



HEALTH
EQUITY
SOLUTIONS

Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis/Emergency

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Health Equity Solutions

Vision

For every Connecticut resident to attain optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

Mission

To promote policies, programs, and practices that result in equitable health care access, delivery, and health outcomes for all people in Connecticut.

Agenda

- ❑ What we mean when we say: “racism”
- ❑ The link between racism and health outcomes
- ❑ Why declare racism a public health emergency?

Race & Ethnicity

Race:

- A social construct that classifies people into distinct groups based on defined criteria, e.g. skin color
- Socially significant not biologically
- Changes throughout time

Ethnicity:

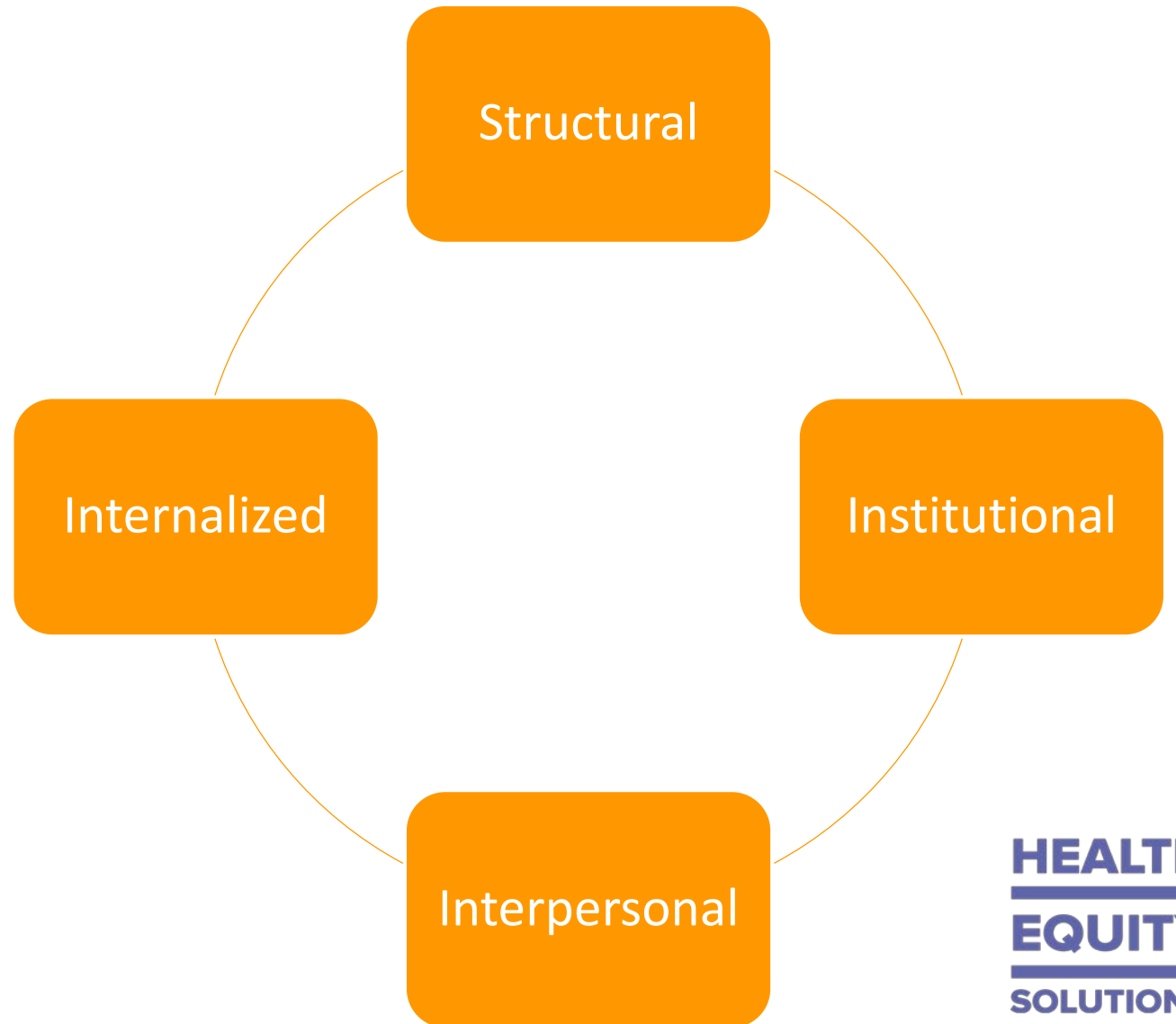
- Shared culture that defines or shapes a group, e.g. language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs

Racism

- A complex social system that deems access to power, privilege, and resources based on racial categorization
- An ideology that places hierarchy based on race, rendering groups superior or dominant and other groups inferior or subordinate
- Produces inequities based on race
- Rooted in history, social structures, and culture

Forms of Racism

Racism is a system that operates on a number of levels (macro to micro)



Why is Racism a Public Health Crisis



- Racism determines opportunity, including health
- There is regular and ongoing discrimination in health, criminal justice, housing, & education
- COVID-19
- Police brutality

Evidence of Health Impact



“How Racism Makes Us Sick.” A summary of evidence by David R. Williams

Some history...redlining, disinvestment, discrimination

Opportunity gaps in:

- Employment
- Education
- Financial security
- Health/environment

Population by race, Greater New Haven, 2016

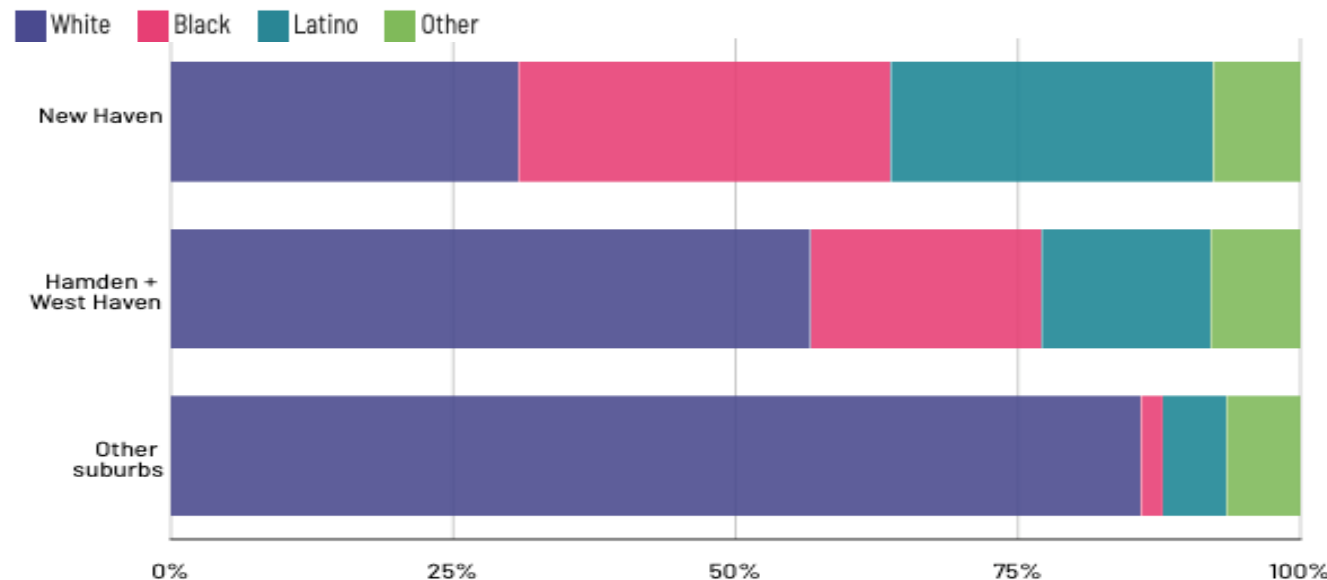
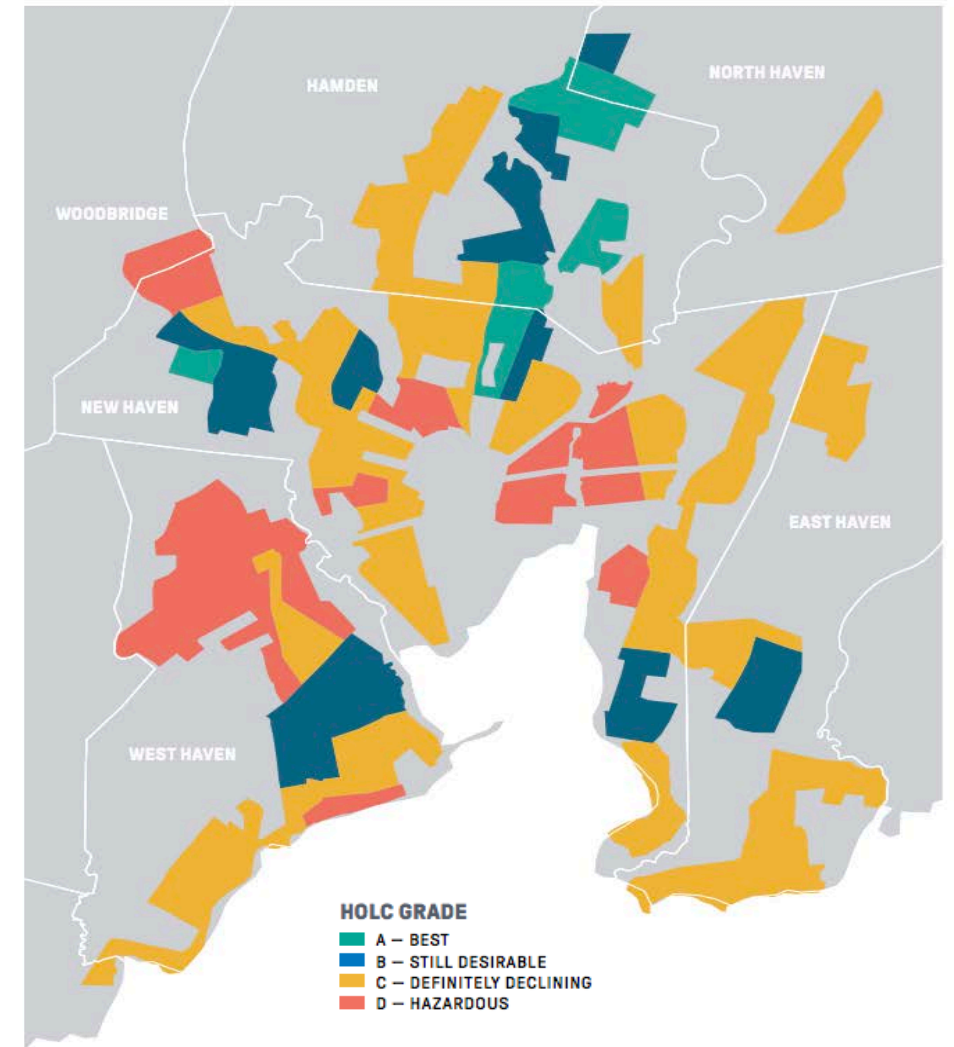


