. Also, this statement continues to be unfound. Transmission of the virus is confirmed through respiratory droplets. We must avoid conspiracy theories and repeating conservative (and untrue) rhetoric.

## DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"The Chinese brought the virus  
because of what they eat."~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## ALSO:

Using words that are commonly associated with people with intellectual disabilities to describe the current crisis is **insensitive** and could be seen as **marginalizing** or providing a **negative connotation** to those who are **directly impacted** by those disabilities. Alternatively, use "trying", "turbulent", or "challenging".

### DO NOT:

~~Describe the moment we are in~~  
~~as "crazy" or "insane"~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## THE REALITY IS:

Members of the Black community are dying at disproportionate rates because of structural racism and systems of inequalities which include lack of or limited access to clean air and water, healthy food, housing, health care and safe and well-paying employment.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Black people are unhealthy and have higher risk factors which is why they are dying at higher rates."~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Affirm that while health care workers are **certainly** on the frontline in essential roles, there are **many other** workers whose roles are **equally as important**, carry the **same risk**, and deserve our appreciation as well as **increased pay and safety projections**. Moreover, it's important to note that certain populations are **more likely** to be serving in roles as essential workers. In fact, **nine million people** in the frontline workforce are **people of color and immigrants**, with many of the **most impacted sectors being women**.

## DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Most, or all 'essential workers' are in  
"health care."."~~



# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Remind folks that **frontline workers** or **essential workers** include janitors, delivery employees and truck drivers, restaurant and factory workers, pharmacists, teachers, mental health and social workers, garbage collectors, postal workers, grocery store clerks, farmworkers, scientists and lab techs, airline and airport staff, caregivers, child care workers, doctors, nurses, and more. **They** are the ones keeping this country running through an **unprecedented pandemic**, **risking their own safety and health**, as well as anyone with whom they may be living.

## DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Most, or all 'essential workers' are in 'health care'."~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## THE REALITY IS:

These workers are also contracting COVID-19 at a **much higher rate** than the general public because too **many are forced** to go to work **without** the appropriate equipment, safety standards, or job protections. In addition to our appreciation, **we should also demand** that all workers deemed essential during this public health crisis receive **hazard pay**, a **livable wage**, workplace **health and safety protections**, universal **paid sick days**, **paid family leave**, **free health care**, **support** for childcare, protections for whistleblowers, and collective bargaining protections. All of these are included in the proposed Essential Worker Bill of Rights.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Most, or all 'essential workers' are in  
"health care".~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Help evoke our communal responsibility to protect essential workers over appealing to audiences' self interest. As previously stated, there are a range of services and benefits that all workers **should have access to**, but are critical for those designated as **essential** during these times.

## DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"We protect our own health by providing health protection to essential workers."~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Employ use of physical distancing - The newly introduced term “social distancing” connotes that we should distance ourselves from being social. During this time, we must show support for one another, be in community, and look out for one another. This does not suggest that we should physically come together; it **instead** means that we should emphasize the need to physically distance ourselves when being social by way of virtual means and maintain six feet (or more) between community members.

## DO NOT:

~~Refer only to social distancing~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## THE REALITY IS:

Practicing physical distancing is **easier for some community members than others**. Those who are incarcerated or held in detention, along with those who work in close quarters and serve as essential workers like hospitals, warehouses, factories and grocery stores, are in regular, close contact with fellow employees, customers, and hazardous materials. The **racial demographic** of these positions is **largely** composed of **people of color**, who are already at **high risk** and many of which return home from their jobs to overcrowded homes where they further put their households at risk, unable to physically distance themselves. When it comes down to it, **physical distancing is a privilege many cannot practice.**

### DO NOT:

~~Don't assume everyone is able to physically distance themselves~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Rather than using language that traditionally involves conflict or death, an alternative is to use “struggle through” or “overcome”. This is also another way to focus on health specific terms since this is a virus.



## DO NOT:

Use:

~~“battle” or “war” to describe efforts  
to address COVID-19~~

# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## DO:

Rely on credible medical **professionals**, community support **organizations**, and other trusted validators **who serve Black and Brown people** to carry the message of vaccine safety and efficacy while also **acknowledging the history** of racist medical malpractice and experimentation. It is well documented that the medical experimentation that occurred at Tuskegee and at other points **throughout history** contributed to Black and Brown communities' mistrust of scientific research and to some people's decision to opt out of getting vaccines.

