

Ramsey County Racial Equity and Community Engagement Response Team

**Submitted for Approval:
4/18/20**

**County Manager Approved Period:
4/20/20 – 4/27/20**

**Next Submission Date:
4/25/20**

Thank you for
your leadership.
I look forward
to this important
work getting
underway.

—T. T.
OC

County Manager Comments

Overall Weekly Progress Report

- Please work with Lidiya Girma in planning to move the weekly report document into a formatted template that is consistent with the Service Delivery design documentation
- This is an excellent week one summary. Thank you for taking on this important work for our organization and community. Ramsey County will ultimately be judged by its efforts to serve every person across the community during its COVID-19 emergency response, and particularly individuals and communities that are most likely to face structural barriers to health, wellbeing and prosperity.
- Please continue to highlight where issues of clarity require immediate attention – with the preference being to address as many topics as possible on a weekly basis through this documentation and comment process.
- Please share any issues in working with departments on specific racial equity or community engagement projects so that we can address questions or concerns in real-time.
- You are assembling an excellent team to perform this work. Please be flexible if other leaders get suggested to you to round out the various areas and continue to share updates on staff time demands and ability to balance this work alongside other projects staff members are being asked to participate in within their departments or the Incident Management Team.
- Please join the 1:00 pm Incident Management Team meeting every Monday to update on tasks and partnerships that involve the Incident Management structure.
- Please be prepared to join the 3:00 pm Senior Management Team meeting every Friday to update on tasks and partnerships that involve departments across Ramsey County.

Focus Area 1 - Communication

- I look forward to reviewing an initial list of trusted messengers and contacts so that we may begin to align that work with the rest of the organization's communication efforts and resource needs
- The Racial Equity COVID-19 page on Ramseycounty.us is a wonderful idea that matters internally and to our broader community response. Please work with the Public Information Section within the IMT to get that work done.
- I wholeheartedly agree on the urgency and the need to act quickly, effectively and in aligned ways that leverage the strength of the entire organization and community

