



How to Become a Facilitator

Brief guide on how to facilitate this conversation!





Review the Following Materials

To help orient yourself and have a solid understanding of how this conversation will further our fight against systemic racism, review the following materials. This way if someone asks you a question, you can point them in the right direction!

- [Just Deeds Mission Statement](#)
- [Just Deeds Partners & Participants](#)
- [Mapping Prejudice](#)

Self-Reflection and Personal Experience

Be prepared for self-reflection. Ground your discussions in your personal experiences, and remember your experiences are NOT the same as the experiences of others. Here are some questions to get you started:

- Why do you want to facilitate this conversation?
- What is your family's history with homeownership?
 - Do you own your home? What was your experience purchasing your home? Who was your realtor? Where did you look and why?
 - Have you experienced barriers to homeownership? How do your social identities (race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, immigration status, family structure, occupation, marital status, etc.) reinforce those barriers?
- What does housing stability mean for you?
- What do you consider indicators of a "good community"?



Facilitating Conversations About Race

This is the hard part, facilitating a conversation that many people would otherwise avoid. We also know that what is worse is not talking about Race and perpetuating systemic racism. This could be the first or thousandth time discussing racism, but the following tips will help to guide others through this topic.

Check your own biases and understandings.

You started this journey with self-reflection for a reason. It is important that you come into the space aware of biases you hold of different groups. This way, when you feel triggered by certain words or actions you can acknowledge and deal with them. Understand that education is a phase on the pathway to anti-racism. This path is not straight and linear for anyone. Review these resources to identify where you are in your journey and to help others in theirs:

- [Becoming anti-racist graphic](#)
- [Pyramid of Accountability](#)
- [Pyramid of White Supremacy](#)
- [Ally Continuum](#)

Create group expectations.

The group can create its expectations together, or you can use these resources to help you get started:

- How do you want people to show up in this space? What are behavioral expectations the group needs to outline so the conversation feels respectful, educational, and action-oriented for all involved?
 - [Communities for Restorative Justice: Restorative Circle Ground Rules](#)
 - [Glenn Singleton's Courageous Conversations about Race Agreements and Conditions](#)

Develop a common vocabulary.

As stated in the Courageous Conversations protocol, groups should use a working definition of Race and all other relevant terms. Consider how your group will define:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| • Race | • Justice | • Intersectionality |
| • Racism | • Equity | • Action |
| • Housing discrimination | • Equality | • Resources |
| | • Reparations | |



Seek to understand, not to respond.

This is a conversation and not an argument—our goal is to build support, gather resources, and determine actions to address the nation’s racist housing practices. Use the following prompts from the [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) to help you facilitate, even when things get rough:

- Seek clarity: “Tell me more about _____” or “What I’m hearing you say is _____, is that right?”
- Offer an alternative perspective: “Have you ever considered _____”
- Speak your truth: “I don’t see it that way, I see it as _____”
- Find common ground: “We don’t agree on _____, but we can agree on _____. What can we do to get there?”
- Assert boundaries: “Our conversation is about _____.” Or “I feel _____ when you say _____. I prefer you _____.”

Planning Your Conversation

How and when this conversation takes place is up to you! Who knows your invitees better than you do? Here are some things to consider as you plan.

Size of the group

Bigger groups can be harder to facilitate in discussions like this on your own. If you are planning on having a large group, you may want to recruit another facilitator.

Location and medium

Do you want to have an in-person or virtual meeting or both? What resources do you have and need in order to educate your community members?

Outcomes

What do you want participants to do after this conversation? How can you lead them to where you want to go? What can you set up and prepare in advance to accommodate everyone? (Example: if you want everyone to discharge the covenant on their homes, provide links and technology for intake forms. If you want to encourage people to consider homeownership, share First Time Homebuyer seminar registration information.)



Facilitators Guide to Hosting a Presentation on Restrictive Covenants

The presentation should have four components: what is a racially restrictive covenant, historical impacts, contemporary impacts, and a call to action. How and which information you present to your group is up to you. Below you will find resources to explore and create your presentation.

