



# Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Report **Appendix**

January 2024

## Department/Agency Status Reports

The following is a review and summary of the County's equity initiatives by department/agency containing:

- Overview of the agency/department
- The Year in Review (CY2023) - Summary of actions/work/results for the current calendar year
- Looking Forward (CY2024) - Summary of specific equity commitments/actions for the upcoming year.

Included in the review and summary are details on the following:

- A summary of where and how resources dedicated to equity initiatives were allocated
- An analysis of equity results as measured against benchmarks
- A description of how the County collected the reported data and made it accessible to the public
- Updates on benchmarks and description of changes in equity initiatives for the coming year

# Annual Equity Report/ Department Summary Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts

## Department/ Agency Overview

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts serves the citizens of Cuyahoga County and all justice system stakeholders in an efficient, effective, and ethical manner.

The operations of the Clerk of Courts are regulated by rules, code sections, and policies. These rules include Ohio Revised Code Section 2303, Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio 44-47, Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure, Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure, Ohio Rules of Appellate Procedure, Cuyahoga County Local Rules, Record Retention Schedule, Administrative Orders, as well as Cuyahoga County Regulations (i.e., Cuyahoga County Charter, County Ordinances, etc.).

Our mission is to perform all statutory duties in the filing, preservation, retrieval and public dissemination of court documents and records pertaining to the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, General Division (34 judges), Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division (5 judges), and the Eighth District Court of Appeals (12 judges), and the Board of Revision. We also collect, hold, and disburse fees and costs paid to the court in a secure, timely, and cost-effective manner.

We also offer the following ancillary services:

**Child Support Payments-** In 2017, the Clerk of Courts began accepting cash payments for child support. Since implementing the service, the agency has collected approximately \$800,000.

**Passports-** In 2017, our office was designated a Passport Acceptance Facility on behalf of the Department of State. Our employees received training and are authorized as U.S. Passport Acceptance Agents responsible for taking passport photographs and processing passport applications.

**Online Bond Posting-** In November of 2022, the Clerk of Courts began offering online bond posting services in addition to in-person service. The online bond posting process provides the public with the opportunity to post an inmate bond from any internet accessible device 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. Since implementing the service, the agency has processed approximately 368 online bonds.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts Office has one contract that has been in place since 2015. This contract is a Sole Source contract with Midwest Presort Mailing for all statutorily mandated mail related services. The Clerk of Courts utilizes the County Print Shop for all printing needs including forms, folders, etc. and all office supplies are purchased from W.B. Mason.

In July 2020, Cuyahoga County and County Council declared racism a public health crisis in Cuyahoga County. Seventeen members were appointed to serve on the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity ("CACE") to oversee and report on equity efforts undertaken by the County. Clerk of Courts Nailah K. Byrd was asked by former County

Executive Armond Budish to serve as the County Liaison for the CACE. In this capacity, Clerk Byrd has assisted the Department of Equity and Inclusion with securing and implementing mandatory DEI trainings for County staff. Additionally, Clerk Byrd and her team attend the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) monthly meetings. Clerk Byrd and her team also prepare, coordinate, participate and staff all CACE subcommittee and full body meetings, and work with CACE members to further equity work within our County. In her capacity as the CACE County Liaison, Clerk Byrd is currently working to secure an informal Request for Proposal to conduct a CACE Community Survey which will capture and highlight lived experiences with racism and other inequities.

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts understands the importance of workforce equity in every area of employee development from onboarding through promotional opportunities. The Clerk of Courts office is currently staffed with eighty (80) employees.

The general demographic outline of all Clerk of Courts staff is listed below:

- 60 Females
- 20 Males
  
- 37 African Americans
- 42 Caucasians
- 1 LatinX

The demographic outline for agency leadership and administrative staff is listed below:

- 1 Chief of Staff (1 vacancy)
- 3 Managers (1 vacancy)
  - 1 African American woman
  - 1 Caucasian woman
  - 1 Caucasian man
  - The current vacancy is staffed by a Caucasian woman serving in a Temporary Work Level.
- 10 Division Supervisors (3 vacancies)
  - 1 African American man
  - 3 African American women
  - 1 LatinX woman
  - 2 Caucasian women
  - 3 Caucasian men
  - 1 of the current vacancies is staffed by a African American man serving in a Temporary Work Level.
  - 1 of the current vacancies is staffed by a Caucasian man serving in a Temporary Work Level.
- 2 Special Assistants
  - 1 African American woman
  - 1 Caucasian woman
- 1 Executive Assistant
  - 1 African American woman
- 1 Administrative Assistant
  - 1 Caucasian woman

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts office interviews candidates with the goal to fill vacancies with qualified individuals seeking to continue or begin a career with our office. All agency vacancy job postings are listed on the Cuyahoga County Department of Human Resources website until filled. All Clerk of Courts job descriptions include a diversity statement which deems Cuyahoga County and the Clerk of Courts office an equal opportunity employer.

New employee recruitment is the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources. However, the Clerk of Courts office believes the representation of diversity is critical before, during and after an employee's onboarding process. All Clerk of Court interview panels include a diverse group of senior level agency employees. All panel members represent different races, genders and have various years of public service and agency tenure. This year we were pleased to welcome fifteen (15) new staff members to our team. We empower all Clerk of Courts employees to perform at their best with the full and unwavering support of agency leadership.

Cuyahoga County awarded a contract to Cuyahoga Community College ("Tri-C") to provide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training to all Cuyahoga County employees under the authority of the County Executive, including the Clerk of Courts office. 88 % of Clerk of Courts staff attended the "All Staff Town Hall" DEI Training sessions. The remaining 12% of Clerk of Courts staff are newly hired employees who have not yet had an opportunity to attend the training. All Supervisors and Managers attended the DEI Management Training. Clerk Byrd also previously attended the Leadership Training, Management Training, and 1 on 1 coaching sessions with Dr. Marlon Moore. The Clerk of Courts understands the importance of DEI training and requires all staff to attend all DEI training opportunities.

The Clerk of Courts will not only attend this year's DEI training for County Leadership and Management but will also participate in this year's Executive Coaching sessions with County Senior Leaders and Dr. Marlon Moore.

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts and her senior staff attend several equity training webinars including, but not limited to the Equity Zone Map/Policy webinar, the DEI Scorecard webinar, the Equity Assessment Tool webinar, as well as several Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts offered by outside agencies and organizations. Agency staff members who attend these seminars serve as leaders for the agency to provide guidance and direction on diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts office will continue to increase awareness and understanding related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the year 2024.

## Department/Agency: Department of Development

*The Charter of Cuyahoga County, adopted by the voters in 2009, defines the mission of the Cuyahoga County Department of Development as follows:*

The Department of Development shall coordinate the programs and activities of the officers, departments, agencies, boards, and commissions of the County that relate to economic development, including identification of the causes of unemployment and economic underdevelopment among segments of the population and within communities in the County and the development of programs and activities to remedy such conditions.

To carry out this mission, in 2023 the Department of Development employed 33 staff and contracted with more than 15 outside nonprofit agencies to deliver services to Cuyahoga County residents and businesses. Staff were organized into two major divisions – Community Development/Housing and Economic Development/Skill Up. Administrative and business staff supported both divisions.

Two-thirds of the Department’s senior leadership team in 2023, and one-third of all the managers and supervisors in the Department of Development in 2023 were African American.

In April of 2023, the County Council created the Department of Housing and Community Development which was formerly part of the part of Development. The creation of the new department essentially divided the Department of Development into two departments, Development and the Department of Housing and Community Development. The year 2024 will reflect those changes of Housing and Community Development being its own department.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The Department of Development does very limited purchasing and contracting for its own operational needs. By far, the greatest amount of purchasing and contracting done by Department of Development staff is for specific County-funded programs. Work to advance equity in these programs is discussed below. With regards to purchasing and contracting for its own operational needs, the Department of Development submitted its two-year purchasing forecast in a timely manner both in 2022 and in 2023. All 2023 purchasing and contracting for the Department of Development’s own operational needs known in advance, was listed on this forecast.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

As noted in the introduction, two-thirds of the Department of Development’s senior leadership team in 2023 was African American, and one-third of all supervisors in 2023 were African American.

The Department of Development used the official job descriptions approved by the Personnel Review Commission in posting for two vacant classified and two unclassified positions during 2023. All outreach was done by Human Resources. Applicants for classified positions were tested by the Personnel Review Commission using Personnel Review Commission-developed tests. One interview panel was used to fill classified management positions. This three-member interview panel included one African American man and one woman.

The Department of Development will fill one classified senior management position during 2024 (Economic Development Administrator) and plans to post another senior position (Senior Business Development Officer). The job description for each position includes specific requirements to advance diversity and equity through the work of the position. Outreach for the senior management position was done by Human Resources using expanded on-line tools, and through professional networks which include significant numbers of African American and female professionals. The interview panels for these positions will include one African-American and female representation. Specific diversity and equity questions will be included in the interviews for these positions.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Economic development, community development, workforce development, and housing programs operated by the Department of Development in 2023 were all consciously designed and operated to advance equity. For example:

The Department of Development was actively engaged in the utilization of the Equity Zones Map and Policy throughout 2023 while working with our capital partners for business retention, expansion and attraction (BRE&A) and actively supported its Countywide adoption.

The Department of Development actively worked with small business ecosystem partners to create events and collaborative programming the support MBEs with a variety of support services such as technical assistance, procurement and funding opportunities. The Department of Development worked with MBE developers to assist them in navigating the landscape and support opportunities in commercial real estate development. The Department of Development worked with eight (8) MBE commercial real estate developers outlining how county programs can support their projects and connecting them with ecosystem partners and other resources.

The Department of Development participated in a number of MBE focused events with two signature events in 2023. The County “Pitch-Day” event in which the Department of Development met with 100 small businesses with over 50% being MBEs informing them of the numerous ways the county supports small businesses and connecting each one with our small business ecosystem partners. Others include follow-up with 67 MBE STIMulus grant award winners connecting them with additional resources to assist in their continued growth and scale, Lastly, the Department of Development participated in the Cleveland Clinic Procurement Construction Fair providing resources for 3 shifts as the fair ran multiple shifts to give MBEs an opportunity to participate at their leisure.

The Department of Development actively tracks participation in all our small business support, job creation, and SkillUp incumbent worker training programs by race, ethnicity, and gender. These statistics are used to evaluate the impact of each type of programming on homeowners, renters, business owners, and workers and to focus outreach where needed to ensure under-represented groups receive these County-funded services. This information is made public through the online Cuyahoga Performance reporting system.

The following statistics are noteworthy for 2023:

- In the Department of Development’s SkillUp incumbent worker training program, 53.81% of the employees trained during 2023 (most recent available data) were African American, compared to 47.19% of other races or unknown.
- Across the Department of Development’s small business support programs, 65.13% of businesses assisted in 2023 were African American owned, compared with 34.86% with owners of other races or unknown.
- Jobs created and retained due to the Department of Development’s direct lending programs in 2023 (most recent available data) were held 25.82% by African American workers, compared with 74.18% held by workers of other races.
- Outreach to more than 200 MBEs to connect them with ecosystem partners for technical assistance, funding, workforce, training, marketing and business growth strategies.

Above and beyond its general Countywide outreach to under-represented groups, the Department of Development leadership actively engaged with leaders of the southeast Cleveland, East Cleveland and the Central neighborhood of Cleveland, other municipalities, and small business groups, throughout 2023, to increase the impact of County-funded small business supports and County-funded job preparation and employment matching work.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

In 2024, the Department of Development will continue to follow all procurement policies. This will include providing all known future procurement in the 24-month forecast. The Department of Development will work with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to identify a way to better inform all suppliers, especially diverse vendors, of new programs that lead to same-year procurement opportunities, beyond those included in the 24- month forecast.

With regard to SBE set aside and SBE/MBE/WBE goal setting, the Department of Development will work with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to develop a way to measure the actual participation of minority professional staff and minority leadership in nonprofit organizations that often are the only qualified vendors for our funded programs. This may provide an alternative to the current structure which is mainly suited to setting goals for profit vendors. Additionally, the Department of Development will work with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to leverage the current private sector emphasis on “ESG” (Environmental, Social, and Governance) tracking and reporting to track and incentivize the use of diverse suppliers by nonprofit organizations directly receiving Department of Development funding.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

While the Department of Development is almost fully staffed for its current functions, new programming may lead to expansion of staffing in 2024. The Department of Development will work closely with Human Resources and the



Personnel Review Commission to ensure that job descriptions for any new positions follow best practices for inclusivity and that minimum and preferred job requirements are skills based not credential based. The Department of Development will follow these same best practices with Human Resources and the Personnel Review Commission in review of existing job descriptions.

The Department of Development will fully support Human Resources in targeting outreach for new hiring to under-represented groups. The Department of Development will ensure that all interview panels are diverse and that diversity questions are included in all interviews, especially interviews for management and supervisory positions.

The Department of Development will continue its current practice of encouraging all staff to join statewide and national organizations where they can network and learn additional skills to advance their careers. Subject to budget limitations, the Department of Development will continue its current practice of identifying and paying for specific external training in skills relevant to advancement within the department for front line staff with a conscious diversity impact. The Department of Development will encourage all eligible staff to utilize County paid secondary education opportunities.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Due to the creation of the new Department of Housing and Community Development in 2023, the opportunity to continue to use the Equity Zone Map and Policy to give priority consideration to projects that impact Equity Zones in competitive community development grant programs has shifted to the new department. Development itself will continue to use the Equity Zone Map and Policy as an element of its social impact analysis for potential investments by County-supported Opportunity Zone funds.

The Department of Development will continue to work with the board of the Cuyahoga County Community Improvement Corporation (CCCIC) on policies to require specific measurable goals for minority participation in economic development projects that receive direct County funding. This is important because the CCCIC, as an independent body, may not be limited to addressing past intentional discrimination, as the County itself is.

The Department of Development will continue to collect, analyze, and report disaggregated data on residents, business owners, and workers served by its funded programs. The Department of Development will continue to engage with the Department of Equity and Diversity to integrate the Equity Analysis Tool with its current use of this disaggregated data.

The Department of Development will continue to engage with networks of private, nonprofit, and municipal leaders that can connect its programs and funding opportunities with groups of residents and business owners. For example, the Department of Development leadership will continue to directly engage with minority business support organizations and with leadership of neighborhoods and municipalities with a large minority population and business presence.

# Board of Revision Annual Equity Report 2023

## Department/Agency Status Reports

The Cuyahoga County Board of Revision is a quasi-judicial body that is tasked with hearing various complaints as dictated by [Revised Code Chapter 5715](#) and [Cuyahoga County Charter Section 6.02](#).

The main complaints presented before the Board of Revision are Complaints Against the Valuation of Real Property. The Board also has authority to render decisions on various other complaints as allowed by the Revised Code.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

*Provide a summary of your actions to advance supplier diversity. Include updates on the commitments made in this area in the 2023 Annual Equity Report.*

The Board of Revision does not solicit suppliers. We typically do not purchase more than office supplies, and we purchase almost all supplies through the County's contract with W.B. Mason.

*The following are "guiding questions" (not required questions) for which your responses may serve as the basis for your overall response/summary for this section.*

*Were any of the goods and/or services for your agency procured using the SBE Set Aside Program? No.*

*Are you working with any external and/or internal partners to increase SBE/MBE/WBEs in the industry related to your department's mission/goals? No.*

*Did your department/agency submit accurate, timely, and comprehensive updates to the 24-month purchasing forecast?*

*Did your department/agency comply with the 30-day minimum solicitation period for formal Bids, RFPs, and RFQs? The Board of Revision did not solicit any bids, RFPs, or RFQs in 2023.*

*Did your procurement staff attend available trainings to ensure understanding of the County's supplier diversity program requirements?*

No. Our staff person who orders supplies had a meeting conflict on a date when training was available.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

*Provide a summary of your actions to advance workforce equity. Include updates on the commitments made in this area in the 2023 Annual Equity Report.*

*The Board of Revision is fortunate to have a relatively stable staff. Our three-person management staff has not had any turnover in over three-and-a-half years. We had one hearing officer out of nine resign in 2023, and the person who stepped into that role had been a temporary hearing officer for over a year. We had one administrative-support staff member transfer to another department in 2023. Our workload was manageable enough that we did not need to replace that person when she left. (We anticipate a relatively light workload in 2024, but a significant increase in 2025. We will likely need to fill this position by late 2024 to train the new person to do the job.) We promoted three administrative-support staff members to a higher-level classification in 2023.*

*The following are “guiding questions” (not required questions) for which your responses may serve as the basis for your overall response/summary for this section.*

*Did you hire personnel for your department this year? No. We changed one staff person’s status from temporary to permanent, but we did not hire any new staff in 2023.*

*If yes, did the recruitment strategy for the vacant position(s) involve job posting(s) and/or outreach collaboration(s) with diverse community organizations and/or culturally specific groups or entities?*

*For the vacant positions, did the job descriptions include work experience equivalents for formal education requirements? N/A*

*For the vacant positions for which you performed interviews, what were the demographics (i.e., race and gender) of your interview panels? N/A*

*If you did interviews for a supervisor/management/leadership position, did the interview include a “diversity, equity, and inclusion” question? N/A*

*Provide details on your specific efforts to support and champion diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings with your staff. The BOR’s management staff makes training opportunities available to all staff members. Some of the training opportunities are from staff members who request to attend training. Others are training opportunities that management sends to staff. Generally, we open most training opportunities to all staff members regardless of classification. We must balance the number of staff members attending training sessions with operational needs.*

*Provide details on trainings related diversity, equity, and inclusion attended by your staff. We notify staff members when DEI sends training opportunities whether these are mandatory or voluntary.*

*Provide details on specific actions your agency is taking to promote equitable development and promotion within your agency amongst all demographics (i.e., race, gender, ethnicity...). The BOR’s management staff makes training opportunities available to all staff members. Generally, we open most training opportunities to all staff members regardless of classification.*

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

*Provide a summary of your efforts/actions to advance equity in your programs, policies, and services. Include updates on the commitments made in this area in the 2023 Annual Equity Report.*

*The Board of Revision’s programs and services are mostly driven by members of the public. The Fiscal Office has community-outreach events at various times. Our office usually participates in those events. We also work with County’s Communications Department to notify the public about our services—particularly complaints regarding property valuation.*

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned actions/commitments to advance supplier diversity. The Board of Revision likely cannot increase supplier diversity. We generally do not engage suppliers for anything other than office supplies, and we use County's contract with W.B. Mason for those orders.*

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned actions to advance workforce equity. The Board of Revision does not anticipate vacancies in 2024. If we do, we will work with HR to recruit a diverse applicant pool for those positions. We will also continue to offer training to our staff, including both mandatory and optional DEI training.*

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned efforts/actions to advance equity in your programs, policies, and services. The Board of Revision's services to the public are mostly driven by citizens and taxpayers filing complaints and appeals with our office. That limits the impact that the Board of Revision's management and staff can have on advancing equity in our programs. I am interested to hear from DEI any suggestions for how we might be able to do this.*

# Cuyahoga County Department of Consumer Affairs / Fiscal

The Department of Consumer Affairs makes sure people who live or shop in Cuyahoga County get what they pay for. Weights and Measures inspectors protect consumers by testing and sealing devices including grocery scales and gas pumps. Consumer Protection Division investigators delve into consumer complaints against businesses. Consumer Affairs serves as a clearinghouse for Scam Squad, a multidisciplinary financial fraud task force that helps Cuyahoga County residents spot, avoid and report scams.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### Using the Equity Zone Map

- Consumer Affairs used the county's Equity Zone Map to ensure our messaging reached underserved residents. Our outreach largely consists of presentations, educational Scamo bingo games and tabling/outreach events. In 2023, when we received a request for an event, we checked it against the DEI zone map. Using the map had an overall positive impact on our outreach. If we were already booked on a date but got a DEI zone request we tried to squeeze it onto our calendar when possible. From Jan. 2 through Dec. 12, 2023, Consumer Affairs booked 106 events, and 70 of those were in DEI zones.
- Consumer Affairs oversaw, with the Department of Sustainability and the Solid Waste District, the Sustainable Stores grant program, which offered small retailers up to \$5,000 to create programs to help them switch from plastic to reusable bags. Stores in DEI zones were given preference for grants, and a tool that helped identify whether stores were in a DEI zone was embedded in the application map. (Administration of the program has since moved to the Department of Sustainability. Please see the Sustainability report for the stats.)

### Programming for more diverse groups:

- Consumer Affairs continued to push Internet Safety information to low-income residents who were newly connected to broadband. Our Scam Squad partners wanted to ensure new computer users could protect their devices and themselves from scams. We partnered with PCs for People and digital navigators at 18 internet connectivity events.
- In June, we partnered with the Ashbury Center's Digital Literacy and Technology Training Center to do a show on WOUV 95.9 FM, which broadcasts in the Kinsman area, to share info about internet safety with residents.
- In 2023, Consumer Affairs and its Scam Squad partners launched the Scam Squad Alerts on Ready Notify program. This program allows people to receive refresher information about scams to ensure they are able to easily identify and avoid scams. This program is for all residents, but it allows people who are sight-impaired or who do not read English to receive scam alerts in multiple ways, including by phone.

## **Actions to advance workforce equity**

- In 2023, we used a diverse interview panel (both gender and race) when we hired a Weights and Measures supervisor.
- The Director participated in the June 15 Mid-Year Equity Summit, “Intentionally All In,” to explore ways to embed diversity into county operations and policies.
- We require all employees who were not in place during the Tri-C-led diversity training in 2022 to take DEI training as it becomes available. We currently have 10 staff members. All have taken DEI classes except the newest, who just joined our staff.

## **Looking Forward (CY2024)**

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Consumer Affairs will continue to work with HR to make sure our job postings reach diverse organizations, so that we can attract a wider range of candidates if we have an opening.
- We will continue to use the Equity Zone Map to calibrate whether we’re reaching the county’s most vulnerable residents.
- Our plan for 2024 is to connect with refugee groups through the just-announced refugee center to provide services and information to new immigrants.

## Department/Agency: Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Prior to May 25, 2021, the Office of Procurement and Diversity (OPD) developed, administered, and enforced several diversity programs related to county purchasing and contracting. On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved [Ordinance No. O2021-0006](#) establishing a Department of Purchasing, [Ordinance No. O2021-0007](#) establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and [Ordinance No. O2021-0008](#) dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. Specifically, The Department of Equity and Inclusion is part of the Fiscal Office and is responsible for enhancing equity in program and policy development within County government by coordinating with the County Equity Commission, the Citizens Advisory Council on Equity, and the various departments under the jurisdiction of the County Executive.

The Department's duties include:

- Increasing participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) in County contracting and purchasing opportunities
- Working with the Office of Innovation and Performance, developing metrics and reports regarding whether County agencies meet or exceed their MWBE contracting goals
- Working with the Human Resources Department to develop and implement programs, training, and assessment to build a culture of equity, with respect to race, gender, and sexual orientation throughout County government, including in hiring and promotion
- Serving as an ombudsman to accept and evaluate inquiries and complaints from the public regarding implementation of the County's equity initiatives and to coordinate and facilitate community input

The Department of Equity and Inclusion conducts a Disparity Study every five (5) years. All such studies are designed to meet the legal standards established by court rulings with respect to the constitutionality of programs intended to encourage greater participation of women and minorities in our economy. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, evaluates the recommendations of the Disparity Study and provides advice to the Executive regarding the implementation of said recommendations, if any. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, monitors the effectiveness of the implemented recommendations and reports same to the Executive and Council at least once per calendar year.

The Department of Equity and Inclusion is budgeted for 9 FTEs (i.e., 1 Director; 1 Senior Contract Compliance Officer, 1 Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, and 6 Contract Compliance Officers).