## DO NOT:

~~Overlook, diminish or dismiss~~  
~~resistance within Black and Brown~~  
~~communities to a COVID-19~~  
~~vaccine.~~



# Leading with Truth and Positivity

## THE REALITY IS:

Knowing that COVID-19 is affecting **Black and Brown communities** at much **higher rates**, vaccination gaps could have **devastating** effects on Black and Brown communities so **building trust and credibility** will be critical. It is also important to emphasize that availability of a **safe and effective** vaccine must be **accessible and available** to anyone who wants it and that **cost should never be a barrier**.

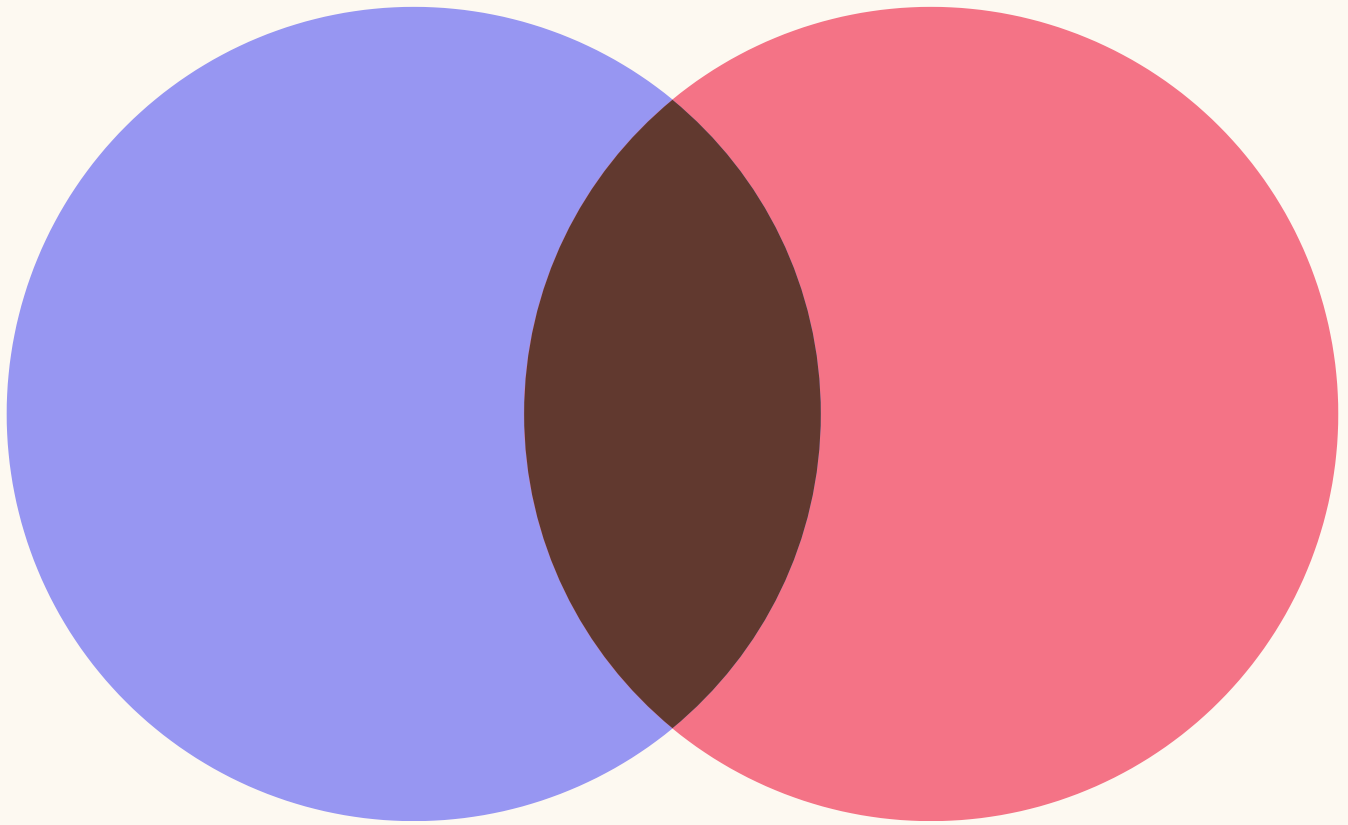
### DO NOT:

~~Overlook, diminish or dismiss resistance, within Black and Brown communities, to a COVID-19 vaccine.~~