Basic Presentation Structure

Presentation Component	Possible Resources
What is a racially restrictive covenant?	Mapping Prejudice: What are covenants? MNOPEdia: Racial Housing Covenants in the Twin Cities
How did restrictive covenants historically shape the community?	novelhand.com/racially-restrictive-covenants-mn/ www.minnpost.com/metro/2019/02/with-covenants-racism-was-written-into-minneapolis-housing-the-scars-are-still-visible/ Jim Crow of the North www.tpt.org/minnesota-experience/video/jim-crow-of-the-north-stijws/ Shelly v. Kramer Video youtu.be/fvsEahWKgNo Cornerstones Documentary www.pbs.org/video/tpt-documentaries-cornerstones-history-north-minneapolis/ geospatial.com/mapping-prejudice-identifying-visualizing-racially-restrictive-land-covenants/ NPR: Housing Segregation and Redlining in America www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5FBjyqfoLM&feature=youtu.be

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Presentation Component	Possible Resources
<p>What are the long-lasting consequences of racially restrictive covenants?</p>	<p>www.mncompass.org/</p> <p>data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?q=United%20States&g=0100000US</p> <p>National Geographic Article www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/09/racist-housing-policies-created-some-oppressively-hot-neighborhoods/</p> <p>Center for Economic Inclusion Access Indicators centerforeconomicinclusion.org/transportation-access-indicators</p> <p>Pioneer Press Article www.twincities.com/2016/04/29/minnesotas-racial-disparities-worsening-why-and-why-it-matters/</p>
<p>What can you do now?</p>	<p>A Case for Reparations www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/</p> <p>The Alliance’s Equity in Place Policy Agenda thealliancetc.org/equity-in-place-releases-policy-agenda/</p> <p>Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity www.tchabitat.org/get-involved</p> <p>BIPOC-Owned Restaurants https://www.onsitepublicmedia.com/twin-cities-bipoc-business-directory</p> <p>BIPOC-Owned Businesses https://www.minnesotamonthly.com/arts-entertainment/guide-to-twin-cities-black-owned-business/ https://mnblackbusiness.com/ https://locusmn.org/poci-owned-businesses/</p>



Key Messages

As a facilitator, we do not expect you to be an expert in systemic racism or housing discrimination. This guide is to give you resources to engage your community in a discussion that ends with action-oriented steps. We believe you know your audience best and can pull from these resources to present to them what will be most engaging and constructive for your time. Below are a few pointers.

Let the information speak for itself.

You may not be an expert and you do not need to be to do a great job. As a facilitator, you present the information and let people draw their own conclusions. This might mean there will be disagreement, and that is ok.

Listen to understand not respond.

Facilitation is about nurturing the conversation and providing boundaries for healthy discussion. As such, while your group is processing internally and externally, let their thoughts fill the space.

Set a foundation of shared conversation expectations.

Think about how you want the conversation to go. What are important understandings participants should have when engaging in this conversation?

Consider who is in the room.

When discussing issues of systemic racism, you want to consider your audience, those impacted by the topic, and the perspectives missing from the conversation. Are you isolating a group or experience, is one person speaking for all, etc.

FAQs

Below are some frequently asked questions about covenants and their history.

Why is it important to discharge covenants if they are not enforceable?

Discharging covenants is one of many steps needed to address systemic racism in housing and economic inclusion for Black Minnesotans. It says that from now and into the future, discriminatory language and systemic racism is unacceptable on your parcel.

Did covenants start in Minneapolis?

The earliest covenant in Minneapolis dates back to 1910. There were cities nationwide that started using similar language in real estate transactions around the same time.



Are there covenants in Greater Minnesota?

Yes, there are covenants all over the state.

Did this practice exist across the country?

Yes. Racially restrictive covenants are all over the country. There are similar projects to Mapping Prejudice in Chicago, Seattle, and California.

Why not erase or remove the covenants?

In passing the law allowing the discharging of covenants, state legislators connected with BIPOC community members to discuss whether to remove the language or not. It is the philosophy of those impacted by this practice that we should not erase the history because it informs and affects our today. Discharging the covenant through the statutory process adds a disavowal of the discriminatory language to the original property records.

What can individuals do?

If you are asking this question, you have already done something! Education is the first step. Individuals can share their new knowledge, discharge the covenants on their homes, donate to organizations committed to housing equity and racial justice, volunteer with Mapping Prejudice or Just Deeds, promote and endorse legislation that improves access to economic inclusion, support BIPOC-owned businesses in economically disenfranchised areas, and anything else you can think of!

Are there current laws/policies that have the same effects on BIPOC communities as discriminatory covenants?

Things like crime-free housing ordinances, exclusionary zoning laws, racist lending and real estate practices, and mass incarceration of Black and Brown men and women all impede access to affordable housing and wealth acquisition for these communities.

Is there a cost to discharging the covenant?

No, Hennepin County has waived the processing fee. If your city is a Just Deeds partner, city staff can connect you with a volunteer attorney to prepare and file the paperwork for free.

How do I file the paperwork on my home or business?

Complete a Just Deeds intake form and send it to your city, if they are a partner. You will need to complete one form per property and include the address and the owner's name and contact information.