

Data Justice Standards

for Human Service Organizations

Do Good

Elevate diverse voices and perspectives

Center participants and those with lived experiences in all decisions about data. Take special care to center participants who are negatively impacted by systems of oppression such as white supremacy.

Prioritize the hiring and retention of BIPOC data professionals to ensure diversity of perspectives.

Prioritize access to services

Reduce data-related barriers to services: fewer questions means quicker access to services.

Consider other available data sources instead of asking participants.

Use data for participants' benefit

Prioritize evaluation that contributes to program improvement, equity, and access to services.

Regularly analyze the data you collect and take action based on your analysis.

Share the results with all invested people

Share back with participants who provided the data and/or use your services.

Educate your team on what you learn -- your board, upper leadership, development staff, managers, and most importantly, frontline workers.

To avoid reports that seem to negatively reflect upon communities, acknowledge the systems of oppression that manifest in disparity. Consider power imbalances between those who provide data and those who receive results.

Elevate funding practices that support data justice

Apply for and accept funding that adequately compensates human service providers for their data efforts.

Reduce Harm

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Only collect data with a clear purpose

Audit and edit your data collection practices so that every piece of data you invest in collecting is there for a specific, meaningful reason.

Provide transparency in data sharing

Get informed consent from participants before collecting data. Make sure participants know what is required and what is optional.

Make it clear to participants why you are asking for their information and how it will be used, both by your organization and your funders.

Trauma-informed data collection

Minimize the quantity of questions asked. Collect data infrequently.

Reword or remove questions that are harmful or retraumatizing.

Write strengths-based questions using accessible language.

Protect participant data

Use secure systems, both electronic and physical, to store participants' data.

Minimize access to data and promote careful stewardship of that data.

Strive towards data quality

Ensure accuracy of data.

Eliminate assumptions. If information is unknown, name it.

When auditing data, stop at "good enough." Data perfection is not possible, and has diminishing returns on providing good service.

Develop clear processes for data entry and data collection.