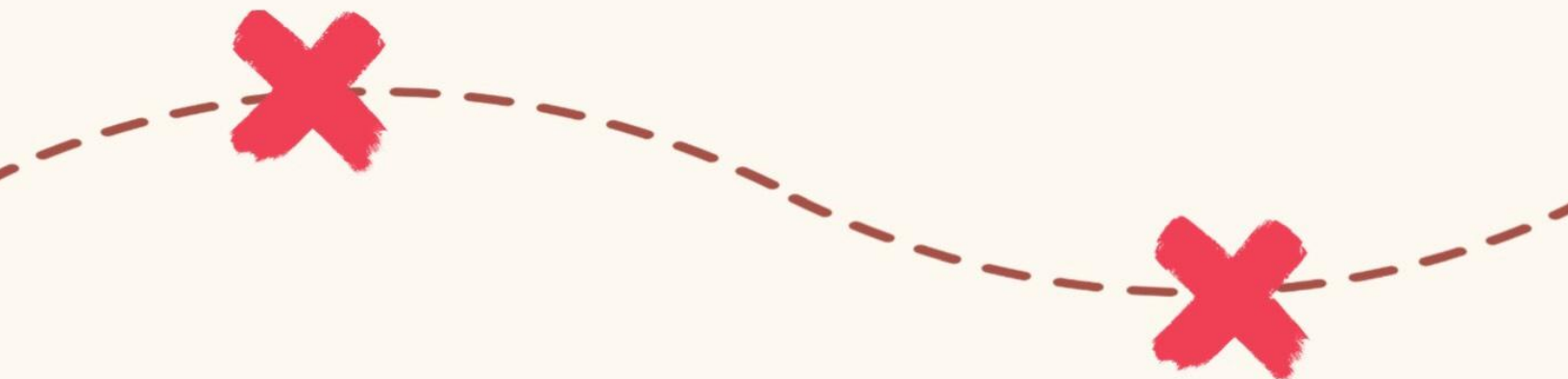




## Making Comparisons



We often make comparisons to things to **fill in the gaps** of our understanding, often leading to the development of **misconceptions**, **reinforced stereotypes**, and the **absence** of **factual-based information**.



# Making Comparisons

## THE REALITY IS:

Stay at home orders are being used to **enforce our health and safety**, and that of our community. People who are being told to stay at home for their health and safety, still have the **ability and freedom** to go outside or to leave. People who are imprisoned do **not**. We are seeing protests from those who feel policed by governments requiring community members to stay home, those taking action to advocate for the release of those incarcerated in jails and prisons and others condemning policy makers including the presidential administration at the White House. A presidential cabinet member was quoted as saying those involved in these acts of civil disobedience are

"modern-day Rosa Parks ... protesting against injustice and a loss of liberties."

### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Stay at home orders are akin to imprisonment."~~

# Making Comparisons

## THE REALITY IS:

Most states' stay at home orders were enacted to **protect** community members from contracting COVID-19 and **still** allow residents to leave their homes to **shop** for essential items including groceries and prescriptions, **exercise** outdoors and **attend** medical appointments. Further, no state ordered a curfew on residents in relation to the health pandemic. The stay at home mandate does **not** in any way displace community members from their places of residence or call for imprisonment or forced labor.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Stay at home orders are akin to imprisonment."~~

# Making Comparisons

## IN ADDITION:

In other accounts, there have been references **comparing** stay at home orders to concentration camps or slavery. Most states' current stay at home orders have been enacted to **protect community members** from contracting COVID-19 and still allow residents to leave their homes to shop for **essential** items including groceries and prescriptions, exercise outdoors and attend medical appointments. Further, **no** state ordered a curfew on residents in relation to the health pandemic. The stay at home mandate **does not** in any way displace community members from their places of residence or call for imprisonment or forced labor.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Stay at home orders are akin to imprisonment."~~

# Making Comparisons

## DO:

Affirm that **everyone** deserves to be **safe** and **able** to **protect** themselves from disease, including people who are incarcerated. During pandemics, jails inevitably become virus hotbeds: people are imprisoned in cramped quarters, cannot practice physical distancing, and **don't** have regular access to **soap** or adequate **health care**. Community members sitting in jails and prisons are now **facing death** due to the inaction of public officials across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately **670,000 people** languish in local jails, most of whom have not been convicted of a crime and are in cages because they **can not afford bail**.