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

- **Implementation of Ordinance O2021-0013 (enacted on 11/10/21):** In accordance with the 2020 Disparity Study recommendations and Executive Order Nos. EO2021-0001 through EO2021-0004, DEI proceeded with reviewing and implementing improvements to its supplier diversity program by proceeding with said recommendations. On November 9, 2021, County Council approved Ordinance No. O2021-0013 amending the SBE Policy and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting the MBE/WBE Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21. Key updates implemented include:
  - Extension of the SBE/MBE/WBE certification period from 1 year to 2 years – reduces processing requirements on vendors yet retains ability to confirm and maintain accurate SBE/MBE/WBE records
  - Contract by contract goal setting narrowly tailored to each County project – MBE and WBE Goals are established by determining the available MBEs/WBEs using the latest Disparity Study data for each scope of work within a procurement and weighting that availability based on the percentage that scope represents within the procurement
  - Informal RFBs/RFPs/RFQs – includes notification to DEI and SBE/MBE/WBEs of the business opportunity as part of the solicitation process and 2nd effort as applicable
  - SBE/MBE/WBE Prime vendor credit – provides up to a 20% credit for diversity participation goal for one diversity category only
  - Definitive Good Faith Effort Criteria - increased focus on vendors providing details on effort to attain each pertinent diversity participation category and submitting documentation of their good faith effort to achieve participation for each pertinent diversity category
  - Creation of an Administrative Reconsideration Panel – provides a vendor appeal process for DEI’s determination of non-compliance with diversity goals for apparent successful vendor
  - Diversity Goal Compliance for RFPs/RFQs- For RFPs and RFQs, once the scope of work and/or price, terms, and conditions have been finalized but in advance of submission for approval by the pertinent contracting authority, requires that the department confirms with DEI that the proposed contract/purchase is compliant with the diversity participation goals and/or Good Faith Efforts requirements
  - Data collection reform – includes creation close out & subcontractor utilization form to document final contract subcontractor participation (SBEs, MBEs, WBEs, and non-SBE/MBE/WBEs) and to collect data on subcontractor utilization on contracts and purchases
  - Changes to the composition of the Grievance Hearing Board – provides flexibility on the three (3) county personnel that can be appointed by the Cuyahoga County Executive
  - 30 day posting of bid opportunities – details that all reasonable efforts shall be made to post formal bids/RFPs/RFQs for goods and services for no fewer than thirty (30) days
  - Posting of 24 month purchasing and contracting forecast – requires that DEI work with County departments/agencies to prepare a 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast that will be updated biannually
  - Expand the use of the Small Business Set Aside Program – provides details on the criteria used to select SBE Set Aside procurements and requires that DEI work with County departments/agencies to determine SBE Set Aside procurements as part of the biannual updates to the 24-month purchasing and contracting forecast
  - **Supplier Diversity Spend (YTD CY2023):** As of December 31, 2023, in CY2023, there have been 147 formal competitive procurements (i.e., Formal RFBs, RFPs, and RFQs) completed. For these procurements, the CY2023 supplier diversity spend breakdown is as follows:
    - Total Awards: \$150,861,162.17
    - Total SBE/MBE/WBE Awards: \$12,075,294.91 (8.00%)
      - SBE Awards: \$5,213,002.95 (3.46%)



- MBE Awards: \$4,576,859.39 (3.03%)
  - WBE Awards: \$2,285,432.57 (1.51%)
- Note:** The total SBE/MBE/WBE Awards does not include the federal/state DBE Award value; but the Total Awards does include the federal/state contract award value.*

- **County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair:** The Department of Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Purchasing collaborated on the Cuyahoga County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair. The Cuyahoga County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair was held on Thursday, July 13th from 9am to noon at Cuyahoga County’s Harvard Avenue Facility. More than 120 people representing approximately 100 businesses attended. At this event, businesses were able to:
  - Meet County Procurement Staff (DEI, Development, DoIT, HHS, HR, Purchasing, PW, and Sheriff)
  - Share their business’ offerings, expertise, and qualifications
  - Learn about the goods and services Cuyahoga County plans to buy
  - Learn about the County’s small business loans and Skill Up 2.0 Program
  - Get Face-to-Face Personal Assistance with:
    - Registering in the Cuyahoga County Supplier Portal System
    - Downloading and utilizing the County’s Purchasing and Contracting Forecast
    - Viewing current County bids, RFPs, and RFQs for goods and services
    - Submitting bids, proposals, and/or qualifications
    - Understanding and preparing the standard required procurement documents
    - Applying for Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), and/or Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certification with Cuyahoga County
  
- **“How to Do Business with the County” Program:** DEI is proceeding with the development and implementation of the “How to Do Business with the County” Program. In collaboration with pertinent County departments/agencies, DEI will develop and implement programs/initiatives to assist vendors/citizens with maneuvering the myriad of county processes and procedures. Initially, the focus will be on the procurement process and the SBE/MBE/WBE Programs’ Policies and Procedures. However, it is envisioned that it will expand to include the multitudes of services offered by the Fiscal Office and the County. Starting in August 2023, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 9-10am, DEI provides a monthly virtual vendor assistance session. The areas of assistance are similar to the areas of assistance provided at the County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair.
  
- **Fiscal Office Refresher Training:** DEI collaborated with the Department of Purchasing, Office of Budget and Management, and General Accounting/Financial Reporting to provide “Fiscal Office Refresher” Training to county personnel in various departments/agencies on the County Purchasing Policies, Budgeting/Fiscal End-of-the-year Processes, and the updated SBE/MBE/WBE Program’s Policies and Procedures. This is an initiative/effort to build capacity internally to maximize the knowledge and understanding of county procurement personnel on the procurement process and supplier diversity requirements; thereby, working to have an effective and efficient procurement system and maximizing the participation of small, minority, and women business enterprises in the county’s procurement process. Personnel from each of the pertinent Fiscal Office areas presented their content. The Department of Equity and Inclusion presented the supplier diversity requirements. There were four (4) training sessions. The training sessions were in-person and provided at various County locations.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**
  - **DEI’s “What’s Next?” Initiative:** DEI’s “What’s Next?” Initiative is what’s next. This workforce equity initiative builds upon the “All In” principle of the DEI Trainings provided in 2022. Our success in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion depends upon all of us doing our part. This initiative emphasizes celebrating progress, embracing a continuous improvement mentality, and recognizing that there is much more work to be done. The Kick-Off Session of “What’s Next?” was a virtual event held on Thursday, March 23, 2023. More than 125 employees attended the session. In September 2023, DEI provided training sessions on Microaggressions and Mental Health. There were five (5) sessions to provide attendance flexibility. Moreover, employees joined virtually and those employees without county issued laptops/PCs were able to attend in-person. More than 900 employees attended the sessions.
  - **Inaugural Mid-year Equity Summit:** On Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, DEI held the County’s Inaugural Mid-Year Equity Summit. The summit served as a diversity, equity, and inclusion retreat for county leadership. For our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to be successfully and sustainably embedded in all facets of county operations, we must be innovative, remain motivated, stay on task, share best practices, and share lessons learned. The summit provided an opportunity for county leadership and departments to share progress and lessons learned on our equity efforts. County Executive Chris Ronayne and County Council President Pernel Jones, Jr., shared their perspectives on the importance of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in Cuyahoga County. The breakout sessions addressed racial diversity and age diversity. Due to time, the breakout session related to gender diversity did not occur. Fifty (50) County Executive Leaders/Directors/Managers attended the summit.
  - **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training:** On June 5, 2023, the Cuyahoga County Board of Control approved a contract amendment with Tri-C to provide additional services related to training on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to Cuyahoga County employees and managers/leadership in departments/agencies under the authority of the Cuyahoga County Executive. The additional services covered by this amendment that were initiated and/or completed in CY2023 include:
    - Development of a modified All County Staff DEI Town Hall Training (combined the original 3-part series into one session) (CY2023 Q3): Completed
    - Providing four (4) sessions of the modified All County Staff DEI Town Hall Training (CY 2023 Q3) Completed; 292 employees attended
    - Providing four (4) sessions of the DEI Leadership/Management Make-up Sessions (CY2023 Q3): Completed; 171 employees attended
    - Providing DEI Executive Leadership/Management Training Cohort (CY2023 Q4/CY2024 Q1): Initiated – 11/29/2023 Executive Leadership/Management Training Session 1
    - Executive Coaching: Initiated – 12/11/2023 1<sup>st</sup> Coaching Session (CY2023 Q4 - CY2024 Q2); Seven (7) Executive Leaders are included in coaching sessions: Erik Janas - Chief of Staff, Debbie Berry – Deputy Chief of Staff – Integrated Development; Katie Gallagher, Deputy Chief of Staff – Operations & Innovation; David Razum – Deputy Chief of Staff – Communications & Strategy, Harold Pretel – Sheriff; Nailah Byrd – Clerk of Courts; and Sarah Nemastil, Director of Human Resources.

- **Develop and implement DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Program:** The Contract Compliance Officer positions represents 6 of the 9 budgeted FTEs for the Department of Equity and Inclusion. As such, this position is the primary resource for implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. To promote equitable development and growth in this position, DEI developed and implemented a DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Program on the major work tasks and programs for DEI. While training and staff development occurs throughout the work day and year, the Contract Compliance Officer Training Program occurred in more than eight (8) scheduled 2-hour sessions with the entire DEI team.
- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
  - **Biennial Budget Equity Lens:** For the CY2024-2025 Biennial Budget Process, County departments/agencies provided a summary statement on how the requested budget supported and/or demonstrated an intentional effort to positively advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in County operations. Cuyahoga County is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. It is critical that departments and agencies apply an “equity lens” to all areas. Department/agency budgets are key indicators of an entity’s priorities. As such, Cuyahoga County’s priority to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations should be evident in how it applies equity concepts in the key decision-making processes related to resource allocation. Applying the equity lens to reflect on how budgetary decisions burden or benefit various demographics especially underserved and/or underrepresented communities is important to making changes and implementing strategies to intentionally positively impact equity in our operations and our community.
  - **DEI Drop-in Meetings:** DEI Drop-in Meetings are meetings between the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and County departments/agencies to build interdepartmental relationships that maximize county efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. The goals are to share information, resolve problems, develop solutions, and foster collaboration that results in improved supplier diversity, workforce equity, and programs/policies/services equity. The meeting can be virtual or in-person. While DEI Drop-in meetings are informal, they are intended to be productive and tailored to the needs of each specific department/agency related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the department’s request, DEI can schedule DEI Drop-in meetings with divisions within a department or for specific topics within a department. Also, for common topics/issues, DEI may schedule a DEI Drop-in Meeting with multiple departments/agencies. DEI may initiate the DEI Drop-In Meeting process with a department/agency. Moreover, County departments/agencies can request a DEI Drop-in Meeting. In 2023, DEI had three (3) Drop-in Meetings: Department of Purchasing (3/30/23), Department of Human Resources (4/19/23), and the Planning Commission (4/25/23).
  - **Equity Zones Map/Policy:** On July 26, 2021, Executive Order No. EO2021-0015 was issued directing the establishment of a map of Cuyahoga County identifying areas of historic disinvestment to be known as Cuyahoga County Equity Zones and the development/implementation of policies and procedures that will result in the County providing additional consideration to investments in road projects, building projects and development projects in identified Equity Zones. On February 15, 2022, Executive Order No. EO2022-0003 was issued accepting the Equity Zones Map. The Cuyahoga County Equity Zone Policy is an intentional effort to improve equity by encouraging investment in areas of historical disinvestment. The Equity Zone Map Criteria/indicators are: HOLC redlining maps, residential property values, life expectancy, poverty, and Improvement Target Areas (ITAs). In CY2022, Cuyahoga County moved swiftly

to implement the Equity Zones Map in its evaluation processes and this resulted in more than \$4.3 M in awards to projects impacting Equity Zones. In CY2023, Cuyahoga County has continued to utilize the Equity Zones Map in its evaluation processes and this resulted in more than \$2.5 M in awards to projects impacting Equity Zones. Specifically:

- The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission’s Healthy Urban Tree Canopy Grant Program provides funds to protect and expand Cuyahoga County’s tree canopy. The 2023 application cycle for this program had an Equity Zone Category worth 5 points out of a total of 130 evaluation points. For the current application cycle, a total of nineteen (19) projects were awarded \$950,00.00 of which \$821,731.00 (86.5%) was awarded to fifteen (15) projects impacting Equity Zones.
- The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works also included an Equity Zone Category for the current application cycle for its Preventative Maintenance Funding Program. This program designates \$2,500,000 in County funds for preventative maintenance work on County roads. The maximum award is \$200,000 per municipality per year. This program is awarded annually. The Equity Zone Impact was added as a new scoring category in CY2023. Projects impacting Equity Zones receive 10 points out of a total 110 points. For the current application cycle, 28 out of 53 awarded municipalities had projects impacting an equity zone. The total amount awarded was \$3,296,691.77. Total amount awarded for projects impacting equity zones was \$1,665,219.88.
- The Cuyahoga County Department of Consumer Affairs’ Sustainable Stores Grant program awards up to \$5,000 per store to help local retailers eliminate plastic checkout bags from their stores. While all stores within the county were encouraged to apply, the Grant applications and materials stated that “preference will be given to stores located within designated Equity Zones in Cuyahoga County”. To make applying easier, the online application automatically flagged store addresses in Equity Zones through GIS coding. Applicants were judged on the merits of their proposals, with special attention paid to applications in Equity Zones during the selection process. In all, 56 applications were received. Of those, 28 (50%) were from applicants located in Equity Zones. In all, 31 stores (55% of the stores that applied) were offered grant funding. Of those, 13 (42%) were in Equity Zones. Three (3) retailers in DEI zones ultimately declined the grant offer, reducing the number of grants offered to stores in Equity Zones to 10 (32%). The total amount of grant funding committed is \$109,395, of which \$43,348 (40%) is earmarked for grantees located in Equity Zones.
- The Department of Housing and Community Development administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Municipal Grant Program. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Municipal Grant Program awards grants up to \$150,000 to municipal governments for projects that improve the community. For the current cycle addressed in County Council Resolution R2023-0122C, of the twenty-one (21) municipal grant awards, it is estimated that eleven (11) of the awards impacted equity zones.
- The Department of Development administers several loan and grant programs as part of its goal to spur job creation and economic growth. As of December 20, 2023, the Department of Development has awarded economic development funding to 210 individuals/businesses/organizations impacting Equity Zones of the total of 358 economic development funding awards (58.66%).

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**
  - **Disparity Study (RFP):** This a supplier diversity initiative. In accordance with the County Code, DEI shall conduct a Disparity Study every five (5) years. All disparity studies shall be designed to meet the legal standards established by court rulings with respect to the constitutionality of programs designed to encourage greater participation of women and minorities in our economy. DEI will lead the procurement process for the selection of the consultant team to perform the study and the negotiation/preparation of the subsequent contract. The goal is complete the procurement process by CY2024 Q2 and have the kick-off for the Disparity Study process soon thereafter.
  - **Diversity Monitoring and Contract Compliance Software (RFQ):** This a supplier diversity initiative. To monitor and track compliance with its supplier diversity goals, DEI, Public Works, and Development use diversity monitoring and contract compliance software. The contract for the current diversity monitoring and contract compliance software expires December 31, 2024. Hence, in 2024, the County will proceed with the procurement process for diversity monitoring and contract compliance software.
  - **CY2024 County Vendor “Pitch Day/Fair”:** This is a supplier diversity initiative that will provide the opportunity for businesses (with an outreach focus on County certified SBEs/MBEs/WBEs) to present their businesses capabilities and offerings to County departments and to learn about the County’s procurement process. Concurrently, County leadership and procurement personnel will have an increased knowledge of the capabilities of the diverse pool of qualified vendors. In addition, businesses can get face-to-face assistance with various procurement processes. The goal is to increase the participation of diverse businesses in the County’s procurement process. In CY2024, it is anticipated that the County “Pitch Day/Fair” will be provided three (3) times: April, July, and October.
  - **CY2024 Development and Implementation of “How to Do Business with the County” Program:** The intent of the “How to Do Business with the County” Program is to develop and implement programs that assist vendors/citizens with maneuvering the myriad of county processes and procedures. Initially, the focus will be on the procurement processes and the SBE/MBE/WBE Programs Policies and Procedures. However, it is envisioned that it will expand to include the multitudes of services offered by the Fiscal Office and the County. In CY2024, DEI will continue providing the monthly virtual vendor sessions on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month from 9-10am. The areas of assistance are similar to the areas of assistance provided at the CY2023 County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair.
- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**
  - **DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Program (Refresher):** The Contract Compliance Officer positions represents 6 of the 9 budgeted FTEs for the Department of Equity and Inclusion. As such, this position is the primary resource for implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. In CY2023, to promote equitable development and growth in this position, DEI developed and implemented a DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Program on the major work tasks and programs for DEI. While training and staff development occurs throughout the work day and year, in CY2024, there will be Contract Compliance Officer Refresher Training that will occur in scheduled 2-hour sessions with the entire DEI team.

- County Leadership Academy:** The County Leadership Academy is a workforce equity initiative that will be created and implemented to develop our internal diverse pool of employees for leadership roles and positions in Cuyahoga County. The Department of Human Resources already has training/development opportunities for County leaders/managers/supervisors. As such, the “County Leadership Academy” will be developed to augment the existing training/development opportunities. As such, DEI will collaborate with the Department of Human Resources and will seek participation from additional departments/agencies on the development team for the County Leadership Academy. Proposed training topics include HR/PRC hiring process, procurement, accounts payable, budgeting/funding sources, public records policy, public records retention, County government structure/departments' mission, ORC/County Code, internal/external boards, HR policy, IT policy, and Travel/Staff Development Policy.
- CY2024 Mid-year Equity Summit:** As in CY2023, the CY2024 Mid-year Equity Summit will serve as a diversity, equity, and inclusion retreat for county leadership. For our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to be successfully and sustainably embedded in all facets of county operations, we must be innovative, remain motivated, and stay on task, share best practices, and share lessons learned. The summit will provide an opportunity for county leadership and departments to share progress and lessons learned on our efforts. Concurrently, the status updates on our actions/initiatives by colleagues/peers can serve as inspiration and motivation to others to push forward with their equity plans and initiatives.
- DEI’s “What’s Next” Initiative (CY2024):** DEI’s “What’s Next?” Initiative is what’s next. In CY2024, this workforce equity initiative will continue building upon the “All In” principle of the DEI Trainings provided in 2022. Our success in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion depends upon all of us doing our part. This initiative will emphasize celebrating progress, embracing a continuous improvement mentality, and recognizing that there is much more work to be done. In CY2024, there will be a virtual session in March. In September 2024, there will be multiple sessions to provide attendance flexibility on a topic to be determined from employee survey results. Moreover, employees will be able to join virtual sessions and those employees without county issued laptops/PCs will be able to attend in-person sessions.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training:** On June 5, 2023, the Cuyahoga County Board of Control approved a contract amendment with Tri-C to provide additional services related to training on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to Cuyahoga County employees and managers/leadership in departments/agencies under the authority of the Cuyahoga County Executive. The additional services covered by this amendment that will be provided and/or completed in CY2024 include:

  - Train-the-Trainer Services for DEI Leadership/Management Training (CY2024 Q1)
  - Train-the-Trainer Services for DEI Leadership/Management Training (CY2024 Q1)
  - Providing DEI Executive Leadership/Management Training Cohort (CY2023 Q4 - CY2024 Q1)
  - Community Action Poverty Simulation (CY2024 Q2)
  - Management & Leadership Kaizen Event (CY2024 Q2)
  - Executive coaching (CY2023 Q4 - CY2024 Q2)
- DEI Collaborations with County Departments/Agencies on Workforce Initiatives:** In alignment with a foundational requirement of the legislation establishing the Department of Equity and Inclusion, DEI will work with the Department of Human Resources to advance workforce equity by collaborating on equity initiatives. Moreover, DEI will collaborate with other County departments/agencies on various workforce equity initiatives. Specifically, potential collaborations at various stages in development include, but are not

limited to, the following: a text analyzer software procurement initiative with HR and PRC; HR/PRC panel discussion on the County's hiring process, outreach and recruitment program focused on minority and women attorneys with Law; and the development of an Environmental, Social, and Governance Strategy (ESG) with HR.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
  - **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Scorecard Update:** What actions can we take to: attract a broad pool of qualified vendors; attract recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain a broad pool of high performing employees; and maximize our performance and results/impact on our entire community? We all have a role in advancing equity! It takes "intentional effort" to make a difference! Furthermore, it has been proven that "What gets measured gets done!". While many items can be measured, we must be strategic and embrace continuous improvement! Based on these premises, in 2022, DEI developed the inaugural DEI Scorecard to guide and assess departments'/agencies' progress with advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. The DEI Scorecard summarizes various factors/indicators related to department/agency efforts and actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI provided trainings to departments/agencies on the scorecard on 7/15/22 (42 participants) and 8/19/22 (35 participants). Moreover, a webinar recording of the training is posted on the county intranet site for viewing. Based on feedback and lessons learned from the inaugural DEI Scorecard, in CY2024, DEI plans to update the DEI Scorecard and implementation process.
  - **DEI Drop-in Meetings:** DEI Drop-In Meetings will continue in CY2024. DEI Drop-in Meetings are meetings between the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and County departments/agencies to build interdepartmental relationships that maximize county efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. The goals are to share information, resolve problems, develop solutions, and foster collaboration that results in improved supplier diversity, workforce equity, and programs/policies/services equity. The meeting can be virtual or in-person. While DEI Drop-in meetings are informal, they are intended to be productive and tailored to the needs of each specific department/agency related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the department's request, DEI can schedule DEI Drop-in meetings with divisions within a department or for specific topics within a department. Also, for common topics/issues, DEI may schedule a DEI Drop-in Meeting with multiple departments/agencies. DEI may initiate the DEI Drop-In Meeting process with a department/agency. Moreover, County departments/agencies can request a DEI Drop-in Meeting.



**CY2024 EQUITY REPORT**  
**Cuyahoga County**  
**Department of Equity & Inclusion**



**Cuyahoga County Administrative Headquarters**



*Spanning 1,246 square miles and home to many different cultures and people, Cuyahoga County is the most populous county in the state of Ohio.*



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## Department of Equity and Inclusion

Prior to May 25, 2021, the Office of Procurement and Diversity (OPD) developed, administered, and enforced several diversity programs related to county purchasing and contracting. On May 25, 2021, Cuyahoga County Council approved [Ordinance No. O2021-0006](#) establishing a Department of Purchasing, [Ordinance No. O2021-0007](#) establishing a Department of Equity and Inclusion, and [Ordinance No. O2021-0008](#) dissolving the Office of Procurement and Diversity and delineating various duties to either the Department of Purchasing or the Department of Equity and Inclusion. The Department of Equity and Inclusion is responsible for enhancing equity in program and policy development within County government by coordinating with the County Equity Commission, the Citizens Advisory Council on Equity, and the various departments under the jurisdiction of the County Executive.

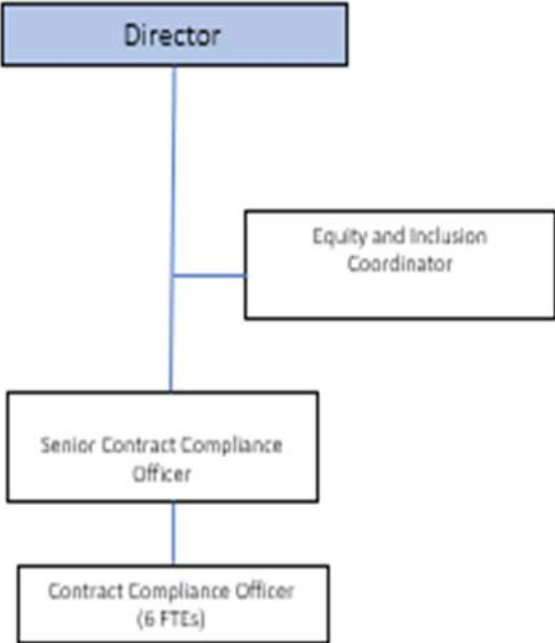
The Department's duties include:

- Increasing participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) in County contracting and purchasing opportunities
- Working with the Office of Innovation and Performance, developing metrics and reports regarding whether County agencies meet or exceed their MWBE contracting goals
- Working with the Human Resources Department to develop and implement programs, training, and assessment to build a culture of equity, with respect to race, gender, and sexual orientation throughout County government, including in hiring and promotion
- Serving as an ombudsman to accept and evaluate inquiries and complaints from the public regarding implementation of the County's equity initiatives and to coordinate and facilitate community input

The Department of Equity and Inclusion conducts a Disparity Study every five (5) years. All such studies are designed to meet the legal standards established by court rulings with respect to the constitutionality of programs intended to encourage greater participation of women and minorities in our economy. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, evaluates the recommendations of the Disparity Study and provides advice to the Executive regarding the implementation of said recommendations, if any. The Department of Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the County Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity, shall monitor the effectiveness of the implemented recommendations and shall report same to the Executive and Council at least once per calendar year.

# Department of Equity and Inclusion

## Fiscal Organization Chart



## Analysis of Equity Results

The Department of Equity and Inclusion is responsible for enhancing equity in program and policy development within County government. This equity analysis builds on the Equity Plan for Cuyahoga County and responds to the Equity Goals/Values objectives reflecting:

1. **Inclusiveness** – Inclusiveness is the core of our various diversity, equity and inclusion programs. As an outcome of information collected to reflect areas with low participation in the county’s procurement and contractive process, we are able to identify, create and implement best practices and procedures required to expand services. DEI will work with HR and County Agencies to improve inclusion and diversity in our culture, workforce practices and programs/policies. It is critical that DEI collaborate with HR to implement programs and training for employees and management that results in improved equity in our recruiting, hiring, retention, and promotion of employees.
2. **Comprehensiveness** – The goal of DEI’s various diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives is to embed these principles in all our work, practices, and decision making. It is essential for the DEI to continue to find ways to create and maintain equity across all domains, internal and external, in order to create positive impacts. DEI will work intentionally and purposefully to assess and address inequities in who benefits from and who carries the burdens for our programs, policies and practices.
3. **Collaboration** – All of DEI’s diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives are subject to collaboration. DEI recognizes and understands that the advancement of equity and inclusion is the responsibility of all and our level of success depends on effective collaboration. The stronger the partnership among the county and other political subdivisions, private sector businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other community institutions, the greater the opportunities to expand and grow our services and to maximize our impact on our community.
4. **Community Outreach** – DEI is committed to creating opportunities that would increase the visibility and awareness of the County’s various diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. To be successful, DEI knows that we must foster community engagement to ensure access and representation by diverse backgrounds, cultures, races, and ethnicities so that varied perspectives, interests, values, and ideas are heard and considered. We will continue our outreach efforts.
5. **Measurement, Reporting & Transparency** – DEI will gather and collect data to track and monitor the results of our programs. DEI will maximize resources including technology to measure and track results and share said results with the public. To improve decision making, the DEI currently uses the B2Gnow software system, Infor ERP System, its Excel spreadsheet, and its Access databases for the monitoring and tracking of data related to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

# Review and Summary of Equity Initiatives

## **SUPPLIER DIVERSITY**

### **A. Diversity Programs – Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), & Women Business Enterprise (WBE)**

On December 19, 2011, Ordinance No. 02011-0054 was passed approving the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program, effective January 1, 2012. On February 15, 2014, the ordinance was amended to revise program policies and procedures ([Ordinance No. 02014-0002](#)).

