



## **AOE Consulting: Anti-Racism Stance**

Racism is a fatal disease, and as an American small business we are taking more action to help eradicate it.

For too long, businesses, including ours, have been silent on the impacts and consequences of racism, especially among Black people. We have recognized the good things companies do to provide a living and help employees thrive and be good members of their respective communities. But we have neglected or brushed over the long, institutional history of racism entrenched within American businesses and governance, including slavery; using force to kill, march, and sequester native peoples; and mistreating or discriminating against fellow humans based on the color of their skin.

Company executives have too often found comfort beneath the veil of shallow statements such as, “Business and politics don’t mix.” Plain and simple, racism is awful and wrong. Businesses can and should be leaders and models in the fight against racism. We have a responsibility to not only acknowledge the presence of racism that exists within business, but to conduct our businesses to be anti-racist.

We are committed to taking action against all forms of racism, and our immediate focus is to combat racism against Black lives. Why? Systemic racism against Black people grew from the fact that American business was founded by business people who imported and enslaved an estimated 500,000 African people and treated them as chattel and personal property. Slavery had government support through public policy and financial investments for hundreds of years.

The country and U.S. businesses have taken far more from Black Americans than we have given in fair return. Thousands of enslaved Black slaves fought for America in the Revolutionary War. More than 1.3 million Black people served our country in first and second world wars. But these Black American “citizens” were not allowed the right to vote until 1964. These fellow Americans still today face racism and obstacles in exercising their right to vote.

Systemic racism helps explain why the rate of fatal police shootings is significantly higher for Black people than any other race in America. The divide between White and Black people in America continues to grow, instead of shrink. We can and should do better.

As a business grounded in ethics, hard work, and a standard of excellence, we are not simply stating we are anti-racist. In addition, we aren’t proposing handouts. We are taking actions as the claim of anti-racism calls us to do by reaching our hands out to support Black Americans in the fight against racism, supporting Black-owned businesses in their growth, and supporting the hiring and growth of Black employees at our business.

In short, we will:

- Develop a recurring schedule and offer anti-racism training to all staff members. We will strive to educate ourselves on what it means to be actively anti-racist.



- Call on legislators in Colorado and Washington to enact legislation and executive orders that fight racism against Black people. Specifically, we encourage Congress to pass H.R. 40, legislation that would create a commission to study the effects of slavery and discrimination and recommend appropriate remedies.
- Devote time during business hours for employees to research and contract with Black-owned businesses providing the products and services on which we rely.
- Conduct new-hire searches utilizing methods that attract a more diverse candidate pool and ensure that we create a supportive work environment for employees of color, both in company policies as well as day-to-day interactions.
- In the professional education programs we help manage and coordinate, recruit more Black, Indigenous and People of Color each year to participate as faculty, planners, and attendees.
- Provide a reasonable amount of paid time off for employees to research and support anti-racism causes, including peaceful protests and support of anti-racism initiatives.
- Lead by example and encourage all employees to act upon the advice of author and basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar to “make a friend with someone who doesn’t look like you.”
- Devote time to hold internal discussions regarding racism, devise and implement new ideas and ways to fight racism, and report to all employees on the level of success of our corporate efforts to help eradicate this disease.

We are a small company. But every day, we achieve successes with our clients, staff members, and colleagues in the field of accredited medical education. By taking the steps above, learning and growing through these actions, we are confident we can achieve success in the American fight against racism.