

2021 - 2022 Annual Report

MULTNOMAH COUNTY
**WORKFORCE
EQUITY
STRATEGIC
PLAN**



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Land acknowledgement

Honoring Native Lands and Indigenous Peoples

Every community owes its existence and strength to generations of ancestors who contributed to our hopes, dreams, and collective possibilities. Together, their history allows us to leave our legacy of hope and justice. Our collective history includes cultural resilience, (re)indigenization, adaptability, colonization, settlement, systemic violence, racism, and forced displacement. Acknowledging this truth helps build mutual respect and connection across diverse communities and lived experiences.

Multnomah County acknowledges that Indigenous peoples of North America were systematically killed in a colonial pogrom to make possible the United States. Those who were not killed were forcibly removed.

Multnomah County acknowledges that the land which we occupy as residents is unceded Indigenous land. The Portland Metro area rests on traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Kalapuya, Molalla, and many other tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River, creating both permanent communities and summer encampments. Due to the strategic and systemic efforts to annihilate Indigenous peoples from these lands and history, there are many other tribes and Nations that traditionally lived, hunted, and fished in what is now Multnomah County and Oregon that are not collectively remembered.

Multnomah County also acknowledges the history of the Portland Metro area as a destination site for the Indian Relocation Act of 1956, which coerced many Native people to leave their homes on tribal land and assimilate into the dominant culture. Because of this history, Multnomah County is home to the ninth-largest urban Indian population in the United States. We honor the enduring relationship between Indigenous peoples and this occupied land.

Settlers from across the globe come to Multnomah County seeking a better way of life.

And Multnomah County owes this opportunity to our Black and African siblings whose stolen lives and labor were used to build the city, county, and country that the people of Multnomah County call home. Multnomah County acknowledges that the enslavement of Black peoples is still used to work land stolen from Indigenous peoples, who have cared for and protected the land since time immemorial.

This acknowledgment brings awareness to the past and current contributions of Indigenous and Black peoples, and highlights the ongoing resilience and solidarity between and among Indigenous and Black peoples. Multnomah County encourages you to think beyond this acknowledgment and consider how to work in solidarity to uplift the collective power, leadership, creativity, and wisdom of Indigenous and Black communities in Multnomah County and beyond. Please take a moment to offer respect and appreciation to the Indigenous peoples whose traditional homelands and hunting grounds are where residents of Multnomah County live, learn, work, play, and pray.

Contributors

Thank you to the following people for authoring, editing, and designing the report.

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Alejandro Juárez | Kalisha Stout |
| Alexandra Appleton | Kimberly Melton |
| Andrea Damewood | Mary Li |
| Ashley Carroll | Neisha Saxena |
| Dr. Carlos Richard | Paul Park |
| Chris Lenn | Rebecca Sánchez |
| Edman Wong | Siniva Bennett |
| Estelle Norris | Sonja Ervin |
| Jamie Waltz | Sophie Wilson |
| Janette Quan-Torres | Steven Sutton |
| Joshua Bates | Travis Graves |
| Julie Sullivan-Springhetti | Dr. Veronica Cano |

Further Appreciation

Deep appreciation to the formal and informal leaders of this work, including the Multnomah County Employee Resource Groups, Equity Managers, department leaders and Equity Committee members, Multnomah Idea Lab, the Office of Diversity and Equity, the Board of County Commissioners, and Chair Kafoury and her staff.

Finally, we want to appreciate the Community Budget Advisory Committees volunteers who continue to champion workforce equity as a necessary and important budget priority. We thank you for seeing this work as vital to community resilience and equitable economic development.



A message from Chair Deborah Kafoury

The story of Multnomah County’s Workforce Equity Strategic Plan (WESP) is one born out of historical and institutional inequities, deep pain and profound vulnerability, and a steadfast belief that Multnomah County is capable of forging a new path toward a culture of equity. Just as importantly, it’s a story that is still being written, propelled forward by our commitment to ensuring that every employee, and particularly our colleagues of color, can experience the Safety, Trust and Belonging that everyone deserves.

The events that set us on this journey have been well-tread. The September 2017 board meeting — during which County staff members courageously shared about the racism and discrimination they had faced in their workplace — will forever be one of the most enduring memories from my time serving Multnomah County. It’s seared in my mind not just because of the rawness, honesty and pain that hung in the air that day, but also because those testimonies served as a powerful, resounding call for change.

Change that required a candid assessment of how our organization operated. Change that we knew needed to be led, developed and grounded in the experiences of those closest to the harms and inequities. Change that required a clear roadmap to breaking down unjust systems and creating together a new culture. And through the hard work of many County staff, the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan was presented to, and adopted by, the Board of County Commissioners in 2019.

We understood that this would be a significant but fundamentally necessary lift for our organization, and we set out on a course to work together and hold one another to the task ahead. After a year of progress, the first WESP annual report was released in early 2020 — just a few months before the COVID-19 pandemic. The following year, the Board was presented with a series of briefings in lieu of a written report, detailing our efforts to advance the recommendations laid out in the WESP.

So much has happened — in our world, our community, our organization — in the four years since we first adopted the WESP and the nearly three years since we published that first annual report. This document, which summarizes the strides we’ve made and

challenges we've come across the last 18 months, serves as the final report of the first iteration of the WESP, which was designed to last four years.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that our WESP efforts have been substantially impacted by the pandemic, which touched our community just a year into implementation. Our work to stand up urgent and comprehensive public health and safety net responses to meet the needs of our community since early 2020 undeniably pulled time, focus and energy away from other active initiatives and areas of our organization — and that included the WESP.

The pandemic, and the County's response to it, have tested and stretched nearly every part of our organization. And I acknowledge that the shifts in organizational priorities, while necessary, were also frustrating, especially for employees who saw the momentum we had accumulated toward meeting our many WESP goals slow down, or even stall in some places.

At the same time, I believe that the pandemic presented our workforce with opportunities to tangibly apply both established and emerging aspects of our WESP-related equity work. We were given the chance to see the goals, successes and spirit of the WESP contribute to ensuring that our COVID-19 response wasn't just effective, but also uncompromisingly equitable. The WESP work that we had done prior to, and continued to do throughout, the pandemic gave us the tools and personnel to better meet the needs of our neighbors who were being disproportionately harmed by COVID-19.

We embedded equity practitioners in the Emergency Operations Center within weeks of standing it up, including tapping department equity managers from throughout the County. Staff from our Office of Diversity and Equity and the Complaints Investigation Unit, which was established in the first year of our WESP work, were active in our emergency response, while also infusing our decision-making with their expertise and unique perspectives. And when it came to making major community-altering decisions — including the County's reopening framework and the investment of millions of dollars of federal COVID funding — we developed and leaned on equity-based principles that provided critical direction in the face of challenging choices.

No one could have predicted the complications, heartaches and urgency of the last several years brought not just by the pandemic, but the other interrelated crises that Multnomah County has worked to confront and address. Still, countless staff continued to put their dedication to equity in action, pushing the implementation of key components of the WESP forward. This report highlights the results and accomplishments of their work, as well as the lessons we've learned from the adversity we've encountered.

The organizational history and culture that led to the testimonies on that unforgettable September day was the result of choices and practices that the County allowed to spread and fester for decades, even while colleagues of color or other marginalized identities were harmed. Our efforts to right those wrongs, to tear down systems of harm, and to raise up a culture of Safety, Trust and Belonging have to be both deliberate and sustained in order to create lasting change.

In that spirit, the WESP can't be, and won't be, a one-and-done project. Rather, it must continue to be an effort that reaches across and into every part of our organization to build infrastructure, political will and an intentional workplace culture that puts us on the

trajectory toward achieving equity in the workplace. These first four years of our efforts showed us the gains we could make even as we faced a world-shaking pandemic and other crises head on. That gives me great hope for what Multnomah County and you, our workforce, can accomplish in the coming years.

As I approach the end of my tenure as County Chair, I recognize that the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan has been an opportunity for me both to lead and to learn. The insidiousness of the racism and marginalization that the WESP helps us to actively address only reinforces how necessary it is for us to implement these remedies. And even as we come up against challenges, this work remains the right thing to support and pursue. I look forward to the next iteration of the plan — one that will hopefully leverage the progress we've made and fold in the lessons we've learned — and to see it push the County closer to becoming the workplace everyone deserves.

I am exceedingly grateful to every member of our workforce who has contributed to this work over the last four years. Together, we've laid the groundwork and have begun to build on that foundation to make Multnomah County the best version of itself that it can be. While the story of this organization will continue to be written after I leave office, it has been an honor to author our ongoing, but resolute, journey toward Safety, Trust and Belonging with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Kafoury". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair



A message from Chief Diversity and Equity Officer Joy Fowler

A Look Forward...

As we deliver this annual report, I realize being new to Multnomah County has its advantages. I have the privilege of seeing the work I read about in the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan (WESP) in action every day through my team's and department's efforts. This body of work was one of the main reasons I could envision myself working at the County, and now I have the benefit of seeing the vision become a reality.

This newness also allows me to bring a unique perspective that offers a recognition of what has been accomplished, considering the circumstances we were faced with as a County in 2020 and 2021. I believe that it is important to acknowledge there were numerous components of the WESP that were implemented over the course of the last few difficult years — work that pressed on regardless of whether the wider organization was aware of those efforts or not — thanks to the hard work, commitment, and dedication of our staff.

In addition, it is equally important to recognize there is still much work to be done regarding workforce equity, organizational culture and team dynamics. Our strategic plan was originally designed to be both ambitious and achievable based on Focus Area 5 investments and the dedicated implementation plan. But as we know, a multitude of factors contributed to the change in course.

I would like us to have a moment of reflection, because what the County did not anticipate was how significantly a pandemic would impact this work. Being reflective is two-fold: It allows us to offer insight to the “why or why not” behind certain aspects of the WESP, while also providing direction for its next iteration.

One of our first responses to the pandemic was to disperse teams to other areas of the organization to support both staff and communities in need. The Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) was no exception. Ben Duncan, my predecessor as Chief Diversity and

Equity Officer, provided executive-level support to County leadership, Unified Command, and Emergency Operations equity officers, while continuing to direct the ODE team. ODE's deputy director, Neisha Saxena, led Countywide work on culturally specific contracting and the eviction moratorium. She also supported the creation of frameworks for our organization's vaccine mandate and led a process to reduce racial disparities in employee vaccination rates. Other ODE team members served in the Emergency Operations Center in roles like Equity Officer, Disability Access Officer, Lead Public Information Officer, and Youth Liaison. Departments and offices worked tirelessly in unison to provide resources and support, and to ensure that COVID-19 testing sites, vaccination clinics, and other services were operational and available to the community and staff.

While certain aspects of the WESP were interrupted, there are many successes throughout this annual report that reflect our ability to pivot, serve our community, and implement key components that directly impacted our workforce. Reflecting on what we've been able to do and how we've done it is also imperative to forging our path ahead.

It will be critical for us to conduct in-depth analyses of each focus area, incorporating objectives and outcomes that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based. Additionally, forecasting the next iteration of the WESP and where we see ourselves as a County will involve ongoing deep collaboration. Each of you is a crucial part of our work to implement an approach that supports our ability to inclusively lead with race so that everyone can experience safety, trust, and belonging.

I see the impacts of the first version and how it has changed the landscape of the County in meaningful ways, so I am both excited and optimistic for what's to come regarding the WESP renewal. This includes working with all of you to ensure that we are meeting the performance measures we set in place for ourselves, communicating our successes and our opportunities, and supporting one another over the next four years.

I greatly look forward to this next chapter and what our future holds.



Joy Fowler
Chief Diversity and Equity Officer



The Letter:

A Call to Action to Multnomah County

The letter below — composed by almost 50 members of the Inclusively Leading with Race Design Team — is a milestone and a call to action. Following 18 months of work, the team completed a document that defines and affirms this organization’s commitment to inclusively leading with race, invites colleagues across the County to join the work, and presents actions the County can take to demonstrate its commitment.

To learn more about this work, see page 29.

To the Employees of Multnomah County and Those We Serve:

We, the members of the Inclusively Leading with Race (ILWR) Design Team, write this letter to affirm that Multnomah County is unequivocally committed to leading with race. And a commitment requires ongoing accountability and action. So we send this letter as a way for us to share what is in our hearts and minds, to paint a picture of what leading with race looks like, so that we can all share the vision of what the County continues to aspire to and work toward. Multnomah County is the community, and true transformation begins with using our institutional power to create the change we want to see. We will be bold, creative, and radical in how we approach our pursuit of transformation.

We also write this letter as a way to invite everyone who reads this letter to step together into a vision of Multnomah County that is a more just, safe, and equitable place to work and live. That starts with acknowledging and understanding — not ignoring, denying, or minimizing — the ways in which race and systemic racism have shaped institutions, structures, communities, and ourselves. We also recognize that this organization has historically contributed to and upheld the inequalities and harms of systemic racism.

We do this not to focus on the past, but to move forward in pursuit of restoration and healing. We do this out of a deep love: for ourselves, our colleagues, the meaningful work we do together, this organization, and the communities we serve.

Right now, the County, along with communities, jurisdictions, and organizations across the country, are facing racial reckonings. The years of racism; anti-Black, anti-indigenous, and anti-immigrant bias and discrimination; microaggressions; and police brutality are all being named and called out for the harm they bring to people of color and the entire community.

But today's calls for justice are resounding echoes of the work, progress, and change that have been made by so many Black, Indigenous, and other County employees of color who have come before us who pushed Multnomah County to be better. They did so because they knew the County could be better for themselves and the countless marginalized people who have been left out of the conversations and left behind by systems over and over again. And they did so in spite of daunting barriers and active resistance from the institution that prevented further progress toward a version of the County they knew we could be.

So while we have a lot further to go on our journey to becoming an organization that models the kind of community we must become, we can't forget that we have only come this far because of the conviction and perseverance of these individuals. Our work now is grounded in the foundation that they created, and it's on their shoulders that we continue to challenge Multnomah County to urgently and fervently pursue racial justice and equity.

Of course, leading with race to build a more equitable organization doesn't mean disregarding other forms of marginalization. There is more than enough room for us to hold to account and address inequities based in identity, like gender, sexual orientation, ability, and age. But white supremacy culture amplifies the inequities in nearly every system and institution that touches our lives and shapes our experiences.

Centering our work around race creates the space we need in order to talk authentically and accurately about all types of oppression. Centering our work around race also acknowledges that individuals hold multiple, overlapping, and sometimes even contradictory identities — some of which carry privilege and protection, and others that add compounding layers of oppression and discrimination. Inclusively leading with race, then, offers us an approach that opens up a way to confront and address the marginalization of numerous identities, while recognizing the outsized and foundational role that race plays in people's lives.

As a community, we haven't fully processed the ways that the ideology and practices of white supremacy fueled the colonization, genocide, and slavery of Black and Indigenous peoples, or how the legacies of that violence contribute to the white-dominant social, economic, cultural, environmental, and even workplace systems that we participate in every day. Across these systems, whiteness has been built up as the baseline against which the identities of people of color are defined as "other." The ability for people of color to define themselves, rather than to be defined in contrast to whiteness, has been stolen, leading to real harm and continued marginalization. When we inclusively lead with race, we give people of color the room to identify themselves on their own terms.