Furthermore, on April 26, 2016, [Ordinance No. 02016-0005](#) was passed approving the ability to set aspirational Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and/or Women Business Enterprise (WBE) subcontractor participation goals on county purchases and contracts.

On November 9, 2021, Ordinance No. O2021-0013 was passed approving a revised Cuyahoga County Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21, and adopting a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) & Women Business Enterprise (WBE) Program Policies and Procedures, effective 11/15/21.

The following standards are used to determine eligibility for certification as a Small Business Enterprise, Minority Business Enterprise and/or Women Business Enterprise:

A business applying for certification must establish that it has a physical presence located within the applicable geographical limits as registered in official documents. (Mailbox facilities or other similar arrangements do not constitute a physical presence).

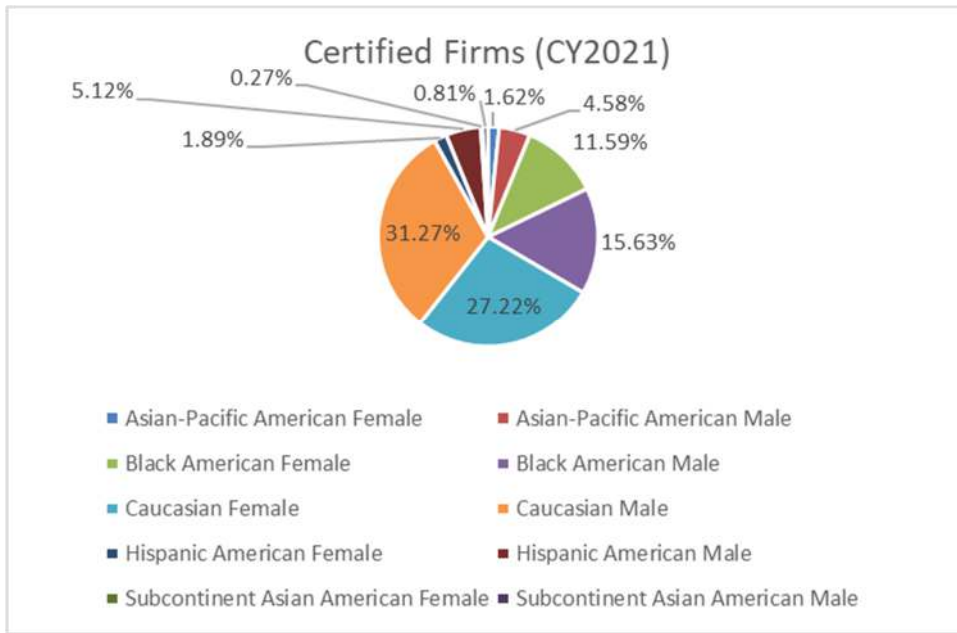
The applicant(s) must demonstrate operational and managerial control of the business.

To be eligible for the SBE Program, a business must demonstrate that it has been in continuous operation in the category or the related category for which it is requesting certification for one year and that majority ownership has at least one (1) year of work experience relevant to the business certification category. For the Small Business Enterprise, its' annual gross revenues or its' total workforce must be at or less than the amounts established by the Small Business Administration, and it must be located and doing business in Cuyahoga County.

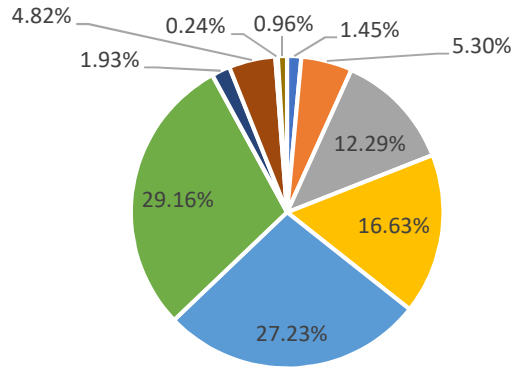
For the MBE Program, the business must be at least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are African American, Hispanic American, Native American, Asian-Pacific American, or Asian-Indian American and they must have operational and managerial control, interest in capital, and earnings commensurate with the percentage of ownership. For the WBE Program, the business must be at least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are women and they must have operational and managerial control, interest in capital, and earnings commensurate with the percentage of ownership. Effective 11/15/21, for the MBE and WBE certifications, the business enterprise must be located and doing business in Cuyahoga County, Geauga County, Lake County, Lorain County, or Medina County.

## SBE/MBE/WBE New and Renewed Certifications

Type of Certification	Number of Active Certifications	
	YEAR	
	2022	YTD 2023
SBE	129	134
MBE	17	22
WBE	15	18
MBE/WBE	3	0
SBE/MBE	96	112
SBE/WBE	102	109
SBE/MBE/WBE	66	77
<b>Total Processed</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>472</b>

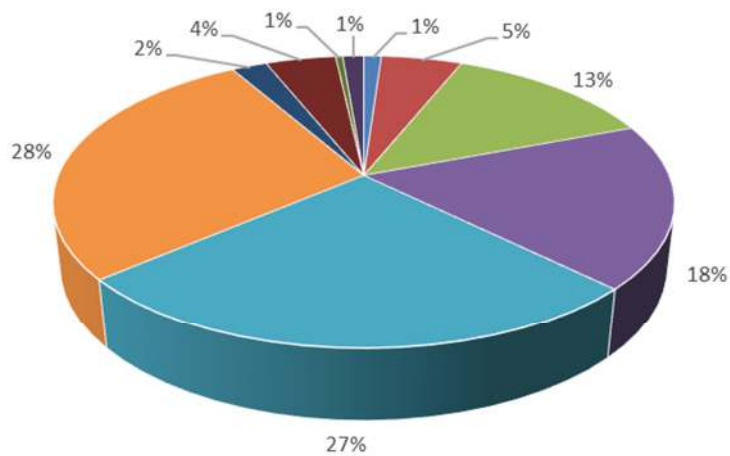


Certified Firms (CY2022)



- Asian-Pacific American Female
- Black American Female
- Caucasian Female
- Hispanic American Female
- Subcontinent Asian American Female
- Asian-Pacific American Male
- Black American Male
- Caucasian Male
- Hispanic American Male
- Subcontinent Asian American Male

Certified Firms (CY2023)



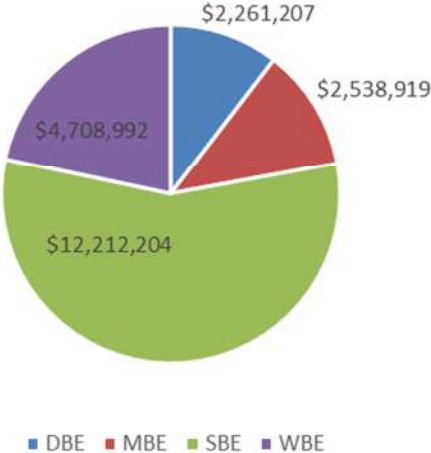
- Asian-Pacific American Female
- Black American Female
- Caucasian Female
- Hispanic American Female
- Subcontinent Asian American Female
- Asian-Pacific American Male
- Black American Male
- Caucasian Male
- Hispanic American Male
- Subcontinent Asian American Male

### Contract/Purchase Awards (Diversity Awards)

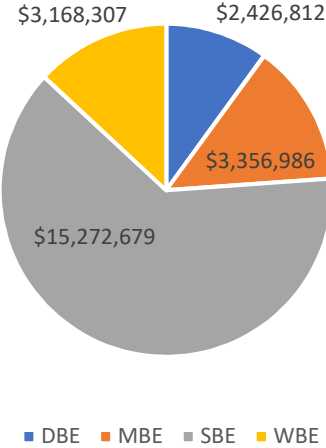
Purchase Type	2022			2023		
	# Items	Total Award Amount	Total Diversity \$ Awarded	# Items	Total Award Amount	Total Diversity \$ Awarded
<b>RFP</b>	67	\$128,641,435.18	\$508,090.00	60	\$56,655,540.89	\$878,281.80
<b>RFQ</b>	26	\$17,792,500.00	\$2,773,967.15	45	\$12,991,938.00	\$1,801,500.00
<b>Bids – Non-construction</b>	19	\$3,171,380.94	\$66,000.00	22	\$4,584,283.88	\$0
<b>Bids – Construction</b> (DBE awards not included)	18	\$49,541,606.71	\$11,177,197.18	20	\$76,629,399.40	\$9,395,513.11
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>\$199,146,922.83</b>	<b>\$14,525,254.33</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>\$150,861,162.17</b>	<b>\$12,075,294.91</b>
<b>Contracts over \$100M</b>	<b>2 RFPs</b>	<b>\$123,000,000.00</b> <b>Out of Home Care (DCFS)</b> <b>\$338,376,490.00</b> <b>Medical &amp; Drug RFP</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0s</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>\$660,523,412.83</b>	<b>\$14,525,254.33</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>\$150,861,162.17</b>	<b>\$12,075,294.91</b>



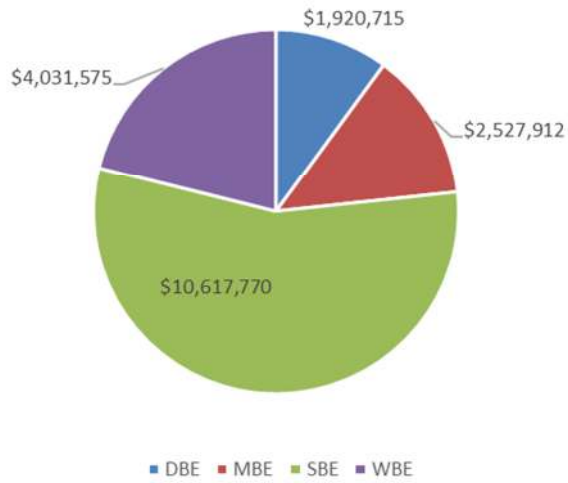
Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal Credit  
(CY2021)



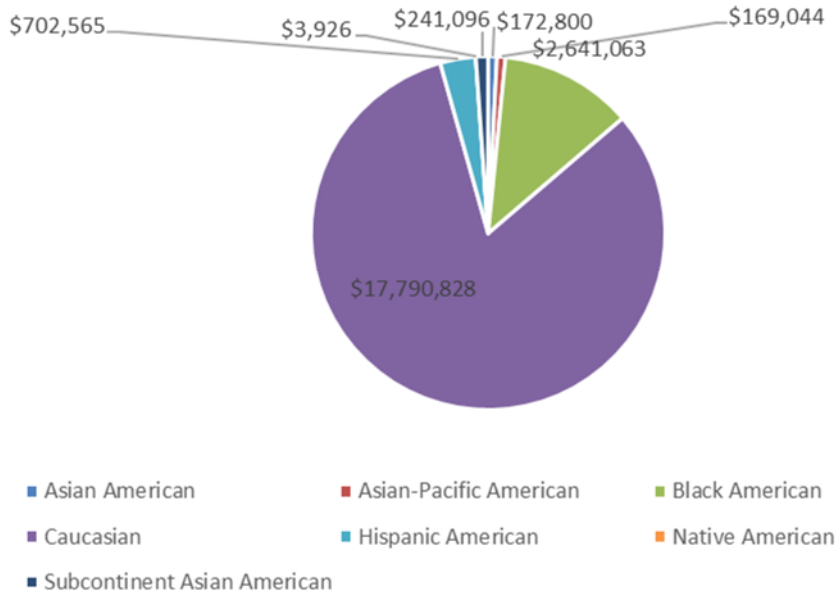
Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal Credit  
(CY2022)



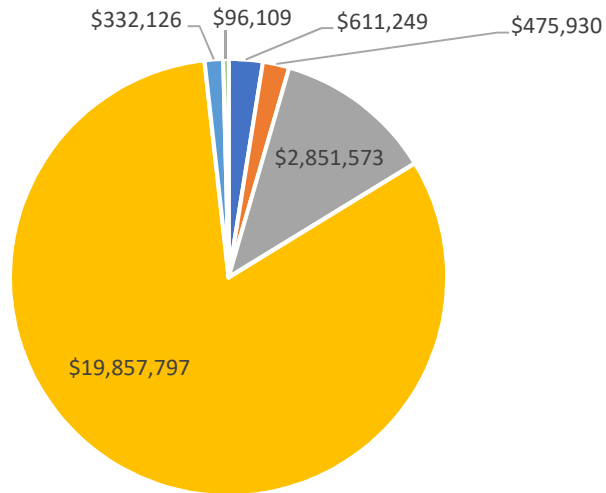
### Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal Credit (CY2023)



### Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal Credit (CY2021)

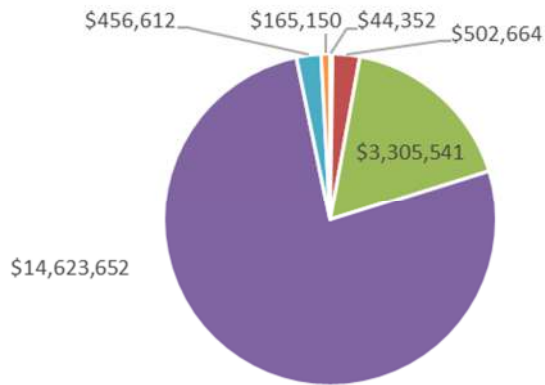


### Contractor Payments for Diversity Goal Credit (CY2022)



- Asian American
- Asian-Pacific American
- Black American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic American
- Native American

### Contractor Payments for Diversity Goal Credit (CY2023)



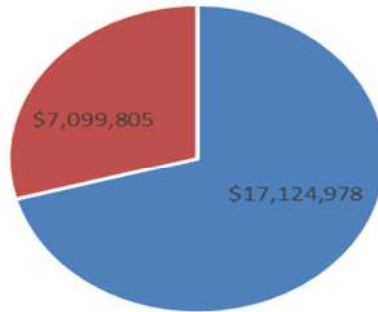
- Asian American
- Asian-Pacific American
- Black American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic American
- Subcontinent Asian American

Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal Credit  
(CY2021)



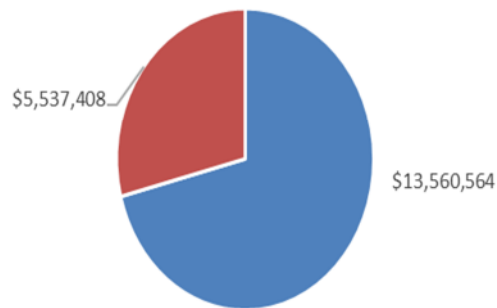
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Contractor Payments For Diversity Goal  
Credit (CY2022)



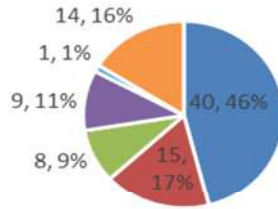
■ Male ■ Female

Contractor Payments for Diversity Goal Credit  
(CY2023)



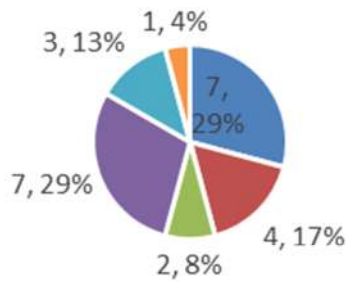
■ Male ■ Female

### Contract Compliance on Closed Contracts (CY2022)



- Compliant (met/exceeded diversity goals/system error)
- Non-compliant
- Compliant w/variance due to scope of work change
- Compliant (prime vendor self-fulfilling contract)
- Duplicate Record
- COVID-19 Projects

### Contract Compliance on Closed Contracts (CY2023)



- Compliant (met/exceeded diversity goals)
- Non-compliant
- Non-compliant DBE
- Compliant (prime vendor self-fulfilling contract)
- COVID-19 Projects
- No Goals

## **B. Cuyahoga County Based Business (CCBB) Preference Program**

On November 27, 2012, Cuyahoga County, approved [Ordinance No. 02012-0020](#) establishing the Cuyahoga County Based Business (CCBB) Preference Program.

A business applying for certification as a Cuyahoga County Based Business must meet the following standards:

a) The business must demonstrate that its principal place of business has been located in Cuyahoga County for at least three (3) years as registered in official documents filed with the Secretary of State of Ohio or the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office. If one party to a joint venture has its principal place of business in Cuyahoga County, the joint venture shall be considered as having its principal place of business in Cuyahoga County; or

b) The business must be a business organization with a "significant economic presence" in Cuyahoga County. For the purpose of this program,

"Significant economic presence" means a business organization that has for at least three years

- I. Had a sales office, division, sales outlet, or manufacturing facility in Cuyahoga County; and
- II. Pays required taxes to Cuyahoga County; and
- III. Has an annual gross payroll in Cuyahoga County of at least \$100,000.00.

Year	CCBB Preference Program Certifications (Active)
2022	51
2023 YTD	51

CCBB ECONOMIC IMPACT						
Year	N/A (RFP or RFQ)	No	No – No Bids Received	Yes – But No Impact	Yes	Total
2013	74	48	1	9	0	132
2014	83	28	0	22	3	136
2015	36	20	0	8	1	65
2016	52	28	0	18	1	99
2017	65	12	0	22	0	99
2018	51	28	0	19	2	100
2019	77	26	0	23	1	127
2020	37	18	0	6	1	62
2021	79	9	0	8	1	97
2022	93	24	0	13	0	130
2023 YTD	93	18	1	18	0	130
TOTAL	740	259	2	166	10	1,177

**Key:**

*N/A* - The procurement method was RFP or RFQ

*No* – The low bidder is located in Cuyahoga County

*No – No Bids Received* – There were zero (0) bids received

*Yes – But No Impact* – The low bidder is not located in Cuyahoga County ***And*** there is not a bidder within 2% of the low bidder that is Cuyahoga County Based Business (CCBB)

*Yes* – The low bidder is not located in Cuyahoga County ***And*** there is a bidder within 2% of the low bidder that is CCBB.

## C. Cuyahoga County Business Economic Inclusion Program (CCBEIP)

On April 26, 2016, Cuyahoga County approved [Ordinance No. 02016-0007](#) establishing the Cuyahoga County Business Economic Inclusion Program (CCBEIP).

For this program, a business applying for certification as an “Inclusive Business” must meet the following standards:

- a) The business must demonstrate that they have used a Minority Business Enterprise and/or Women Business Enterprise in at least three projects within the past two years.

or

- b) The business must demonstrate that it hired and employed a diverse workforce based on payroll records within the past two years.

Year	CCBEIP Certifications (Active)
2022	24
2023 YTD	20

CCBEIP ECONOMIC IMPACT						
Year	N/A (RFP or RFQ)	No	No – No Bids Received	Yes – But No Impact	Yes	Total
2016	52	0	0	47	0	99
2017	65	0	0	34	0	99
2018	51	0	0	49	0	100
2019	77	0	0	50	0	127
2020	37	0	0	25	0	62
2021	79	0	0	18	0	97
2022	93	3	0	34	0	130
2023 YTD	93	6	1	30	0	130
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>844</b>

**Key:**

*N/A* - The procurement method was RFP or RFQ

*No* – The low bidder is certified as an “Inclusive Business” in the CCBEIP

*No – No Bids Received* – There were zero (0) bids received

*Yes – But No Impact* – The low bidder is not certified as an “Inclusive Business” **And** there is not a bidder within 2% of the low bidder that is certified as an “Inclusive Business” in the CCBEIP

*Yes* – The low bidder is not certified as an “Inclusive Business” **And** there is a bidder within 2% of the low bidder that is certified as an “Inclusive Business” in the CCBEIP.

## **D. Small Business Set Aside Program**

On April 26, 2016, Cuyahoga County passed [Ordinance No. 02016-0004](#) expanding the Small Business Enterprise Program to allow Small Business Set Asides.

“Set Asides for Small Business Enterprises” are defined as the reserving of some or all a Request for Bid, Request for Proposal, Request for Qualifications, or contract exclusively for participation by Small Business Enterprises as determined by the Cuyahoga County Department of Equity and Inclusion.

<b>SELECTION CRITERIA</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>
<b>FUNDING SOURCE REQUIREMENTS &amp; RESTRICTIONS</b>	County agencies leverage county funds with a multitude of other funding sources (i.e., federal, state, grants, loans...). This enables the County to maximize the return on its investments. However, some of the funding sources may have requirements that will limit the County’s ability to fully enact its diversity/inclusion initiatives. When evaluating the eligibility of contracts or services for the SBE Set Aside Program, funding source requirements and restrictions will be assessed.
<b>SCOPE OF WORK</b>	When evaluating the eligibility of contracts or services for the SBE Set Aside Program, the scope of work will be assessed. Contracts or services selected will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be typical of the industry in size and scope</li> <li>• be of simpler or of typical complexity</li> <li>• have typical/standard delivery requirements</li> </ul> have typical periods of performance for the industry
<b>COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT</b>	While providing opportunities for SBE vendors to participate in the County procurement process, the County must still maximize the return on its resources. As such, when evaluating the eligibility of contracts or services for the SBE Set Aside Program, at the time of selection, contracts or services must have at least three (3) county certified SBE vendors that provide the scope of work/goods being procured. The size of the pool of pertinent county certified SBE vendors will be re-confirmed at the time of advertisement.
<b>PERFORMANCE BOND AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS</b>	Performance bond and insurance requirements are frequently mentioned as obstacles to small businesses in participating in government contracts. When evaluating the eligibility of contracts or services for the SBE Set Aside Program, contracts or services with lower than or typical performance bond and insurance requirements will be selected.



### Approved SBE Set Aside Procurements (CY2016 - CY2023)

Advertisement/ Approved Date	Description	Actual Contract Value	Diversity Program Small Business Set Aside Vendor
Approved 9/26/2016	Southern Pump-Entrance Repair (RQ37442)	\$252,747.00	Schirmer Construction, LLC
Approved 11/21/2016	Interior Painting at various county buildings (RQ38152)	\$349,588.00	Frank Novak & Sons, Inc.
Approved 2/21/2017	General Engineering Services (RQ38158)	\$490,000.00	Kevin C. Robinette Architects, LLC Makovich & Pusti Architects
Approved 10/2/17	General Architectural Engineering Services (RQ40115)	\$200,000.00	K2M Design, Inc.
Approved 4/24/2018	General Engineering Services (RQ39869)	\$300,000.00	Chagrin Valley Engineering, LTD
Approved 10/10/2018	General Architectural Engineering Services (RQ 42565)	\$400,000.00	Makovich & Pusti Architects, Inc.
Approved 5/28/2019	2019 Cleveland Operation Resurfacing Program Eddy Rd. & Shaw Rd. (RQ44940)	\$186,692.30	Perk Company
Approved 8/12/2019	Rehab of Lewis Rd. (C.R. 174) Culvert C-13 (RQ-46172)	\$83,589.60	Nerone & Son
Approved 7/7/2020	General Mechanical - Electrical Plumbing Architectural/Engineering Service (RQ-47759)	\$400,000.00	The Osborn Engineering Company
Approved 8/4/2020	General Architectural-Engineering Services (RQ-47764)	\$450,000.00	Robert P. Madison International, Inc.
Approved 4/19/2021	Shady Road Culvert (RQ4281)	\$366,178.95	North Star Contracting
Approved 4/27/2021	Construction Management Support (RQ48674)	\$600,000.00	Quality Control Inspection, Quality Control Services
Approved 6/8/2021	General Engineering Services 2021 (RQ4442)	\$450,000.00	Chagrin Valley Engineering, LTD
Approved 3/28/2022	Construction Management (RQ7656)	\$450,000.00	Quality Control Inspection
Approved 4/12/2022	General Architect ENG Services (RQ7449)	\$900,000.00	Richard L. Bowen & Associates, Makovich & Pusti Architects, Inc.
Approved 4/26/2022	General Sanitary ENG Services 2021 (RQ8603)	\$300,000.00	Chagrin Valley Engineering, LTD
Approved 5/10/2022	General Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing (RQ7469)	\$700,000.00	Karpinski Engineering, Inc., Advanced Engineering Consultants, Inc.
Approved 6/21/2022	2022 Sewer Repair Program (RQ8818)	\$2,818,140.00	Fabrizi Recycling, Inc.
Approved 7/5/2022	General Engineering Services 2022 (RQ8603)	\$450,000.00	Euthenics, Inc.
Approved 7/18/2022	2022 Countywide Preventative Maintenance – Crack Seal & Striping (RQ9520)	\$313,062.00	Specialized Construction, Inc.
Approved 10/25/22	Crestwood Lane & Eastwood Lane Culvert Replacement	\$1,598,700.00	Schirmer Construction, LLC
Approved 2/28/2023	2022-On Call Heavy Construction for Road & Bridge Maintenance and Repairs (3 year Master Contract) (RQ11147)	750,000.00	Catts Construction, Inc.; Schirmer Construction, LLC (2 of 4 prime vendors in \$1.5M Master Contract)
Approved 2/28/2023	Sanitary Sewer MC- MRO Supplies (2 year Master Contract) (RQ11049)	\$1,330,000.00	Amico LLC dba SOS Speedy Office Supply; The Chas E. Phipps Company; Lakeside Supply Company; The Safety Company dba Mtech (4 of 8 prime vendors on \$2M Master Contract)
Approved 2/28/2023	Facilities Master Contract 2023-2024 various maintenance, repair and operations supplies (2 year Master Contract) (RQ11080)	\$1,030,000.00	Air-Rite, Inc.; Amico LLC dba SOS Speedy Office Supply; The Chas E. Phipps Company; Decker Steel & Supply, Inc.; Lakeside Supply Company; Mars Electric Company, Inc. (6 of 20 prime vendors on \$3M Master Contract)
Approved 3/13/2023	Road & Bridge Master Contract MRO Supplies (2 year Master Contract) (RQ11164)	\$250,000.00	The Chas E. Phipps Company; LumberOne Supply, LLC (2 of 5 prime vendors on \$0.4M Master Contract)
Approved 8/1/2023	2023 General Engineering Services 3-year contract Road Bridge	\$450,000.00	Chagrin Valley Engineering, Ltd.
Approved 8/1/2023	2023 Countywide Prevention Maintenance Program Asphalt Surface Preservation (RQ12725)	\$1,082,130.86	Specialized Construction, Incorporated
Approved 10/10/2023	General Architectural Engineering Services 2023 3-yr Contract (RQ11970)	\$450,000.00	DS Architecture, LLC
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$17,400,828.71</b>	

**Contracting & Purchasing Forecast (1/1/24 – 12/31/25)**  
**Potential SBE Set Aside Procurements**

<b>Primary Department</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>	<b>Anticipated Solicitation Period</b>
Law	Enterprise Risk Management Consulting Services	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q1
Public Works	Monticello Blvd Bridge (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q2
Public Works	General Engineering Contract (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	General Engineering Contract (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	General Engineering Contract (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Construction Material Testing (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Construction Management (24 CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Steel, Lumber and Guardrail Supplies (Road & Bridge Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Concrete, Asphalt and related Supplies (Road & Bridge Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Road & Bridge hardware, safety and Stock Tools (Road & Bridge Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Lakeside Pump Station (Sanitary CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q1
Public Works	Various Pump Station Supplies (Sanitary Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Plumbing Materials (Sanitary Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	General Sewer Equipment and Supplies (Sanitary Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Landscaping Supplies Various Public Works Divisions (Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Paint Supplies Various Public Works Divisions (Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Filter Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Belt Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Sign Shop Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Laborer Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Masonry and Concrete Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Motor Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Pipefitter Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Carpentry Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Door & Hardware Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Locksmith Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Sheetmetal Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Electrical Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Ballasts & Lighting Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Plumbing Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Glazing Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	HVAC Supplies (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	General Building Materials (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Tools (Facilities Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q3
Public Works	Sanitary Stock Tools (Sanitary Master Contract)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q4
Public Works	Facilities Contract Integrated Pest Management Services	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q4
Public Works	Sanitary General Engineering Contract (Sanitary CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2025 Q4 and beyond
Public Works	Fitch Road Sanitary Sewer (Sanitary CIP)	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2025 Q4 and beyond
Sheriff's Department	Integrated Security Management System	>\$50,000-\$500,000	2024 Q1

### **E. Performance Bond Program**

On April 26, 2016, Cuyahoga County passed [Ordinance No. 02016-0006](#) establishing the County's Risk Management procedures and performance bond and insurance requirements. This program includes the ability to pre-qualify county certified SBE contractors for performance bond waivers in certain circumstances.

