



DOVE (*DO*mestic *VI*olence *EN*ded), Inc. reaches out today to our communities with a call to action

We are devastated and enraged by the senseless and brutal killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Manuel Ellis, and countless others this year and in years, decades, and centuries past. We recognize the individual and collective grief and rage for the stolen lives of our fellow human beings. Among our staff, clients, and communities are people who have been targets of violence, as well as people who aspire to be allies and agents of change. We stand in solidarity with the millions who have and continue to march in protest of police brutality. We join in the condemnation of all forms of racist violence, both state-sanctioned and interpersonal.

Many of our staff have lived their lives in fear – for themselves, their children, their elders, and their communities. On a professional level, we recognize that partner abuse, sexual violence, and other forms of violence often collide in the life of any one individual and the communities they call home. Indeed, many of those most impacted by domestic violence, sexual violence, community violence, hate crimes, and xenophobic violence are those most impacted by police brutality. All violence is based on oppression and dehumanization. One form of violence, abuse, or oppression too often has a cascading effect, opening the door to other forms of trauma. As a result, our work is not just about ending domestic violence; it is about ending all forms of violence and abuse – interpersonal, systemic, and structural. We believe another world is possible.

While white people are not the targets of racism, and while white people benefit from racism and white supremacy culture, white people are also hurt by it, psychologically, cognitively, emotionally, and in other ways. It dehumanizes white people as well. It affects personal and professional relationships. White people develop distorted beliefs and fears about people of color, and experience guilt about unearned privilege and uncertainty about how to interrupt racism. White people miss out on the benefits of deep, authentic human relationships with people of color.

It feels important to acknowledge here that DOVE owes its existence in part to the advocacy and support of criminal-legal leaders. DOVE was established over 40 years ago by a partnership of concerned community citizens, St. Boniface Church, Quincy City Hospital, Quincy Police Department, and the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office. We have worked in close partnership with police departments for many years. A solid and effective police response for victims of domestic violence is critical in the lives of many survivors. In its ideal, police do protect and serve. However, the ideology of white supremacy, the history of policing as a tool to maintain slavery and oppression, and institutionalized and structural racism have allowed police brutality against Black people to continue. The criminal-legal system is thus not a safe option or resource for many survivors – in fact, those at greatest risk for domestic violence: Black women, Black trans, and other Black nonbinary people.

24-Hour Hotline: 617.471.1234 or 1.888.314.DOVE (3683)

Community Advocacy & Prevention Services P.O. Box 690267 Quincy, MA 02269 617.770.4065 www.dovema.org

Racism runs deep in the DNA of all our institutions. We can and must change the culture of institutions. Racism intersects with and compounds sexual and domestic violence. We cannot uproot one without uprooting the other. We commit ourselves to the difficult work of uprooting and dismantling this and all forms of oppression in would-be “sanctuary” systems, whether those are criminal-legal system or the domestic violence movement. We commit to building a liberatory and inclusive future.

DOVE specifically is:

- ◆ implementing a commitment that 5% of employee time be engaging in addressing racial equity, to include building resilience for BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and other people of color); this will be included in job descriptions and performance evaluations
- ◆ looking at our organization and examining the ways we maintain and benefit from white supremacy culture. Our DEI committee has been working on a strategic plan that reaches every aspect of DOVE’s organization. We commit to sharing the strategic plan with the community, implementing this plan over the next 3 years, and following up with our community on our progress
- ◆ continuing to explore and identify other action steps with the staff and Board of Directors

We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of the larger community. As part of DOVE’s community, we urge you to join us in this effort. Attend a demonstration. Read and educate ourselves. Listen to Black-identified people of color. Support Black-owned businesses and racial justice organizations. Be in conversation with friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers. Let us deepen our understanding and strengthen our work for safety and justice together.