Inclusively leading with race means using these acknowledgments to enact change that leads to more equitable, just, and dignified treatment of people of color among our workforce and in the community. To achieve that change, we will be bold, creative, and radical in our approaches. And County decision makers and those in leadership have communicated to us that they understand that they have made a commitment to inclusively leading with race.

So when Multnomah County says that we are committed to inclusively leading with race, we will do that by changing our practices and policies to ensure that the voices of those who are most affected by racial inequity have a seat at the table to shape, influence, and lead decision making around racial justice and equity work. Black, Indigenous, and other people of color have often said “nothing about us without us” for a reason. The County will continually work to honor that goal.

We will be intentional and deliberate about who is in the room when decisions are made, and exceedingly thoughtful about how those decisions will affect employees of color. We will ensure that racial justice and equity are embedded in our policies, practices, and training across our systems. We commit to pursuing what’s needed to make all this happen from County decision makers and those in leadership, including funding and mechanisms for accountability.

Multnomah County will inclusively lead with race not just because it is the right thing to do, but because doing so is the best and only way to achieve a vision of inclusive racial justice. For our organization, that looks like becoming a workplace and an organization:

*Where each and every employee experiences the liberation to **show up as their true, authentic selves at work.***

*Where the professional tools and opportunities that people need to **reach their full potential** are readily available to everyone.*

*Where people of color can work **free of fear, retaliation, microaggressions, and the pressure to assimilate** into white supremacy culture.*

*Where the **full diversity of the County workforce is reflected in every level** of the organization, from direct service delivery to top leadership.*

*Where white colleagues and leaders see that their liberation is bound together with the liberation of all people, and are willing to be **true allies and accomplices in our quest for equity** by refusing to stand in front of their colleagues of color any longer, but rather next to them.*

Because we have far to go to truly inclusively lead with race, this feels like an ambitious undertaking. At the same time, it’s what we must do if Multnomah County is serious about using our position as an institution — as a local government, one of the region’s largest employers, and the state’s largest service provider — to spur change within ourselves and in the community.

And finally, to our Black, Indigenous, and other brothers, sisters, and siblings of color: We know that change feels slow to materialize. We know that many of you have been promised change before and have felt let down and underwhelmed by the results. So has every member of this ILWR Design Team. But we encourage you to hold on to

the hope and the promise of this vision for the County. We are in a critical moment of our organization's story. We have worked fiercely to gain momentum. And together, we are building a movement of radical love for each other, our colleagues, and our community that pushes us toward racial justice. We will not let the urgency of transformation pass us by.

Multnomah County, we've got the commitment. For it to mean anything, we must, and we will, see it through.

In revolutionary love, hope, and radical imagination,

The Inclusively Leading with Race Design Team

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aimeera Flint | Jeff Lewis | Ofelia McMenamy |
| Alejandro Juárez | Joshua Bates | Percy Winters, Jr. |
| Alex Gerald | Jooyoung Oh | Raymond De Silva |
| Anabertha Owusu-Bempah | Julia Adebawo | Rebecca Sánchez |
| Andrew Campbell | Julie Latimer | Roy Iwai |
| Ben Duncan | JB/Julia Brown | Sarah Fast |
| Benjamin Escalante-Cruz | Kalisha Stout | Sky Wilson |
| Brie Murphy | Kimberly Melton | Steve van Eck |
| Casey Layton | Kory Murphy | Sulma Flores |
| Chris Lenn | Lauren Aguilar Castillo | Tamyka Miles |
| David Kerry | Lonnie Nettles | Tony Gaines |
| Dion Jordan | Mariana Parra | Tyra Lovato |
| Edman Wong | Marlina Hausmann | Veronica Lopez-Ericksen |
| Jade Dodge | Mary Li | Wendy Lin-Kelly |
| Jason Barnstead-Long | Molly Franks | |

Executive summary

This Workforce Equity Strategic Plan Annual Report describes:

- What has been accomplished in the years 2021 and 2022 of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan implementation
- How financial investments were applied to achieve 2022 targets
- How Countywide investments and initiatives have operated over the last two years
- How departments and Countywide initiatives fared in achieving their 2022 targets
- How employees and departments have innovated workforce equity efforts in addition to Countywide initiatives
- How we have addressed emerging workforce equity implementation challenges since 2019
- A look ahead as we renew the WESP for 2023 and beyond

Building a workforce equity infrastructure

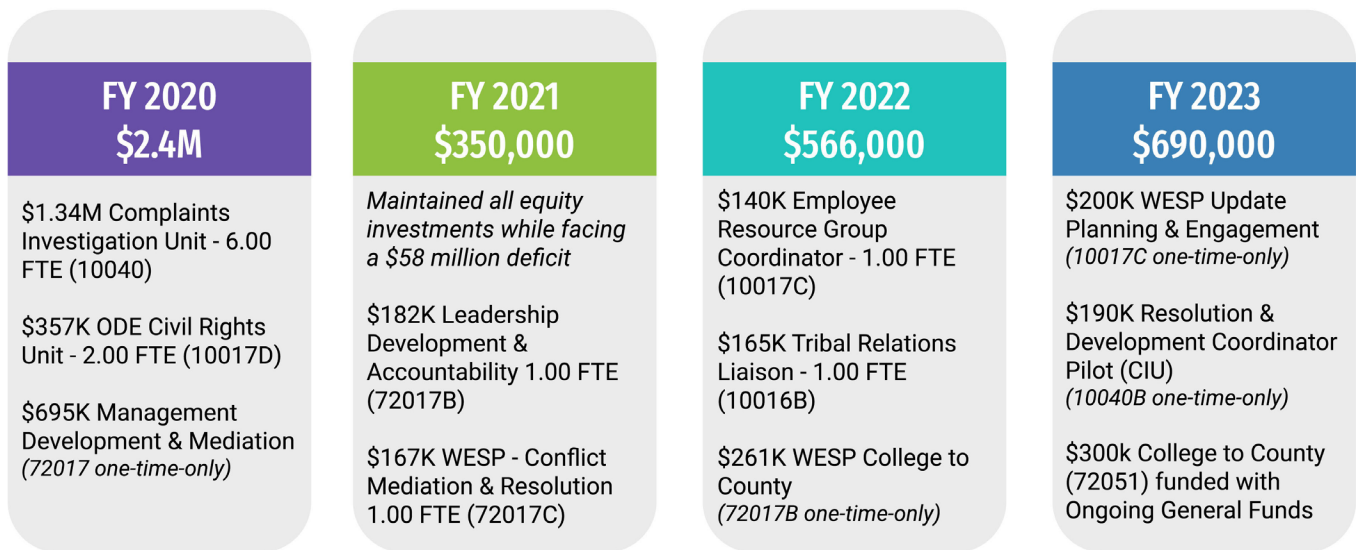
In 2017, Multnomah County employees of color shared their experiences with racism in the workplace during a Board of County Commissioners meeting. Their testimony and advocacy for solutions to long-standing workplace disparities paved the way for the groundbreaking Workforce Equity Strategic Plan (WESP).

The Board of County Commissioners, led by Chair Deborah Kafoury, took steps to address the immediate concerns of the staff. All protected class complaints were moved from departmental Human Resource offices to the direct supervision of the Chief Operating Officer. Jemmott Rollins Group, a national consulting firm, was hired to perform an audit of the County's practices and policies, and provide specific recommendations for implementing the WESP and developing a greater workplace culture of safety, trust, and belonging. At the same time, the Board of County

Commissioners directed the Office of Diversity and Equity, Central Human Resources, and other County departments to engage in a process to identify and prioritize themes and implementation strategies related to workforce equity.

These actions ultimately resulted in a series of goals and deliverables that was adopted together as Multnomah County's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan in January 2019. Since then, the WESP has profoundly changed the organization by driving the evolution of the County's frameworks and ideologies concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Countywide Workforce Equity Investments



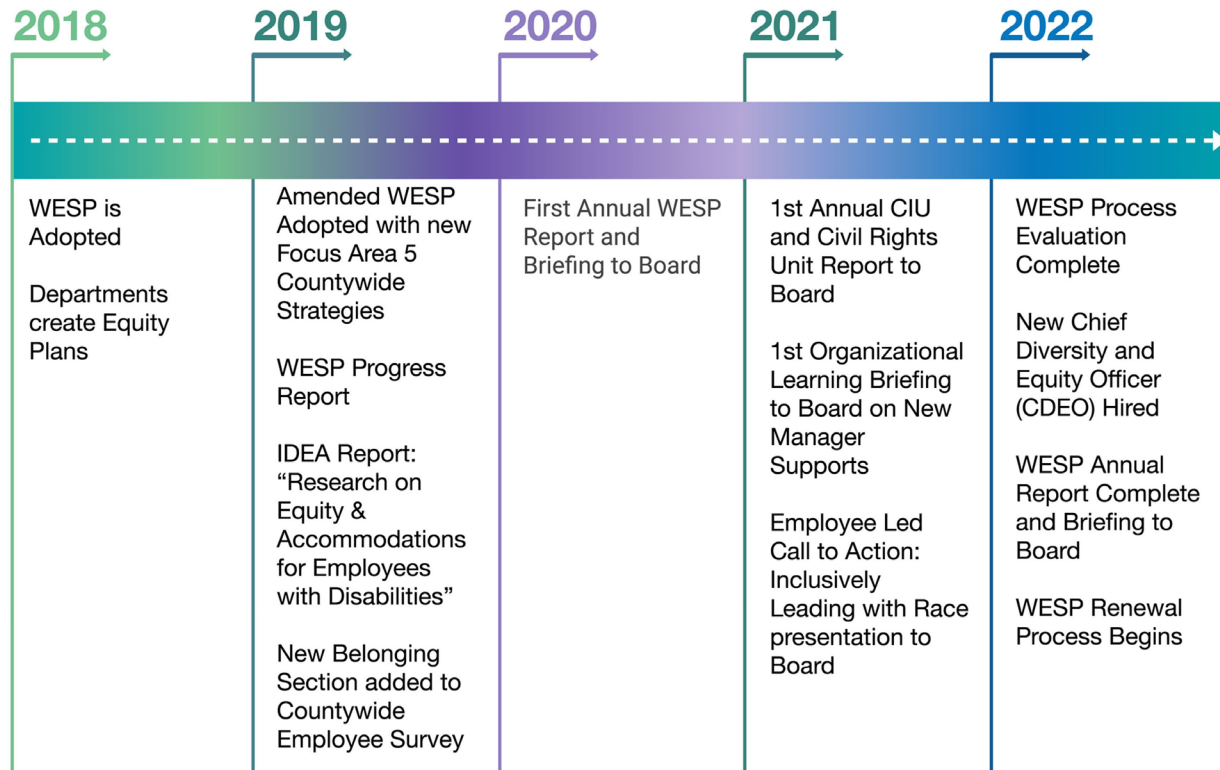
For years, Multnomah County has leveraged the Equity and Empowerment Lens to ensure that our services can equitably and effectively address the root causes of issues like illness, poverty, hunger, and homelessness. The tool improves planning and decision-making by presenting a set of questions and principles about the people, places, power, and processes that are used to engage those who are most impacted by disparities, as well as the overarching purpose, in order to truly center their needs.

Our success in addressing the needs of our community requires that we have a workforce that reflects our community's diversity and are skilled in addressing their specific needs.

The creation and subsequent implementation of the WESP has led us to similarly apply the Equity and Empowerment Lens to our work of addressing workforce disparities. Responding to and preventing disparities identified in each of the first four focus areas of the WESP required that we apply the same Equity and Empowerment Lens questions to our workforce practices to confront bias in interviewing and hiring, and to examine the effectiveness of current onboarding processes.

To meet our goals, we reorganized the structure and priorities within Central Human Resources and the Office of Diversity and Equity. New teams like the Complaints Investigation Unit were created, and Equity Manager positions were added to all County departments, the Sheriff's Office, and the District Attorney's Office. Together, these investments have developed an equity infrastructure that has increased our capacity to realize the County's vision for workforce equity.

Multnomah County's Equity Journey



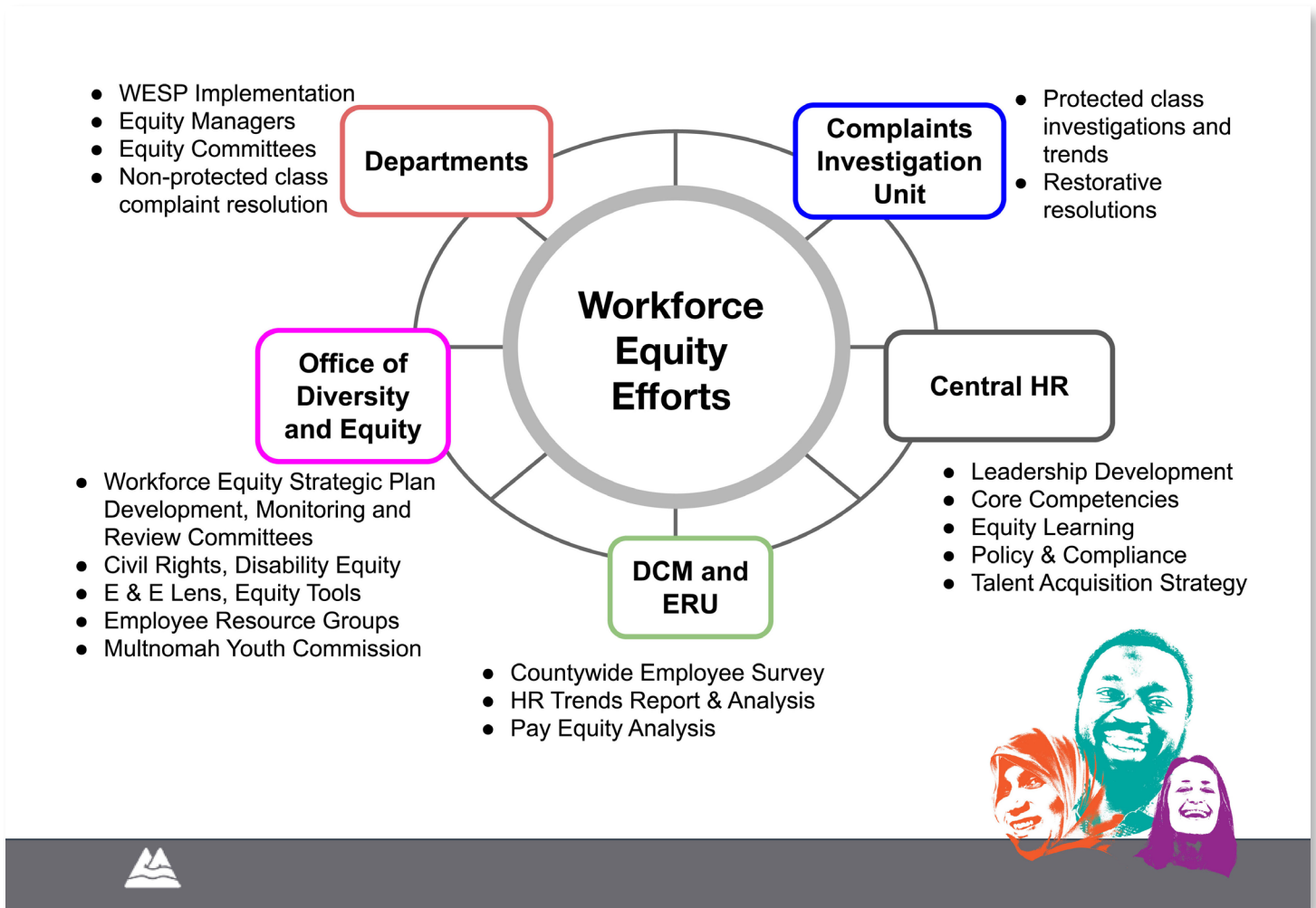
"Investing in workforce equity is critical to becoming a better version of Multnomah County for all our employees and the communities we serve. The County's budget is more than numbers and program offers; it's a reflection of our values and our priorities. Even as the County's ongoing response to COVID-19 shifts what our daily operations look like and how we perform them, we remain committed to aligning our daily operations with workforce equity strategies. During a time of crisis, the need for equity to guide our work becomes even more clear, as communities of color and other marginalized populations face disproportionate risks of experiencing COVID-19's social, economic, and health impacts."

