Racial disparities in Minnesota create imbalances in the distribution of economic resources, opportunities, and access to services that are among the worst in the nation. These imbalances extend to the intersections that exist between racism, sexual violence, and incarceration. Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) are disproportionally subjected to sexual violence and are incarcerated at disproportionate rates. Protests occurring in the Twin Cities and throughout the world are indications of the severe impact systemic racism has on so many individuals.

The services MnATSA members provide (treatment, supervision, legal representation, etc.) link us to this system and create a responsibility to address the racial oppression that impacts so many of our clients. We must better understand the intersections between racism, sexual violence, and incarceration if we are to effectively work with the people we serve. We as an organization are committed to addressing sexual abuse issues, and we must recognize that we cannot combat sexual violence unless we also actively combat racism.

The MnATSA Board, MnATSA membership, and service providers in our state are predominately white, while the people we serve are disproportionately BIPOC. MnATSA members are encouraged to understand racial disparities in Minnesota, to understand the impact of systemic racism in our work, and to do the work in addressing racism and privilege within ourselves and the systems in which we work. Effectively combating sexual violence and racism requires each person to take action, both individually and as part of the larger society.

MnATSA’s mission is the multidisciplinary promotion of education, research, and professional intervention regarding sexual abuse issues. MnATSA is committed to continuing to provide training and resources on understanding and combating racism in the services provided to people who have engaged in sexually abusive behavior. The MnATSA Board is committed to being actively anti-racist, including engaging colleagues in discussions about racism and privilege, and confronting racial issues when they arise in our day-to-day work.

Please see the Resources page on the MnATSA website. We also would like to hear from MnATSA members on ways we can support you in understanding and combating racism in your work and suggestions you have about how MnATSA can actively support anti-racism. MnATSA is committed to holding trainings in support of anti-racism, increasing visibility among our membership of local community agencies doing anti-racism/racial equity work, and encouraging members to do the work in being actively anti-racist.