



Disability
Rights
Oregon

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Statement on Anniversary of George Floyd’s Murder

Portland, Oregon—Today, on the first anniversary of the murder of George Floyd by a police officer, Disability Rights Oregon Executive Director Jake Cornett issued the following statement:

Statement from Jake Cornett, Executive Director, Disability Rights Oregon

As the world commemorates the anniversary of the killing of George Floyd by law enforcement in Minneapolis, we continue to dedicate ourselves to the cause of racial justice and ending white supremacy. As we work to protect the rights of people with disabilities, we also recognize our duty to shine a light on the brutal system of white supremacy and dehumanization of Black people that persists to this day.

We’ve witnessed the glaring racial disparities in whether a person with mental illness who is in crisis [gets taken to a hospital for treatment or gets locked inside a jail cell](#). We’ve seen the need for our community mental health system to do a better job of including people of color and offering culturally informed care.

Our investigative reports pointed to data indicating significant racial disparities across multiple areas in the Multnomah County Detention Center, including how [Black people are over-represented in Multnomah County jail’s population](#). For example, Black people appear almost twice as likely to be disciplined, twice as likely to be subjected to physical force, and almost twice as likely to be “voluntarily” restrained.

Studies show that Black students with disabilities are at greater risk of being punished, denied services, and supports and end up left behind than their white classmates with disabilities.

We stand in solidarity with our clients, colleagues of color, family, and friends as we work to end institutional racism in all its forms and undo slavery's legacy that perpetuates brutality and lethal violence against Black Americans.

About Disability Rights Oregon

Disability Rights Oregon upholds the civil rights of people with disabilities to live, work, and engage in the community. The nonprofit works to transform systems, policies, and practices to give more people the opportunity to reach their full potential. For more than 40 years, the organization has served as Oregon's Protection & Advocacy system.

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