August 13, 2020

Denver Department of Public Health and Environment
101 W. Colfax Avenue, Suite 800
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Mr. McDonald:

The experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic have exposed and exacerbated the vulnerability of communities experiencing racial and health inequity, including the sickness and death of members of these communities in numbers far greater than expected based on their representation in the population. The recent demonstrations demanding justice and equitable treatment that have led to civic unrest have highlighted the exigency for immediate action to remedy the public health impacts of systemic racism.

The Denver Board of Public Health and Environment recommends that the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment declare systemic racism a public health crisis!

As such, the Denver Board of Public Health and Environment requests that the Department adopt the attached policy and strategies to support this declaration. The Board asks that the Department provide a formal response to this formal letter, along with a timeline for the agreed-upon strategies, by the September 2020 board meeting. The timeline should be realistic/reasonable, while also addressing the urgent needs of our most vulnerable communities.

Any questions regarding these recommendations can be addressed to myself and/or:

Alisha Brown
Social Determinants of Health Committee Chair
ABrown@FSUCommunities.org
720.810.0848

Sincerely,

Jim Rada, Chair
Denver Board of Public Health and Environment