**- Chair Deborah Kafoury,
May 18, 2020**



Countywide initiatives

Aligning our workforce equity efforts



Multnomah County is a large and complex organization with multiple lines of business, operating 10 departments and 10 offices. The County’s Human Resources (HR) function operates under a decentralized model in which each department houses its own HR division, each with its own unique structure and practices. The Department of County Management shares these HR services with the non-departmental offices.

In its report, “Workforce Equity Strategies: Recommendations to Strengthen and Improve Efforts in Multnomah County,” the Jemmott Rollins Group presented a series of recommendations to strengthen oversight and accountability of HR practices and policies, and to clarify management and supervision responsibilities and structure, to

overcome structural impediments to equity and to improve the County’s complaints process.

Between Dec. 19, 2018 and Jan. 23, 2019, a Countywide engagement process asked employees to prioritize the Jemmott Rollins Group recommendations. This process enabled the County to adapt the consultant’s recommendations to meet the unique conditions of this organization while also strengthening the priorities that were previously identified by County employees and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners. These adapted consultant recommendations became known as Focus Area 5 and were added as an addendum to the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan, which was re-adopted by the Board in January 2019.



These recommendations are outlined in the Focus Area 5 section of the WESP and are collectively referred to as “Area 5.”

Recognizing that fulfilling the firm’s recommendations and supporting this work in a manner consistent with our workforce equity efforts required additional resources, the Chair and commissioners have continued to make additional investments in County infrastructure. It is important to note that these investment decisions were made through proactive and significant collaboration with [Employee Resource Groups](#), [the Office of Diversity and Equity](#), County executives, and [industry experts](#) in workforce equity.

These key investments have allowed the County to complete the recommendations outlined in Focus Area 5 of the WESP. In 2022, we are close to completing the initial goals outlined in all five focus areas, and are tasked with the continued implementation of these new strategies. Moving forward, we will work to create a new multi-year strategic plan that will utilize the lessons learned over the years to continue addressing, eliminating and preventing workplace disparities.

Focus Area 5 progress update

| Recommendations | Status |
|--|--------|
| Develop clear Countywide communication that supports and deepens understanding of “Leading with Race.” | ✓ |
| Better define and communicate this overall effort by creating a shared language glossary. | ✓ |
| Develop an Equity Toolkit accessible to all County employees. | ✓ |
| Create clearly defined and standardized roles, responsibilities, and classifications for departmental equity manager positions that acknowledge their expertise and specialization with principles of equity and inclusion. | ✓ |
| Analyze Countywide Employee Survey and identify opportunities to add indicators of belonging. | ✓ |
| Reorganize Talent Development and Talent Acquisition resources in Central Human Resources to build a new organizational development model that emphasizes the critical leadership skills needed to create an environment and culture of Safety, Trust, and Belonging. | ✓ |
| Fully transfer the responsibility of investigating protected class complaints from departmental Human Resources to a non-departmental unit reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, staffed by a diverse set of skilled investigators dedicated to investigating employee complaints of discrimination and harassment based on a protected class. | ✓ |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Assign all departments an equity and diversity team of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds representing front-line staff, managers, supervisors, and senior leadership.</p> |  |
| <p>ODE updates and creates new job classifications and job descriptions to include the following new scopes of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing exempt hiring and promotional decisions, involuntary terminations, and probationary terminations. • Conducting analysis of exit interviews. • Assisting with access, accommodation, and centralized handling of Americans with Disabilities Act Accommodations requests and developing an implementation plan based on the conclusions of the Multnomah County “Research on Equity and Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities” report. |  |
| <p>ODE hires a Workforce Equity Strategic Plan project manager and a Civil Rights Administrator.</p> |  |
| <p>Organizational Learning (formerly Talent Development) in Central Human Resources provides eight hours of training in the first-ever all-managers conference, Together: Forward.</p> |  |



Ashley Carroll, MSW (left) and Saara Hirsi, MSW (right) present at the 2019 Leading with Race Conference.

Streamlining ADA Accommodations

Disability equity and employee accommodations

In the fall of 2022, the Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) and Central Human Resources launched an updated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations process for County employees. This long-awaited update originates from findings in the [“Research on Equity and Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities” report](#), a collaborative effort between ODE, the Department of County Management Evaluation and Research Unit, and the Including Disability in Equity and Access (IDEA) Employee Resource Group (ERG). The report detailed an inconsistent accommodation process and called for streamlining an often-confusing process, as well as updating the County’s methods for tracking requests.

“Nothing about us without us” is a well-known call to action from the disability justice movement. In that spirit, the Employee Accommodation Workgroup was created with the goal to center those most impacted in all committee work. This group was convened and supported by the ODE

Disability Resource Specialist and consisted of a Human Resource staff representative from each department, the Complaint Investigation Unit, Central Human Resources and Labor Relations, as well as representatives from the IDEA Employee Resource Group. The group met monthly for over a year and created four subgroups to produce the following deliverables:

- Accessible, trauma-informed forms
- Easy-to-follow employee materials
- Templates and guides for Human Resources
- Updated tracking in Workday
- Training for HR staff

The Employee Accommodation Workgroup centered accessibility and trauma-informed practices throughout this work. All forms were developed as fillable PDFs that have been remediated to be accessible for screen readers. Lengthy forms with invasive questions have been replaced by a short request form and succinct

medical documentation paperwork. Human Resource staff have been directed to engage in an information-gathering conversation instead of relying on initial information from a form that many employees with disabilities found intimidating. New employee materials, such as a [“What to Expect” Commons site](#) and a [Frequently Asked Questions sheet](#), were created to increase transparency in the process.

Part of the improved ADA Accommodations process includes new Workday tracking of requests. This update will provide better data to help the organization better understand which employees are being accommodated and what a successful accommodation process entailed. The Employee Accommodation Workgroup worked with IDEA leaders and the Evaluation and Research Unit to create new data fields. In response to ERG feedback, HR staff will gather disability information from the employee, instead of entering it on their behalf. The Workday team will also create a report, delivered to an employee’s Workday inbox, alerting them to their current accommodation status.

Lastly, the workgroup developed training for HR staff based on surveys and interviews with IDEA members to find out what topics were most important to them. The group performed a pilot run-through of the training that included IDEA members before it was delivered to HR. In September 2022, 48 Human Resources Business Partners and additional HR staff were trained on facilitating the new process.

The Employee Accommodation Workgroup envisioned — and worked to build — an employee-led process, while also acknowledging that some employees do not feel safe accessing our formal process. The idea that everyone benefits when processes and systems are built for people with the most barriers was a valuable part of their approach. This principle, also known as Universal Design, will be critical as the workgroup works beyond the October 2022 launch of the improved accommodations process to increase access to assistive technology software. Some commonly requested software will be available outside of the formal accommodation process.

Another disability equity project that grew out of the research report is the [Accessibility Guidelines](#) for County events and trainings. This guide is available to all County staff on Commons and is a useful tool for anyone planning an event, creating a training or presentation, or facilitating a meeting.

The creation of this resource was facilitated by Ashley Carroll, the ODE Disability Resource Specialist and the ADA Workgroup, which was created in 2020 for County staff whose roles have a nexus with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Carroll worked with Organizational Learning and the Aging, Disability, and Veterans Services Planner to test the tool using a Human-centered Design process. Next steps include piloting the use of these accessibility practices with specific County teams.

Complaints Investigation Unit

The Protected Class Complaints Investigation Unit is an independent unit that was formed out of recommendations for how Multnomah County could create safety, trust, and belonging for all employees. The CIU investigates allegations in complaints of workplace harassment and discrimination based on a protected class.

Director

Andrea Damewood

Moving toward trauma-informed complaint investigations

The Complaints Investigation Unit (CIU) takes County employee complaints of discrimination and harassment based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or their membership to another protected class. The CIU was founded in November 2019 based on recommendations put forward by the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan's Focus Area 5. The team is composed of a manager, three workplace investigators, and an investigations coordinator.

By June 2022, the CIU had fielded more than 250 inquiries and initiated more than 155 investigations.

The CIU team moved to telework at the start of the pandemic and has remained a routinely remote team since. Interviews are conducted via Google Meet or phone, or in person at the request of the parties. Working virtually has allowed the CIU to work more efficiently while also giving investigation participants the flexibility to choose the interview format in which they feel most comfortable.

Investigators have taken trauma-informed investigation training and have become certified mediators. They continue to hone their investigative skills, as well as their application of equity and power dynamic lenses to all their cases.

For the first time, all protected class complaint data is being tracked centrally thanks to the CIU's Investigations Coordinator, who is taking the lead on data collection and analysis. This information can be used to identify trends and impacts in different departments or among specific demographics.

In response to employee feedback, the CIU is also piloting a one-year limited-duration Resolution and Conflict Coordinator position for fiscal year 2023 (July 2022 - June 2023). The aim of this pilot is to ensure that those who have been harmed will not only feel that their complaint was properly investigated, but also that they would receive the support to address the conflict and harm they experienced. This new role is tasked with engaging participants after an investigation is complete to help them identify ways they can feel safety, trust, and belonging following the stress of an investigation. The coordinator will work with the individual to create plans that could include mediation or facilitated conversations, training, group work, or other methods that can help achieve restoration.

Central Human Resources

Central Human Resources is composed of functional areas, each providing targeted services to create a positive, productive, and healthful work environment for Multnomah County employees: the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, Benefits, Wellness, Classification and Compensation, Labor Relations, Workday Information System, Organizational Change, Organizational Learning, and Talent Acquisition.

Workforce Equity Leads

Chris Lenn, Central HR Director; Joseph Almond, Organizational Learning Manager; Jenny O'Meara, Talent Acquisition Manager

Creating a positive, productive, and healthful work environment

Central Human Resources (Central HR) in the Department of County Management leads on Countywide human resource policies and practices to create a positive, productive, and healthful work environment in Multnomah County. This work is built upon effective relationships with the County's 13 labor unions.

Central HR supports employees throughout their tenure in our organization, starting from when they are applicants, through each stage of their growth and development at Multnomah County. The division serves County employees through learning and professional development opportunities, benefits, wellness and retirement programs, regular newsletters, and more.

The work of Central HR has, however, changed significantly with the arrival of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan. In response to WESP recommendations, Central HR has expanded its role to also provide Countywide support for the College to County program, equity-informed talent acquisition efforts, leadership development programming, equity and conflict resolution training, performance review coordination, and more.

In 2020, Central HR and the Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) established a central commitment to providing the information, guidance, training,

and infrastructure all departments need to meet minimum standards and ensure that employees across the organization find a consistent workplace experience.

This central commitment is not intended to advance a "one-size-fits-all" approach to supporting County departments. Rather, it establishes a baseline of tools that can be adapted and implemented to meet each department's unique needs and structure. Since 2020, Central HR has developed [resources and tools](#) for New Manager Orientation, stay interviews, manager feedback, diversity on interview panels, interview questions, mentoring, and Countywide College to County coordination.

Central HR has continued to build out additional resources and tools that assist departments in meeting minimum standards, while also optimizing our budget and infrastructure to support ongoing workforce equity initiatives across the organization.

In 2022, the College to County program was able to secure ongoing centralized funding for an additional 20 internships to support the program's development and extend opportunities to even more community youth. In all, 64 College to County interns gained valuable experiences and connections through our program this summer.

Organizational Learning is launching a robust series of learning opportunities specifically to help managers meet their yearly training requirements. Additionally, Organizational Learning is partnering with ODE to bring trainings to HR teams and managers about the County's updated Americans with Disabilities Act Accommodations process and strategies to improve working with employees with disabilities.

The Talent Acquisition Team developed and presented a training on minimum qualifications to the Employment Committee made up of recruiters across the County. Further, the newly hired Career Development and New Employee Experiences Coordinator will soon launch workshops on developing Talent Profiles in Workday and training that supports the development of professional and career development plans.

Central HR strives to contribute as a leader and partner to Countywide WESP efforts related to the division's mission. Their aim is to be responsive to the needs of all staff and teams working to implement the WESP across the County, and to help lead the transformation of systems and processes that can offer consistent support for meeting WESP goals across the organization.



Alix Sanchez, Manager Senior for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Coordinating Office (center) speaks to DCHS employees during the 2019 DCHS Leading with Race Conference.

Leadership Expectations and Accountability Program (LEAP)

Creating an equity model for leadership

Recognizing the influence that leaders can have on cultivating an organizational culture of safety, trust, and belonging, one of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan goals was to design a new leadership development and accountability model that emphasizes leading with equity. In response, a Leadership Expectations and Accountability Program (LEAP) WESP Subcommittee was formed to delve into this goal.

The basic tenets that guided the group’s direction are modeled after a similar effort in King County, Washington, and were designed to address our organization’s needs to:

- Clarify expectations for leaders on what it means to lead with equity.

- Equip leaders with culturally responsive support and resources to embody the County’s Core Competencies, particularly focusing on the “Racially Just” and “Promoting Equity” competencies.
- Outline accountability, consequences, and restorative responses when leaders do not meet expectations.

The LEAP Subcommittee [developed a charter](#) and began meeting in February 2019. Its goal was to develop recommendations that would help ensure County leaders are equipped with the support and tools they need to be culturally aware by demonstrating empathy, humility, and sensitivity to the needs of their employees. Leaders would concurrently be held accountable if they failed to show demonstrated growth.

Many WESP-related changes were already being implemented across the organization when the subcommittee began its work to use its collective wisdom to assess current County processes and explore best practices in other jurisdictions. Several of these developments launched new programs that aligned with leadership expectations and accountability practices, including the expansion of Organizational Learning's Leadership Development program and the addition of Talent Acquisition staffing and resources in Central Human Resources (Central HR).

Due to these overlapping goals, the responsibility for leading the development of leadership programming was shifted from the Office of Diversity and Equity to Central HR in April 2021 to align the efforts.

