

NEWS

Our Message about Diversity and Institutional Reform

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Sussman Shank LLP shares in the nation's mourning and outrage over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, and countless others at the hands of law enforcement.

These killings underscore the racial divide and unequal distribution of justice that persist in the United States. However, the national dialogue over the past few months has revealed that this divide is not limited to our criminal justice system. It is increasingly clear that racial inequity is a pervasive and systemic problem. Systemic racism is the product of generations of discriminatory policies, from the historic redlining of neighborhoods to the illegal detaining of immigrants. Not only have these policies resulted in the devaluation of communities of color, but they have also permeated all touchstones of our American life.

Sussman Shank LLP is proud to have a workforce that encompasses various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, cultures, sexual orientations, genders, and disability statuses. For sixty years, our attorneys and staff have embraced public service as part of our collective responsibility to serve disenfranchised communities. Given our identity and history, we recognize that at this particular chapter in our nation's history, Sussman Shank is uniquely positioned to serve as allies in the fight against systemic racism.

Our firm is strengthened by our workforce. Yet the diversity of our firm alone is insufficient to address the impact of systemic racism faced by our community. To that end, Sussman Shank has established a committee of attorneys and staff to develop and evaluate our organization's policies and procedures to promote a more inclusive workplace, beginning with the following plans. First, the committee shall help the firm engage in internal educational trainings on critical topics concerning implicit bias. These conversations open doors of revelation and will be an essential tool in building new paths forward. Second, the committee shall identify



and seek to support local, regional, and national organizations addressing racial prejudice and policing relations. Third, the committee and firm will seek to highlight and amplify the efforts of both our workforce and our clients in promoting diversity and institutional reform.

Systemic racism is a complex issue and will not be solved by one person, organization, or plan. Nevertheless, we heed the message of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" in which he stated that human progress on racism "never rolls in on wheels of inevitability." Instead it comes from the tireless efforts of individuals to collectively promote justice for all. Sussman Shank remains dedicated to efforts of solidarity with our community allies to uproot oppressive measures and sow the seeds of a truly equitable future.