Focus Area 2 – Program Areas

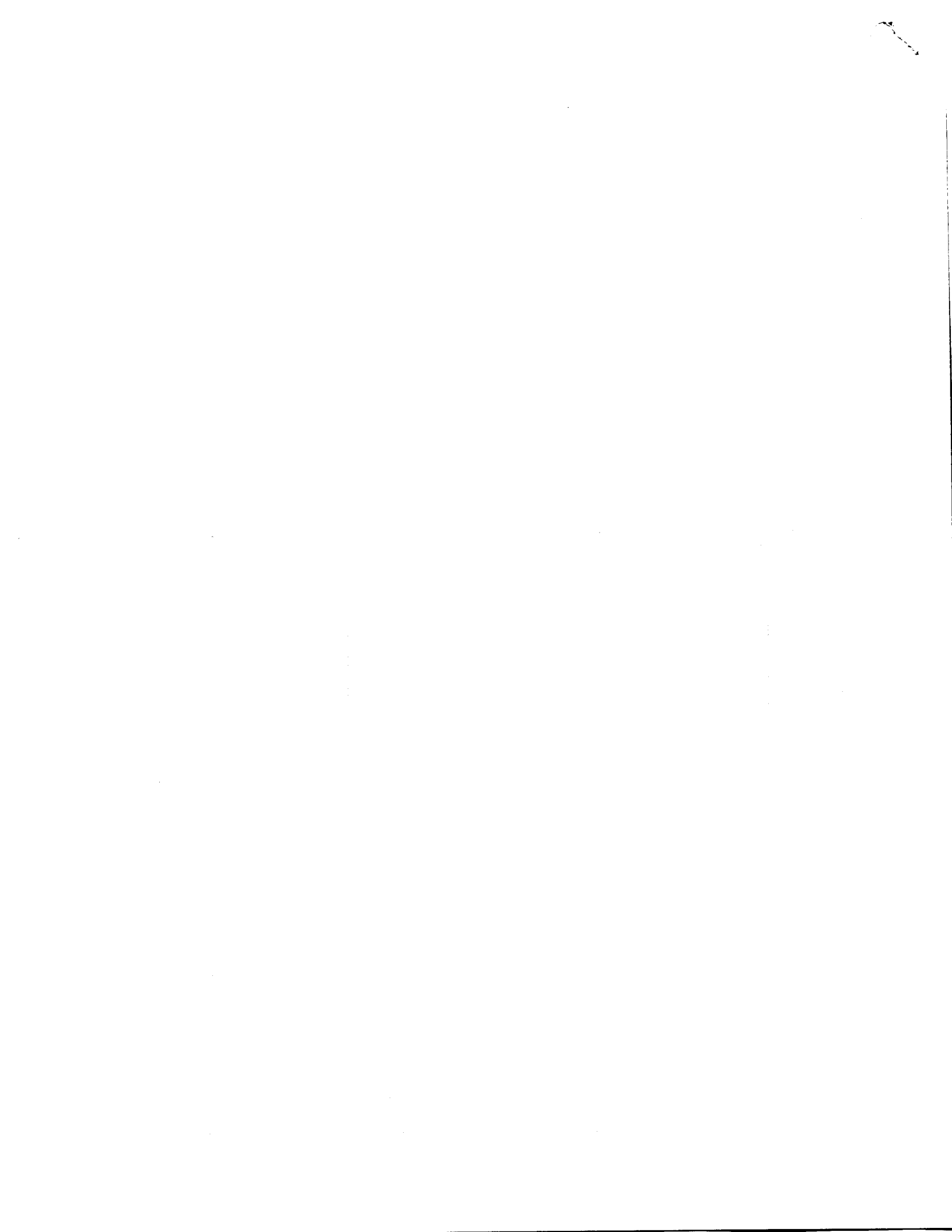
- The 5-10 areas of programmatic focus will be huge to aligning the work of the RECERT with the work of the IMT and rest of Ramsey County. Any clear data and rationale underpinning the selection of each programmatic area will be useful in future communications and building support and understanding for why a focus on racial equity and community engagement matters.
- This is admittedly not a racial equity specific issue, but individuals with disabilities are also being impacted in ways that are leading to other equity issues during COVID-19. I'd ask for RECERT to think about if that area of programmatic focus can be addressed at all through this group or if Ramsey County needs to take more specific steps outside of RECERT to ensure an effective and equitable response.
- I wholeheartedly agree on the urgency and the need to act quickly, effectively and in aligned ways that leverage the strength of the entire organization and community

Focus Area 3 - Data

- I am hoping that previous work from Ramsey County's racial equity teams can be built on in developing narratives that are asset based and can be incorporated on the language at ramseycounty.us as a new racial equity page is developed.
- How will a COVID-19 racial equity impact tool align with other assessment tools that Ramsey County used before COVID-19? This will be an important question that we need to rapidly answer so we are deploying resources to departments and across the IMT as soon as possible.
- I wholeheartedly agree on the urgency and the need to act quickly, effectively and in aligned ways that leverage the strength of the entire organization and community

Focus Area 4 - Engagement

- The creation of an advisory committee will be hugely important to Ramsey County's work. Thank you for taking this task on.
- Can you think about if it will be possible for departments to specifically interact with this group during the weekly conversations as a way to, in real time, discuss specific issues that are arising and ensure that the RECERT is serving as a conduit into the county and community that can hopefully help us improve how we think about and execute our work.
- I wholeheartedly agree on the urgency and the need to act quickly, effectively and in aligned ways that leverage the strength of the entire organization and community



**Racial Equity and Community Engagement Team
Weekly Report
Submitted 4/19/20**

*Work with
Planning on
template*

Overall Weekly Progress Report

The first week provided an opportunity to build a process, structure, workplan and team to support Ramsey County's Racial Equity and Community Engagement Response Team (RECERT) efforts throughout the COVID-19 emergency period. The following report and workplan is based on the information provided to the County Board in a memo from the County Manager dated April 13, 2020.