### **F. Speedy Pay/Swift Payment Protocol**

On May 2, 2016, County Executive Armond Budish approved [Executive Order No. EO2016-0002](#) to ensure that prime contractors are paid on time by the County and to penalize prime contractors who do not pay their subcontractors timely even after being paid by the County for their subcontractor work.

Shall require a Prime Contractor to pay its subcontractors within 10 days of the Prime Contractor receiving payment for that subcontractor work from the County.

### **G. Mandatory Pre-Bid and Pre-Proposal Conferences**

On May 2, 2016, County Executive Armond Budish approved [Executive Order No. EO2016-0003](#) mandating that the County shall, whenever possible, conduct a conference open to the public where it will allow prime contractors and subcontractors to interact and the County will explain its needs/wants in advance of the due date for every request for bids, request for proposals, and request for qualifications issued by the County.

# WORKFORCE EQUITY

## H. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training

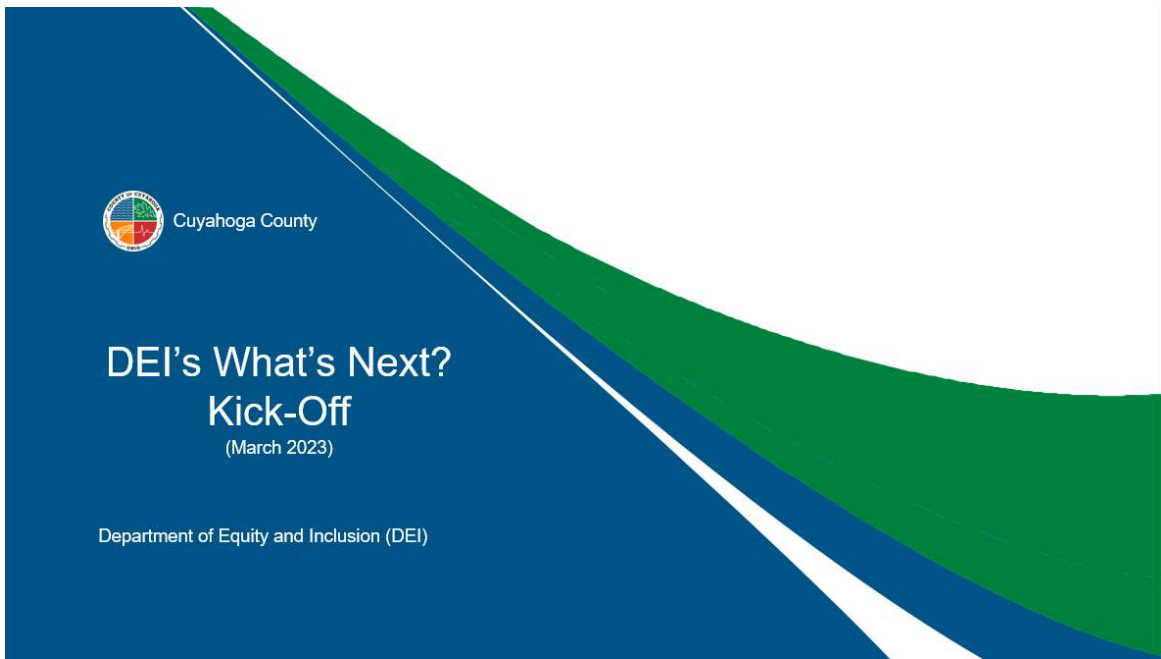
On June 5, 2023, the Cuyahoga County Board of Control approved a contract amendment with Tri-C to provide additional services related to training on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to Cuyahoga County employees and managers/leadership in departments/agencies under the authority of the Cuyahoga County Executive. The additional services covered by this amendment that were initiated and/or completed in CY2023 include:

- Development of a modified All County Staff DEI Town Hall Training (combined the original 3-part series into one session) (CY2023 Q3): Completed
- Providing four (4) sessions of the modified All County Staff DEI Town Hall Training (CY 2023 Q3) Completed; 292 employees attended
- Providing four (4) sessions of the DEI Leadership/Management Make-up Sessions (CY2023 Q3): Completed; 171 employees attended
- Providing DEI Executive Leadership/Management Training Cohort (CY2023 Q4/CY2024 Q1): Initiated – 11/29/2023 Executive Leadership/Management Training Session 1
- Executive Coaching: Initiated – 12/11/2023 1<sup>st</sup> Coaching Session (CY2023 Q4 - CY2024 Q2); Seven (7) Executive Leaders are included in coaching sessions: Erik Janas - Chief of Staff, Debbie Berry – Deputy Chief of Staff – Integrated Development; Katie Gallagher, Deputy Chief of Staff – Operations & Innovation; David Razum – Deputy Chief of Staff – Communications & Strategy, Harold Pretel – Sheriff; Nailah Byrd – Clerk of Courts; and Sarah Nemastil, Director of Human Resources.

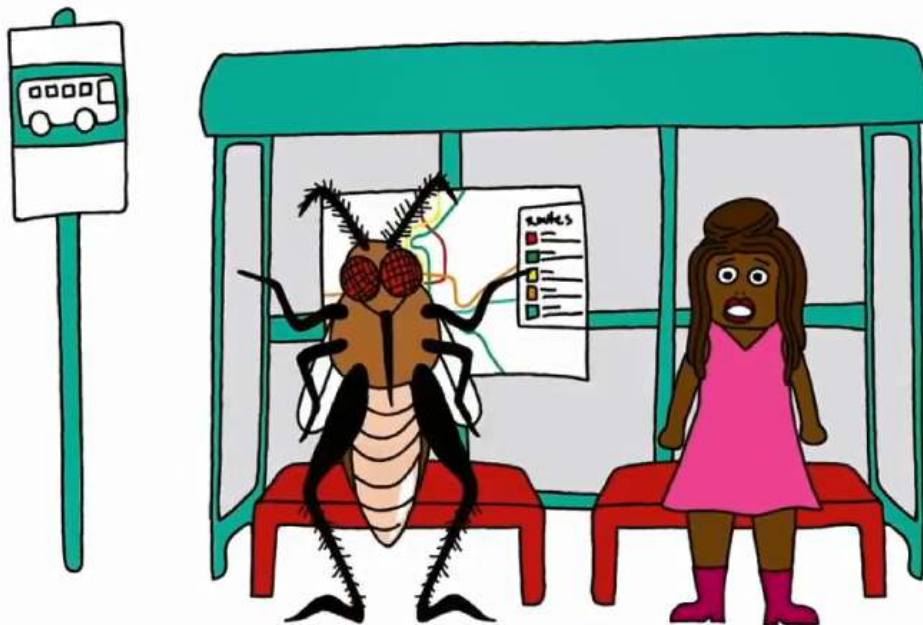


## I. DEI's "What's Next?" Initiative

DEI's "What's Next?" Initiative is what's next. This workforce equity initiative builds upon the "All In" principle of the DEI Trainings provided in 2022. Our success in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion depends upon all of us doing our part. This initiative emphasizes celebrating progress, embracing a continuous improvement mentality, and recognizing that there is much more work to be done. The Kick-Off Session of "What's Next?" was a virtual event held on Thursday, March 23, 2023. More than 125 employees attended the session. In September 2023, DEI provided training sessions on Microaggressions and Mental Health. There were five (5) sessions to provide attendance flexibility. Moreover, employees joined virtually and those employees without county issued laptops/PCs were able to attend in-person. More than 900 employees attended the sessions.



# What is a microaggression?



A MOSQUITO BITE.

## J. Inaugural Mid-year Equity Summit

On Thursday, June 15th, DEI held the County’s Inaugural Mid-Year Equity Summit. The summit served as a diversity, equity, and inclusion retreat for county leadership. For our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to be successfully and sustainably embedded in all facets of county operations, we must be innovative, remain motivated, stay on task, share best practices, and share lessons learned. The summit provided an opportunity for county leadership and departments to share progress and lessons learned on our equity efforts. County Executive Chris Ronayne and County Council President Pernel Jones, Jr., shared their perspectives on the importance of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in Cuyahoga County. The breakout sessions addressed racial diversity and age diversity. Due to time, the breakout session related to gender diversity did not occur. Fifty (50) County Executive Leaders/Directors/Managers attended the summit.





Per the following comments from the evaluation surveys, the program was well received:

*“The age aspect of DEI was eye-opening.”*

*“It would be great to see successful case studies from departments implementing DEI initiatives.”*

*“Training for all Supervisors. This was an excellent training. It will be useful for all supervisory staff.”*

*“I would like to see DEI work more closely with the departments to help them create DEI initiatives. Some departments are doing a great job and some need help. Thank you!”*



## **K. Contract Compliance Officer Training Program**

The Contract Compliance Officer positions represents 6 of the 9 budgeted FTEs for the Department of Equity and Inclusion. As such, this position is the primary resource for implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. To promote equitable development and growth in this position, DEI developed and implemented a DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Program on the major work tasks and programs for DEI. While training and staff development occurs throughout the work day and year, the Contract Compliance Officer Training Program occurred in more than eight (8) scheduled 2-hour sessions with the entire DEI team.

# PROGRAMS/POLICIES/SERVICES EQUITY

## L. Equity Zones Map/Policy


On July 26, 2021, Executive Order No. EO2021-0015 was issued directing the establishment of a map of Cuyahoga County identifying areas of historic disinvestment to be known as Cuyahoga County Equity Zones and the development/implementation of policies and procedures that will result in the County providing additional consideration to investments in road projects, building projects and development projects in identified Equity Zones. On February 15, 2022, Executive Order No. EO2022-0003 was issued accepting the Equity Zones Map. The Cuyahoga County Equity Zone Policy is an intentional effort to improve equity by encouraging investment in areas of historical disinvestment. The Equity Zone Map Criteria/indicators are: HOLC redlining maps, residential property values, life expectancy, poverty, and Improvement Target Areas (ITAs). In CY2022, Cuyahoga County moved swiftly to implement the Equity Zones Map in its evaluation processes and this resulted in more than \$4.3 M in awards to projects impacting Equity Zones. In CY2023, Cuyahoga County has continued to utilize the Equity Zones Map in its evaluation processes and this resulted in more than \$2.5 M in awards to projects impacting Equity Zones. Specifically:

- The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission's Healthy Urban Tree Canopy Grant Program provides funds to protect and expand Cuyahoga County's tree canopy. The 2023 application cycle for this program had an Equity Zone Category worth 5 points out of a total of 130 evaluation points. For the current application cycle, a total of nineteen (19) projects were awarded \$950,000.00 of which \$821,731.00 (86.5%) was awarded to fifteen (15) projects impacting Equity Zones.
- The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works also included an Equity Zone Category for the current application cycle for its Preventative Maintenance Funding Program. This program designates \$2,500,000 in County funds for preventative maintenance work on County roads. The maximum award is \$200,000 per municipality per year. This program is awarded annually. The Equity Zone Impact was added as a new scoring category in CY2023. Projects impacting Equity Zones receive 10 points out of a total 110 points. For the current application cycle, 28 out of 53 awarded municipalities had projects impacting an equity zone. The total amount awarded was \$3,296,691.77. Total amount awarded for projects impacting equity zones was \$1,665,219.88.
- The Cuyahoga County Department of Consumer Affairs' Sustainable Stores Grant program awards up to \$5,000 per store to help local retailers eliminate plastic checkout bags from their stores. While all stores within the county were encouraged to apply, the Grant applications and materials stated that "preference will be given to stores located within designated Equity Zones in Cuyahoga County". To make applying easier, the online application automatically flagged store addresses in Equity Zones through GIS coding. Applicants were judged on the merits of their proposals, with special attention paid to applications in Equity Zones during the selection process. In all, 56 applications were received. Of those, 28 (50%) were from applicants located in Equity Zones. In all, 31 stores (55% of the stores that applied) were offered grant funding. Of those, 13 (42%) were in Equity Zones. Three (3) retailers in DEI zones ultimately declined the grant offer, reducing the number of grants offered to stores in Equity Zones to 10 (32%). The total amount of grant funding committed is \$109,395, of which \$43,348 (40%) is earmarked for grantees located in Equity Zones.
- The Department of Housing and Community Development administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Municipal Grant Program. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Municipal Grant Program awards grants up to \$150,000 to municipal governments for projects that improve the community. For the current cycle addressed in County




## M. Biennial Budget Equity Lens

For the CY2024-2025 Biennial Budget Process, County departments/agencies provided a summary statement on how the requested budget supported and/or demonstrated an intentional effort to positively advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in County operations. Cuyahoga County is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. It is critical that departments and agencies apply an “equity lens” to all areas. Department/agency budgets are key indicators of an entity’s priorities. As such, Cuyahoga County’s priority to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations should be evident in how it applies equity concepts in the key decision-making processes related to resource allocation. Applying the equity lens to reflect on how budgetary decisions burden or benefit various demographics especially underserved and/or underrepresented communities is important to making changes and implementing strategies to intentionally positively impact equity in our operations and our community.



Cuyahoga County



Department of Equity and Inclusion

**Budget Equity Lens:**  
Cuyahoga County is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. It is critical that departments and agencies apply an “equity lens” to all areas. Department/agency budgets are key indicators of an entity’s priorities. As such, Cuyahoga County’s priority to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations should be evident in how it applies equity concepts in the key decision-making processes related to resource allocation. Applying the equity lens to reflect on how budgetary decisions burden or benefit various demographics especially underserved and/or underrepresented communities is important to making changes and implementing strategies to intentionally positively impact equity in our operations and our community.

For each of the following questions, please provide detailed responses.  
**Department/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Department contact person:** \_\_\_\_\_

- How does your requested budget support and/or demonstrate an intentional effort to positively advance supplier diversity?** (This can include actions/costs to divide larger purchases into smaller purchases, reduce the frequency of procurement exemptions/amendments, do outreach to diverse businesses, increase awareness of qualifications and capabilities of SBE/MBE/WBEs...)
- How does your requested budget support and/or demonstrate an intentional effort to positively advance equity in recruiting, hiring, developing, and promoting a diverse pool of employees?** (This can include actions/costs to do additional posting/advertisements for vacant positions focused on underrepresented communities, implement diverse interview panels, review and modify job descriptions to add experience equivalents, equitably and transparently provide training opportunities for staff...)
- How does your requested budget support and/or demonstrate an intentional effort to positively advance equity in policies, programs, and/or procedures?** (This can include actions/costs to collect disaggregated demographic data on programs, utilize disaggregated demographic data to assess and modify programs/policies/procedures, increase community engagement especially with underserved and/or underrepresented communities, mitigate impact of budget reductions on underserved and/or underrepresented communities...)

For questions, please contact the Department of Equity and Inclusion by email ([dei@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:dei@cuyahogacounty.us)) or by phone (216-443-7230).

H:\SBE\BudgetAndDEI\DEI\BudgetLens.docx

## N. DEI Drop-In Meetings

DEI Drop-in Meetings are meetings between the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and County departments/agencies to build interdepartmental relationships that maximize county efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. The goals are to share information, resolve problems, develop solutions, and foster collaboration that results in improved supplier diversity, workforce equity, and programs/policies/services equity. The meeting can be virtual or in-person. While DEI Drop-in meetings are informal, they are intended to be productive and tailored to the needs of each specific department/agency related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the department's request, DEI can schedule DEI Drop-in meetings with divisions within a department or for specific topics within a department. Also, for common topics/issues, DEI may schedule a DEI Drop-in Meeting with multiple departments/agencies. DEI may initiate the DEI Drop-In Meeting process with a department/agency. Moreover, County departments/agencies can request a DEI Drop-in Meeting. In 2023, DEI had three (3) Drop-in Meetings: Department of Purchasing (3/30/23), Department of Human Resources (4/19/23), and the Planning Commission (4/25/23).



City of Chatham County  
Together We Thrive



Department of Equity and Inclusion

### DEI Drop-in Meetings

DEI Drop-In Meetings are meetings between the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and County departments/agencies to build interdepartmental relationships that maximize county efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in its operations. The goal is to share information, resolve problems, develop solutions, and foster collaboration that results in improved supplier diversity, workforce equity, and programs/policies/services equity.

Let's meet (virtually or in person) and discuss various diversity, equity, and inclusion topics that are impacting your department/agency and the County. We will meet to address diversity, equity, and inclusion. The DEI Drop-In Meetings are informal, they are intended to be productive and tailored to the needs of each specific department/agency related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the department's request, DEI can schedule DEI Drop-in meetings with divisions within a department or for specific topics within a department. Also, for common topics/issues, DEI may schedule a DEI Drop-in Meeting with multiple departments/agencies. DEI may initiate the DEI Drop-In Meeting process with a department/agency. Moreover, County departments/agencies can request a DEI Drop-in Meeting. In 2023, DEI had three (3) Drop-in Meetings: Department of Purchasing (3/30/23), Department of Human Resources (4/19/23), and the Planning Commission (4/25/23). For more information, contact DEI at [DEI@chathamcountyga.gov](mailto:DEI@chathamcountyga.gov) or via phone (252-449-7220). The following is a list of potential (not all inclusive) topics:

Potential (not all inclusive) Topics

- General Considerations (past, relevant research, items...)
- Supplier Diversity
  - TRF Status
  - Internal Procurement Guidelines
  - Diversity Goals
  - Bid Solicitation
  - The AED's proposed Meetings
  - Administrative Remediation Panel
  - Outreach Meeting Board
  - Award Letter
  - Pre-Award Meeting
  - Contract Administration and Delivery
  - Contract/Contract Award Report
  - Purchasing & Contracting Process
  - Bid, Contract
  - Diversity Compliance Review Panel
  - How To Do Business with the County (Supplier Diversity)
  - Supplier Diversity Outreach
  - Training (Supplier Diversity)
  - County Risk Register
- Workforce Equity
  - Training (Workforce Diversity)
  - Career Ladder Analysis
  - How To Do Business with the County (Workforce Equity)
- Programs/Policies/Services Equity
  - Equity Access/Help Desk
  - Equity Assistance Tool
  - DEI Dashboard

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City of Chatham County  
Together We Thrive



Department of Equity and Inclusion

### DEI Drop-in Meeting

Department Name: Department of Human Resources

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 11am (Virtual via Microsoft Teams Meeting)

Agenda

- Welcome Introductions
- **DEI (Go Back to TRF Meeting Process)**
- Supplier Diversity
  - Outreach Meeting
  - Administrative Remediation Panel
  - Purchasing & Contracting Process
  - Diversity Compliance Review Panel
- Workforce Equity
  - Training (Workforce Diversity)
  - Career Ladder Analysis
  - How To Do Business with the County (Workforce Equity)
- Programs/Policies/Services Equity
  - DEI Dashboard
  - Training (Programs/Policies/Services)
  - Annual Equity Report
  - **HR and Equity Support**

© Inclusive DEI: Work Teams Program/DEI/Supplier Diversity/Agenda/2024/04/19/23/11am

## O. County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair

The Department of Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Purchasing collaborated on the Cuyahoga County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair. The Cuyahoga County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair was held on Thursday, July 13th from 9am to noon at Cuyahoga County's Harvard Avenue Facility. More than 120 people representing approximately 100 businesses attended. At this event, businesses were able to:

- Meet County Procurement Staff (DEI, Development, DoIT, HHS, HR, Purchasing, PW, and Sheriff)
- Share their business' offerings, expertise, and qualifications
- Learn about the goods and services Cuyahoga County plans to buy
- Learn about the County's small business loans and Skill Up 2.0 Program
- Get Face-to-Face Personal Assistance with:
  - Registering in the Cuyahoga County Supplier Portal System
  - Downloading and utilizing the County's Purchasing and Contracting Forecast
  - Viewing current County bids, RFPs, and RFQs for goods and services
  - Submitting bids, proposals, and/or qualifications
  - Understanding and preparing the standard required procurement documents
  - Applying for Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), and/or Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certification with Cuyahoga County



**Cuyahoga County Vendors  
Come To Our  
Pitch Day And Fair**

**Thursday, July 13, 2023 (9am – noon)**

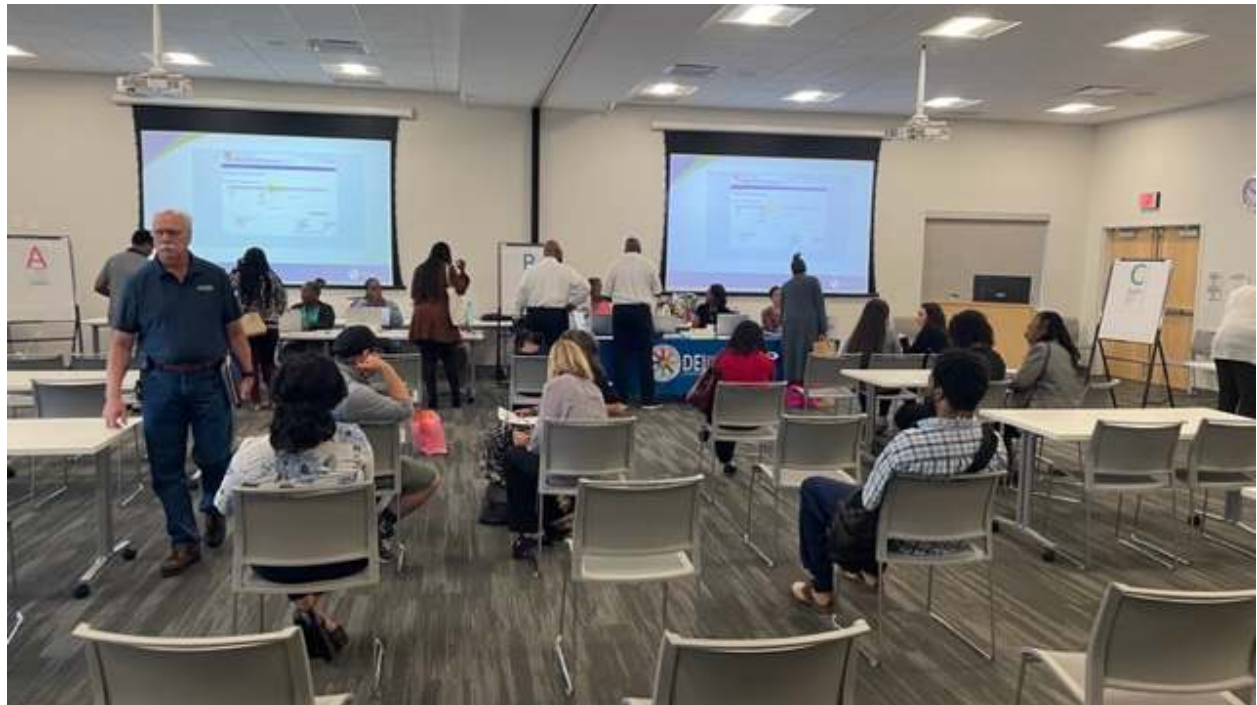
Cuyahoga County's Harvard Avenue Facility  
2501 Harvard Avenue  
Newburgh Heights, Ohio 44105

 **FREE parking**

**Meet** County Procurement staff  
**Share** your business' offerings, expertise, and qualifications  
**Learn** about the goods and services Cuyahoga County plans to buy  
**Get** Face-to-Face Personal Assistance

**Questions? Call (216) 443-7230**

  
Cuyahoga County





Per the following comments from the evaluation surveys, the program was well received:

*“Great program & initiative”*

*“I’d like to see this event happen a few more times throughout the year.”*

*“Great Job to all that put this event on! Well done.”*



## P. “How to do Business with the County” Program

DEI is proceeding with the development and implementation of the “How to Do Business with the County” Program. In collaboration with pertinent County departments/agencies, DEI will develop and implement programs/initiatives to assist vendors/citizens with maneuvering the myriad of county processes and procedures. Initially, the focus will be on the procurement process and the SBE/MBE/WBE Programs’ Policies and Procedures. However, it is envisioned that it will expand to include the multitudes of services offered by the Fiscal Office and the County. Starting in August 2023, on the 4th Thursday of the month from 9-10am, DEI provides a monthly virtual vendor assistance session. The areas of assistance are similar to the areas of assistance provided at the County Vendor Pitch Day and Fair.