Like many initiatives, the work of the LEAP Subcommittee was deeply impacted by the County's COVID-19 response beginning in early 2020. The subcommittee and project lead worked on this effort throughout the pandemic when possible, successfully drafting a framework of recommendations that will help to guide future efforts in this area. The subcommittee identified the following key areas that are essential to advancing leadership expectations and accountability:

- Hiring Process for Managers
- Onboarding for Managers
- Learning and Support Opportunities
- Mentorship and Coaching
- Restorative and Resolution Practices

Funding for the project lead role was sunsetted in September 2021.

This work to create the Leadership Expectations and Accountability Program has been informed by a combination of the subcommittee's recommendations and other goals highlighted in the WESP that aligned closely with leadership development. Despite the lack of a formal "kick-off" of LEAP recommendations, teams in Central HR have made progress toward meeting the recommendations:

- Hiring Process for Managers

- Implementing guidance from the WESP, including the use of questions in interview processes that assess a candidate's experience working with or serving individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Updating the Countywide Interview Panelist training to help build a community of trained panelists for interviews.
- Onboarding for Managers
 - New Manager Orientation reaches all newly hired and promoted supervising managers and provides a key foundation of knowledge and expectations for leaders on racially just and equity-based competencies.
- Learning and Support Opportunities
 - [Coaching Circles](#) provide cohort-based experiences for managers to engage in peer-to-peer learning and professional development.
 - Organizational Learning will offer a wide variety of learning programs specifically for manager engagement, including Cultivating Empathy & Cultural Understanding in the Workplace, Equity and Empowerment Lens, Impact of Microaggressions, Having Impactful Conversations, Understanding Oppression, Mediation Skills for Managers and Supervisors, and more.
- Mentorship and Coaching
 - Mentoring for new employees is assigned at the time of hire as part of the onboarding process.
 - [Core Competencies Manager Self Assessment Tool](#) helps managers gain an awareness about areas of strength and skill related to the Core Competencies, and surface opportunities for personal development.
- Restorative and Resolution Practices
 - Projects related to microaggression and conflict resolution resources have been underway since 2021. These projects identified key roles for managers and

training opportunities to improve manager learning. Recommendations from these projects will be implemented beginning in 2022 with ongoing plans for evaluation and improvement.

The work of developing leadership and leveraging their influence to advance our organizational goals is never complete. Multnomah County will continue to invest in programming that supports leadership development, including the relaunch of the Executive Learning Series and ongoing all-management learning opportunities. Central HR will provide ongoing in-depth manager training and additional learning opportunities for current managers and supervisors.

With key roles in leadership development and talent acquisition efforts filled, emerging practices in equity-informed leadership can be identified and integrated into future WESP efforts and assigned accordingly. This will enable all leadership expectations and accountability efforts to be aligned with centralized programming and priorities for ongoing development.



Sulma Flores (left), Brie Murphy (center), and other members of the Inclusively Leading with Race Design Team collaborate during a worksession.

Inclusively Leading with Race

The language and conversations that brought forth the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan described the experiences of employees of color with racism in the workplace, leading to an examination of human resource systems and practices. In response, the County was tasked with measuring disparities in the workplace and developing recommendations to address them.

However, we recognized that we could no longer treat our workforce as a monolith, but rather that we must honor our workforce as the collection of communities and identities that it truly is. That acknowledgment raised questions about our approach to addressing workplace disparities. Given that workplace disparities in recruitment, retention and discipline were concentrated among Black and Brown employees, how would we ensure that our solutions improved conditions for Black, Indigenous, and other employees of color?

A traditional “colorblind” approach was no longer — and in fact, never was — sufficient or appropriate to meet the challenges faced by Multnomah County. The organization needed to come to terms with aspects of white supremacy

culture that continued to sideline our equity efforts and maintain disparities in the workplace. These discussions gave way to our Inclusively Leading with Race (ILWR) framework and our Shared Language Guide.

The Inclusively Leading With Race Workgroup was developed using Equity- and Human-Centered Collaborative Design principles, which reflect the practice of having a beginner’s mind, centering racial justice, and using collaborative tools in service to the co-creation of new approaches to challenges.

The Multnomah Idea Lab believed that utilizing these promising practices aligned with the spirit and goals of the WESP. Through work on the intentional use of language, the decision was reached to rename this work to Inclusively Leading with Race. This change reflected the realities of an intersectional analysis and served to call in all identities shared by people of color.

The ILWR team created a healing space for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) employees to connect to do this work. This was critical to the success of the process and

the individuals involved as they continued their participation and leadership with the WESP.

Equity- and Human-Centered Collaborative Design practices were tested and established a precedent for promising practices that can be used by other workforce equity committees moving forward.

The initial ILWR team developed a draft definition of inclusively leading with race, made a case for the ILWR framework, and identified action steps. After deeper employee engagement, the workgroup agreed that further work was needed to arrive at a single finalized definition. Throughout 2020 however, the County's pandemic response pulled staff and resources deep into the work of addressing immediate community crises.

The ILWR team reconvened in fall 2020 to begin a design sprint that resulted in a revised approach to meeting this WESP goal. What resulted was a letter addressed to Multnomah County employees and the community (republished on page 11 of this report) that wove together the shared values identified by the committee, including:

- Explicitly Naming and Centering Race and Intersectionality: prioritizing racial justice and including all other forms of oppression.
- Calling for Radical Imagination and Revolutionary Love: offering hope for the future, and as an antidote for white supremacy culture and systems, trauma and harm, apathy, and futility.
- Seeking Systemic Change and Shifting from White Supremacy Culture: committing to systemic level of change in order to eliminate white supremacy culture in the County.
- Committing to Consistent Practices: applying ILWR throughout the County's internal operations and external services.
- Expecting Accountability and Commitment: receiving from leadership a clear plan, measured outcomes, and sufficient budget investment.

The ILWR team's work sought to recognize our national and local history with racism and exclusion that has directly led to the prevalent racial

disparities seen in our organization today. The word "inclusively" was added to ensure that communities with overlapping identities — and people for whom disparities are compounded by those identities — would not be overlooked.

Kimberlee Crenshaw popularized these ideas on intersectionality as a legal framework. Intersectionality describes how one's identities and demographics (such as race, class, and gender) overlap and intersect to shape experiences and dynamics of power, privilege, and discrimination, as well as other penalties and benefits. Scholars and community leaders have since adopted intersectionality to explain the complexity of identity and as a framework to ensure that our solutions fully address the root causes of disparities.

To fully address racial disparities within our organization, we must also inclusively lead with race and center the experiences of people of color within other marginalized identities. By doing so, we can challenge the pervasive belief that marginalized identities are separate, when in reality, a person can identify as both a member of a BIPOC community and the LGBTQ+ community.

The ILWR letter invites our colleagues, leaders and community to conceptualize a vision of Multnomah County that is a more just, safe, and equitable place to work and live. It begins by acknowledging and understanding the ways in which race and systemic racism have shaped institutions, structures, communities, and ourselves.

Going forward, we will continue to provide clarity on what it means to inclusively lead with race at the County, provide actionable steps for doing so, and work to address any misconceptions about how this core value shows up in our day-to-day roles. We are committed to bringing members of our workforce into this work by communicating how it impacts every staff member, regardless of their position within the organization, and tying it even closer into the next iteration of the WESP.



Shared Language Guide

The [Shared Language Guide](#) includes frequently used terminology to promote a shared language for equity. The guide is intended to be a living document and is an attempt to unite our frameworks as Multnomah County continues to expand its equity infrastructure.

Throughout 2019 and early 2020, the Multnomah Idea Lab facilitated a process to create the Shared Language Guide for use by the workforce in support of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan. A workgroup with membership from Employee Resource Groups, Organizational Learning, County Communications, equity managers, Central Human Resources, Labor Relations and other departments initially convened in summer 2019. In partnership with members of the Inclusively Leading with Race (ILWR) Design Team, a final phase of work — using an intentionally time-limited sprint process — completed the guide in 2020.

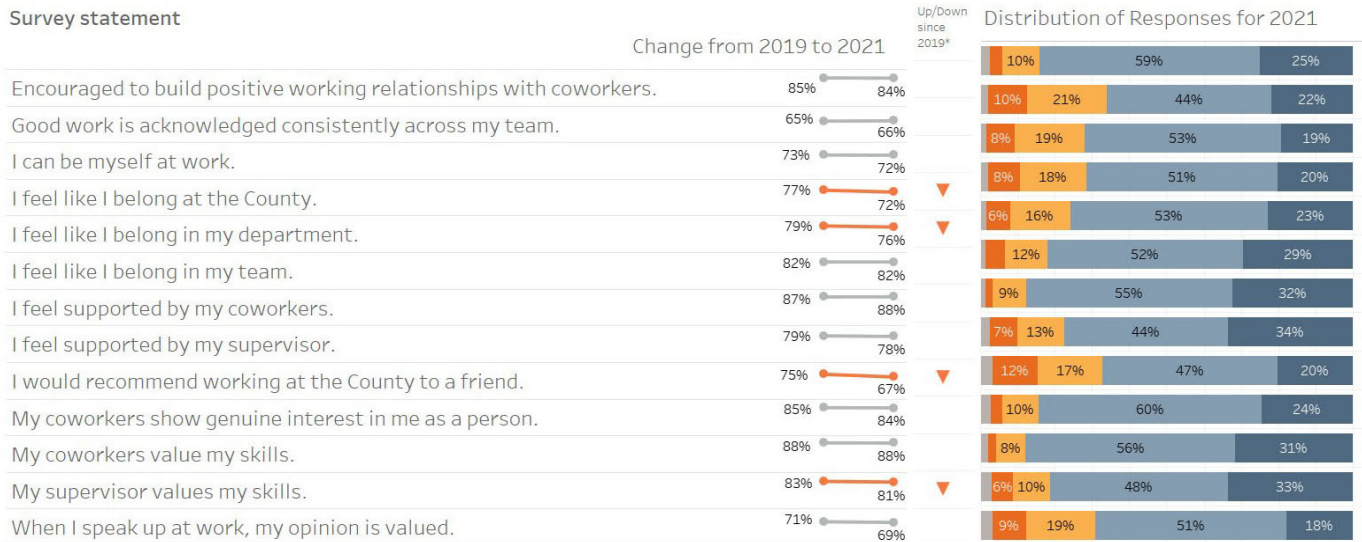
All 19 words have been defined with support materials that include an example of use, important contextual information, and reference and resource citations.

The Shared Language Guide helps department equity managers and staff, policy advisors, trainers, and other staff members involved in this work as they promote racial justice and advance equity across the County. It also serves as a reference for any staff that would like to learn more about equity work in the organization.

Revising the Shared Language Guide will be an ongoing effort because learning, language, and meaning evolve. The evolution of the guide will allow us to collect and incorporate feedback and continue to build with additional terms and definitions both now and into the future.

Belonging Countywide

Responses for the “belonging” section of the 2021 Countywide Employee Survey



* Change since 2019 is statistically tested. A statistically significant change is indicated by either a blue upward arrow (statistically increased) or orange downward arrow (statistically decreased) means that we are at least 95% confident that the difference is not due to chance. For smaller groups, we tend to have less confidence. So, although there may be a difference, the result does not meet our threshold.

Focus Area 5 of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan recommended that the County create and track indicators of people’s sense of belonging as a way to understand the organization’s progress toward creating safety, trust, and belonging for all employees. In 2019, in an effort to build an understanding of what a sense of belonging looks and feels like for County employees, the Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) and the Department of County Management Evaluation and Research Unit (ERU) [held worksessions and created an anonymous questionnaire](#) to gather information from employees about how they understood the concept.

The worksessions and questionnaire were designed to help in the creation of questions about belonging for the 2019 Countywide Employee Survey. These belonging questions were also included in the 2021 Countywide Employee Survey so that we could track how employees’ sense of belonging has changed since 2019. The results provided the County with the opportunity to delve into deeper conversations with employees about

what creates, and what erodes, belonging, and to inform the development of additional workplace strategies.

In 2019, employees had high agreement with the belonging questions — the Countywide belonging average was 3.01 and employees had over 75% agreement to all but three of the Belonging questions.

However, there were important differences in agreement to the belonging questions related to employees’ department and employee’s identities. Employees within the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office and the Department of Community Justice showed lower averages. Employees with disabilities, Latino or Hispanic employees, and multiracial employees were also more likely to disagree with several belonging questions. Additionally, there was a general pattern that Transmasculine, Transfeminine, Questioning, and Two-spirit employees had lower satisfaction with Belonging and Work Climate.

Results from the 2021 survey showed that employees across the County maintained a similarly high belonging average of 2.99. However, there were statistically significant declines in four of the belonging questions. The largest drop-off showed up in the question, “I would recommend working at the County to a friend,” which declined from 75% agreement in 2019 to 67% agreement in 2021. It is important to note that the 2021 survey was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic in fall 2021.

Additionally, employees working in public safety departments (e.g., Sheriff’s Office, Department of Community Justice, and the District Attorney’s Office) and the Library, as well as employees with disabilities, showed lower-than-average belonging responses. For employees with disabilities, this was mitigated to some degree by telework status, with employees with disabilities who worked on-site or who were not eligible to telework having statistically lower belonging averages compared to employees with with disabilities who had the option to telework.

This data has provided another tool for departments and County leaders to understand employee experience with and connection to the County and its policies, practices, and culture.



Attendees of the inaugural Multnomah County Management Conference participated in a networking exercise led by County Assets Director Bob Leek.

Exit interview pilot

A snapshot of the experiences of managers of color

The Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) launched an exit interview pilot project in summer 2020 in response to a Focus Area 5 recommendation to conduct exit interviews with managers of color who were voluntarily leaving the County. The recommendation placed the responsibility of holding these exit interviews on the ODE's Civil Rights Administrator (CRA)/Deputy Director. The pilot project extended through early 2022.

In that time, the CRA conducted interviews with seven directors and deputy directors, five middle managers, and seven equity managers and practitioners.

Interviews were voluntary, questions were shared a minimum of two days in advance, and interviewees had broad leeway to edit and approve their statements after the exit interview.

Several themes emerged across interviews that pointed toward a need for improved succession planning, onboarding for new director-level employees, and support for managers and senior leadership across the organization. Participants noted that particular support was needed for

managers of marginalized identities, especially those who were of multiple intersecting identities.

The group of employees who were interviewed was relatively small due to the voluntary and word-of-mouth nature of the project, so we recognize that it does not represent all managers or directors of color who exited the County during this time period. However, many of the themes that were uncovered through the exit interviews reflected informal feedback given by those who elected not to participate in the project.

