



CONSORTIUM FOR CONSTITUENTS
WITH DISABILITIES

CCD Veterans Task Force

Anti-racism Principles – May 2022

We acknowledge that the percentage of minority veterans is predicted to increase from 22% in 2017 to 35.7% in 2040 (Veterans annual report 2017, https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Minority_Veterans_Report.pdf).

We recognize that, despite this prediction, minority veterans continue to disproportionately experience barriers to healthcare, particularly as it relates to mental health conditions, along with economic disparities and gaps in employment outcomes. We understand that statistics show that these experiences were exacerbated by the Covid-19 epidemic.

- Black veterans represented 16% of Covid-19 cases and 22% of Covid related deaths, despite only making up 12% of the U.S. veterans. (Minority Veterans to Receive Priority for Covid-19 Vaccines, <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/minority-veterans-to-receive-priority-for-coronavirus-vaccines-1.654624>).
- Black veterans are subjected to racial bias, particularly in the mental healthcare space, including microaggressions (How Black Veterans Experience Racial Bias in Mental Healthcare, <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-black-veterans-experience-racial-bias-in-mental-healthcare#Representation-and-microaggressions>)
- Data held by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) indicate that Black veterans, especially women, with disabilities are disproportionately denied disability compensation and other VA benefits according to the Black Veterans Project. <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/black-veterans-groups-sue-department-veterans-affairs/>

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics data show significant disparities in labor force participation for African American veterans with a disability versus those without a disability – 16.4% to 61% - compared to labor force participation for white veterans with disabilities (20.3%) and those without (55.4%).

We pledge to learn about, incorporate, and pursue an inclusive perspective and approach to our task force work. We will advocate for equal access to all facets of healthcare, as well as education and employment opportunities for veterans with disabilities regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and socioeconomic status. We will make sure to recruit and include individuals with diverse backgrounds in the Veterans task force. We will invite speakers with knowledge of diverse characteristics and how they intersect with disability to better inform our task force's efforts. We will stand in solidarity and work collaboratively with organizations in order to bring attention to the systematic bias experienced by disabled veterans in marginalized communities.