During the first week the Racial and Health Equity Administrators:

- Developed of workplan template and regular reporting mechanisms
- Identified a core team membership and structure
- Reviewed action planning and priority issues with the County Manager
- Requested to Information Services the Development of a SharePoint site
- Created a RECERT Microsoft Teams site.
- Discussed the structure of a Community Advisory Committee

The second week of work will transition from initial planning into action across focused areas where progress and results are urgently needed. Integrating the racial equity and community engagement work into the efforts of the Incident Management Team and across the rest of Ramsey County is a significant opportunity, and also one in which role clarity, partnership, trust and shared leadership will be required. Additionally, regular communications and outreach with the community will be developed during week two to ensure that there are opportunities to learn from and report out on important information about race, ethnicity, and Ramsey County's response during the COVID-19 emergency period.

The work of the Racial Equity and Community Engagement Team will continue to evolve, shift and expand its influence as concepts transform into action. There are excited and supported leaders, staff and community members in our midst who are looking for opportunities to be a part of the COVID-19 emergency response, and the Racial Equity and Community Engagement Team will take advantage of that enthusiasm, wisdom and experience.

This document provides the weekly reporting template that will be used to show the work of the team, engagement of the community, the progress and challenges of doing this work across the organization, and will provide an opportunity for the entire organization and community to transparently see how Ramsey County is addressing racial equity and community engagement throughout the COVID-19 emergency period.

Team Structure and Membership

The Racial Equity and Community Engagement Team will be comprised of a core team of 10 individuals. It will then work with a network of leaders across the county and a community advisory group to ensure the work is being carried out by many. The core team is proposed to include the following but may need

to be adjusted based on availability and final approval of supervisors. The roster will be finalized next week.

- Sara Hollie and Prince Corbett (leads; Racial and Health Equity Administrators) - Confirmed
- Maria Sarabia (Human Resources) - Confirmed
- Sara Myott (Health and Wellness Evaluation) - Pending
- Kee Vang (Public Health) - Pending
- Lidiya Girma (Policy and Planning) - Confirmed
- Priscilla Stallings (Safety and Justice Liaison) - Pending
- Chris Mba (Economic Growth and Community Investment Liaison) - Pending
- LaRone Greer (Health and Wellness Liaison) - Pending
- Kaosong Yang (Information and Public Records Liaison) - Confirmed

Focus Area 1: Effective and focused communication into racial and ethnic communities that otherwise may be missed during a COVID-19 response.

Achievements from Previous Week

- Building on work that began within specific Incident Management Team (IMT) subcommittees during the past few weeks (Food and Essential Services, Homelessness, etc.).
- Positioned the Racial and Health Equity Administrators to be the leads and directly reporting to the County Manager in coordinating racial equity and community engagement efforts for the county during the COVID-19 emergency.
- Started developed a list contacts for the to help inform the list of organizations and trusted messengers as potential partners in effective and focused communication to racial and ethnic communities.

Challenges from Previous Week

- Limited time that requires urgency to identify the core team and move forward on 4 key focus areas.

Workplan for Upcoming Week

- Complete a list of community-based organizations and trusted messengers that will be able to amplify and more effectively deliver Ramsey County's messages into racial and ethnic communities
 - o This work needs to be developed with awareness and input from the Communications Department and the Policy and Planning Division to ensure that the resulting product will be able to build on existing communications and community engagement work within the organization. This connection will occur outside of the IMT as it has implications for all of Ramsey County's work. But the resulting list and resources will be applied to work within the IMT and beyond.
 - o Meetings with a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic group of community members will help to define the list of organizations and trusted messengers.
- Meet with Communications Department for the development of a "COVID-19 Racial Equity" page on Ramseycounty.us site and determine content sections.

Lead Staff for Upcoming Week's Work

- Prince Corbett, with partnerships from some of the core team members

Focus Area 2: Program designs and implementation during the public health emergency response that ensures effective service to racial and ethnic communities that may otherwise see significant disparities in outcomes.