A review of the interview notes yielded additional overarching themes:

- Many interviewees left the County for higher-level positions, taking with them skills acquired at the County.
- Senior leadership transitions (including Chief Operating Officer and Chief Human Resources Officer transitions) rippled across departmental leadership teams, resulting in a loss of familiar, personalized support and changes in supervision during the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

- There was a high level of turnover in equity-focused leadership roles.
- Many interviewees described pandemic-related burnout resulting from managing crisis responses for months on end.
- Nearly all interviewees stressed the importance of supportive supervision at both the middle manager and director levels; many described lower satisfaction resulting from lack of supportive supervision.
- Interviewees described the uncertain nature of so many leaders serving in interim roles during the pandemic.
- Interviewees discussed the unique pressures on managers of color, including being more closely scrutinized, underestimated, and expected to carry the weight of operationalizing the County's racial equity initiatives.
- Women of color experienced more "push back" from staff and less support from more senior leaders. Cisgender male managers described their gender as an advantage in leadership.
- Interviewees preferred a more collaborative relationship with labor unions, and expressed concern about an "us vs. them" dynamic toward managers, including managers of color.
- Interviewees also described the challenges of a decentralized organizational structure and structural barriers to collaboration across teams.
- Interviewees appreciated the intention behind the WESP, but wanted more support from leadership, including increased countywide communications, tools, operational support, and better centralized coordination across the organization.

The exit interview pilot collected information from a small sample and further research may be warranted. The intent of the recommendation was not to create data or a scientific process, but rather to capture the lived experience of key individuals leaving the organization. Nevertheless, the

common themes that emerged across interviews can inform potential interventions, including:

- Middle manager support that could look like cohorts, peer support, and coaching for directors on how to support middle managers of color.
- Improved and more intentional succession planning, executive leadership development, director-level onboarding, coaching, and peer support.
- Dedicated support for equity-focused staff, including equity managers, departmental equity and inclusion staff, and employees of the Office of Diversity and Equity, Organizational Learning, and the Complaint Investigations Unit.
- Dedicated qualitative research related to manager experiences, with comparisons across demographic categories and management levels.

A comprehensive Countywide strategy to support and retain managers of color and managers of other marginalized identities should be considered as a deliverable for the upcoming WESP renewal process. Currently, there are select resources in Central Human Resources (Central HR) dedicated to manager support. In addition, the Chief Operating Officer's Office is slated to introduce more initiatives in the coming months focused on supporting managers and directors.

Multnomah County's new Chief Diversity and Equity Officer is leading a renewal process for the WESP and is working toward more cross-County collaboration, including among equity managers, the ODE team, and Central HR. She will also be working toward more operational support for Countywide equity initiatives that will reduce the burden of implementation that is currently felt by managers of color, including equity managers, in departments.

2021-2022 WESP process evaluation

The following section highlights the findings from the process evaluation for the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan, which began implementation in 2019¹. Findings from the process evaluation are useful in monitoring WESP developments and helping identify areas of improvement in future WESP goals and objectives.

The WESP was the product of a series of discussion sessions facilitated by the Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE), which aimed to highlight institutional racism and inequities within Multnomah County as an organization. The WESP was intended to guide the organization in addressing institutional inequities following a guiding framework of Safety, Trust, and Belonging, and designing strategies that reflected the principles of equity and tactics of community organizing.

Findings from the WESP process evaluation of Focus Areas 1 through 4 suggested that most departments completed minimum standard measures around developing equity teams; completing performance reviews at the department, division, and program levels; providing new manager orientation that focused on resources and supports; developing interview panels that are intentionally representative of the diversity of the workforce and/or community they serve; training interview panels; and developing a set of questions utilized during the hiring process that reflect an assessment of competency working with diverse employees and communities. In addition, departments were generally able to ensure they were hosting College to County mentees.

The measures that presented the most barriers to completion for departments include manager training; manager and human resource disability focused training; 360° feedback; stay interview tracking; employee training focusing on cultural

1 As of the writing of this report, implementation of some WESP performance measures were still in development.

responsiveness and inclusionary practices; reviewing job descriptions; and building relationships with community-based organizations and other stakeholders to enhance diversity in County applications.

The completion of performance measures was more varied as many of the measures are not due until late 2022. In addition, some performance measures are directly linked to the minimum standard — if the minimum standard was not met as a result of barriers, the performance measure would also not be addressed.

Overall, completion was high across departments for the following measures: stay interviews of at least 1% of department staff; established equity teams in departments; and developed a set of questions focusing on cultural responsiveness, equity, and racially just practices for management hiring. Focus Area 2 presented the lowest completion of performance measures.

In March 2020, Chair Kafoury shifted the timelines for meeting WESP minimum standards from July 1, 2020 to Oct. 1, 2020, to allow departments to focus on responding to the then-emerging COVID-19 pandemic and protecting the health and well-being of the community. Modifications in working environments and workloads in addition to the state-mandated lockdown impacted the resources that departments were able to dedicate to fulfilling WESP recommendations.

Focus Area 5 provided recommendations to ensure oversight and accountability toward the progression of WESP performance measures via five areas of concentration:

- Clarifying and Communicating Our Vision
- Structural Changes that Support Shifting Practice and Culture
- Updating the Role, Responsibility, and Authority of the Office of Diversity and Equity
- Improving Practice
- Measuring Impact and Culture Change.

Each area included responsibilities and timelines for completion. All responsibilities in Focus Area 5 — with the exception of conducting an analysis of current communication channels and developing communication best practices — have been completed.

Under the “Clarifying and Communicating Our Vision” area, the Multnomah Idea Lab was tasked with developing a Shared Language Guide to be used by the workforce in support of the WESP. The guide was developed in tandem with members of Employee Resource Groups, Organizational Learning, County Communications, equity managers, human resources executives, Labor Relations, and departments. This task was completed in 2019. In addition to developing the Shared Language Guide, access to the guide through the [Safety, Trust, and Belonging website](#) was required by 2019.

The final task under this concentration area was to conduct an analysis of current communication channels and develop communication best practices that support shifting cultures and systems, and identify benchmarks for success. A work plan for completion was developed.

The “Structural Changes that Support Shifting Practice and Culture” focused on reorganizing Talent Development and Talent Acquisition resources in Central Human Resources to build a new organizational development model that emphasizes critical leadership skills needed to ensure an environment and culture of safety, trust, and belonging. The explicit goal is to strengthen managers’ ability and accountability in creating workplace culture that reduces disparities. This concentration is directly linked to the objectives of Focus Area 1.

All tasks under this concentration were completed on or before their designated timeline.

Tasks that focused on ensuring that ODE’s current and proposed roles and responsibilities were reflective of the new proposed scopes of work came from the third area of concentration. In addition, the development of the Civil Rights Policy Unit was recommended; it directly linked to Focus

Area 2. All tasks under this concentration were completed in 2020 and 2021.

The “Improving Practice Measuring Impact” concentration focused on developing an equity toolkit for use by departmental diversity and equity teams to facilitate efforts in creating safe, equitable, and fair work environments, and addressing systemic barriers to equity and inclusion. This effort is directly linked to Focus Areas 1 and 3, and was completed in 2019.

The tasks associated with this concentration area also included the development of a WESP subcommittee focusing on the design of a leadership development and accountability model that emphasizes leading with equity. This was completed in 2020.

The last task aims to develop an orientation and onboarding model for exempt employees that includes principles of racial equity and targeted universalism. Central Human Resources is currently working on a position description for a new Career Development Specialist position that will focus on these areas, including New Employee Orientation and Countywide onboarding.

The “Measuring Impact and Culture Change” concentration area focused on creating belonging metrics within the Countywide Employee Survey (CWES), as well as developing departmental evaluation metrics that measure progress toward the WESP and/or lead to additional support or interventions.

The two most recent surveys were modified to include indicators of belonging. Departments have also been developing internal interventions to advance culture change. The development of metrics for these efforts was not examined for this report as it requires extensive discussions with equity managers and their equity teams. This element will be further examined in the impact evaluation.

The process evaluation was completed in early 2022, and while the bulk of data are from prior to January 2022, work did not stop and there has been additional progress since then.




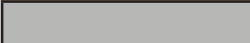

Tables 1 and 2

In order to determine the completion status of the minimum standard and performance measures at the department level, department equity managers were tasked with completing the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan matrix. The data collected in the matrix is reflected in Table 1 for minimum standards and Table 2 for performance measures. These tables were designed to provide insight into each department's journey toward meeting minimum standards and performance measures by highlighting areas where the Office of Diversity and Equity and other departments can assist in their completion.

The following completion status options were provided, defined, and explained in the matrix:

- **Completed:** Means the measure requirements, as stated in the WESP, have been met.
- **In Progress:** Means the measure requirements have been started as stated in the WESP. However, many elements of the measure have not been met by the department.
- **Not Started:** Means the measure requirements, as stated in the WESP, have not been attempted, and no action has been taken on completing this measure.

Legend

| | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Completed |  | Status not reported |
|  | In progress |  | Not applicable |
|  | Not started | | |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 1

| Department | DCA | DCHS | DCM | DCJ | DCS | Health Dept. | JOHS | Library | MCSO |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Focus Area 1 - Organizational Culture | | | | | | | | | |
| Manager training on competencies (intercultural and racially just practices) | In progress | In progress | Not started | In progress | In progress | In progress | Completed | Completed | In progress |
| ADA-focused manager and HR training - accommodations | In progress | In progress | Not started | Not started | Not started | In progress | In progress | Not started | In progress |
| Stay interviews with focus on frontline positions | Completed | In progress | Completed | In progress | In progress | In progress | In progress | Not started | In progress |
| Develop equity and diversity teams to examine policy | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed | Completed |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 1 (continued)

| Department | DCA | DCHS | DCM | DCJ | DCS | Health Dept. | JOHS | Library | MCSO |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Focus Area 2 - Promotion & Professional Development | | | | | | | | | |
| Performance review tracking at department, division, and program levels | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Green | Green | Red | Green | Green | Yellow |
| Manager feedback loop between supervisees and supervisor | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Red |
| New Manager Orientation focusing on resources and supports to manage responsibly | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Green | Green | Green |
| Workday profiles and development plans to support promotion and leadership | Yellow | Green | Red | Red | Red | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Grey |
| Diverse interview panels representative of workforce/ community | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Green |
| Employees are trained to participate in interview panels | Yellow | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Green |
| Develop hiring process questions focusing on competency with working with diverse workforce | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Green | Green |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Focus Area 3 - Retention | | | | | | | | | |
| Assign peer support or mentor to assist with onboarding and professional growth | Green | Yellow | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow |
| ERG hours expanded to support employee affinity, Countywide project engagement, and development | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey | Grey |
| Employee training plan with inclusion of cultural responsiveness training | Yellow | Light Orange | Yellow | Green | Green | Light Orange | Green | Green | Yellow |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 1 (continued)

| Department | DCA | DCHS | DCM | DCJ | DCS | Health Dept. | JOHS | Library | MCSO |
|--|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Focus Area 4 - Recruitment & Workforce Pipelines | | | | | | | | | |
| Departments participate in College to County mentorship program | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green |
| Review and ensure job announcements convey clear and appropriate equivalencies | Red | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Yellow |
| Departments are building relationships with CBOs and other stakeholders to enhance diversity in applications | Yellow | Green | Red | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Green |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 2

| Focus Area 1 - Organizational Culture | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------|
| By 2022, ALL managers and senior leadership have training on equitable and racially just practices | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Red | Yellow | Green | Yellow |
| By 2022, ALL supervisory staff and HR will have training on disabilities | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Red | Red | Yellow | Red | Yellow |
| By 2020, yearly assessment of at least 1% of the department will have completed stay interviews | Light Orange | Green | Light Orange | Yellow | Yellow | Light Orange | Light Orange | Green | Yellow |
| By 2019, ALL departments will have established equity teams (stakeholders, front line staff, managers, supervisors, and senior leadership) | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Green | Green | Green |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 2 (continued)

| Department | DCA | DCHS | DCM | DCJ | DCS | Health Dept. | JOHS | Library | MCSO |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Focus Area 2 - Promotion & Professional Development | | | | | | | | | |
| By 2020, 100% of employees have completed PPRs | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Light Orange | Green | Grey |
| By 2020, ALL departments have a tool for manager and supervised staff feedback loops | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Red | Green | Yellow | Light Orange | Red | Red |
| By 2020, departments will have an orientation process for managers including internal support resources and overview of preventative/ disciplinary expectations and processes | Green | Yellow | Green | Green | Green | Yellow | Light Orange | Green | Yellow |
| By 2022, ALL employees (excluding non-exempt) will have active development plans co-created with the manager | Yellow | Yellow | Red | Red | Yellow | Yellow | Light Orange | Green | Red |
| By 2020, ALL departments will work with ERGs and other stakeholders to develop a list of trained employees or with professional skills to serve on interview panels for entry-level positions | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Light Orange | Green | Yellow |
| By 2020, ALL management-level hiring will include questions on cultural responsiveness, equity, and racially just practices as required for managers | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green |

WESP Process Evaluation Table 2 (continued)

| Department | DCA | DCHS | DCM | DCJ | DCS | Health Dept. | JOHS | Library | MCSO |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Focus Area 3 - Retention | | | | | | | | | |
| By 2022, there will be no discernable disparity in probationary termination rates | Green | Green | Green | Green | Green | Orange | Green | Green | Green |
| By 2019, every department has a documented and communicated onboarding training curriculum for new employees on cultural responsiveness | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Green | Green | Green | Yellow |
| Focus Area 4 - Recruitment & Workforce Pipelines | | | | | | | | | |
| By 2022, ALL departments have trained and specialized recruiting staff that will focus on federally required obligations, race, gender, disability, and veterans status | Yellow | Red | Yellow | Yellow | Red | Green | Orange | Yellow | Green |



Departmental efforts

Innovating and expanding workforce equity

This section describes how employees and departments innovate on workforce equity through their equity committees and departmental equity strategic plans. The department-specific work is in addition to the structural and policy changes initiated under the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan and the Countywide initiatives such as the Complaints Investigation Unit, the Leadership Expectations and Accountability Program, and the Countywide Employee Survey. The Countywide initiatives provide tools and framing regarding equity efforts to the departments, while the responsibility for implementing the WESP recommendations rests within the departments.

The County's decentralized Human Resource model creates a challenge for implementing the WESP recommendations consistently across 10 departments and 10 offices, each with its own culture and practices. Yet, through the efforts of equity managers and their offices, departments and their employees continuously reshape and advance workforce equity by surveying their departmental culture and participating in focus groups and project committees. These innovators are developing ways to build relationships and improve practice with new tools and approaches. Some employee- and department-led innovations have occurred parallel with the WESP

implementation, while some innovations have been adopted outside of the WESP structure by other departments who sought solutions to similar problems. Departments have developed training programs, created new policies, and advocated for change to achieve Multnomah County's equity values.

[Upcoming addenda to the 2021 - 2022 WESP Annual Report](#)

Office of the District Attorney

District Attorney Mike Schmidt has signaled his interest in participating in the County's WESP efforts. The DA's Office is in the process of hiring an Equity Manager and an Equity and Inclusion Analyst who will lead this work. The office has had a long-standing equity committee and has used the Equity and Empowerment Lens and Budget Equity Tool in budgeting. The Office of Diversity and Equity will connect with the DA's Office and submit an addendum summarizing this work in early 2023.

Non-departmental offices

Many non-departmental offices have WESP plans and have been actively engaged in this work. ODE will gather this information and submit an addendum highlighting this work in early 2023.

Department of County Assets

The Department of County Assets ensures that those who serve the community have what they need to provide excellent service. We envision a thriving community built on information, spaces, and services for everyone.

The department manages technology, facilities, vehicles, and records for Multnomah County. We provide Countywide services and support behind the scenes to ensure County programs can serve residents effectively. In short, we serve the people who serve the people.