## DO NOT:

Feed the myths:

- ~~"Violent vs. Non Violent"~~
- ~~"Everyone is safe and accounted for"~~
- ~~"People in jails, prisons should stay there to quarantine"~~

# Making Comparisons

## THE REALITY IS:

Jails and prisons **fail to provide** sufficient hand soap and alcohol-based sanitizers to the people detained in and working in these settings. Once inside this perfect breeding ground, the virus will **rapidly spread**, leading to **countless illnesses and deaths** both in and out of the facility. If these community residents are **not** released to their families in the coming days, health care services in jails and prisons will quickly be **overwhelmed**, leaving a **devastating death toll**. This death toll won't only affect those inside once the inadequate health care inside the jail has been pushed to its limits. We must secure the immediate release of people detained **inhumanely** and now **terrified for their lives** amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myths:

- ~~"Violent vs. Non Violent"~~
- ~~"Everyone is safe and accounted for"~~
- ~~"People in jails, prisons should stay there to quarantine"~~

# Making Comparisons

## IN ADDITION:

We must **not** pit one against the other when it comes to people in jail for non-violent and violent offenses, **nor** those in jail vs those in prison. **All** community members **must be safe** and the U.S.'s reliance on incarceration **must end**.

### DO NOT:

Feed the myths:

- ~~"Violent vs. Non Violent"~~
- ~~"Everyone is safe and accounted for"~~
- ~~"People in jails, prisons should stay there to quarantine"~~

## Making Comparisons

### THE REALITY IS:

There are **common sense** measures that states can enact to **protect public health** and **democracy** at the **same time**. Voting can safely happen in person with physical distancing and the proper PPEs. It can happen **even more safely** by making arrangements for voters to return their ballot by mail.

#### DO NOT:

Feed the myth:

~~"Voting in person is unsafe."~~



# Making Comparisons

## THE REALITY IS:

Assuming that certain communities are more likely to spread the virus **advances racist stereotypes** about carriers of the virus. **No one** should have to choose between their **right to vote** and their **health**. In-person elections lacking accommodations for the vulnerable, disabled, and immunocompromised during a pandemic are *morally irresponsible* and **disgraceful**.