Achievements from Previous Week

- Building on work that began within specific Incident Management Team (IMT) subcommittees during the past few weeks (Food and Essential Services, Homelessness, etc.)
- Positioned the Racial and Health Equity Administrators to be the leads and directly reporting to the County Manager in coordinating racial equity and community engagement efforts for the county during the COVID-19 emergency.

Challenges from Previous Week

- Limited time that requires urgency to identify the core team and move forward on 4 key focus areas.

Workplan for Upcoming Week

- Develop a list of key areas of focus requiring immediate and sustained focus to address, reduce and eliminate racial and ethnic inequities and harm:
 - o The list will include 5-10 areas of focus:
 - Examples: Housing, Food and Essential Needs, Incarceration/Justice System, Benefits Eligibility
 - Each item on the list will require the specific development of strategies that address policy, systems and environmental factors that contribute to racial and ethnic inequities
 - o Begin to map where within the IMT and across the entire organization there will need to be focused work and a network of leaders working in concert to address the policy, systems and environmental factors. This map will change as the work changes each week.
 - o Initially identify specific issues that can be brought to the county's Policy Action Group for action beyond Ramsey County.

Lead Staff for Upcoming Week's Work

- Suggestion: Sara Hollie, with partnerships from some of the core team members

Focus Area 3: Data collection and sharing that is focused on the measurement of race and ethnic based disparities historically and during the public health and economic crises.

Achievements from Previous Week

- Building on work that began within specific Incident Management Team (IMT) subcommittees during the past few weeks (Food and Essential Services, Homelessness, etc.)
- Positioned the Racial and Health Equity Administrators to be the leads and directly reporting to the County Manager in coordinating racial equity and community engagement efforts for the county during the COVID-19 emergency.
- Continued to share data and outcomes on racial and ethnic disparities while understanding the historical context and stigma on community.

Challenges from Previous Week

- Limited time that requires urgency to identify the core team and move forward on 4 key focus areas.

Workplan for Upcoming Week

- Develop COVID specific race and ethnicity data categories that need to be tracked and reported weekly
- Work with Public Health Incident Command Structure (ICS) on this effort
- Develop a plan to expand the race and ethnicity data measurement efforts statewide with MDH
- Work with Public Health ICS and the Public Health Department Director on this effort
- Align additional data and measurement efforts with the key areas of focus in Focus Area 2 to ensure a response linked to measurement that can be shared with the community
- Ensure that the narrative of the data and outcomes builds on the assets of the community that does not further mistrust, despair or stigma of our racial and ethnic communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Work with the Community Advisory Committee to develop a COVID-19 Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool that can help leadership make more equitable decisions when it's clear what areas are least likely to recover economically from this crisis.

Lead Staff for Upcoming Week's Work

- Suggestion: Prince Corbett, with partnerships from some of the core team members

Focus Area 4: Work with, engage and empower community to develop a unified response to COVID-19 that meets the needs of community and priorities our most vulnerable communities

Achievements from Previous Week

- Building on work that began within specific Incident Management Team (IMT) subcommittees during the past few weeks (Food and Essential Services, Homelessness, etc.)
- Positioned the Racial and Health Equity Administrators to be the leads and directly reporting to the County Manager in coordinating racial equity and community engagement efforts for the county during the COVID-19 emergency.
- Building on the community relationships and partnerships to identify and develop a process of selecting the community advisory committee.

Challenges from Previous Week

- Limited time that requires urgency to identify the core team and move forward on 4 key focus areas.

Workplan for Upcoming Week

- Creation of a Community Advisory Committee that will meet with the Racial and Health Equity Administrators every week and provide guidance into the entire effort around racial equity and community engagement
 - o Review the weekly workplan and reports
 - o Meet at least once every week on a regular schedule
 - o Work to identify key 5-10 key focus areas in partnership with the core team.
- Develop a weekly report out of progress to the community that can be shared broadly and provide important information to the community and provide connections into the rest of the Ramsey County information that is available on the website and shared broadly with community

Lead Staff for Upcoming Week's Work

- Sara Hollie, with partnerships from some of the core team members