Director

Tracey Massey

Human Resources Director

Patsy Moushey

Equity Manager

Sophie Wilson

The Department of County Assets (DCA) values stewardship, equity, innovation, and collaboration. Our values and accomplishments are best reflected in the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan focus areas of Organizational Culture, Retention, and Recruitment and Workforce Pipelines.

Organizational Culture

Our department prioritizes our people. We organize regular DCA Connection meetings, focus groups, listening sessions, and a monthly engagement survey to consistently assess morale, inclusion, supportive environments, and cultural responsiveness. The engagement survey gives us the ability to disaggregate employee experiences and responses based on demographic data such as race, gender, and age.

The DCA Equity Committee examines policy and leads transformative change efforts to build infrastructure to support equity and empowerment practices, policies, and programs. The committee meets monthly for training opportunities and supports many DCA subcommittees. In 2021, the committee served as Equity Reviewers for our department budget proposals.

In 2018, DCA implemented the “Think Yes” initiative that “aspires to build an inclusive workplace culture.” The initiative is geared toward improving our service to customers and colleagues by focusing on how we treat each other. Since its

implementation, every DCA employee has been through an initial training focused on developing Think Yes behaviors and outcomes; this training is part of our New Employee Orientation. This year, we are offering Think Yes trainings for managers.

We value continuous educational and culture building opportunities for our staff. The Plain Language Writing Workshops are part of the Think Yes initiative and align with our pledge to improve clarity, remove barriers, and promote digital accessibility. In 2021, we required all IT staff members to complete the Plain Language Writing Workshops, which were expanded and offered to all staff within DCA in 2022.

We are committed to providing equitable communications and services. The Digital Accessibility Work Group (DAWG) leads our department’s efforts in designing digital services and tools to be usable by everyone. All staff were required to complete the Digital Accessibility Part 1 training this past year.

The DCA mission ensures that those who serve the community have what they need to provide excellent services. We will launch a Manager Leadership Training in the fall of 2022 in partnership with our Equity and Inclusion Team and Organizational Learning. The purpose of this required 12-month Manager Leadership Training is:

- Learn how to lead with race.

- Gain knowledge about management best practices.
- Develop skills to create an inclusive work space.

Retention

All staff are welcomed to our department through our New Employee Orientation (NEO). According to DCA Equity & Inclusion Analyst Tamara Lash, “Intentional onboarding is paramount in making sure employees are supported and given the tools for success in their new job. As someone who supports the NEO, I find great pride in being one of the support staff for new employees. In particular, I love getting to plan the DCA New Hire Program Tour. The tour is an opportunity for DCA new hires to learn about how their work impacts the rest of the County. This is important as a department made up of internal services — it ties our staff to the collective mission of the County as opposed to being siloed in our department.”

DCA partnered with Tusk Consulting to develop and lead a Gender Inclusive Training. This training will occur in fiscal year 2023. The learning outcomes of this all-staff training are:

- Establish a common DCA language around gender bias and discrimination.
- Gain knowledge about how gender identity and structures shape our lives, how we uphold those structures, and how we can disrupt them.
- Practice interrupting discrimination and allyship and receive feedback to open a discussion and connection.
- Introduce managers to the tools and resources to interrupt unacceptable behaviors and support employees.
- Professional Development.

Recruitment and Workforce Pipelines

We are committed to serving as an employer of choice for diverse candidates. Our department intentionally works with diverse vendors and contractors for our projects.

We engage with many school-to-work and

community-to-work pipelines. DCA supports the College to County internship program, which offers interns from underrepresented populations opportunities to work on DCA programs and participate in weekly professional development sessions. In 2021, our department hosted seven interns across four divisions. In 2022, our department hosted six interns across three divisions.

Over the last nine years, the Information Technology Division has partnered with PSU/PDX Cooperative Education Program (PCEP), through which computer science students work 20 hours per week at the County for six months, while concurrently taking between eight and 12 credits each term on-campus at Portland State University.

Department of County Human Services

The Department of County Human Services delivers services with the goal that every resident of Multnomah County, at every stage of life, has equitable opportunities to thrive.

DCHS strives to not only uplift our community members in times of need, but also to invest in innovative, future-oriented approaches to human services that prevent crises, build assets, and nurture self-determination within our communities by addressing and redressing the root causes of racism and all other forms of inequity.

Director

Mohammad Bader

Human Resources Director

Susan Yee

Equity Manager

Dr. Carlos Richard

The Department of County Human Services (DCHS) remains strongly engaged in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and continues to work diligently to implement Workforce Equity Strategic Plan initiatives throughout the department.

DCHS is currently engaged in a WESP initiative focused on augmenting diverse applicant pools. This initiative encourages the application of best practices that consistently result in increasing diverse applicant pools for all external, as well as internal, recruitments. This initiative aligns with the goal of inclusively leading with race and will focus on current practices and processes for outreach and recruitment; assess the diversity of the applicant pools they produce; institutionalize the practices and processes for consistency; expand current recruitment practices to include more targeted recruitment; and establish consensus on roles and responsibilities for hiring managers and human resources staff.

Further, an important outcome of this project is to inclusively lead with race with the goal of increasing the cultural and ethnic diversity of applicant pools at the beginning of the hiring process. This project will focus on expanding or adapting the recruitment process to include proven practices for hiring diverse and well-qualified candidates. Ultimately, increasing the recruitment of diverse candidates is a strategy that will enhance and improve services for clients and provide thought leadership within the organization.

After best practices for recruitment have been developed, recorded, and adopted, management and HR will evaluate their success and modify them as needed to accommodate emerging best practices. The intended impact of this project is for underrepresented groups and individuals to have more opportunities for inclusion and representation in the recruiting process. More representation amplifies the voices of underrepresented communities we serve, which is expected to lead to greater equity in service outcomes.

DCHS is also engaged in a WESP initiative focused on Retention, specifically onboarding. This initiative engages the WESP's Focus Area 3, Objective 3, which states that the onboarding process and expectations should be clear and consistent across the organization, with necessary and appropriate variation at departmental levels. This initiative is vitally imperative to ensuring that staff obtain support during the initial onboarding process, reducing and preventing staff turnover, and avoiding ostensibly inequitable workload distribution and morale issues.

A remote working environment presents a different set of challenges than in-person onboarding, making communication, resources, and support between staff more challenging. The onboarding process will be adaptable, consistent, and modified when necessary to accommodate the needs of the staff engaged in the onboarding process, especially

employees who are new to the program, as well as employees transferring into the division or moving to a different workgroup or team. The goal is to enhance the onboarding process for employees to achieve better outcomes for staff, better outcomes for clients, and increased retention rates.

This effort will also provide a consistent, organized, and supportive structure for managers and supervisors to successfully onboard staff. This initiative will enhance the ability for all staff — especially staff who represent diverse backgrounds and identities — to successfully complete trial service, access appropriate resources during the onboarding process, and identify systemic and institutional barriers within the onboarding process.

The department is also currently engaged in conducting stay interviews as an initiative of the WESP Focus Area 1, Organizational Culture, which states that Multnomah County should utilize multiple tools to consistently assess morale, inclusion, supportive environments, and cultural responsiveness, and that County departments will conduct stay interviews with a percentage of staff, focusing on frontline positions. Stay interviews are conducted to help managers and supervisors understand why employees stay and what might cause them to leave. In an effective stay interview, managers ask standard, structured questions in a casual and conversational manner.

DCHS is currently in the process of launching the Manager and Supervisor Skill Building Cohort Group. This is an initiative that will assist managers and supervisors develop leadership skills by using a relational approach called for in the “Improve Onboarding and Training” action area, focusing on building skill sets specific to Racial Justice + Equity (RJ+E). A recent manager and supervisor survey revealed that a majority of managers are highly interested in learning about diverse ways to promote equity, understanding how to be more racially just, augmenting their leadership skill sets, better navigating change, and increasing their creativity and innovation skills.

DCHS is also engaged in an initiative to address policies, procedures, and systems that perpetuate

anti-Blackness and continue to marginalize and erect barriers for members of the African American community. This starts with a deep dive into the historical foundations of the United States and an exploration of the process that led to the disparate treatment of African Americans that continues to the present day.

Equity at My Desk is a signature initiative launched in DCHS to provide training and technical assistance to staff who provide direct services to the community. An essential aspect of this effort is the opportunity for staff to examine their own backgrounds through the lens of implicit bias, with the goal of helping staff develop an awareness of their own blind spots that may prevent them from inclusively leading with race when serving diverse communities. The purpose of Equity at My Desk is to change the trajectory of equity at Multnomah County from a “50,000-foot” level to a “boots on the ground” level, and empower staff to infuse equity into their daily work with the community. Equity at My Desk equips staff with the principles and concepts of equity, as well as the Equity and Empowerment Lens.

Department of Community Justice

The Department of Community Justice provides community-based supervision and services to youth and adults on probation, pretrial, post-prison supervision, and juvenile detention. DCJ uses evidence-based practices to tailor programs to wrap support around families with the hope of building stronger communities.

DCJ's services are designed to give people who have engaged in crime the opportunity to change negative behaviors that cause harm to victims. Providing support to victims is also a cornerstone of DCJ programming. The department exists to keep our communities safe by addressing the underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior, and to help people grow and heal.

Director

Erika Preuitt

Human Resources Director

Patty Blanchard

Equity Manager

Kalisha Stout

This update to the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan marks a moment in time to reflect on progress and accomplishments. Additionally, it's a chance to sharpen the focus on the challenges our department and organization still face in removing barriers in the workplace. Throughout the implementation process, the Department of Community Justice (DCJ) has learned a lot about our strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for growth. We welcome the opportunity to reflect on the last four years and prepare for the future.

The DCJ WESP Advisory Group was convened and launched in March 2020. The group is a subcommittee of DCJ's Diversity and Equity Steering Committee (DESC), and is designed to guide the work of the WESP through shared power, tracking progress on DCJ's WESP goals, and making recommendations for implementation. Members represent a cross-section of department staff.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, we began 2021 with a deliberate and decisive intent to move forward with the work of the WESP. Because of the commitment and dedication of DCJ staff, we have successfully attended to numerous focus areas of the WESP. Some recent key accomplishments include:

- Funding and hosting six College to County interns.
- Working with Organizational Learning to provide online and in-person coaching and support to managers.
- Implementing stay interviews.
- Redesigning the new DCJ employee onboarding process.
- Establishing an Onboarding Workgroup.
- Implementing an equity-based question bank for DCJ interview questions.

Moving forward, we anticipate increased momentum as our WESP Advisory Group finalizes its recommendations and presents them to the advisory DESC.

DCJ is engaged in a collaborative process to integrate the WESP into the fabric of our department. Fundamental to our work is our commitment to inclusively leading with race as we recognize the history of systemic inequities.

This work would not be possible without the dedication of the many employees in our department who have committed themselves to making DCJ a better place to work — especially those in the Diversity and Equity Steering Committee and the WESP Advisory Group. DCJ's

Equity & Inclusion Manager has been critical to shepherding this work, DCJ Human Resources has worked diligently to transform business practices while adjusting to operating in a global pandemic, and DCJ's senior leadership team has offered crucial guidance in the practical application of action items.

Department of County Management

The Department of County Management provides the corporate-level management of the County's administrative infrastructure. DCM's central function is to support the County and its departments to serve the people who live, work, and do business in the county. Examples of DCM's work include paying the County's bills, developing and implementing policies and programs for effective human resource management, administering property taxes, and creating the budget.

COO and Director
Serena Cruz

Deputy COO
Travis Graves

Human Resources Director
Anna Plumb

Equity Manager
Estelle Norris

The Department of County Management (DCM) is responsible for collecting, protecting, and investing in Multnomah County's human and financial capital. DCM manages and trains the County's workforce, pays the County's bills and safeguards its funds. We embrace the vision that every employee has a role to play in advancing equity and creating a racially just workplace. Collectively, we are doing transformative work to help raise the consciousness of employees, including management at the highest levels.

This year, DCM continues to fulfill and implement its Workforce Equity Strategic Plan commitments, led by the DCM Equity Committee. The senior management team provides guidance and resources, and empowers this committee to develop solutions to pressing equity issues. Because of the partnership between the committee and management, DCM is on track to meeting our 2022 WESP goals and accomplishing more.

One accomplishment is the continued engagement from the DCM Equity Committee and its three subcommittees: Organizational Culture and Retention, Culturally Responsive Onboarding, and Promotion & Professional Development. The Organizational Culture and Retention Subcommittee is finalizing recommendations for managers to meet the annual four-hour equity training requirement. Once established, the team will explore practical accountability measures that balance fairness and the demand for stronger equity practices for those in leadership roles.

A second accomplishment is DCM's support of the College to County program. This summer, DCM hosted 11 interns, contributing significantly to the record-setting number of program participants across the County. DCM interns Oscar Betancourt and Trinity Bowen facilitated weekly connection meetings for their peers to discuss accomplishments and challenges, and to share resources. The space allowed them to brainstorm ideas and support each other's professional growth. DCM also organized a College to County meet-and-greet with Chief Operating Officer Serena Cruz and Deputy Chief Operating Officer Travis Graves.

Additional ongoing equity work includes organizing and facilitating a two-hour New Employee Orientation. The orientation is hosted by the DCM Equity Team and department Human Resources team four times a year and welcomes new employees and internal staff transferring into new roles in DCM.