The header of the website features the Cuyahoga County logo on the left, followed by the text "CUYAHOGA COUNTY, Ohio" and "Department of Equity and Inclusion". To the right is a search bar with the placeholder text "I'm looking for..." and a magnifying glass icon. Further right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Email, Instagram, and Pinterest. Below this is a dark blue navigation bar with white text for "HOME", "SERVICES", "CULTURAL AWARENESS", "RESOURCES", and "ABOUT US".

[Home](#) / [Department of Equity and Inclusion](#) / [Resources](#)

## Resources

### Vendor Meeting Sessions

Please register via the link below. You will receive an email with the meeting log in information. Please use that email log in information to sign into the webinar.

<p><b>August 24, 2023</b></p> <p>10am - 11am Virtually</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here to Register</a></p>	<p><b>September 28, 2023</b></p> <p>10am - 11am Virtually</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here to Register</a></p>	<p><b>October 26, 2023</b></p> <p>10am - 11am Virtually</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here to Register</a></p>
<p><b>November 30, 2023</b></p> <p>10am - 11am Virtually</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here to Register</a></p>	<p><b>December 28, 2023</b></p> <p>10am - 11am Virtually</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here to Register</a></p>	

# **DIVERSITY OUTREACH & TRAINING – CY2023 EVENTS**

## ***I. Construction Opportunities Fair***



On Friday, February 3, 2023, at Max S. Hayes High School, Senior Contract Compliance Officer, Jennifer Wilson attended the Construction Opportunities Fair hosted by the Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development (NEOHCED) and Sherwin-Williams. This event connected opportunities in construction contracting, information on bidding, certification, pre-qualification requirements, training and technical support for Small, Minority and Women owned businesses.

## ***II. Accelerate 2023***



On Thursday, February 23, 2023, Contract Compliance Officers, Shaunna Slayton and Carmen Chapman-Cameron participated Accelerate 2023 hosted by the Cleveland Leadership Center at the Huntington Convention Center. Accelerate is a pitch competition which gives individuals across Greater Cleveland the chance to win seed money to help launch their idea to make the region a better place.

## ***III. Cleveland Convention Center Expansion Project***



On Wednesday March 15, 2023, Director Lenora participated in the virtual meeting for the Cleveland Convention Center Expansion event. Director Lenora Lockett provided a brief overview of the Cuyahoga County’s SBE/MBE/WBE certification process. Turner Construction provided an overview of its construction prequalification process.

#### **IV. Opportunities in Contracting**

##### Opportunities in Contracting: HUD Section 3 and Other Opportunities



On Thursday, May 18, 2023 Contract Compliance Officer Shaunna Slayton was a part of the resource panel and presented the department of Equity and Inclusion at the Opportunities in Contracting event: HUD section 3 and other opportunities. This event allowed vendors to learn how to better access contracts with cities and public housing authorities and agencies that receive federal funding. They can also learn how SBA programs, Apex Accelerators, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Minority Business Assistance Center (MBAC) and more can assist in their pursuit of contracting Opportunities in both the public and private sectors and business growth. Contract Compliance Officer Carmen Chapman-Cameron and Senior Contract Compliance Officer Jennifer Wilson provided additional information on certification of SBE/MBE/WBE programs as well as CCBB & CCBEIP certifications at a resource table.

#### **V. The B2Gnow 2023 User Training Conference**



Senior Contract Compliance Officer Jennifer Wilson and Contract Compliance Officer Carmen Chapman-Cameron attended the conference which was held in Scottsdale, Arizona from May 22, 2023, through May 25, 2023. Topics were designed to be comprehensive and educational, with in-depth visualizations of system functionality that would assist in sharpening skills and abilities within our internal process and with the knowledge to better provide support for vendors utilizing B2Gnow. Training also included legal and regulatory updates, as well as best practices for creating and utilizing disparity studies. Both Jennifer Wilson and Carmen Chapman-Cameron were able to schedule a twenty-five (25) minute one-on-one individual learning session with a B2Gnow expert concerning specialized topics on the B2G system.

**VI. Cuyahoga County Department of Equity & Inclusion Pitch Day and Fair**



**Cuyahoga County Vendors  
are invited to our  
Pitch Day And Fair**

**Thursday, July 13, 2023 (9am – noon)**

On Thursday July 13, 2023 from 9am-11am The Department of Equity & Inclusion hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Pitch Day and Fair. The fair held at Cuyahoga County’s Harvard Avenue Facility provided vendors with an opportunity to meet County procurement staff, share their business offerings, expertise and qualifications. The fair also allowed vendors to learn about the goods and services Cuyahoga plans to buy and to get face-to-face personal assistance. Vendors were able to get assistance registering in the Cuyahoga County Supplier Portal System and be able to view and download the County’s Purchasing and Contracting Forecast. Vendors were able to view current county bids, RFP’s and RFQ’s for goods and services. The fair had various department personnel giving information on their department needs as well. This fair catered to Cuyahoga County Certified businesses as well as businesses seeking to get certified as Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and or Women Business Enterprise (WBE) and Minority Business Enterprise (MBE).

**VII. Cuyahoga County Fair 2023**



On Friday, August 11, 2023 Senior Contract Compliance Officer Jennifer Wilson partnered with various departments in Health & and Human Services as they presented a booth including various information about benefits, programs, certifications and information from departments within Cuyahoga County. Jennifer Wilson provided information about the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) certification process for SBE/MBE/WBE as well as CCBB and CCBEIP, and the Forecast.

**VIII. ACCA Training Institute**



# 2023 National Training Institute

August 14-19, 2023, Carmen Chapman-Cameron, La Quisha Lyons and Shaunna Slayton (Contract Compliance Officers) attended the 2023 ACCA Conference in Memphis, Tennessee. The ACCA is a non-profit national organization dedicated to ensuring equitable employment and contracting practices with public and private sector institutions. The ACCA provides a unique opportunity for conference participants to study among nationally recognized experts in their respective fields such as Affirmative Action; Contract Compliance; Labor Compliance; Economic and Business Development; Equal Employment Opportunity; Fair Housing; and Minority, Women, Disadvantaged, Small, Emerging Business Enterprise Programs. The training agenda is designed to focus on the critical issues and successful strategic solutions. Additionally, in conjunction with Morgan State University, this training can ultimately lead to certification through the ACCA. By obtaining 42 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and 84 CEUs, an attendee can earn the title of Certified Compliance Administrator (CCA) and Master Compliance Administrator (MCA), respectively. In addition to earning a CCA and MCA certificate, ACCA members can obtain an Executive Leadership certificate. The Leadership Institute at the conference provides the members that have achieved the MCA certification with the opportunity to obtain 1 CEU after 10 hours of training.

***IX. Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Expansion & Renovation Project Pre-Bid Conference***



**ROCK & ROLL  
HALL OF FAME™**  
EXPANSION & RENOVATION PROJECT  
**PRE-BID CONFERENCE**  
August 30, 2023 // 3-5p.m.  
Reinberger Auditorium @  
Great Lakes Science Center

On August 30, 2023 Contract Compliance Officers La Quisha Lyons and Shaunna Slayton provided a resource table to vendors on our certification of SBE, MBE and WBE certifications as well as CCBB and CCBEIP. This event allowed Subcontractor candidates to hear background and schedule information related to the first project bid packages for sitework, mass excavation and deep foundations. Subcontractor candidates could meet with Rock Hall representatives, its design-Builder, and learn about project schedule and scope, certification requirements for MBE, FBE and SBE qualifications.

**X. Community Resource Fair**



On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Contract Compliance Officers Halli Martin and Jamillah Murdock provided a resource table at the Community Resource Fair in Richmond Heights, OH that included information about the SBE/MBE/WBE certification programs and also the forecast which is an overview of what goods/services the county is seeking to obtain. In partnership with the County Executive and the Mayor Kim Thomas of Richmond Heights, each Director/Department was asked to briefly present their department's programs and/or share resources to the community. Director Lenora Lockett provided a presentation on the Department of Equity & Inclusion certification programs for small businesses, women business and minority businesses.

**XI. City of Fairview Park Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coalition Meeting**



On Wednesday, October 4, 2023, Director Lenora Lockett was a guest speaker at the City of Fairview Park's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition Meeting. Director Lockett provided an overview of Cuyahoga County's Department of Equity and Inclusion and provided details on various equity initiatives and programs. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition was created to promote diversity and inclusion in the City of Fairview Park.

**XII. Cleveland Guardians Community Review Group**

The Cleveland Guardians established the Community Review Group as part of its Community Benefits Program (CPB). The Community Review Group (CRG) was established to ensure there is a regular forum for the Guardians' Ballpark Improvements Project Team to receive feedback and transparently provide progress updates on all project objectives. The CRG focuses on racial, ethnic and gender diversity as it relates to contracting and workforce representation; inclusion and belonging; retention; and engagement on project related issues. The CRG concept is intended to build a coalition, share best practices around diversity and inclusion, and learn from peers and experts as the Guardians proceed with their Ballpark Improvements Project. Director Lenora Lockett serves as a representative for Cuyahoga County in this group. In 2023, there were three (3) CRG meetings.

***XIII. City of Cleveland Lakefront Development Community Benefits Working Group***

The City of Cleveland’s Lakefront Development Community Benefits Working Group is tasked with developing strategies to ensure transparency and inclusivity throughout the project planning, contracting, and construction process. Director Lenora Lockett serves as a representative for Cuyahoga County in this group. In 2023, there were several meetings (virtual and in-person) of this group.



## Committees/Councils & Partnerships – CY2023

The following is a listing of various meetings in which DEI participated with other departments/entities as part of its efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in Cuyahoga County:

- CACE Meetings: Pursuant to [Section 208.01](#) of the County Code, the Cuyahoga County Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity was first appointed in July 2020 to obtain community input on the full range of equity issues in Cuyahoga County. There were three (3) CACE meetings in calendar year 2023.
- Equity Commission Meetings: The Equity Commission oversees the County's equity efforts. The Equity Commission consists of the Directors of Development, Human Resources, Health and Human Services, Department of Equity & Inclusion, and Public Safety and Justice Services, or their respective designees. In calendar year 2023, there were six (6) meetings.
- Equity Commission Working Group: This group was created in September 2020 by the Cuyahoga County Equity Commission to support day-to-day work and to develop strategies and recommendations to advance racial equity. In calendar year 2023, there were six (6) meetings.
- Pre-Bid/Pre-Proposal Meetings: These meetings are for formal bids, RFPs, and RFQs meetings. At these meetings the County provides details on specific requirements for procurement. If diversity goals are set for item, the Department of Equity and Inclusion will provide an overview of diversity requirements. In calendar year 2023, there were 70 pre-bid/pre-proposal meetings.
- Pre-Construction Meetings: For construction projects after contract award but prior to contract work. These meetings include the requesting department, Purchasing and Department of Equity and Inclusion. These meetings typically include prime vendor, sub-contractors, and any state/local agencies affected by project (i.e., utilities, Fire/EMS/Police, Postal Service, community leaders, etc.). The Department of Equity and Inclusion reiterates information that was given in pre-proposal meetings and also addresses questions regarding compliance of established goals and program. In calendar year 2023, DEI attended one (1) meeting.
- Fiscal Office Refresher Training: DEI collaborated with the Department of Purchasing, Office of Budget and Management, and General Accounting/Financial Reporting to provide "Fiscal Office Refresher" Training to county personnel in various departments/agencies on the County Purchasing Policies, Budgeting/Fiscal End-of-the-year Processes, and the updated SBE/MBE/WBE Programs Policies and Procedures. This is an initiative/effort to build capacity internally to maximize the knowledge and understanding of county procurement personnel on the procurement process and supplier diversity requirements; thereby, working to have an effective and efficient procurement system and maximizing the participation of small, minority, and women business enterprises in the county's procurement process. Personnel from each of the pertinent Fiscal Office areas presented their content. The Department of Equity and Inclusion presented the supplier diversity requirements. There were four (4) training sessions. The training sessions were in-person and provided at various County locations.
- Equity Plan and Annual Equity Report Webinar: On October 26, 2023 and November 2, 2023, the Department of Equity and Inclusion provided a webinar presenting an overview of the County's Equity Plan and Annual Equity Report requirements as detailed in [County Code Chapter 1101](#). In addition, DEI detailed the preliminary preparation plan for the CY2023 Equity Report (publication deadline 1/31/24). In total, there were 52 attendees for the webinars.

## Equity Initiatives for 2024

In 2024, in accordance with the founding principles, the Department of Equity and Inclusion shall work to enhance equity in program and policy development within County government. DEI's work will be in three (3) areas of focus: Supplier Diversity, Workforce Equity, and Programs/Policies/Services Equity.

### Keys to Success:

- **Community Engagement:** Foster community engagement to ensure access and representation by diverse backgrounds, cultures, races, and ethnicities so that varied perspectives, interest, values and ideas are heard and considered.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Attract, recruit, hire, develop, and retain employees whose cultural, racial, and social demographics are reflective of the community. Provide racial and social equity and inclusion training that is general and role and business area specific to employees to increase understanding and to nurture behavioral changes that positively impact equity and inclusion.
- **Being Accountable:** Recognize that the advancement of equity and inclusion is the responsibility of all county agencies and departments.
- **Addressing System Inequities:** Intentionally and purposefully address inequities across our system. Utilize equity tools to evaluate, consider, develop, and implement policies, procedures, and initiatives to advance racial and social equity and inclusion in all of our work and practices. Working with various departments and leadership to embed equity and inclusion in the decision-making process.

### Major tasks/goals to complete by the end of CY2024:

- Develop and implement CY2024 County Vendor "Pitch Day/Fair" to increase vendor participation in the County procurement process with a focus on increased participation of SBE/MBE/WBE vendors
- Develop and implement the CY2024 "How to Do Business with the County Program" to assist vendors/citizens with maneuvering the myriad of county processes and procedures
- Develop County Leadership Academy to assist with the development of an internal pool of county employees for leadership roles and positions in Cuyahoga County
- Develop and implement the CY2024 Mid-year Equity Summit to provide an opportunity for county leadership to share progress and lessons learned on our diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives
- Develop and implement DEI's "What's Next?" Initiative for CY2024 to build upon the "All In" principle for advancing equity in county operations
- Develop and implement the DEI Contract Compliance Officer Training Manual and Program (Refresher) to provide for effective and consistent training for the Contract Compliance Officer position
- Complete the RFP process for the Disparity Study
- Complete the RFQ process for the diversity monitoring and contract compliance software system
- Draft the 2025 Equity Report (publication deadline: January 31, 2025)

The above detailed tasks are in addition to the ongoing equity initiatives previously implemented.

## Department/Agency: Fiscal Office (Financial Services and Administration)

Financial Services is responsible for certifying, accounting for and timely payment of funds. They scrutinize spending request to make sure that the County's tax dollars are spent as intended by law. The Fiscal Office is responsible for issuing best practice accounting policies and procedures throughout the County and ensuring compliance with internal controls and the County's financial policies.

The mission of the Fiscal Office is to provide quality, cost effective information and services to the citizens of Cuyahoga County through financial reporting, budgetary control, innovation, government excellence, and superior customer service.

The goal of the Fiscal Office is to develop a fiscal organization that is a leader in the public sector arena.

The key programs under the Fiscal Office include: Recorder's Office, Treasury, Board of Revisions, Auto Title, Office of Budget & Management, Purchasing, DEI, Consumer Affairs, and Real Estate Services.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

*Provide a summary of your actions to advance supplier diversity. Include updates on the commitments made in this area in the 2023 Annual Equity Report. – There are not many contracts in the Financial Services department, however one of the few procurements that we had, the organization selected to perform the annual audit for the years 2021-2025 included a MBE award.*

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

*Provide a summary of your actions to advance workforce equity. Include updates on the commitments made in this area in the 2023 Annual Equity Report. – We have worked with the HR Department to ensure that they are reaching out to minority organizations to post our job vacancies (historically black colleges, minority professional organizations, etc.) so that we can get a broader range of candidates.*

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned actions/commitments to advance supplier diversity. – N/A*

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned actions to advance workforce equity. - Continue to work with HR to ensure they are reaching out to a diverse candidate pool when posting jobs as noted in the response above.*

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

*Provide a summary of your planned efforts/actions to advance equity in your programs, policies, and services. – N/A*

## Department/Agency: Fiscal Department/Appraisal, Real Property and Transfer and Recording

The Appraisal department is responsible for discovering, listing, and valuing approximately 511,231 parcels. Real property preserves a complete historical record of all property transactions. They maintain records of property ownership, valuation, and taxation. Real property also collects special assessments for public improvements and computes tax credits as well as issues refunds based on decisions by the Board of Revisions, Board of Tax appeals, the Appraisal department, and the Court of Common Pleas. Transfer and Recording is responsible for the transfer and recording of all documents conveying interest in land and mineral rights to track the ownership history of all real property in the County. They ensure the public's interests are safeguarded by the recording, preservation, protection, and retrieval of all legally prescribed documents.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

This year we contracted for the Sexennial reappraisal. The contractors consisted of both Men and Women with different races and background.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

We worked with both PRC and the HR Department to make sure years worked in a specific field will hold as much weight as a college degree and to make sure Fiscal Job Classifications include and/or to allow for a more diverse candidate pool.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

We partnered with Probate Court and Auto Title to Host the Great Estates program. This program offers information and assistance to residents who wish to transfer property outside of the probate process. We hosted events at local libraries for residents to attend and learn more about probate and non-probate options. Residents who pre-registered had a copy of their deed available and a transfer on death designations that was recorded at the event.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

We ensured our purchasing forecast was completed in a timely manner so that vendors have enough time to participate in Bids.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

We will continue to work with both HR and PRC to ensure the job classifications are inclusive.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

We will continue to host the Great Estate program and look for other opportunities to support the residents of Cuyahoga County.

## Department/Agency: Fiscal Department/Treasury

Treasury is responsible for the collection of real estate taxes including enrolling taxpayers in the Easy Pay auto-withdrawal program for a convenient, secure and budget-friendly way to pay taxes; We also establish delinquent tax payment agreements to allow taxpayers to make monthly installments towards a past due/delinquent balance and provide community outreach. Our Mission is to collect, invest, safeguard and disburse public monies in a legal efficient and professional manner.

The mission of the Fiscal Office is to provide quality, cost effective information and services to the citizens of Cuyahoga County through financial reporting, budgetary control, innovation, government excellence, and superior customer service.

The goal of the Fiscal Office is to develop a fiscal organization that is a leader in the public sector arena.

The key programs under the Fiscal Office include: Recorder's Office, Treasury, Board of Revisions, Auto Title, Office of Budget & Management, Purchasing, DEI, Consumer Affairs, and Real Estate Services.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

We did not do a lot of procurement this year, but we did make sure our managers attended the DEI Initiative Kick-Off.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

Most of the positions are union based. All hiring decisions were made consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreements.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Our office has begun tracking our payment programs monthly to identify broadly what utilization looks like. We also implemented a change to our penalty remission request processing policy in November to ensure that

recommendations for remission are made consistent with the provisions of ORC. This new remission request review policy prioritizes compassionate response and seeks to withhold remission only in cases of statutory mandate or clear abuse. The new policy is attached to this email. We are also presently engaged in reviewing responses to the County's request for proposals for banking services, which heavily emphasizes community reinvestment and equity and inclusion initiatives and seeks accountability for implementation of those initiatives from our banking partners.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

In 2024 we plan on making sure our purchasing forecast is submitted in advance so that vendors have the opportunity to bid on our services.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

The Treasurer's Office believes strongly in the value of a diverse workforce, and the importance of ensuring that all members of the public feel welcome and represented in interacting with the County. Treasurer Cromes and staff are committed to conducting hiring processes consistent with County policies on equity and inclusion and will review job descriptions for inclusivity prior to any postings for open positions in 2024. Internal promotion and hiring will continue to be made consistent with the requirements of our labor agreements, and staff will be encouraged to take advantage of internal trainings on DEI offered by the County's Department of Human Resources. We are engaging with the Sustainability Office on opportunities to build staff morale through the shared project of making our office greener and will continue to seek out staff development initiatives that offer our employees the chance to grow and advance.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Given the sensitivity of the personal financial matters our office touches on for taxpayers, equity in the implementation of Treasury programs is essential to building public confidence. Treasurer Cromes has begun the process of working with staff to review all program areas for equity and inclusion and will be placing an emphasis on improving delinquency management. That process will include consideration of offering a wider variety and duration of delinquent tax payment plans, examining the office's down payment requirements for those plans, and identifying ways of improving utilization of monthly payment tools that make tax payments more manageable. We are also working on spinning up financial literacy and wellness outreach programming and intend to work with other County agencies to ensure that our efforts are targeted to areas of greatest potential impact within the County. Treasurer Cromes is in communication with peer and near-peer Ohio county treasury departments to identify programming that may be of value to our community, including the use of data visualization to extend the reach of



county programs to broader populations, the use of artificial intelligence to improve service delivery response times, and the use of data to forecast delinquency and implement early intervention programming. We will make an effort to tie our work in this area back to the County's broader efforts around utilizing equity zones to ensure services are delivered well and consistently to all parts of our community.

## Department of Health and Human Services 2023 Annual REI Report

Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) consists of ~ 2,000 leaders, managers, and frontline staff, who make up the workforce for eight operational divisions and offices. The four largest divisions under the DHHS umbrella are the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS), Office of Child Support Services (OCSS), and the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS). There are four smaller offices, referred to as Community Initiatives, consisting of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) also called Invest In Children (IIC), the Office of Re-entry (OOR), the Office of Homeless Services (OHS), and Family and Children First Council (FCFC). As a collective, DHHS' mission is to transform lives at every age and stage, through collaboration, innovation, and service; connecting people with the opportunity to live their best lives.

### **There are five overarching goals driving the DHHS diversity equity and inclusion work:**

1. Normalizing REI and DEI conversations
2. DHHS-wide training and application
3. Vehicles for workforce input
4. Review policy & procedures with an equity lens
5. Review & disaggregate employee & service data

These goals were developed in collaboration with the DHHS REI Steering Committee, comprised of staff from across DHHS divisions and varying positions. The chairs and committee members conducted research, participated in training, and consulted with their peers to determine the five goals that appear throughout this report.

Crucial conversations were also instrumental in engaging DHHS workforce in a safe space to have difficult conversations. These quarterly conversations are open to all DHHS staff with topics selected by the workforce. An ongoing staff survey starting in October 2022 affirms the above priority focus for 2024.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- I. **Actions to advance supplier diversity falls under the goal of reviewing the policy and procedures with an equity lens**

**The DHHS Division of Contracts Administration and Performance (DCAP)** developed standards for all RFPs and contracts to inquire about diversity in vendors, boards within vendors, and subcontractors. Vendors are required to explain how they will provide comprehensive staff DEI training upon hiring and on an annual basis. Vendors are required to describe how they are using an equity lens to plan, implement, and oversee programming about how equitable services will be provided to all consumers. Scoring proposals criteria addresses the above standards.

### **Supplier Diversity Data**

Based on the large population of clients served under the various DHHS programs that DCAP coordinates procurement for, there is no specific effort being made to increase smaller procurements for these critical services. We do, however, consider all vendors that submit proposals based on the merit of their response to meet the need(s) outlined in the RFP.

We issued 6 RFPs in 2023 set aside for **small business enterprises (SBE)**:

1. RFP 13370 Adult Guardianship Services  
SBE: 10%  
MBE: 0%

WBE: 0%

Only one proposal received and approved, and they submitted a good faith waiver for being a Non-profit.

2. RFP 12756 Community Social Service Program

SBE: 20%

MBE: 0%

WBE: 0%

We received 34 responses and awarded 30 vendors.