### DO NOT:

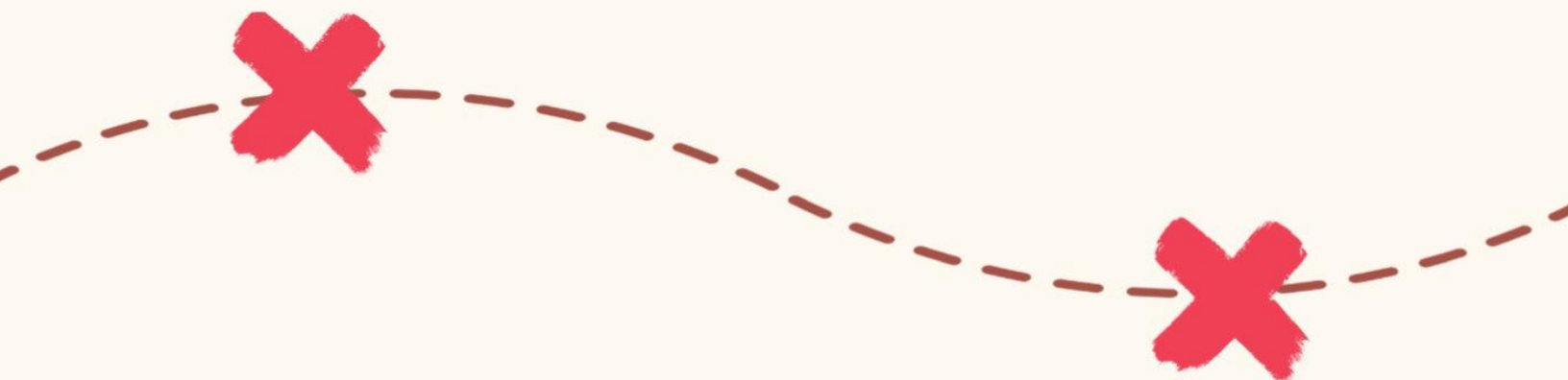
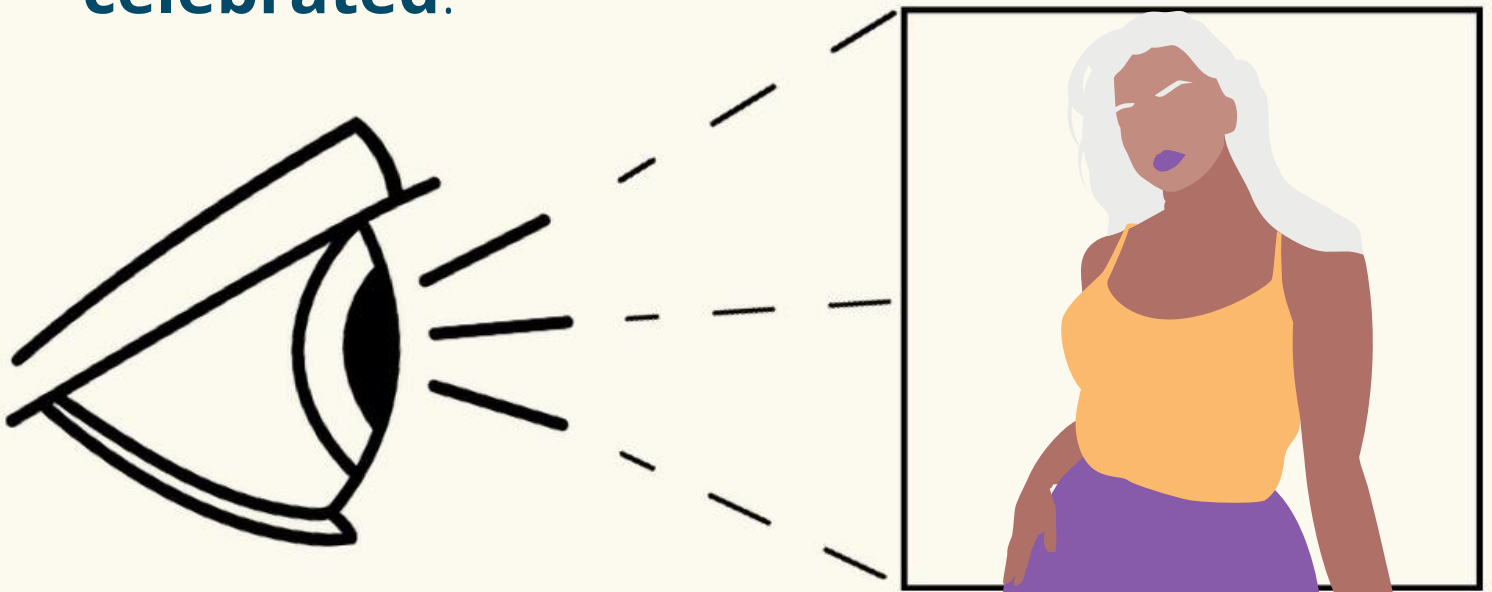
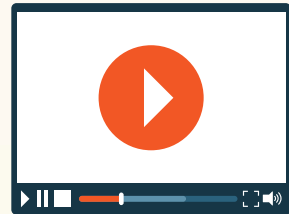
Feed the myth:

~~"Certain regions, residents are  
unsafe for voting in person."~~



## Imagery Guidance

To be *accurately*  
**represented**  
is to be  
**celebrated.**



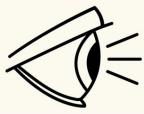


# Imagery Guidance

To be *accurately* **represented** is to be **celebrated**.



Images are powerful and a key tool in **changing** the **narrative**. Certain images are often a key component in **criminalizing people of color**. We must be **careful** in all instances to illustrate what is going on in our communities by using **responsible** and **accurate** photographs, graphics and video footage. When talking about the coronavirus, particularly related to its introduction to society, **there's no need** to post a photo of a homogeneous group. Further, when talking about those who succumb to the disease, **make sure not to further victimize** a particular population, nor pit one population over another. Seek and publish images of families together vs mugshots or potentially dehumanizing images that inherently imply criminality.



# Imagery Guidance

To be *accurately* **represented** is to be **celebrated**.



We must also be helpful to the media in providing images to counter untruths and victimizing imagery, and further our narratives on racial justice, equity and fairness. By doing this, we are, in turn, educating and informing how the media and others should move when working independently. Consider using photos that depict families together, celebratory situations, candids of community members working together, close ups showing raw, earnest emotion. Also be mindful - and intentional - of what is placed in the background of photos. When working with stock images, find resources that include people of color. Some examples include: [Black Illustrations](#) and [Unsplash](#).