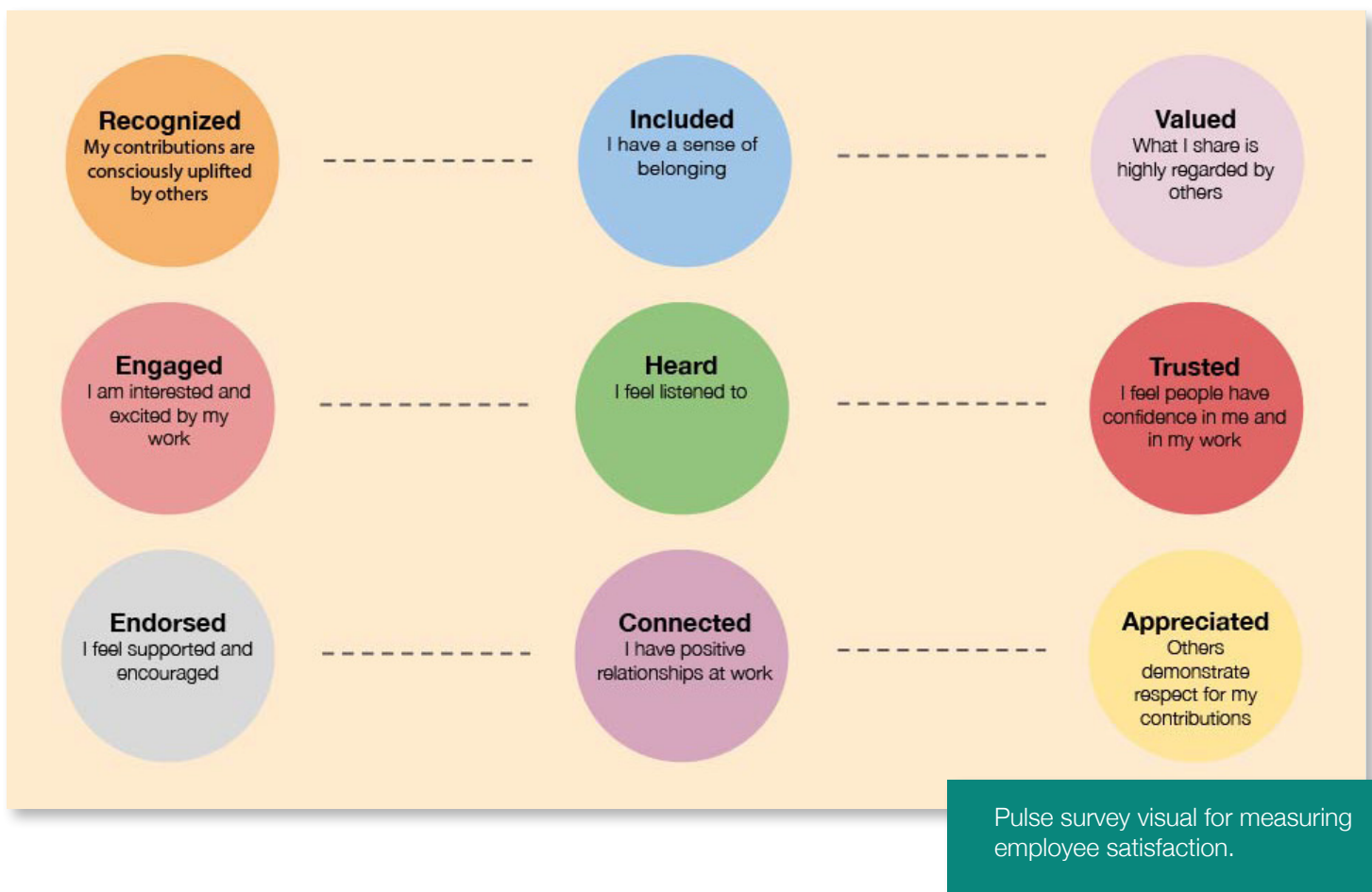
The Division of Assessment Recording and Taxation (DART) Employee Engagement Committee champions equity issues to improve employee engagement and satisfaction. While it does not directly advance WESP objectives, the committee collaboratively drives culture change efforts within DART, DCM's largest division.

DCM continues to enhance its prior WESP work in four major areas: the Onboarding Liaison program;

stay interviews; developing a manager feedback tool; and implementing staff polls to inform department-wide culture change efforts.

The Onboarding Liaison program is a thriving peer support program for new or transferring employees. The DCM Equity Team and Human Resources continue to partner to complete stay interviews and develop the manager feedback tool. Lastly, DCM will roll out staff “pulse” surveys during quarterly “Real Talk” all-staff meetings. The DCM Director’s Office continues the department’s all-staff meetings that are designed to be an informal space to share information and updates about

current matters affecting the department and the County. The pulse surveys will measure employee satisfaction using the visual below. Over the next year, this data will be used to inform department-wide culture change strategies.



Department of Community Services

The Department of Community Services delivers a number of essential services throughout Multnomah County. Our mission is to preserve harmony between natural and built environments, keep people and pets safe, and ensure every voice is heard.

Director
Jamie Waltz

Human Resources Director
Cynthia Trosino

Equity Manager
TBD

In 2021, the Department of Community Services (DCS) crafted a bold equity statement reflecting our commitment to eradicating racial injustice and inequity in the workplace and the services we provide to our communities. As we begin 2022, we plan to translate our equity values into action.

In 2019, the DCS Equity Committee began training with the Center for Equity and Inclusion (CEI), which gave the committee a shared language and foundation to integrate equity into our culture. The shared learning inspired the committee to draft an internal-facing Equity Statement for all DCS employees. The committee invited DCS staff to interweave their perspectives into the statement, recognizing that only through our united stories and experiences could our call for equity be complete. The statement was then given voice through DCS employees in English and multilingual videos, reflecting the committee's intent to lead with action and bring marginalized stories and voices to the forefront of our work. The Equity Statement formed the visionary foundation for the DCS Equity Strategic Plan.

The Equity Strategic Plan was co-created by the DCS Equity Committee throughout 2021. Committee members challenged each other's ideas and strategies for the plan. We formed bonds, shared stories of our unique experiences, and empathized in our individual and group equity journeys

Our first Equity Strategic Plan lays out how we can build together using this developmental approach, focusing on the first two phases. The third phase will be developed once we complete the first two.

Phase 1 emphasizes the personal area of building self-awareness and learning knowledge-related equity. The outcomes we are aiming to achieve during this phase are that every employee will be able to:

- Build individual awareness of our values, culture(s), and beliefs.
- Gain knowledge of equity concepts, ideas, and perspectives.

Phase 2 emphasizes turning our inward focus outward, toward cultivating a culture in which we all grow together. In this phase, our outcomes will be that every employee will be able to:

- Build a culture of connection internally in DCS through conversations, sharing cultural values, and increasing empathy.
- Practice skills by applying what we have learned with each other.

The future plan for Phase 3 will emphasize working with the external community as we communicate with, perform outreach to, and serve the residents of Multnomah County. In this phase, our outcomes will be that every employee will be able to apply knowledge, skills, and tools related to the equity that we have practiced together internally with the local community that DCS serves.

Priorities and Strategies

When the Equity Committee first began building the Equity Strategic Plan, we used the Center for Equity and Inclusion's framework that identifies how we can create change in the organization. In

this framework, there are three different areas, or domains, where we will achieve change.

Personal Domain – Building Awareness:

This priority includes creating a survey that allows each of us to individually consider, review, and reflect on where we are in our attitudes, values, awareness, knowledge, and skills related to equity. The survey also aids all of us in understanding patterns, trends, and stories related to equity in the DCS community.

Personal Domain – Building Knowledge:

For this priority, we are creating a library, or shared repository of resources, where all DCS employees can access more learning about equity for self-study. Every employee is allotted four hours of work time a month to further explore, reflect on, and learn about equity in whatever ways feel meaningful.

Cultural Domain – Knowledge Sharing:

This priority involves training in equity for all DCS employees. As we move from more personal reflection to group connection, we participate in training together on topics like equity, common language, intersectionality, and current cultural norms we are working to change. Training will be a starting point as we begin holding conversations as a group.

Cultural Domain – Application and Skills:

This priority includes building a toolkit available to all DCS employees that we can use to build stronger relationships and become more adaptive in our communication styles with others. As we grow our awareness and knowledge in equity and share our stories and cultural values with each other, we can apply this growth to our work teams and the external community.

Institutional Domain – Values and Resourcing:

As we embark on our equity journey together as a department, it is crucial that we have institutional support throughout the process. This means that:

- Leadership supports division requests for specific equity-related training, and the Director’s Office and the Equity and Organizational Culture Manager provide consultation as needed.
- DCS leadership supports our department’s values and includes relationship-building as a core competency.
- DCS policies reflect Equity Strategic Plan goals, including resourcing activities in the plan and having designated paid time (four hours a month) for all employees to reflect, explore, and further pursue interests in equity.

Health Department

The Multnomah County Health Department works with communities to advance health equity, protect the most vulnerable, and promote health and wellness for everyone. We work collaboratively to ensure that our policies and programs amplify people's voices and uplift community-driven solutions.

Director

Ebony Clarke

Human Resources Director

Steve Sutton

Equity Manager

TBD

Equity is at the heart of the Health Department's mission. The Health Department works across our county's diverse communities to advance health equity, protect the most vulnerable, and promote health and wellness for everyone.

For equity work to be transformative and for its goals to be realized, the work must move beyond the theoretical to the practical, with specific, tangible results across the department. To focus our equity work on specific deliverables and outcomes, the Health Department created the Equity Leadership Program (ELP). This 29-member team collaborated to identify project areas and specific goals aligned with the County's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan.

The department made progress across all six project areas identified by the fellows and cohort members of the ELP:

- Manager Onboarding and Orientation
- Mentorship Program
- Interview Panels
- Position Descriptions and Job Announcements
- Pathways
- ADA Accommodations

Many of the specific goals and targets identified by the Health Department's ELP were achieved during the past year. Some highlights of the Health Department's WESP accomplishments during this period include:

- Designing and implementing a beta version of individualized onboarding Google sites to support employee collaboration, enhance a sense of belonging across our workplace, and orient new hires to Health Department culture, tools, and values (Manager Onboarding and Orientation).
- Designing and carrying out a year-long mentoring recruitment campaign in support of the department's Mentoring Matters program, including written communications, live open houses, and integration into New Employee Orientation sessions (Mentorship Program).
- Updating department practices on convening interview panels so that each panel includes at least four participants, with a cross-section of Health Department employees from underrepresented populations represented on the panel (Interview Panels).
- Initiating the review of equity language to be included in position descriptions and identifying any needs for updating and ensuring cohesion across departmental position descriptions (Position Descriptions and Job Announcements).
- Systematizing onboarding and training for College to County interns, ensuring they attend Health Department New Employee Orientation and training (Pathways).
- Updating policies, procedures, and communications to provide a clear process

for employees seeking Americans with Disabilities Act Accommodations needed to carry out their work at the Health Department (ADA Accommodations).

The ADA Launchpad

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was a welcome and critical development for people experiencing disabilities. The law established policies requiring employers, schools, and public places to become accessible to people with disabilities. While the legislation initially led to increased access for many people with disabilities, it soon became apparent that disparities in access to accommodations were developing along lines of intersecting identities. Black, Indigenous and other employees of color experiencing disabilities must navigate racism and manage stigma related to a disability, while also navigating the ADA process. The Health Department's establishment of the [ADA Launchpad](#) is one effort to create an equitable pathway for employees experiencing disabilities.

The County's many staff with culturally specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) are essential members of our workforce and our work groups, and it was clear that an improved pathway toward ADA Accommodations would be useful to both the staff seeking accommodations and their managers and supervisors. Moreover, these staff members hold cultural expertise that is critical to the Health Department successfully carrying out its mission within diverse communities across Multnomah County.

The ADA Launchpad was designed to help employees understand the ADA Accommodations process in the Health Department. This resource provides a transparent, step-by-step overview of the entire process and provides clear guidance for employees requesting accommodations and their managers or supervisors.

The ADA Launchpad empowers employees to ask for the support they need to thrive at work. "One-size-fits-all" approaches are rarely successful, which is why we work together with employees in an ongoing inclusive, case-by-case process to find accommodations that best fit each individual,

then continue to check in over time to make adjustments as needed.

To support the success of the ADA Launchpad, and with the goal of empowering employees to access ADA Accommodations, the Health Department created an ADA Launchpad page on the County Commons website. This resource provides an overview of the ADA Accommodations Request Process and all forms required, as well as a list of Health Department staff who can assist staff and managers as they navigate the process. Providing all this material in a single place is one way the Health Department is seeking to streamline the accommodations process to better support our staff to thrive in their work at the Health Department.

Three "lunch and learn" sessions will provide an overview of the ADA Launchpad in the summer, fall, and winter of 2022. The department's initial educational campaign will be followed by a Countywide rollout of the updated ADA process in late 2022, and will be accompanied by an ADA Champions support program that is in the planning and development stages now.

Joint Office of Homeless Services

The Joint Office of Homeless Services is a partnership between Multnomah County and the City of Portland. The JOHS seeks to create an equitable community in which all people have safe, affordable, and accessible housing, and works with community-based organizations and governmental entities to provide participant-driven, coordinated, and equity-based services focused on those who are, or are at risk of, experiencing homelessness.

Director

Shannon Singleton

Human Resources Director

Shannon Goulter

Equity Manager

TBD

The Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) has diligently worked to advance system services, workforce capacity, and service delivery. Central to the internal and external work of the Joint Office is racial equity and the elimination of disparities.

Over the past two years, JOHS has worked to create robust service delivery and an equity-centered department that is responsive to the work we do here, with a focus on increasing awareness of, and shifting practices toward, equitable and racially just outcomes. JOHS has taken the following steps that help prepare the department for and align with the County's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan efforts:

- **Build Infrastructure:** JOHS is well-positioned in its practices and development to effectively advance racial equity in the workplace. JOHS has taken the opportunity to restructure and add capacity, with a focus on building sustainable systems and practices that address disparities and advance racial equity both internally and externally.
- **Organizational Structure:** JOHS is committed to building an organizational culture that centers racial equity and the safety, trust, and belonging of all of our employees. We are achieving this goal by implementing equity in new organizational structures through an equity team, equity steering committee, and a conference workgroup.

All WESP focus areas, goals, and associated JOHS strategies will continue to be incorporated into the broader strategic plan. We have made meaningful progress so far, while we also are planning our goals and next steps:

- **Professional Development and Workforce Pipelines:** The JOHS Human Resources team is on track to develop and successfully complete the WESP performance measures by the end of 2022, including hiring recruitment staff to focus on federally required obligations, such as race, gender, different ability, and veterans. The HR team is also creating a feedback system for leadership and employees to support professional development and to encourage transparency of processes.
- **Inclusively Leading with Race:** We recognize that while equity work involves changing and building systems and structures, it fundamentally requires us to lead with race and to foster relationships built on accountability and anti-racism. JOHS is committed to creating anti-racist policies, practices, and processes, and to collaborating with staff in leading with race efforts. This will require internal workforce investment, as well as establishing attainable and measurable goals.
- **Ongoing Improvement:** As JOHS continues to grow, we will actively work with all areas of our organization to assess organizational

needs and opportunity areas around equity. We will then develop policies and strategies to respond to those organizational needs, while ensuring that all new interventions build toward the County's goal of ensuring safety, trust, and belonging among all employees.

Advancing workforce equity requires building and supporting policies, systems, and structures that can support efforts to shape organizational culture over time. JOHS will continue to leverage Countywide efforts to create onboarding, training, staff development, and hiring processes that support managers and staff in advancing equity in the workplace. We look forward to collaborating with County leadership and staff across departments to advance our collective workforce equity goals.

Library

Multnomah County Library is the oldest public library west of the Mississippi, with a history that reaches back to 1864. Today, Central Library and the other neighborhood libraries that make up the library system house nearly 900 computer search stations for the public and a collection of two million books and other library materials.

Director

Vailey Oehlke

Human Resources Director

Johnette Easter

Equity Manager

Sonja Ervin

The library continues to move forward with addressing workforce equity. While there have been challenges throughout the pandemic, including building closures and staffing shortages, we have focused on addressing the systems of oppression that have and continue to negatively impact staff and those we serve.

The library has demonstrated intentionality in resource reallocations and increasing staffing for many of our knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) teams, including the addition of an Indigenous team in the last year. Increased KSA staffing doesn't only provide an opportunity to better serve our diverse communities — it also provides staff with greater connections with other staff who share their cultural experiences.

The library also allocated funding to hire an equity analyst. The equity analyst position supports the transformational equity work that the library is engaging in, and more specifically, this position will expand the work of supporting staff. The equity manager meets with all public services managers regularly to provide information and guidance on equity work with their teams.

