



## Virginia Occupational Therapy Association

The leaders of the Virginia Occupational Therapy Association (VOTA) stand in solidarity with those who suffer the effects of inequality, racial disparity, and oppression. [We support AOTA's recent statement on the current events.](#)

At VOTA, our stance is not one of politics but of people. We recognize that communities of color routinely suffer from the occupational injustice that arises from systemic racism. We grieve in particular for the most recent examples of this suffering: the senseless deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. We denounce any and all forms of racial bias, hatred, violence, indignity and disrespect toward one another.

We all practice under the occupational therapy code of ethics, with justice being one of those tenets. One of VOTA's own values is integrity, which calls us to champion the moral and ethical foundation of our practice. We stand together, today and every day, in practicing and leading with these ethical principles guiding our way.

We welcome the opportunity to continue this dialogue, however difficult, with our membership. We have already begun taking steps to examine the impact that racism can have on not only the delivery of OT services, but on the recruitment, admission, retention, and promotion of students and clinicians of color.

We additionally acknowledge that this is a difficult and sensitive time for many of our members. Whether you are a student or a clinician, we commit to creating a safe space for you, and to providing an ongoing platform where all voices can be heard, accepted, and supported.

We will begin by offering a town hall style virtual meeting, the details of which will be forthcoming. It will be led by Elle Russell, a VOTA board member and practitioner of color. We plan to continue engaging our membership on racism and all issues of inequity.

Together we will create a better future for all occupational therapy practitioners and their clients.

VOTA Board

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Virginia Occupation Therapy Association  
8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 226  
Richmond VA 23229  
[office@vaota.org](mailto:office@vaota.org)