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Original Social Justice  
Phrase Guide

.....

Color of Change

The Black Response

.....

COVID-19 Messaging Resources

.....

Data for Progress and Groundwork

Collaborative Message Testing

Coronavirus Response

.....





# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



The Leadership Conference on Civil and  
Human Rights Voting and COVID-19  
Messaging



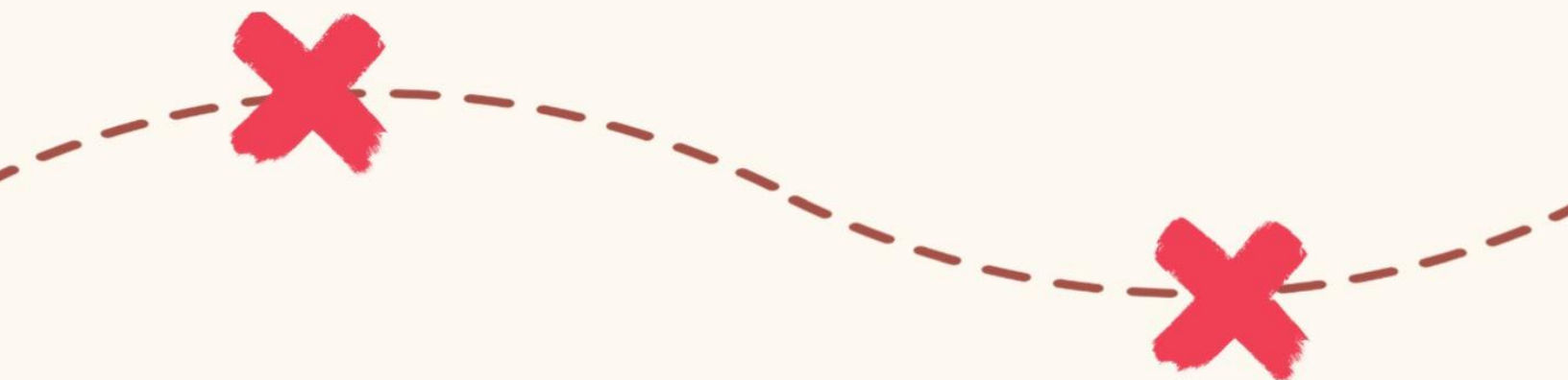
Narrative Initiative Resources and Reading  
Lists



Protecting Immigrant Families Messaging  
Guide



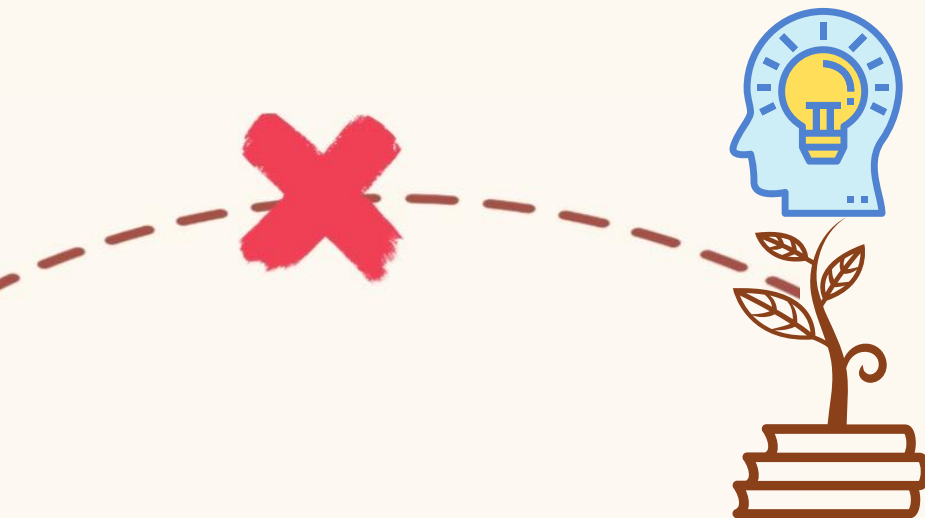
Messaging This Moment: Mobilizing Our  
Base and Persuading the Middle on  
Policing, Protest and Racial Injustice



*finish*

We thank you for joining us along this journey  
towards the truth, solutions, and love.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



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