We are seeing positive outcomes as managers gain more awareness and insight. Related to hiring, at the end of fiscal year 2022, staff of color (SOC) make up 63% of the regular workforce under the age of 35, while SOC account for 36% of all regular positions — a 4% increase from the end of 2021. The retention rate for staff of color at the end

of the 2022 fiscal year was 91.7%. It is important to acknowledge that this is slightly below the overall retention rate of 93.6%, so the library equity team is working to develop strategies to connect with new staff of color to support their transition into the library.

The library continues to find other opportunities to support staff most impacted by racism and oppression. In October 2020, after hearing from staff from Black, Indigenous and people of color communities about the emotional and physical safety concerns related to increasing protests, we asked staff who are at less risk of physical and emotional danger from hate groups to demonstrate their allyship by volunteering to work at other library locations as needed based on known rallies or demonstrations by hate groups. This effort provided opportunities for staff most affected by the public demonstrations to take time off or change locations during the protests.

The library recognizes the impacts of providing public services and the micro- and macroaggressions that are directed toward staff of color and other staff who are subjected to marginalization. To help support staff at Central Library, Central Library's Staff of Color group led the development, design, and creation of the Protected Identities Decompression Space (PIDS).

They described the space as: "Born out of discussions held in the Central Staff Of Color

(CSOC), the PIDS is meant to be a place for staff of marginalized identities to retreat to when they're experiencing physical, emotional, or mental violence or aggression due to discrimination on a macro or micro scale. The PIDS is a safe space for persons experiencing discrimination to be allowed to feel, express, and process their experience with the support that they need. Even if it's just to take a few breaths before getting back out there or deciding to go home."



The Central Library's Protected Identities Decompression Space (PIDS), before (left) and after (right).

Multnomah County Sheriff's Office

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office is committed to providing quality prevention, intervention, and rehabilitative services to the communities of Multnomah County. We improve the quality of life by reducing crime and the fear of crime through innovation, partnerships, and teamwork with the communities we serve.

Sheriff

Mike Reese

Human Resources Director

Jennifer Grogran

Equity and Inclusion Manager

Rebecca Sánchez

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) began its equity and inclusion journey in June 2020 when the first MCSO Equity and Inclusion (E&I) Manager was hired. In 2021, MCSO released a strategic plan that acknowledged the need for the agency to focus on equity to achieve its mission and a commitment to holding the agency accountable to the community's call for transformational reform and culture change.

In order to build infrastructure to support this journey, the E&I Manager position was moved to report directly to the Sheriff, and an Equity and Inclusion Unit was proposed and approved in the fiscal year 2022 budget process. The Equity and Inclusion Unit includes two additional full-time positions that focus on training, professional development, staff wellness, and retention.

In 2021, the E&I Manager was welcomed into the Policy Review Team, where the Policy Advisor and E&I Manager worked together on two primary initiatives:

- Creation of a Policy Communication Plan to increase access and inclusion for both community and internal staff comments during the Stakeholder Review process.
- Development of an MCSO Equity and Empowerment Lens toolkit specifically for the Policy Review Process. To support the toolkit, the Policy Review Team received a two-part training on the Equity and Empowerment Lens from a trainer from the

Office of Diversity and Equity. As of Spring 2022, the ["5 Ps Assessment Questions Worksheet"](#) is used at every MCSO Policy Review stage.

In addition to infrastructure development, MCSO invested in a different approach to learning informed by community demands for public safety reform. Informed by the many calls, a cohort of law enforcement professionals participated in a 12-week training series to better understand how history, identity, and trauma impact the interactions and relationships between law enforcement and marginalized communities. The E&I Manager collaborated with various community members who brought both subject matter expertise and lived experiences to co-develop the curriculum. Concepts and skills were built upon each other throughout the training in a progressively advancing sequence.

This different approach to training for MCSO helped normalize these concepts and strategies while operationalizing the concepts into daily work. One participant said, "Last summer, I kept hearing that I should be doing more learning about these topics. I thought, at the time, that I didn't need to. After this learning experience, I now know that learning this history is important for me as a police officer and a human being."

To address retention concerns, MCSO developed the Mentorship Guidance Initiative (MGI) for new hires. Mentors were solicited, selected, and trained

in collaboration with the E&I Manager and a cross-agency workgroup. The program entered the pilot phase in spring of 2022 in the Law Enforcement Division, with all new recruits assigned a mentor at hire. The MGI is slated to be rolled out to all MCSO staff.

Additional equity-related accomplishments from the last fiscal year include:

- Adding an Equity and Inclusion Unit page to the MCSO staff intranet that includes information on the WESP; definitions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (D.E.I.); and information about Employee Resource Groups, the MCSO E&I Committee, and Learning Resources.
- Adding a “Safety, Trust and Belonging at MCSO” D.E.I. presentation to our New Hire Orientation. The MCSO Equity & Inclusion Committee co-developed the presentation and a rotating member of the committee co-presents.
- Giving all newly promoted managers a D.E.I. presentation within the first month of promotion. The content focuses on the WESP, equity strategies, best practices regarding inclusion, psychological safety, and manager support resources.
- Adding a Sworn Outreach Recruiter position to the HR Unit.
- Putting on or participating in diversity outreach events and activities. That included a public safety recruitment event hosted by the Somali American Council of Oregon (SACO) in response to Somali-American community requests for more staff representation, as well as a September community hiring event in alignment with National Police Woman Day on Sept. 8. The MCSO E&I Manager facilitated a panel of female-identifying staff from all divisions to speak about their experience working in public safety.



Mentorship Guidance Initiative Mentors and Program Co-leads (from left to right): Sergeant Aaron Sieczkowski, Deputy Cassidy Malchow, Deputy Jason Maury, Detective Jonathan Swick, and E&I Manager Rebecca Sánchez.

An evolving landscape for equity

The last five years have brought a change in federal administration, a global pandemic, extreme weather events, and mass protests against racial discrimination and police violence. These events shifted our collective understanding of racism in the United States and the role of the government in eradicating racism in our society. We are continuing to evolve our language, our perspectives, and our practices to make sense of our new landscape, learn from where we've been, and ensure that racial equity is a foundational part of our ongoing work.

Retaining diversity in management by supporting managers with marginalized identities

When the WESP was first adopted in 2018, one of the goals included increasing opportunities for hiring, promotion, and retention of employees of color into management-level positions, especially middle management. Demographic data consistently pointed to diversity among frontline staff and senior management but not as much among frontline supervisors and middle management.

The concerns brought forward in the WESP were not only related to diversity, but to the need for increased support and preparation for managers to successfully and equitably support an increasingly diverse staff. Many of the stories that employees of color shared featured managers and supervisors as antagonists. This led to recommendations in the WESP to increase both support and accountability for managers and supervisors.

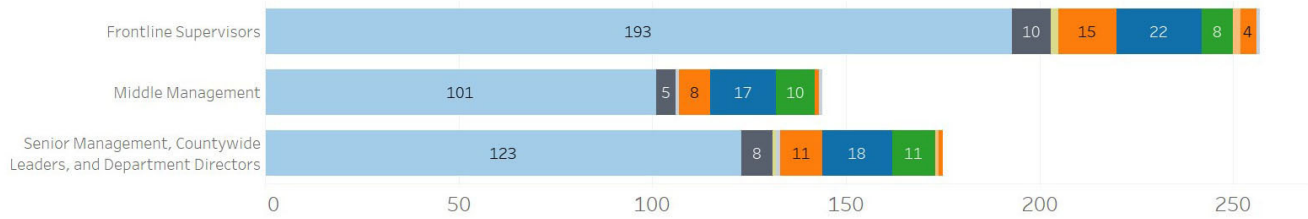
Over the course of the WESP implementation, the County has experienced increased diversity among all employee groups, including frontline supervisors and middle management. Since 2019, the percentage of frontline supervisors of color has increased by 12% and the percentage in middle management has increased by 7%. At the same time, diversity among frontline staff has also increased 6%.

The WESP was primarily designed to address

the concerns and needs of represented staff. Over the last four years, however, managers with marginalized identities, especially managers of color, have uplifted several issues to be addressed in support of their success in the workplace. The Managers of Color Employee Resource Group reported negative experiences with microaggressions, systemic racism, and a lack of support in managing insubordination from staff who identify as white. Complaints increased with new reporting systems available to all employees regardless of identity.

The dynamics that existed five years ago have expanded. Where we were focused on addressing issues that emerged among white managers managing diverse teams, we are now also developing strategies to support BIPOC managers who are managing mostly white teams and managing diverse teams. The updates regarding the Leadership Expectations and Accountability Program (LEAP) and the results from the Office of Diversity and Equity's (ODE) exit interview pilot provide a snapshot of the County's efforts to address manager accountability, manager coaching, and support while recognizing the specific needs of managers of color.

Count of Regular Represented and Non-Represented Employees by Race/Ethnicity - 2019

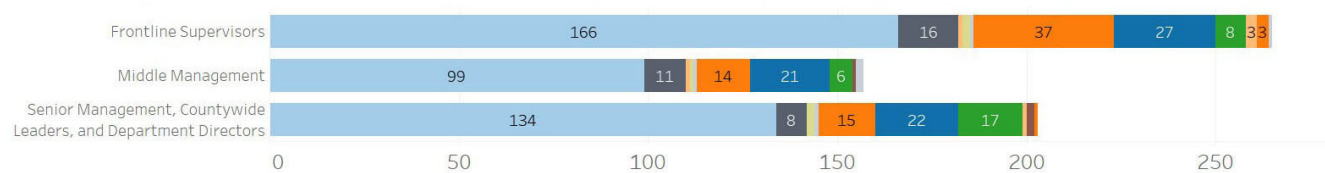


Percentage of Regular Represented and Regular Non-Represented Employees by Race/Ethnicity- 2019

| | White | Two or More Races | Slavic | Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | Middle Eastern | Latino or Hispanic | Black or African American | Asian | American Indian or Alaska Native | African | Decline to Answer | Unknown |
|---|-------|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| Non-Supervising Frontline Staff | 64% | 4% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 12% | 8% | 8% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 1% |
| Frontline Supervisors | 75% | 4% | | 1% | | 6% | 9% | 3% | 1% | | 2% | 0% |
| Middle Management | 70% | 3% | | | 1% | 6% | 12% | 7% | | | 1% | 1% |
| Senior Management, Countywide Leaders, and Department Directors | 70% | 5% | | 1% | 1% | 6% | 10% | 6% | 1% | | 1% | |



Count of Regular Represented and Non-Represented Employees by Race/Ethnicity - 2022



Percentage of Regular Represented and Regular Non-Represented Employees by Race/Ethnicity- 2022

| | White | Two or More Races | Slavic | Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | Middle Eastern | Latino or Hispanic | Black or African American | Asian | American Indian or Alaska Native | African | Decline to Answer | Unknown |
|---|-------|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| Non-Supervising Frontline Staff | 58% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 13% | 8% | 9% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| Frontline Supervisors | 63% | 6% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 14% | 10% | 3% | 1% | | 1% | 0% |
| Middle Management | 63% | 7% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 9% | 13% | 4% | | 1% | | 1% |
| Senior Management, Countywide Leaders, and Department Directors | 66% | 4% | | 1% | 0% | 7% | 11% | 8% | 0% | 1% | 0% | |



Workforce Equity Strategic Plan Committee

The Workforce Equity Strategic Plan Committee (WESP Committee) was developed to support effective, meaningful, and transformational change through the implementation of the strategies outlined in the WESP. The purpose of this committee was two-fold: to provide shared accountability and oversight for implementation of the WESP, and to offer continuous connection and communication with people affected by the County's workforce equity efforts, whether internal or within our communities.

The WESP Committee, sponsored by the County Chair and facilitated and staffed by ODE, intentionally engaged all County departments and non-departmental units, staff from the Board of County Commissioner offices, Employee Resource Groups, multiple functions across the organization, union leadership, and key external partners.

This group of individuals who served as advocates for building, implementing, and supporting the WESP was not only diverse, but also quite large. Initially drafted as a 36-member committee, meetings at times grew to include more than 60 individuals. They could host broad discussions, offering updates about centralized efforts and department-specific work. When shifting to remote meetings during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee leveraged technology to host presentations and updates on Countywide initiatives that helped prepare staff to present in front of the Board of County Commissioners.

However, there were challenges with managing a large committee. At times, virtual meetings grew as large as 80 participants, making it difficult to facilitate and ensure that group agreements were respected and maintained. Coordinating the committee took substantial staff capacity, as did the follow-up after each meeting. While the large group meetings provided a space for updates, the majority of the work was accomplished in smaller subcommittees, such as the Inclusively Leading with Race Subcommittee.

The WESP Committee was impacted by the

pandemic, as much of the capacity to facilitate this group was redirected to the County's Emergency Operations Center for several months. This led to a hiatus between March and September 2020. Four virtual meetings were held between fall 2020 and spring 2021 to share briefings by: Central HR, the LEAP Project Manager, Complaints Investigations Unit, ODE Civil Rights Policy Unit, and members of the Inclusively Leading with Race Design Team. Those briefings preceded briefings to the Board of County Commissioners in spring 2021 and contemporaneous Wednesday Wire coverage in lieu of a 2020 WESP Annual Report.

Given these structural and capacity considerations, the WESP Committee has been on hiatus since spring 2021. However, the reorganization of this committee is an important consideration and goal for the WESP Renewal process.

When thinking about the future of this committee, a few themes emerged from lessons learned:

- Diversity across job classification, protected class identity, departments, subject matter expertise, and community spaces was essential and one of the committee's greatest strengths when it came to identifying gaps in analysis and finding innovative solutions.
- The size of the committee greatly impacted the ability of the committee to focus and to address specific issues. While it provided an engaging and interactive space for debating larger questions regarding our vision and mission, these discussions came at the cost of providing practical solutions for more technical questions regarding operations.
- The WESP Committee provided crucial accountability to the WESP through engagement. Progress reports and conversations on tracking, monitoring, and measuring progress generated buy-in for workforce equity efforts.
- Differentiating between practitioners, whose job descriptions explicitly direct them to implement workforce equity, and stakeholders, whose jobs are impacted by workforce equity efforts, is essential.

Practitioners need a space for peer support from each other and feedback from stakeholders.

This annual report, which fulfills one of the committee's main expectations, reflects the County's progress in implementing the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan. The report also meets the committee's commitment to identifying findings, recommendations, and updates to the strategic plan.

What's next: The 2023 WESP renewal process

As we prepare to renew the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan to guide our next five years, we have the opportunity to apply what has been accomplished to date, the opportunities for improvement we've identified, the feedback we've received regarding the focus areas, and the lessons we've learned.

Our approach will be one that is collaborative and ensures employees are engaged in a meaningful and impactful process that centers those most impacted by racial disparities in the workplace. We will apply the Equity and Empowerment Lens to address communications, resources, evaluation, and metrics related to operationalizing workforce equity.

There will be a review of the WESP focus areas based on feedback from those charged with implementing the WESP, as well as those who contributed to this first iteration of the plan. The WESP review will also consider the barriers and opportunities that emerged during the last five years of implementation. The goal of the renewal process will be to finalize recommendations that will allow for the implementation of the WESP from fiscal year 2024 through fiscal year 2028.

