

To our Central Texas community,

At Austin Mutual Aid, it is our mission to be a respectful, equitable, and collaborative part of our vibrant city and all of the communities that call this place home and make it what it is.



That mission starts with trust. Some time ago—*too* long ago, frankly—we broke that trust. We caused harm, didn't own up to our actions, failed to publicly address it for too long, and—in doing all of the above—failed to honor the people we serve and uphold the core values through which we serve them.

In Spring 2021, Austin Mutual Aid social channels sent multiple disgraceful messages that dishonored Black and Trans people. No one in our collective should've ever said those words or held those views. We should've put an immediate stop to that member's tenure, and we should've publicly apologized and made tangible changes to address that harm head-on. We didn't. That's wrong and that's on us.

We must conduct ourselves with unimpeachable integrity and accountability and we didn't. This also goes for any individuals speaking on behalf of AMA. Our lack of cultural literacy and vacuum of informed procedures allowed for actions that lacked the empathy and compassion that are critical to mutual aid work. We needed to change, fast and hard.

That summer, we held a community and internal grievance process, took direction from Austin's Black and Trans community leaders, and took corrective actions. We are still taking them every day. AMA has since:

- Removed the former member and social media manager from our organization
- Established clearer communication protocols and greater internal oversight
- Overhauled our leadership team to more appropriately represent the diversity of our community and the integrity we aim to embody

As we move forward, we will hold ourselves every bit as accountable as you have held us. We will continue to do the work necessary to rebuild trust and co-create a more inclusive, safe, and supportive Austin. That work starts within and continues now and always.

Thank you,

Austin Mutual Aid Team