3. RFP 12904 Options for Independent Living Services for seniors and adults with disabilities

SBE: 20%

MBE: 0%

WBE: 0%

We received 31 responses and awarded 24 vendors.

4. RFP 13403 Youth Advocacy and Leadership Coalition

SBE: 26%

MBE: 1%

WBE: 3%

Only one (1) vendor responded. The RFP has closed, but the key documents are still being collected for contract creation.

5. RFP 12401 Entrepreneurial Training and Small Business Development

SBE: 16%

MBE: 7%

WBE: 7%

Only one (1) vendor responded. This RFP is not moving forward at this time.

6. RFP 12945 Satellite Reentry Resource Centers.

SBE: 20%

MBE: 0%

WBE: 0%

Only one (1) vendor responded. The RFP is currently pending next steps.

DCAP has issued nine (9) RFPs, three (3) Informal RFPs, and three (3) Informal Bids in 2023. DCAP created a plan holder's list for the RFPs and informal bids keeping in mind to include vendors from the DEI approved vendor lists. DCAP follows the specific instructions mandated from DEI for all of their procurement processes.

***An example of advancing supplier diversity from the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS):***

*DSAS developed a scoring rubric for the Options and Community Senior Service Providers (CCSP) major programs RFP proposals specifically designed to assess inclusivity and target minority and female owned businesses.*

**Procurement Forecast**

The DHHS Division of Contracts Administration and Performance completes the required Procurement Forecast biannually. DCAP works with DHHS Divisions to ensure they are aware of upcoming procurements to be accurately reflected on the forecast. All formal Bids, RFPs and RFQs comply with the 30-day minimum solicitation period as well as holding pre-proposal conferences for formal procurements. All pre-proposal conferences continue to be conducted virtually.

All staff are required to attend the instructional and refresher training modules presented by the Department of Purchasing and the Division of Equity and Inclusion. Throughout the year, all staff on board at the time of scheduling attended required training provided by DEI and DoP. We currently have eighteen (18) staff. As a part of our division onboarding process new hires are given copies of training materials and an overview of key points, expectations, and protocols is provided to them. All staff holding management positions attended the end-of-the-year refresher training session in October 2023 provided by DEI, DoP, and Fiscal.

**Exact RFP language from the FCFC Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program but standard in all RFPs:**

**Equity and Inclusion**

To educate and train Cuyahoga County HHS employees and community partners on the importance of fostering inclusiveness, HHS has embarked on a Racial Equity and Inclusion initiative to ensure diversity and racial representation and promote avenues to equitable systems and resources. Some of this work will be accomplished through revision of policies and practices and addressing disparities in the workplace and in communities. As a first step to extending this work to our partners, your proposal should include a completed Staffing Information Chart (Attachment 1) and Board Composition Chart (Attachment 2).

***An example of vendor requirements from the Family and Children First Council (FCFC):***

*Vendors must apply a racial equity lens to policy and practice regardless of the program. We seek a vendor who is aligned with Cuyahoga County's commitment to REI when addressing both the personal and professional needs of, for example, formerly incarcerated participants, bolstering them with entrepreneurship thinking, skill development, connections to training networks, and proven coaching and support in the entrepreneurial eco-system.*

- II. **Actions to advance workforce equity continues to highlight the goal of reviewing policy and procedures with an equity lens**

**Recruitment Strategies**

**Job postings** were done on the County website, Indeed.com, Zip recruiter (which cross posts to other websites), Ohio Means Jobs, and some sites that are specific to the job (example, PCSAO for Social Workers). We do continuous hiring for the largest 4 HHS divisions.

**Outreach** to candidates was in the form of emails and calls to candidates found on websites, that had applied with us previously, and that have applied on the Indeed site. In addition, we have used a lot of the community collaboratives associated with HHS to send our jobs, such as the ADAMHS board. For positions at HHS in Sobriety Treatment And Recovery Teams (START), we have reached out to community programs that would have people in rehabilitation for drugs and alcohol.

**Job descriptions** include equivalents for work experience. For example, if you need a bachelor's degree but do not have one, you will need 4 years of work experience to make up for not having the bachelors. The PRC includes equivalents for all formal education requirements.

**Interviews** include a diversity, equity, and inclusion question, even staff positions. DHHS always includes a question that revolves around DEI. DHHS divisions and HR use a question bank with an entire section on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. At least one question on diversity is selected for each interview. Open interview events were a large focus this year for DCFS social service workers, CJFS eligibility specialists, and OCSS support officers.

**An example of recruitment strategies in interviewing and retaining newly hired staff from Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS):**

- CJFS collaborates with HR to provide interview training for employees seeking promotional opportunities.
- CJFS and all other HHS divisions provide some form of onboarding training for new supervisors that includes a mentoring component to increase support, competence, confidence, and retention. Mentoring and onboarding are inclusive efforts to address DEI in a new role and at all levels (individual, as an employee, and organizational).
- From July 2022 to June 2023, 46 CJFS employees received a promotion (internal and to other County divisions/departments). Of the 46, 29 employees identify as people of color.
- CJFS continues to provide eligibility specialists with the professional development program, COMET (Community Outreach, Messaging and Education Team), which builds skills by providing opportunities for networking, public speaking, cultural awareness, and creative and critical thinking. This program began in 2019 and continues to upskill participants leading to promotional opportunities.

**An example of promoting workforce equity in recruitment from the Office of Homeless Services (OHS):**

OHS has recently updated job descriptions and continues to work with HR to acquire additional staff through equity in recruitment and hiring.

OHS budget includes \$225k for (2) SPA 2 positions. OHS examines all expertise and skills to advance equity when hiring new staff members. OHS utilized federal funds and leveraged non-county resources to financially support a designated Continuum of Care staff position.

**An example of promoting workforce equity in hiring from the Office of Early Childhood/Invest In Children (IIC):**

IIC filled the UPK Program manager position in 2023 (SPA3). The interview panel included four people (in addition to the HR Talent rep): three IIC employees and one Starting Point employee, the lead UPK agency. Two of the panelists were white women and two were Black women.

- Interview candidates completed a 10-minute presentation on the prompt: "What are the best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion in early childhood education that Invest in Children should consider implementing or supporting?"
- Additional interview question: "Describe how your career has been enhanced by exposure to diverse people, places, or experiences? Please provide a specific example."
- A current IIC vacancy's (also a SPA3) job description includes education and experience equivalencies.

**An example of advancing equity in hiring from the Office of Child Support Services (OCSS):**

OCSS hosts hiring events throughout the year with focused attention to accessibility for all potential employees.

- OCSS thoughtfully considers location, access to public transportation, and times during and after traditional work hours.
- OCSS, like CJFS and DCFS, offers a one-stop hiring process, including application, testing, interview, immediate conditional offers, paperwork, and fingerprinting.
- OCSS worked with the Personnel Review Commission to be more flexible and inclusive regarding screening criteria for applicants.
- OCSS developed and implemented peer review and interview preparation opportunities for employee interested in promotion.

**An example of advancing equity through hiring and building future leaders from the Division of Contract Administration and Performance (DCAP):**

DCAP currently has a total of 18 staff. There are six (6) positions (33%) in the supervisor and up category. Of those, six (6) staff identify in the following racial categories: 1 (5%) - Latinx; 3 (17%) - African American; and 1 (5%) - Caucasian.

DCAP, whenever practicable, hires/promotes from within. In 2022 the new administrator updated the staffing model to include cross-training, allowing staff to become proficient in all areas of responsibility under DCAP. To further prepare staff for promotional opportunities, DCAP incorporates monthly training for all staff in 2023 to close any learning gaps and improve quality. DCAP management routinely promotes staff professional and HHS/internal/other personal development opportunities. DCAP has recently implemented the opportunity for all staff to develop/enhance their presentation skills by preparing and presenting various training modules to the team with a three-prong evaluation (management, self, and peers) following the presentation.

## **DHHS-wide Training**

- All employees in the largest 4 divisions are required to complete a minimum of 5.5 hours in annual DEI training.
- Staff are provided training in various areas that provide equitable opportunities in the same classification to improve their job skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- Think, Relate, Coach is a leadership training series for DCFS supervisors created with Case Western Reserve University social work school in a unique module-based format that includes process sessions to promote transfer of learning and teamwork. This series can be expanded across DHHS in the future.
  - Modules focus on emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and supportive supervision with DEI principles interwoven throughout the series.
- Supervisor onboarding is provided in all DHHS divisions.
- A social work licensure group and internship program is available to advance leadership skills.
- Staff are provided training in various areas that provide equitable opportunities in the same classification to improve their job skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- CJFS and DCFS staff are also required and do provide regular training to staff on civil rights and how to access language services when working with DHHS clients.
- Polices including our LEP plans are posted on our website here: <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/about-hhs/civil-rights>

### ***An example of division-specific training from the Family and Children First Council (FCFC):***

*2023 FCFC staff training built on the 2022 implicit bias trauma-informed curriculum. High fidelity wraparound, six-month training on creating a trauma-informed biographical timeline, and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment training. Each training is created on a foundation of understanding how race, gender, culture, and economics impact the people of Cuyahoga County.*

### ***An example of division-specific training from the Office of Child Support Services (OCSS):***

*The 5.5 annual diversity training hours required for all DHHS employees may be obtained by attending diversity courses offered by HHS Professional Development, classes developed internally at OCSS by Continuous Quality Improvement or other individuals who have developed and received approval for a diversity class. Some examples of internally created courses include book clubs and paper/discussion and movie/documentary viewing and paper/discussion. Some employees have also organized a celebration of unit culture through sharing recipes, music, or other items.*

### ***Examples of division-specific training from the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS):***

*DSAS develops programs to engage staff with learning about and appreciating other cultures, causes, and understanding. DSAS hosted an event for Black History month led by 3 staff from Nigeria. They shared culture, traditions, food, and more. In April, a female Rabbi hosted a webinar to discuss how Jewish women are viewed in their culture along with the history of Purim and Passover. In October, the Hispanic Senior Center demonstrated Latin dance and the importance of music in Latin-x culture. DSAS hosted a Minority Men's Health webinar, a*

*Black History Month webinar on African Americans in Leadership, and a panel for Disability Awareness Month. In June, speakers from the Muslim, Asian, and Hispanic cultures discussed how Adult Protective Services and elder abuse are viewed in their respective cultures and how to improve service delivery with individuals in those cultures. Almost every month there is a theme dedicated to celebrating and bringing awareness of an ethnic group.*

### **III. Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services**

#### **Vehicles for Workforce Input**

In October 2022, the DHHS REI Steering Committee developed an Employee Engagement Survey to gain increased understanding of the current state and areas of opportunity related to REI strategies. Due to survey fatigue, we have used a personal approach for steering committee members to reach out to colleagues since November 2022 in each division and obtain their commitment to completion by explaining the impact. A smaller response rate is expected, yet we found more thoughtful responses with this approach.

At the time of this report, we have 121 responses.

Findings:

- Respondent Race/Ethnicity
  - 52% African American
  - 34% Caucasian
  - 8% Latinx
  - 0% Asian/Pacific Islander
  - 7% Multi-Racial
- Department-wide participation – equal representation
- 85% Female-identified reflects the majority of females as HHS employees
- Equal representation of years of service and bargaining/non-bargaining status
- Overall responses to questions about satisfaction with equity in training, growth opportunities, and availability of personnel and client data are significantly more positive than negative.
- However, a relatively large % entered a neutral response. Though not objectively clear, we believe this indicates that employees may not have thought about these questions enough to give a definitive answer or are unaware of what is available.
- 2024 is an opportunity to explore hypotheses further and acquire more responses.
- Finally, employees offered several topics for future crucial conversations incorporated in 2023 and overwhelmingly responded with affirmation to continue crucial conversations.

#### **Examples of actions to advance equity in programs and services from the Office of child Support Services (OCSS):**

- *Debt compromise and reduction through the Reduction of Permanently Assigned Arrears program.*
- *Right-size child support orders to best reflect the financial situation of both parents, including when a parent is incarcerated.*
- *Safe Access for Victims' Economic Security (SAVES) is a five-year federal demonstration grant to increase safe access to child support services for victims and survivors of domestic violence.*
  - *Child support can be a critical solution to financial insecurity.*
  - *This grant also seeks to build relationships with community partners and enhance parenting time opportunities.*
  - *SAVES seeks input from families about their experiences with child support, striving to build trust and give a voice to underserved communities.*
- *Outreach to prisons, courts, and homeless shelters to rebrand OCSS as a supportive human services agency by providing services and meeting our customers in their communities/location. OCSS participates in a number of steering committees/community collaboratives, such as Fatherhood Initiative, Domestic Violence, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland and Pro Bono Collaborative.*

- OCSS serves as a partner at In The Neighborhood community events, city programs in different communities within the city with specific racial or cultural focus. In Spanish-speaking neighborhoods, OCSS sends Spanish-speaking employees to attend. OCSS provides information and resources to customers participating in amnesty programs.

**Example of advancing equity in service delivery from the Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS):**

DSAS is in year 2 of 5 of the Livable Cuyahoga Initiative (planning phase). At the last Advisory Council meetings, Lorena Lockett presented to all partnering attendees about Cuyahoga County’s expectations to ensure DEI is incorporated in all aspects of service delivery and engagement. This was done with purpose so all the work in the domains can include a DEI lens. We anticipate Cuyahoga will become an Age Friendly County and continue to foster the tenants of DEI.

**Diversity in outreach and community engagement**

The DHHS Communications team supports external communication and community outreach to help clients and residents learn about and access the programs and services that can help them thrive. General communications about programs and services are shared [on social media platforms](#) and [community newsletters](#).

The following 2023 y.t.d. data represents community utilization of internet and social media accounts:

- HHS Facebook - 1,500 followers,
- HHS Instagram - 3,410 followers,
- HHS X - 1,169 followers
- HHS Combined Website - 191K users in previous 12 months
- CJFS Facebook:
  - Total Reach 12 months - 269,086,
  - Page Visits 12 months - 55,223,
  - New Page Likes 12 months - 628 ,
  - Total posts shared in other languages - 5 posts circulated that had multiple languages

**Pride in the CLE event** - 140 staff County-wide participated, over 500 visitors stopped in at the County resource table. Cleveland Heights Pride Event - Over 40 visitors stopped in at the County resource table.

**Father’s Walk** – 19,530 fathers and 165 schools participated in the annual fathers walk their children to school event County-wide.

**Cuyahoga County Fair** - Health and Human Services provided community outreach at the 2023. HHS agencies collaborated to provide education, information, and resources to Cuyahoga County Fair attendees on August 8<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>. The Division of Children and Family Services, the Division of Senior and Adult Services, Child Support Enforcement Agency, Job and Family Services, the Department of Consumer Affairs, Human Resources, the Office of Reentry and Invest in Children employees provided outreach, engaging over 200 community members throughout the weeklong event.

**Juneteenth Celebration**

Various divisions and offices under the Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services joined forces to take part in the Cleveland Juneteenth Freedom Fest held in downtown Cleveland. Each Agency distributed collateral as well as provided information and resources to County residents who attended the festivities. Combined, we received more than 1500 residents during the celebration.

- Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS)
- Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS)



- Cuyahoga County Department of Treasury
- Invest in Children

### **Voting Rights Outreach Coordination**

- The HHS Voting Rights Coordinator conducted 73 total community outreach engagement events resulting in 222 confirmed voter registrations and or address updates.
  - HHS Voting Rights Coordinator developed a continuous community partnership with Greater Cleveland Foodbank (*initiated November 2022*).
    - Original Euclid Pantry location NOW South Waterloo Marketplace location.
    - 2,422 neighbors engaged resulting in 71 confirmed voter registrations and/or address updates.
  - Initiated HHS Voter Registration Table Project
    - Established quarterly site visits to several agencies to promote voter education and awareness among County employees and visiting clients.
    - 466 employees and client engaged resulting in 72 confirmed voter registrations and/or address updates.
  - Hosted the Annual Your Voice Matters Youth Voting Summit (September 15, 2023)
    - 11 Cuyahoga County High Schools participated with over 250 Students, Faculty, Chaperones, Distinguished Guests, and Staff.
    - Results: 16 confirmed voter registrations submitted to Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.
    - <https://youtu.be/NRUPlw3jplg>
  - Co-sponsored Vote Early Day Press Event (October 26, 2023)
    - Promoted In-person early voting to all Cuyahoga County residents.
    - At the time of Press Event there were approximately 7,100 Early in-person voters counted with over 90,000 mail-in ballot applications requested.
    - <https://youtu.be/kXmtdPCCQMY?si=nduxanFBlc4h9RJU>

### **Invest in Children (IIC)**

- 2023 Infant Sleep-Related Death Education Campaign – Invest in Children helped fund a transit advertising campaign in September and October to educate new parents about the importance of safe sleep practices. Buses in six east-side Cleveland neighborhoods ran internal and external ads, generating 2,059,733 impressions in the first four weeks. The top five neighborhoods in Cuyahoga County for sleep related deaths are located on the east side of Cleveland and accounted for 41% of all Cleveland sleep related deaths in the last ten years.
- IIC provided testimony to the Ohio House Public Health Policy Committee in October to establish Black Maternal Health Week in Ohio, to assist in focusing messaging and program investments to address inequities in health and pregnancy outcomes experienced by Black families in Cuyahoga County.
- *IIC continued in 2023 an effort launched in 2022 on a short text messaging campaign conducted with Imagination Library, a program that promotes early literacy by sending books to children. Zip codes with high concentrations of African American residents were selected to receive Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program promotional messages to help increase enrollment in these high-quality preschool programs.*

### **Division of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS)**

- The Division of Senior and Adult Services participated in 54 Outreach events in 2023. The events had a total of 5,078 community members in attendance. Outreach events included Resource and Information Fairs, Community Programs, Health Fairs, Senior Center Events:
- DSAS conducted community outreach at Senior Centers and Senior Living Facilities in the following cities: Rocky River, Strongsville, Berea, Brook Park, Fairview Park, Strongsville, Euclid, Fatima, Richmond Hts., Gordon Square, North Royalton, Indian Hills, May Dugan, Maple Heights, and Famicos. Staff engaged with

community members and provided by assistance with benefits and HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) applications. On average, DSAS assisted 25 individuals at each event.

- DSAS hosted the 2023 Senior Resource Fair.
  - Staff from all of DSAS program areas, Adult Protective Services, Information Services, Options and Home Support engaged with seniors and adults with disabilities and their caretakers.
  - Services included biometric screenings and benefits check-ups.
  - Over 25 vendors were onsite to provide information and resources to seniors and adults with disabilities.
  - 103 attendees participated in the event.

### **Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS)**

#### **CJFS Co-Sponsored Cuyahoga County in becoming a Welcoming Community for Immigrants and Refugees**

In partnership with the national non-profit organization Welcoming America, in October 2023 Cuyahoga was officially certified an inclusive and welcoming community for immigrants and refugees. Efforts to achieve certification included:

- Established provider contracts with two (2) community organizations that provide social service navigation, legal resources, and education to non-citizen populations.
- Implementing ongoing targeted access events for newcomers to receive assistance with public benefits, education, workforce, healthcare, legal support, and more.
  - Five (5) Newcomer Intake Days were conducted in collaboration with Refugee Response and CJFS staff onsite to determine public benefit eligibility. These events focused on the Ukrainian, Congolese and Arab communities.
  - A total of 123 customers were provided with eligibility service or educated on public benefits information.
- Increased translated materials to share in the community about public benefit programs and access.
- Collaborating across departments/agencies to provide more streamlined processes of accessing services for immigrants, refugees, and limited-English proficient residents.
- Beginning the development of a multi-service center for immigrants, refugees, and limited-English proficient residents to access on-site support from County services and other social service programs.
- CJFS conducted 148 community outreach events in 2023
- CJFS conducted 27 community education workshops/trainings with community partners who serve Cuyahoga County residents.
- CJFS and the City of Cleveland collaborated to host produce pop ups at 2 events.

### **Children and Family Services (DCFS)**

- Hope for the Holidays - 1,400 youth served - total donation of in-kind, financial, and time resources was \$238,330.95
- Back to School - 1,400 youth served through efforts of over 50 donors
- Speaker's Bureau presentations – 18 events with over 700 local teachers, medical staff, community mental health staff, legal staff, and caregivers participated
- Child Abuse Prevention Month Walk - 230 County staff and partners walked from the Jane Edna Hunter Building to the Administration Building to raise awareness

#### ***An example of outreach and community engagement from the Division of Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS):***

*CJFS implemented a "Worker in the Community" pilot in 2023. Eligibility Specialists went to community partner sites across the County to assist people in underserved neighborhoods in accessing public benefits. CJFS highlighted engagement in the Central Neighborhood as well as Ohio City/Clark-Fulton to serve the African American and Latin-x community. The pilot has been successful and will be extended into 2024.*

## Office of Reentry (OOR)

The Annual Reentry Week is dedicated to raising awareness in our community about the barriers and challenges facing our justice-involved population and their families. During the week, we hosted community programs, raised public awareness and understanding about available services, and provided those in need with access to a wide range of reentry support services. We consciously hosted events in different neighborhoods and cities throughout the County to engage all residents and bring the necessary services to them. This effort allowed us to help over 600 justice involved individuals get the services they needed. Hundreds of community partner organizations provided access to jobs, food, mental health services, legal assistance, healthcare, education, and overall reentry support.

- OOR has an ongoing partnership with the Office of the Public Defender, Case Western Reserve University Second Chance Reentry Clinic, and the Cleveland State University Pardon, Clemency and Reentry Clinic where we host events that offer free legal assistance, advice, education, and expungement opportunities in various areas around the County.
  - In 2023, we have assisted over 300 residents to get their felony records expunged and sealed, provided access to other legal services, helped folks work through child support issues, and engaged them in understanding their rights after incarceration.
- Our outreach is focused on the reentry community but that allows us to serve a diverse population of residents that make up Cuyahoga County, including but not limited to those that are, African American, Hispanic, Asian, White, homeless, members of the LGBTQ+ community, older adults, single individuals, families with children, young adults, and even children.

## Equity Tool – to further the goal of reviewing policies and procedures with an equity lens

DHHS began using the 5 questions included here for all policies and procedures.

Citation: *The Power of a Racial Equity Impact Analysis*, Race Matters Institute of Just Partners, Inc., [www.racemattersinstitute.org](http://www.racemattersinstitute.org), 2016.

### RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ANALYSIS:

#### ASSESSING POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND PRACTICES

1. Are all racial/ethnic groups who are affected by the policy/practice/decision **at the table**?
2. How will the proposed policy/practice/decision **affect** each group?
3. How will the proposed policy/practice/decision **be perceived by** each group?
4. Does the policy/practice/decision **worsen or ignore** existing disparities?
5. Based on the above responses, what **revisions** are needed in the policy/practice/ decision under discussion?

DCFS and CJFS have a **Policy** Review Group each composed of a diverse group of staff from all levels of the agency to inform practice.

Policies are required throughout DHHS to address civil rights, non-discrimination, and limited English proficiency. DHHS continues to contract with US Together for interpreter services. This includes employee training and client complaint procedures. Current policies and training are in the process of being updated to reflect new state and federal guidelines and case law protecting clients with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE) (in process).

### **Examples of how policies and procedures have garnered national attention from the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS):**

- *In July 2023, the federal Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary, Children’s Bureau, and other HHS Chiefs met with a team of DCFS employees about safe identification, data collection, affirming care, and resources/services policy and procedure for working with LGBTQIA+ young people. LGBTQIA+ young people are overrepresented in child welfare involvement and foster care.*
- *In October 2023, the research firm Mathematica selected Cuyahoga County DCFS as one of 6 national sites to conduct a 3-day in-person case study of REI/DEI practice due to our advanced practice.*
- *Also on October 2023, a group of diverse DCFS employees participated in a facilitator training provided by national experts as part of a federal SAMSHA grant to train the child welfare workforce (and other child-serving professionals) in a unique cognitive behavioral therapy-based curriculum called AFFIRM Professional, adapted from the current AFFIRM Caregiver curriculum. Twelve facilitators completed the training and will begin training the workforce in 2024. Key components of the curriculum focus on overrepresentation, the minority stress model, and intersectionality.*

*Federal HHS and Children’s Bureau officials continue to consult with the Cuyahoga DCFS team to develop national requirements in collecting data about LGBTQ+ youth to assure their safety and that they and their caregivers are receiving affirming care, resources, and services. Cuyahoga also leads the state in this work which aligns with the Foster Youth Bill of Rights and President Biden’s 9/27/23 executive order to affirm all young people in foster care.*

#### **Why did they want to meet with Cuyahoga County DCFS?**

*DCFS replicated a Los Angeles County study from 2014 in 2019 with a survey asking young people over 12 a wide variety of questions about their experience in foster care including their sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). Cuyahoga matched the LA response rate with 31% youth completing the confidential survey. 53% respondents identified as African American. The LA County study revealed 19% youth who responded identified as LGBTQ+. The Cuyahoga County Youth Count study found that 32% of youth who responded identified as LGBTQ+.*

#### **Selected Overrepresentation Findings**

- *67.6% (46) of LGBTQ+ youth reported that they had not been treated very well by the foster care system compared to 44.7% (67) of non-LGBTQ+ youth.*
- *49.3% of LGBTQ+ youth reported they experienced adverse experiences in group homes compared to 30.2% of non-LGBTQ+ youth.*
- *LGBTQ+ youth were more likely to report being hospitalized for emotional and physical reasons.*
- *42.3% of LGBTQ+ youth reported that they could never be themselves in the place they are currently living, compared to 23.8% of non-LGBTQ+ youth.*

#### **Where and how resources were dedicated to equity initiatives**

DHHS weaves data and policy into an integrated system of care made up of 8 divisions and shared serves. An example is evidenced by all policies and procedures <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/about-hhs/more/policies-procedures> in DCFS are included on the public website as well as data reports <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/resources-data/reports> including racial equity. The DHHS website <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/> is a one-stop shop for residents to have the knowledge and access to all DHHS services and resources. There are no resources allocated in division/department budgets dedicated to REI work.