FIG 2.18

The patterns in 1930s redlining maps are still present today

HOLC REDLINED AREAS OF NEW HAVEN AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS, 1937



Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis



Acknowledging a problem is the first step in addressing it.

Why is this a critical step?

Systemic racism is...systemic. Embedded in what we do and how.



*"Systemic Racism is an unacceptable aspect of our culture. It has deep roots. But that does not mean that it cannot be **examined, recognized, and addressed.**"*

~ Michael Dimok & Susan K. Urahn, PEW Research Center

October 1, 2020

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What else? What this IS NOT

- A final or the only step
- An accusation
- An empty gesture

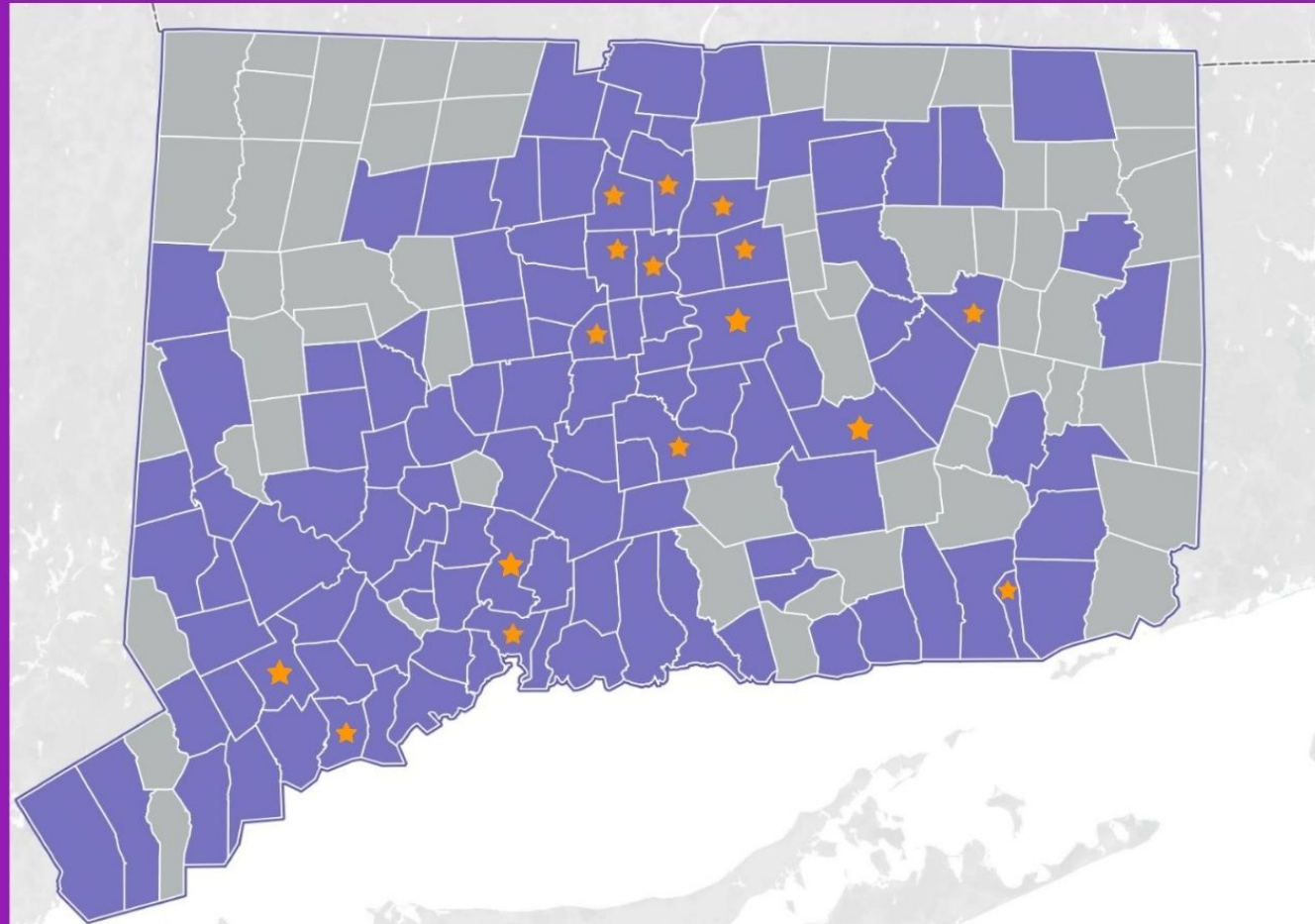


**1,017 CT signatures
across 131 towns**

- Signed petition
- ★ Declared racism a public health crisis

- Bloomfield
- Bridgeport
- Colchester
- Easton
- Glastonbury
- Hamden
- Hartford
- Manchester
- Middletown
- New Britain
- New Haven
- New London
- South Windsor
- West Hartford
- Windham
- Windsor

Dismantling Racism in CT



Declarations in the U.S.

- ✓ 4 States considering
- ✓ Introduced in House and Senate
- ✓ Over 200 towns and cities + many counties
- ✓ 1st Tribal Nation to declare? Right here
- ✓ APHA, APA, etc.

[Details](#) on APHA website

Voting Impact On Health Equity



Children, youth, and non-citizens in our state depend on us to represent their voices. When we vote, we are looking out for their futures, too!



Policies shape our health care system. Elected officials respond to neighborhoods and communities where more people are registered to vote and vote.



Candidate representation: having your community represented & voice heard.

Are you registered to vote ?

How to Get Involved

- ✓ Sign up to get our e-alerts at hesct.org/signup
- ✓ Talk to your local officials about declaring racism a public health crisis/emergency; more at hesct.org/advocacy

Questions?

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