### **Examples of how DHHS resources were dedicated to equity initiatives and service delivery from the Office of Homeless Services (OHS):**

*The Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services (OHS), the lead agency for the Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC), is committed to developing a racially equitable system. Given the overrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) experiencing homelessness in our community, the CoC has taken collective action in addressing inequities within the system, especially ensuring equitable access to services and housing. The CoC is using data to drive the process of modifying standards, practices and policy.*

- *The OHS Advisory Board and all Standing Committees (Governance Committee, NOFO Review Committee, NOFO Strategy Committee, Program Policy Committee, and Youth Action Board) include persons with lived experience of homelessness and representatives of the BIPOC community.*
- *The OHS Advisory Board instituted a Program Policy Committee (PPC). The PPC utilizes disaggregated program data to review, create, and modify policies and procedures.*
- *The role of the PPC is to:*
  - *Provide guidance and leadership on standards, policies and procedures for housing and services programs funded by the CoC including the Coordinated Entry System (CES)*
  - *Develop, revise, amend and recommend standards for the administration and operation of CES, emergency shelter (ES), permanent supportive housing (PSH), rapid rehousing (RRH) and additional program models funded by the CoC*
  - *Review data on CoC and CES operations and outcomes. Make data-driven decisions about revisions to policies and practice*
  - *Submit recommend new or revised policies and procedures for adoption by the Advisory Board*
- *OHS dedicated HUD Planning Grant dollars towards the development of system-wide, race equity data dashboards. The dashboards are used to establish equity performance monitoring, develop standards, and support improved outcomes for the BIPOC population served within the homeless system. The CoC measures outcomes for length of time homeless, exit destinations, and returns to shelter by age and race cohort. Findings will also be instrumental in modifying standards, practices, and developing policy recommendations.*

**Describe how the DHHS Equity Zones Map/Policy is being utilized (Equity Zone Scoring Category/favorable terms and conditions**

See **Equity Zone Maps** attached. DHHS strongly agrees that the locations identified as Equity Zones are those most in need of the services provided by DHHS. However, most DHHS services are mandated and heavily regulated by federal and state agencies. DHHS is required to serve all applicants/clients in the county without any legal discretion regarding the clients' place of residence. For discretionary services, the process of making Equity Zone maps in 2022 showed that the current practices for targeting clients and service locations already produce results that consistently exceed the Policy's 40% target by over 1.5x. As a result, DHHS has not made any changes to procurement or scoring practices during 2023. DHHS will continue to produce and review the Equity Zone Maps annually to ensure that its policymaking and procurement processes produce results exceeding the Equity Zone targets.

**Data Collection & Accessibility**

Limited aggregated data is included on the DHHS/division public-facing websites. Much of our work involves PII personal identifying information and cannot be shared with the public.

**Program Data**

Job & Family Services, Children & Family Services , Senior & Adult Services, Child Support Services, Invest in Children, and Homeless Services all collect demographic information on enrolled clients, allowing their programs to be reported in terms of any combination of demographic categories. The Family & Children First Council has demographic data for the following programs: Family Centered Services and Supports (FCSS); Out-of-School Time (PST); Youth Advocacy and Leadership Coalition (YALC); Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG). The Family & Children First Council has begun collecting demographic data for the following programs: Comprehensive Sexual Education/Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP); Families and Schools Together (FAST). Reentry has begun collecting demographic data for all programs.

## Looking Forward (CY2023)

### I. **Actions to advance supplier diversity falls under the goal of reviewing the policy and procedures with an equity lens**

#### **CY2024 Action Commitments to Advance Supplier Diversity and Procurement Forecast**

DHHS DCAP continues to follow the requirements set out by DEI for future procurements. With a permanent Administrator in place, they are approaching capacity to focus on increasing supplier diversity. DCAP will examine how to better use the information they receive in proposals. DCAP will work with the HHS Director and specifically the Assistant Director to further explore other diversity initiatives we can pursue in 2024.

DHHS DCAP will submit timely, complete, accurate, and comprehensive 24-month purchasing and contracting forecasts in CY2024. DHHS and DCAP will adhere to the minimum 30-day posting period requirement for formal bids, RFPS, and RFQs. DHHS and DCAP will work with divisions to increase the diversity of vendors in the industry by soliciting both informal and formal bids and RFP's/RFQ's from a diversified pool of potential vendors.

#### **Planned procurements for CY2023 candidates for the SBE Set Aside Program**

Upon review of the planned procurements, there aren't currently any candidates for the SBE set aside program.

### II. **Actions to advance workforce equity continues to highlight the goal of reviewing policy and procedures with an equity lens**

#### ***An example of the RFP language and requirements to advance supplier diversity from the Office of Early Childhood/Invest In Children (IIC):***

*In 2024, IIC will release the next RFP for the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program. In this RFP IIC is attempting to advance diversity and equity in several ways:*

*1. IIC will include questions similar to the following:*

- a. Describe the background and characteristics of families your program serves including socio-economic status, use of childcare subsidy, family structure, race, ethnicity, countries of origin, languages spoken. (IIC always asks some version of this question to understand the children & families each program serves.)*
- b. Describe work your program has done to address racial equity across all aspects of the program (e.g., hiring practices, training for staff, board composition, recruitment, and child enrollment).*
- c. How does the curriculum address racial and ethnic diversity? How does it address the needs of the population your program serves (as described in question 1)?*

*2. IIC plans to include features like linguistic diversity of staff/materials and offering non-traditional hours (i.e., nights and weekends) for preschool programs.*

#### **Recruitment, Hiring, and Interviews**

HR recruiters will work to develop better relations with local colleges. Several colleges have specific diversity groups that they are researching to share job postings and information. Recruiters partnered with professional development to get to know the interns that are working in our buildings and to help them through the hiring process so we could increase the number of interns that turn into employees.

DHHS Human Resources has not done much with culturally specific groups in the past, so HR is working on getting back in touch with former and new organizations to build relationships and promote recruitment. Examples include The Cleveland Foundation and The Diversity Center.

The Talent Acquisition team will continue to hold open interview events with a focus on inclusion by inviting an increasing the number of diverse organizations, such as our community collaboratives. In addition, the team will be posting on zip recruiter more often, which cross posts to many culturally diverse organizations.

## DHHS-wide Training

PDL plans to work collaboratively with DHHS leadership to advance the Future Leaders Program in 2024.

### **The DHHS Steering Committee learned in the October 2023 crucial conversation series from a participant about an overarching REI/DEI strategy.**

The crucial conversation topic was: One of the inherent challenges of public service is that you must be able to serve individuals regardless of their national origin, background, race, orientation, etc. Have you identified your own personal biases? How are you overcoming your own personal biases while serving our clients?

In this discussion, honest participants reflected on their biases and learned stereotypes about different groups. We were impressed with one’s participant’s approach to consciously assessing bias before responding to a client or co-worker. His approach is a mnemonic device easily remembered for an In the Moment strategy so valuable when biases and learned behavior are involved.

- Pause – Take a deep breath or two to regulate your emotions and be in the present
- Process – Label the emotions and you are feeling, what biases or stereotypes are coming up? Use empathy to enter a mindset everyone is different. Everyone is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind always.
- Plan – How do you respond, not react? Remember how you are is always more important than what you do.
- Proceed – Only then take action and proceed with your response

### ***An example of HHS division-specific REI/DEI training planned for 2024 from the Office of Early Childhood/Invest In Children (IIC):***

IIC is working with partners at Starting Point to implement an early childhood educator professional development initiative aimed at reducing racial bias among teachers and racial disparities in punishment/expulsion of children in early care and education settings. One IIC employee is already trained in this initiative, in its pre-pilot phase. With the pilot phase in 2024, IIC and Starting Point plan to offer this professional development experience to an additional 4 IIC staff members. We recognize that reducing racial bias is key not only in classrooms but also for systems leaders.

## Vehicles for Workforce Input

The DHHS Steering Committee commits to increasing responses to the **internal DHHS staff survey**, distributed in November 2022 to continue to inform CY2024 initiatives through data.

The survey is an opportunity to learn more about DHHS demographics, topics of interest, and what they see as the next priority. We will learn about each respondent’s prioritize through the following two scaling questions.

1. The employee’s current level of satisfaction with the DHHS DEI Goals (Normalizing conversations, Training, Workforce Input, Policy & Procedure review with an equity lens, and review and disaggregate employee and service data)
2. Employee perspective about the importance of initiatives and suggested new strategies.

### ***An example of workforce input in action from the Office of Reentry (OOR):***

***OOR DEI Principles continue to guide the division as they work toward advancing common internal and external goals***

- |  |
|--|
| • <b><i>Provide regular reminders on the importance of language</i></b>  |
| • <b><i>Solicit honest feedback from staff (value everyone’s thoughts, etc.)</i></b>                           |
| • <b><i>Encourage staff to share microaggressions</i></b>  |
| • <b><i>Create a safe space for employee voices</i></b>  |
| • <b><i>Monthly, we watch DEI videos at the opening of our all-staff meetings and allow for discussion</i></b> |

The Office of Reentry is implementing crucial conversations within the division in 2024 monthly staff meetings. OOR employees will view a DEI video and participate in a team discussion to promote relationship and team building and to advance DEI by learning from one another and provoking thoughts and perspectives to expand the individual and collective

mindset. Team members are encouraged to respectfully and professionally challenge one another to grow and increase cultural humility. This is an excellent example of what the DHHS REI Steering Committee seeks to promote with department-wide crucial conversations, and we hope to see all divisions replicate OOR Director Simeon Best's efforts.

### **III. Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services**

#### **Organizational Self-Assessment Tool**

DHHS researched organizational self-assessment tools for completion and reference within and across divisions. This tool, "Developing Multicultural Organizations: An Application of the Multicultural OD Model 517", provides examples of what it looks like to become an equitable and inclusive organization on a continuum. Divisions identify challenges, potential short and long-term solutions, and champions from the inside out. DHHS used this tool in a team setting to generate crucial conversation and identify action plans for CY2023.

**Full citation:** Adapted from: Evangelina Holvino, "Developing Multicultural Organizations: An Application of the Multicultural OD Model 517" in Brenda B. Jones, Michael Brazzel's *The NTL Handbook of Organization Development and Change: Principles, Practices, and Perspectives*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. February 2014. Pfeiffer

#### ***An example of actions to advance equity in programs/services/policies from Cuyahoga Job and Family Services (CJFS):***

*We engage in advocacy for less administrative burdens with regards to the SNAP program to ensure access to critical services to at risk and marginalized populations.*

*We will continue to cooperate with Community partners to provide access to services through community resource fairs, offering services during resource events for the community to assure we are removing barriers to knowledge and access.*

#### **Data-Driven Programs/Policies/Services to review policies and procedures and disaggregate employee and service data**

DHHS plans to use data to identify who we work with in terms of formal and informal supports, increase access to personnel data, use equity maps, and maximize the use of community collaborative data.

#### **Collecting REI Data**

DHHS is reevaluating the categories it uses when analyzing racial and other disparities, especially with regard to mixed/multi-racial individuals and families. For each analysis, we are now considering whether the appropriate racial categorization would be to aggregate all case members, report on members individually, or aggregate only a particular, context-specific subset. For example, while it has been common practice to use a single 'primary' case member as proxy for the entire case, we are finding this sometimes significantly undercounts multi-racial families.

#### ***An example of planning for the use of REI data in equitable service delivery from the Office of Homeless Services (OHS):***

- *The County Continuum of Care is looking at a system-wide standard for providing reimbursement/ stipends for individuals with lived experience who participate on boards, committees, or other OHS-supported activities. OHS is exploring how this participation might promote future employment opportunities within CoC partner agencies.*
- *OHS in partnership with Enterprise Community Partners developed the Income & Stability Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has developed a pilot, in partnership with Ohio Means Jobs, dedicated to serving homeless and at-risk youth ages 18-24. There is currently overrepresentation of BIPOC within this age cohort. This pilot will further strengthen the Continuum's ability to link individuals to employment services and address disparities that occur within the workforce.*



DHHS Workforce Demographics - identifies baseline data that will help us ensure policies and operations both reflect and meet the needs of our workforce. Additionally, this may help guide future recruitment efforts to improve the diversity of our workforce at all levels.

<b>Female</b>	<b>1621</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Withhold</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1918</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>AGENCY - ETHNICITY</b>	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>
<b>Health and Human Services</b>	<b>1918</b>
	44
American Indian or Alaska Native (not Hispanic or Latino)	3
Asian or Pacific Islander (not Hispanic or Latino)	10
Black or African American (not Hispanic or Latino)	868
Choose Not to Identify	471
Hispanic or Latino	70
Two or more Races	54
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	398
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1918</b>

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the examples provided throughout the report illustrates DHHS’s ongoing commitment to embedding REI/DEI principles in every facet of our work. It is our belief that in order to strengthen our service delivery continuum and create an environment that supports an engaged and productive workforce, it is necessary to use an equity lens on all policies and practices.

## Department/Agency: Department of Housing and Community Development

Department of Housing and Community Development - Established April 25, 2023

### **Mission Statement**

The Cuyahoga County Department of Housing and Community Development's mission is to develop and implement new strategies with creative and innovative solutions to increase affordable housing, enhance middle market neighborhoods, and create a stronger, vibrant quality of life for residents in all Cuyahoga County communities.

### **Federally Funded Programs Administered**

Affordable Housing Loans

Down Payment Assistance Program -

Emergency Rental Assistance

Fair Housing Education and Testing

Financial Counseling and Foreclosure Prevention

Homeowner Repair Program

Lead Removal and Remediation

Municipal Grant Program

### **Non- Federally Funded**

Community Development Supplemental Grant – Funded by County Council

Heritage Home Loan Program – Administered by Key Bank

Housing Enhancement Loan Program – Administered by Key Bank

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The Department of Housing and Community Development procures services from a variety of non-profit organizations for the purpose of administering the federally funded programs as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. RFPs are sent to those non-profit organizations that have the expertise in providing the administration of the federally funded programs. These program by federal statute must serve county residents whose incomes do not exceed the HUD mandated Area Median Income, specifically those persons or households considered low to moderate income. The Department has had a long-standing relationship with Breaking Chains, a minority-led, non-profit organization that specializes in financial education.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

As a recipient of federal funding the Department of Housing and Community Development is required to be in compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Developments Equal Employment Opportunity regulations.

As such, each interview team consists of at least one minority, and one female.

In the past year, a Director was hired for the department who is an African American female. In the past 6 months an Administrator was hired for the department who is an African American female.

The departments demographics are as follows:

- 4 African American females
- 1 African American male
- 2 Caucasian females
- 3 Caucasian males

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Federal funding requires that the Department of Housing and Community Development collect and report demographic information where the use of federal funds was used. This information is reported to HUD on a regular basis with the aggregate being provided in our submission of the “Annual Report” to the department.

The use of the Equity Zones is not considered in the department’s programming as we are required to provide non-discriminatory assistance to those who meet the eligibility criteria required for the funding. By nature of the population which must be served, the demographics is a high percentage of minorities, whose incomes are in the low to moderate income range.

The Department administers a federally funded grant program awarded to cities which requires that persons served must be low to moderate income or the area where the service is provided must by census tract be a low-moderate income area or a blighted area per HUD’s definition. The department provides an update on those communities who meet the HUD requirements for funding that are also located in a County Equity Zone.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The Department of Housing and Community Development will continue to follow the regulations provided by the federal funding received in serving low to moderate income individuals and households.

The Department of Housing and Community Development will continue to include minority led organizations to the list of candidates to respond to our requests for proposals for all activities as we are made aware of these non-profit organizations who meet the required expertise in the individual areas of need.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

The Department of Housing and Community will continue to ensure its workforce is diverse while also hiring the best candidate for any open positions.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Federal funding requires that the Department of Housing and Community Development collect and report demographic information where the use of federal funds was used. This information is reported to HUD on a regular basis with the aggregate being provided in our submission of the “Annual Report” to the department.

Federal funding requires the Department of Development to provide at least a 15-day comment period on all new programs created. In addition, we further provide a 15-day comment period, and public meetings on the use of our federal funds and associative programs on an annual basis.

## Department/Agency: Human Resources

**Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, the Department of Human Resources attracts, recruits, develops, motivates, and retains a high performing and diverse workforce while fostering a healthy, safe, and productive environment. Adhering to the principle that the County's employees are its most important asset, HR's strives to engage, develop, and empower County employees to provide the very best services to County residents.**

**The Department of Human Resources provides HR services in various areas, including talent acquisition; organizational and employee development; benefits; compensation; employee wellness; payroll; HRIS; employee and labor relations (including workers' compensation administration and environmental health and safety); and general HR services.**

**The HR Department consists of a team of 54 professionals who support over -- employees.**

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

**In 2023, HR recommended approval on 12 new contracts. Of these contracts, six (6) resulted from formal request for proposals (RFP) with a total not-to-exceed value of \$10,117,694.00. From these six (6) RFPs, the County only awarded one contract to a vendor that was not compliant with the County's DEI program, and this vendor was the only vendor that responded to the corresponding RFP. The County awarded the remaining contracts via exemptions, awarding two (2) to a government entity (MetroHealth), two (2) pursuant to older RFPs, and two (2) due to time constraints. The total value of these exempted contracts is \$2,556,326.00.**

**HR has limited procurements for which to solicit bids. The majority of purchase expenses are service contracts, many of which are related to the administration of benefits. HR solicits these contracts with the intent to award the vendor that will provide the greatest benefit and value for the County and its employees, though many of the benefits submissions are from national firms which do not or cannot meet project diversity goals when established. To counteract this, HR builds vendor lists starting with the DEI maintained list of certified diverse vendors. Unfortunately, vendors often do not meet the established goals, as some projects are not**

**suitable for subcontractor-based diversity goals. When possible, HR has encouraged vendors to register and become eligible diversity suppliers for future procurements.**

**In 2023, HR made strides to improve procurement efforts, both on competitive solicitations and reducing the need for non-competitive exceptions. In so doing, HR has reduced the number of ‘late’ contracts submitted to the Board of Control or County Council after service began. Even with this improvement, we continue to try to improve procurement by beginning the solicitation process as early as possible to encourage timely submissions and corrections to meet established diversity goals. In addition, HR has used the DEI maintained certified vendor lists, and posted formal procurements for a minimum of 30 days with incorporation of a telephone pre-bid conference. HR also provides requested extensions to solicitations when time permits to encourage multiple submissions and compliance. In some instances, vendors were provided a chance to correct their diversity documentation to resolve minor errors. All anticipated procurements are maintained on the Department’s 24-month purchasing forecast, as there is a regular schedule for most of these services. HR participated in the first DEI-Sponsored Pitch Day where staff and vendors connected and discussed future needs and projects, which, in turn, increased vendor awareness of the types of business and services HR needs. Purchasing staff also attend webinars and refreshers when possible.**

- Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

**In a collaborative effort with the County’s Personnel Review Commission (PRC), HR is including additional information in its job postings to encourage a diverse applicant pool and provide alternative options for candidates to meet the minimum qualifications for the position. Most of the County’s classifications include a statement of minimum qualifications, or “any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience.” During the test development process, the PRC works with SMEs to define these ‘equivalencies’ and uses those to screen applicants. These equivalencies, however, historically were not published in the job postings. HR has been working with the PRC to include the applicable equivalencies in job postings for classified positions, with the goal of obtaining a broader pool of applicants who otherwise may not have applied for a position without knowing the specific ‘equivalent’ combinations.**

**In addition, HR, together with the PRC and Department of Equity and Inclusion, explored procurement of text-analyzer software to ensure that the language used in our job postings, position descriptions, and other County documents is inclusive and does not tap into unconscious biases or otherwise discourage diverse applicants. HR requested, and the County Executive approved, funding in the Department’s 2024 and 2025 budgets to procure this software.**

In 2023, HR hired 1020 and promoted 235 employees. See below tables for statistics on new hires and promotions. HR’s recruitment efforts included using advertising mechanisms and conducting “one-stop-shop” hiring events aimed to reach diverse and underrepresented populations. [Will supplement with specific data from Talent Acquisition]. HR endeavored to use interview panels for these hires and promotions that were diverse in gender, race/ethnicity, and other socioeconomic demographics, and to include diversity-related questions in the interview process for managerial/ supervisory positions.

- In 2023, HR hired 1020 employees. Approximately 67% of the new hires were women. The new hires identified (or did not) as the following:

<b>62%</b>	<b>Choose Not to Identify</b>
<b>11%</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>2.50%</b>	<b>Two or more Races</b>
<b>2%</b>	<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>
<b>22%</b>	<b>Black or African-American</b>
<b>0.50%</b>	<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>

- In 2023, HR promoted 235 employees. Approximately 70% of the promotions were women. The promoted employees identified (or did not) as the following:

<b>29%</b>	<b>Choose Not to Identify</b>
<b>32%</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>2%</b>	<b>Two or more Races</b>
<b>1%</b>	<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>
<b>35%</b>	<b>Black or African-American</b>

1%	Asian or Pacific Islander
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- HR’s recruitment efforts included using advertising mechanisms and conducting “one-stop-shop hiring events” and “application days” aimed to reach diverse and underrepresented populations and endeavored to use interview panels for these hires and promotions that were diverse in gender, race/ethnicity, and other socioeconomic demographics, and to include diversity-related questions in the interview process for managerial/ supervisory positions.

In terms of DEI development of HR staff, on October 25, 2023, -- members of our HR team and our internal DEI Committee attended a DEI Conference presented by Engage Cleveland, which addressed the import of DEI, provided insight for supporting DEI in the workplace, and offered tools to foster inclusivity. In addition, -- members of our team attended the *Microaggressions and Mental Health* educational program presented by the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

HR also hired Dr. Alida Moonen to serve as our Director of Organizational and Employee Development. Dr. Moonen and her team have partnered with DEI Director Lenora Lockett and her team, as well as Clerk of Courts Nailah K. Byrd (who serves as the County’s liaison for the Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity), to increase awareness of the import of DEI within our workplace by coordinating DEI training for staff and leadership.

- Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):

One of the great Initiatives of our internal DEI Committee began is our "Can We Talk: Conversations that Matter" Panel Discussions. The Committee hosted the first discussion on February 24, 2023, and the topic was *Why Black History Month is Still Relevant Today*. County Executive Chris Ronayne, County Council President Pernel Jones Junior, and Clerk of Courts Nailah K. Byrd, participated as our panelists.

On June 30, 2023, the Committee hosted its second panel discussion, and the theme of this discussion was “*Your Vote, Your Voice*” in light of the August 8, 2023 special election. The event hi-lighted and educated others on the impact and import of voting and featured our own Councilwoman Meredith Turner (District 9), who has served as an election official with the BOE and is committed to empowering civic engagement in our community; Meredith Helmer, who is the President of the Board of NE Ohio Voter Advocates and has coordinated voter registration within the CCCC for many years; as well as Mike West, who is a longtime BOE employee and serves as its Manager of Community Outreach.



**And, on November 3, 2023, our Committee facilitated its third panel discussion, the theme of which was food insecurity in Cuyahoga County. Our panelists included our very own Yvonne Conwell, who is our County Councilwoman for District 7; as well as Denise Caviness, who serves as an Information Services Supervisor with the County’s Division of Senior and Adult Services in HHS; and Vaughn Johnson, who serves as our Deputy Director of Economic Development. We were also privileged to have Vontrice Jones, who is the Director of Agency Services at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, serve on the panel. In preparation for our conversation, on October 19, several members of our DEI Committee volunteered at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, not only to give back to the community, but to have a better understanding of the serious equity challenges food insecurity presents to Cuyahoga County, the residents we serve, and our colleagues.**

**We have also started to review the County’s personnel policies, as well as recruitment, hiring, and onboarding procedures with an equity lens. As part of this effort, the County Executive and HR will be submitting legislation to expand the eligibility criteria and duration of the County’s Paid Parental Leave benefit in --.**

## **Looking Forward (CY2024)**

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

**To improve supplier diversity efforts, HR will continue to evaluate future formal procurements for term and scope with the goal to reduce the necessity of national firms and allow for more suitable projects for local, diverse businesses. For example, the Employee Benefits Selection Tool was solicited in 2023 with a disappointing number of submissions. HR is reviewing this RFP to encourage additional competition and hopefully encourage local, diverse suppliers to submit proposals in 2024.**

**HR will also make an effort to evaluate established goals before solicitation to address concerns early on in the process. HR purchasing staff will continue to attend provided seminars and trainings and will look forward to the next DEI-sponsored pitch day with the expectation that additional staff will participate and connect with new diversity suppliers. When preparing solicitations, HR will continue to utilize the DEI maintained vendor lists and encourage current partners to seek registration, if applicable.**

Moreover, HR's Wellness Program is expected to undergo a revamp, which may create opportunities for diverse suppliers to provide incentive items to the County under the program. Some of HR's current incentive ideas include items that any number of vendors could potentially supply to the County, creating a new opportunity for vendors to contract with HR, which has not been available in a number of years.

In terms of our recruitment, hiring, and onboarding policies and practices, HR plans to review them with an equity lens to consider changes to enhance equity and remove equity barriers.

In terms of organizational and employee development, our internal DEI Committee is committed to establishing Employee Resource Groups throughout the County in 2024. We believe ERGs will foster an environment of inclusiveness and belonging; help build strong relationships between employees throughout our organization; and strengthen our culture. We plan to coordinate these efforts with our OED team.

- Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):

For 2024 and beyond, HR is partnering with the PRC and Department of Equity and Inclusion to procure and implement text analyzer software. This software will be used to review County job postings, requirements, classifications, and communications materials for biases that may result in the exclusion of persons interested in County employment and current employees. Doing so will further the County's efforts to be equitable and inclusive from the very onset of the employment and onboarding process.

In addition, HR plans to have our Talent Acquisition team work with leadership of the respective departments to establish recruitment plans, which:

- Identify all cross-sections of our community (to ensure we are effectively recruiting a diverse workforce and recruiting from all potential sources);
- Identify priority applicants with an equity lens;
- Build partnerships with community stakeholders in cross-sections of the community;
- Build partnerships with colleges, communities, universities, and accredited training programs with intentional effort to reach and attract diverse and minority members from our community;
- Incorporate regular review of the effectiveness of HR's recruitment strategy (by analyzing new hire and turnover data) as well as our hiring, and onboarding procedures to ensure that they do not create unnecessary obstacles and/or equity barriers for candidates during the hiring process; and
- Makes sure our advertising reaches different cultural audiences.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

**As mentioned, for 2024 and beyond, HR is partnering with the PRC and Department of Equity and Inclusion to procure and implement text analyzer software. In addition to job posting related material, the software will be used to review internal communications and policy materials for biases that may impact current employees, stakeholders, or suppliers.**

**Also planned for 2024, HR is preparing to introduce Civil Treatment, an employee training on harassment and inclusion in the workplace. This training will be provided to all County employees with the goal of preventing workplace harassment and increasing inclusion among the workforce by improving moral and reducing instances of exclusion.**

**In addition, HR plans to work with a consultant to conduct a pay equity study for non-bargaining employees and develop a compensation philosophy that will provide a framework to ensure that compensation-related decisions are made in a fair and equitable manner.**

**As mentioned, HR also plans to continue to review the County's personnel policies, as well as recruitment, hiring, and onboarding procedures, with an equity lens. As part of this effort, the County Executive and HR will be submitting legislation to expand the eligibility criteria and duration of the County's Paid Parental Leave benefit.**

## Department/Agency: Enter Department/Agency Name

The **Department of Information Technology (IT)** provides services to support efficient operations of County departments. Our staff includes IT professionals in security, network engineering, web design and development, database, multimedia, enterprise application services, GIS, project management and business services. We support county-wide and departmental specific applications and services, and partner with departments to promote the use of technology to expand the scope, scale, and quality of services. We deliver practical solutions and promote policies to make innovation sustainable.

The Department of IT coordinates the use of all automatic or electronic data processing or record-keeping equipment, software, computer hardware, information technology and/or information technology services in use by the various Cuyahoga County government offices, departments, agencies, boards and commissions that are under the jurisdiction of the Charter.

The Department of IT shall be comprised of the staff of the Chief Information Officer and the following divisions: Project Management Office, Security, Web Development, Health and Human Services Applications, Justice Services Applications, Enterprise Services Applications, Infrastructure Operations, and Geographic Information Systems.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

For all RFPs/RFQs/RFIs posted in the customary fashion, we deliver these requests to all vendors we have on file. This listing of vendors includes a substantial number of diverse vendors that we are always looking to increase. The Department of IT continues to establish partnerships with organizations that focus on promoting diversity in technology fields.

We provide a 24-month purchasing forecast to the Cuyahoga County Department of Equity and Inclusion. This document includes our best projection of procurements that will be initiated so that vendors of all sizes can begin to plan accordingly and identify opportunities of interest to themselves.

Furthermore, for formal Bids, RFPs, and RFQs, the Department of IT complies with the 30-day minimum solicitation period to ensure prospective vendors have adequate time to craft a response. Department of IT also complies with the requirement to hold pre-bid and pre-proposal conferences so that vendors have an opportunity to ask questions about Cuyahoga County's procurement process generally or about the specific procurement for which they are participating.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

The Department of IT has partnered with organizations that focus on promoting diversity in technology fields, including Greater Cleveland Partnership and Interapt. IT leadership promotes diversity and is accountable for creating an inclusive culture within their teams.

The Department of IT works with our Talent Acquisition Specialist in the Department of Human Resources as part of our hiring process. We rely on this team to ensure the recruitment process attracts candidates from a wide range of backgrounds.

Interviews and subsequent hiring have resulted in a diverse demographic of employees, including management-level resources. IT leadership ensures decision-making bodies and interview panels include individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The Department of IT promotes continuous DEI training and regularly assesses DEI initiatives to identify areas for improvement.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

The Department of IT reviews and updates policies to ensure they are free from bias and support a diverse workforce. The Department of IT has had representation at all internal trainings hosted by the Cuyahoga County Department of Equity and Inclusion.

A priority item for the Department of IT in 2023 was to recruit a DEI Champion for our business and procurement team to better manage and implement DEI initiatives. 2023 was a transition year in the Department of IT in the business services manager role, but a new incumbent was recruited into the position in September 2023. That individual will be expected to integrate DEI practices into the Department of IT's procurement activities when and where practicable.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The Department of IT will continue to build on our foundation of DEI initiatives to increase supplier diversity. IT business team members will work collaboratively with the Department of Equity and Inclusion to identify new vendors, with an emphasis on those that achieve diversity like SBEs/MBEs/WBEs, for inclusion on planholder's lists when formal procurements are underway as well as to receive notifications when other opportunities arise.

The business services manager, as DEI champion and head of the business team, will continue to work with all IT stakeholders to document fiscal and procurement processes and identify opportunities to advance Cuyahoga County's DEI goals. Process changes will be implemented when and where practicable.

The Department of IT will also continue to adhere to internal best practices such as the minimum 30-day posting period for formal procurements as well as submitting 24-month purchasing forecasts that are developed collaboratively with and thoroughly vetted by IT leadership and managers.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

As the Department of IT creates or updates job classifications, we will use inclusive language to attract a diverse pool of candidates. We will clearly communicate our agency's commitment to diversity and equity in technology roles.

The Department of IT will utilize interview panels for employees that are diverse in gender, race, ethnicity, and other socioeconomic demographics.

We will continue to foster partnerships with local organizations that promote diversity and inclusion in the workforce. We will continue to establish partnerships with local education institutions, community organizations, and professional networks to expand the pool of diverse IT candidates.

The Department of IT will expand its mentoring program to support the professional development of underrepresented employees in the Department of IT and provide training opportunities for interns to encourage long-term engagement.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

The Department of IT has recruited a DEI champion for the Procurement Department to make sure all DEI initiatives are executed.

The Department of IT will continue to tailor initiatives to the unique framework of our agency in order to advance workforce equity through fair and inclusive policies and programs designed to address the unique needs of our workforce.

We will continue to develop IT programs that address identified needs and focus on cultural competency, diversity, and inclusion. This can include forums and collaborative workshops to gather input on IT initiatives.

The Department of IT will continue to use the Equity Assessment Tool to identify potential disparate impacts. As part of our policy review process, the Department of IT will adjust policies based on assessment findings to mitigate any unintended consequences.

## Department/Agency: Enter Department/Agency Name

The Agency of the Inspector General was established to protect the County taxpayers' interest by promoting honesty and accountability in County government. To that end, the AIG has three main areas of responsibility:

- Ethics – The Inspector General serves as the County's Chief Ethics Officer and is charged with upholding and enforcing the County Ethics Code. The AIG conducts proactive ethics education; receives, researches, and responds to ethics inquiries; investigates allegations of ethical misconduct; and receives and reviews required disclosures aimed at preventing impermissible conflicts of interest.
- Complaints & Investigations – The AIG receives whistleblower complaints and investigates allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse. The AIG administers an automated data analytics program designed to detect fraudulent conduct and promote effective and efficient County operations.
- Contractors & Lobbyists – The AIG administers the County's contractor and lobbyist registration program and as part of that process conducts background checks to ensure the County is only doing business with upright individuals and businesses. The AIG additionally enforces the County's Debarment Law.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The AIG provided timely, accurate information to the Department of Equity and Inclusion ("DEI") regarding its recurring contracts and procurement processes. This information is incorporated into the Cuyahoga County purchasing and contracting forecast which provides details on contracting and purchasing opportunities for a 24-month period. Although the AIG did not issue any formal bids, RFPs or RFQs, the AIG followed procurement rules for all its purchases. Additionally, AIG team members responsible for procurement efforts attended available trainings to ensure their understanding of the procurement process, including but not limited to the County's supplier diversity program.

In order to reduce non-competitive awards, the AIG procured items through the County's established competitive process. The procurement process requires departments to contact all qualified SBEs/MBEs/WBEs certified by DEI prior to posting the procurement. Additionally, the Infor procurement system is used to notify all pertinent suppliers in the system which can include SBEs/MBEs/WBEs.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

No staff vacancies occurred in 2023. When future staff vacancies occur, the AIG will review the job posting(s) to ensure the language is as clear and inclusive as possible and attempt to identify additional posting, advertisement, and outreach opportunities to encourage recruitment from the most diverse, qualified group of applicants.

AIG management strives to be as inclusive as possible to ensure staff knows their input and opinions are valued. The last two rounds of AIG hiring occurred in 2022, and during that hiring process each staff member was given an opportunity to meet with and have input on the selection of the successful candidates. Additionally, over the past two years the AIG has undertaken significant changes to its policies and procedures. Management included staff in the formation and implementation of those policies and procedures to ensure everyone had a voice at the table.

AIG management also strives to be as equitable as possible. Not only does this include treating staff equitably, but it also includes equitably investing in our staff. All employees are encouraged to pursue relevant certifications and other staff development opportunities.

Part of developing our staff professionally is ensuring that they support diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives. The AIG participated in all available DEI training opportunities provided by the Department of Human Resources. Additionally, AIG management researched multiple training options to find a cultural sensitivity and awareness training, with a twofold goal of 1) generally increasing the overall cultural competency of the AIG, and 2) specifically training investigators on the importance of cultural sensitivity in interviews. The AIG was successful in identifying a relevant training vendor that will provide custom content and tailor the training specifically to the AIG's needs. This training will be held in 2024.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

The AIG promotes honesty and accountability in County government primarily through ethics training and guidance, complaint investigation and administration of the contractor and lobbyist registration process. The AIG does not provide services or administer programming for the community.

Although the AIG does not administer community programming, the AIG engages in employee outreach to ensure that all County employees are aware of the AIG, the County Ethics Laws, and the availability of the Whistleblower Hotline.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

The AIG will continue to provide timely, accurate information to the Department of Equity and Inclusion (“DEI”) regarding its recurring contracts and procurement processes. This information is incorporated into the Cuyahoga County purchasing and contracting forecast which provides details on contracting and purchasing opportunities for a 24-month period. Additionally, the AIG will continue to: follow all procurement rules for its purchases; attend available trainings to ensure an understanding of the procurement process, including but not limited to the County’s supplier diversity program; and procure items through the County’s established competitive process, which includes contacting all qualified SBEs/MBEs/WBEs certified by DEI prior to posting the procurement.



- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

There are no staff vacancies anticipated for 2024, however should they occur, the AIG will review the job posting(s) to ensure the language is as clear and inclusive as possible and attempt to identify additional posting, advertisement, and outreach opportunities to encourage recruitment from the most diverse, qualified group of applicants. The AIG will continue to involve its staff members in the interview and selection of new candidates.

Management will continue to include staff in the formation and implementation of new policies and procedures to ensure everyone has input, as well as continue to offer development opportunities to AIG employees.

The AIG will continue to participate in all available DEI training opportunities provided by the Department of Human Resources. Additionally, the AIG will undergo its planned cultural sensitivity and awareness training, with the twofold goal of 1) generally increasing the overall cultural competency of the AIG, and 2) specifically training investigators on the importance of cultural sensitivity in interviews. This training will be conducted through a vendor already identified by the AIG that will provide custom content and tailor the training specifically to the AIG's needs.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

The AIG promotes honesty and accountability in County government primarily through ethics training and guidance, complaint investigation and administration of the contractor and lobbyist registration process. The AIG will not provide services or administer programming for the community in 2024.

Although the AIG does not administer community programming, the AIG will continue to engage in employee outreach to ensure that all County employees are aware of the AIG, the County Ethics Laws, and the availability of the Whistleblower Hotline.

## Department/Agency: Internal Audit

The Department of Internal Audit (DIA) is an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity that is guided by a philosophy of adding value to improve operations of Cuyahoga County. We assist the County in accomplishing its objectives by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the County's risk management, control, and governance processes.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

DIA supports actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through voluntary participation in all DEI required activities including training, townhalls, forecasts, updates and annual reviews.

Where possible, DIA follows and ensures compliance with DEI procurement directives including the 30-day minimum solicitation period for formal Bids, RFPs, and RFQs.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

DIA has not required posting/advertising for an available vacant position since 2020. Job descriptions/requirements for the Staff Auditor and Sr. Staff Auditor positions are maintained by the Personnel Review Commission.

All DIA staff are required to attend an average of 40 hours continuing education/training per year. During 2023, several continuing education courses attended included diversity and equity subject matters. More specifically, how to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into audit services. This practice is expected to continue in the future. DEI will be considered with any future vacancies including job requirements and advertising strategy.

- In 2023 each DIA team member attended between 1.0 – 2.5 hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) related to DEI. Courses included the following:
  - Governing for Equity through the lens of Organizational Change (1 Hr) – 6 of 6 staff attended.
  - Tools for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Audit Planning (1 Hr) – 3 of 5 staff attended.
  - The Importance of Auditing Equity Factors in the Public Sector (1.5 Hrs) – 1 of 5 staff attended.
  - Auditing Organizational Culture in the Public Sector – 1 of 5 staff attended.
- DIA supports actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through voluntary participation in all DEI required activities including training, townhalls, forecasts, updates and annual reviews.
  - Monica Houston, Director
    - Attended DEI Mid-Year Equity Summit

- Updated Purchasing & Contract Forecast
  - Submitted Annual Equity Report for Internal Audit Dept.
  - Tom Schneider, Sr Auditor
    - Attended DEI Townhall Session
    - Attended “What’s Next Microaggressions & Mental Health” Webinar
  - Joseph Balbier, Staff Auditor
    - Attended “What’s Next Microaggressions & Mental Health” Webinar
- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
- DIA is an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity that is guided by the philosophy of adding value to improve operations at the County including DEI best practices. As such, DIA applies a DEI lens to all appropriate audit engagements which include the following:
    - Through the audit process, ensuring Cuyahoga County sets goals with measurable outcomes for HR's recruitment, hiring and retention process with respect to diversity and equity

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

DIA 2024-2025 proposed budget is fairly limited outside of Personnel Services. This includes other operating expenses, contract services, and capital outlay.

Other operating expenses do not provide an opportunity to apply an Equity Lens consisting of:

- Internal chargebacks (mail, space maintenance),
- Local travel expenses (mileage etc. as necessary),
- Office supplies (limited to WB Mason), or
- Employee professional development/certification costs (memberships, continuing education through professional organizations such as the Institute of Internal Auditors) as mandated by County and Audit Committee Charter.

Contract service expenses are obtained following Executive Department of Purchasing (DoP) procedures. All competitively bid contracts are subject to the Department of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) review and requirements when appropriate.

Capital outlay budgeting is minimal and maintained in the event DIA is need of equipment to effectively conduct a specific audit. DoP procedures and DEI requirements will be followed in such a case.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

DIA anticipates the hiring of an employee in FY 2024/25 during which time we will follow all recommended and required DEI guidance to recruit and hire a diverse staff. DIA will continue to seize opportunities to obtain training relative to how we may positively impact and support DEI within the organization in the work we do.

- Each member of the team is required to obtain 40 hours of relative training. DIA management has identified training within the DEI arena to be preferential and hence staff will seek to take DEI related training when available.
- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
- DIA will continue to identify and seize opportunities to incorporate DEI into the work that we perform by consistently examining areas of audit focus through a DEI lens. DIA has developed processes and procedures that are followed when planning each audit. Those processes and procedures contain specific direction relative to the identification and assessment of areas/items that are relevant to or which impact DEI. To the extent deemed appropriate, the review and testing of any DEI related processes or controls will be included in the work performed.

## **PART I**

### **DEPARTMENT/AGENCY: ENTER DEPARTMENT/AGENCY NAME**

**Cuyahoga County Department of Law**

### **PROVIDE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF YOUR DEPARTMENT/AGENCY. PROVIDE DETAILS ON MISSIONS, GOALS AND KEY PROGRAMS.**

The Law Department was established in 2011 pursuant to the County Charter. The Law Department is structured into the following Divisions:

- **General Division**
- **Enterprise Risk Management Division**

The Law Department provides a breadth of legal services, advice, and representation to County Executive, County Council, Departments, officials, and employees in the advancement of the efficient administration of government. The highest quality legal advice is rendered on matters of great importance to the operation of County government, while protecting the County from loss and risk in areas relating to labor and employment issues, enterprise risk management and compliance, legislation, purchasing contracts, real estate transactions, public works projects, and matters of great interest to public officials and the public at large.

The County's Enterprise Risk Management Division (ERMD) cultivates a risk aware and safety-first culture throughout the County by collaborating and advising County Departments to incorporate risk control practices to protect employees, resources, and properties. ERMD implements loss prevention and risk control strategies resulting in the conservation of resources for the delivery of superior services to county residents and families. ERMD seeks to further the effective and efficient County administration's stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Pursuant to County Code, ERMD is responsible for the administration of private insurance programs protecting the assets, resources and liabilities of County, its departments, officials, and employees. ERMD also oversees and directs the Claims Division, which investigates, negotiates, and settles claims covered under self-insured program.

#### **Mission**

The Law Department will provide the highest quality legal representation and advice to clients related to their public duties and responsibilities in the administration of the public's operations in accordance with highly ethical and professional standards. To ensure effective legal counsel is performed at the highest level of excellence, the Law Department will promote fairness and justice, protect the rule of law, and create social and legal reform that considers the experiences of the diverse county residents whose lives will be most impacted by the policies and laws the County creates. The Law Department is committed to deliberately and intentionally advancing Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity so that we may effectively serve the citizens of County of Cuyahoga. These principles are necessary to build a culture of belonging for all employees and the clients we serve.

#### **Goals**

To achieve its Mission, the Law Department focuses on the following goals:

- Support a work environment that is collaborative, diverse and inclusive;
- Provide superior training to tackle complex legal issues;
- Maximize communication with clients to meet legal service needs efficiently;
- Improve the quality of delivery of services by assisting clients to develop innovative, sustainable practices and solutions.

## Key Programs

In 2024, the Enterprise Risk Management Division will be rolling-out the first-ever County-wide Enterprise Risk Management program to guarantee minimal loss exposure and execute compliance. The objective is to obtain optimal protection for the County by identifying, assessing, prioritizing, reporting, and managing top risks and opportunities to facilitate achievement of the County's strategic objectives and performance priorities. The ERMD has retained an Enterprise Risk Management Consultant to assist with the execution and implementation of an ERM structure and framework.

## **PART II LAW'S ACTIONS TO ADVANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION YEAR IN REVIEW (2023)**

### **ACTIONS TO ADVANCE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY: (I.E., SPEND WITH DIVERSE VENDORS; PARTNERSHIP WITH DIVERSITY/OUTREACH EFFORTS, PROMPT PAY PERFORMANCE...):**

Although the Law Department's purchase of goods and services is relatively limited, the Department promotes economic inclusion by working collaboratively with other County departments and agencies to remove barriers experienced by small vendors doing business with the County.

The Enterprise Risk Management Division (ERMD) develops risk management practices and strategies simultaneously promote the County's interest in contracting with small businesses and protect the County against risk. See Cuyahoga County Code Section 507: Risk Management

Procedures. <https://www.cuyahogacounty.gov/code/titles/title-5-contracts-and-purchasing/chapter-507-risk-management-procedures>

#### **1. Sustainable Business Cyber Access Program (CAP)**

In 2023, ERMD established CAP to educate small business and nonprofit enterprises about best practices for internet security and to help county vendors access the cyber liability insurance market and get competitive quotes for coverage. <https://cuyahogacounty.gov/purchasing/doing-business-with-the-county/sustainable-business-cyber-access-program-cap>

#### **2. Performance Bond Waiver Program**

ERMD oversees the Performance Bond Waiver Program. The County requires construction contractors to provide performance bonds. The Performance Bond Waiver Program assists small businesses by removing barriers to contract competition. The Bond Waiver Program is intended to give economically disadvantaged businesses a one-time waiver in order to level the playing field. This program allows County contracts to be equitably available to all qualified contractors and benefits the County's interests. See Section 508.01-02.

<https://www.cuyahogacounty.gov/code/titles/title-5-contracts-and-purchasing/chapter-508-county-s-performance-bond-and-insurance-requirements>

#### **3. Insurance Waivers for Small Businesses**

When setting insurance requirements for individual contracts, ERMD considers the impact on small business while protecting the County's interest. ERMD accommodates waivers of the County's insurance requirements on a case-by-case basis when it is determined to be in the County's best interest. Section 507.01

#### **4. Intentional Focus on DEI in the Hiring of Outside Counsel**

Although limited in its ability to hire outside counsel directly, the Law Department seeks to have material effect on the diversification of the legal profession through the engagement of outside counsel that supports, practices, and prioritizes diversity. The Law Department is committed to the proposition that any law firm doing business with the County must be prepared to demonstrate the firm's DEI commitment.

#### **5. Supplier Diversity**

When contracting for consulting services, the Enterprise Risk Management Division ensures supplier diversity. Recently, ERMD issued an RFP for an Enterprise Risk Management Consultant that incorporated small business goals. The vendor selected exceeded the small business goal set by the DEI Department.

#### **6. Community Outreach Efforts To Support Change**

The Law department sponsors or invests in scholarships, internships, and other pipeline programs designed to help develop the career path for a greater number of diverse attorneys. The Law Department has made commitments to scholarship funds to support minorities in the pipeline to a legal career. Two teams of Law Department attorneys are participating with a local high school (Garrett Morgan) through the CMBA's 3Rs Program to teach civics and provide mentoring. And staff speak at Career Day functions at local law schools. The Law Department has invested in CMBA's LSAT Prep Scholarship Program. This program improves the inclusion of diverse individuals in the legal profession and removing barriers to college, law school and the practice of law. The LSAT Scholarship Program eliminates barriers for many college students or graduates pursuing law school admission by giving them access to effective tools to prepare for LSAT success.

#### **ACTIONS TO ADVANCE WORKFORCE EQUITY: (I.E., EFFORTS TO EVALUATE/REVISE JOB DESCRIPTIONS TO BE INCLUSIVE; EFFORTS TO RECRUIT/HIRE/PROMOTE A DIVERSE STAFF, EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EQUITABLE STAFF DEVELOPMENT/PROMOTION/RETENTION...):**

The Law Department is dedicated to recruiting and hiring diverse talent. The Law Department is engaging in actively searching for and considering diverse candidates for open positions to ensure diverse slates of candidates for entry level and other hiring. To that end, the Department is partnering with law schools and student affinity groups to raise its visibility and strengthen its relationship with diverse law students.

The Law Department is also dedicated to developing and promoting diverse talent, once acquired. Professional development procedures and processes are part of the DEI Strategic Action Plan to ensure that diverse attorneys receive equitable access to leadership opportunities, work allocation and assignments, feedback, professional development, and "client" opportunities. With respect to leadership, the Law Department is working to promote and assign leadership roles to women.

#### **ACTIONS TO ADVANCE EQUITY IN PROGRAMS/POLICIES/SERVICES (I.E., PRIORITIZATION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE EVALUATION/IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND SERVICES; UTILIZATION OF EQUITY ZONES IN APPLICABLE SELECTION PROCESS/PROGRAMMING...):**

The Law Department is in the process of establishing the necessary infrastructure to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in the County and the legal profession. Law will roll out a multi-prong DEI strategic plan in 2024. This plan will be incorporated on the Law Department’s website as a visible commitment to equity.

**PART III LAW’S ACTION COMMITMENTS 2024**

**ACTIONS TO ADVANCE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY (I.E., SPEND WITH DIVERSE VENDORS; PARTNERSHIP WITH DIVERSITY/OUTREACH EFFORTS, PROMPT PAY PERFORMANCE...):**

The Law Department will continue to advance economic inclusion through the implementation of the programs listed in the section above:

- 1. Sustainable Business Cyber Access Program (CAP)**
- 2. Performance Bond Waiver Program**
- 3. Insurance Waivers for Small Businesses**
- 4. Supplier Diversity**
- 5. Intentional Focus on DEI in the Hiring of Outside Counsel**
- 6. Community Outreach Efforts To Support Change**

**ACTIONS TO ADVANCE WORKFORCE EQUITY (I.E., EFFORTS TO EVALUATE/REVISE JOB DESCRIPTIONS TO BE INCLUSIVE; EFFORTS TO RECRUIT/HIRE/PROMOTE A DIVERSE STAFF, EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EQUITABLE STAFF DEVELOPMENT/PROMOTION/RETENTION...):**

[repeated from above:]

The Law Department is dedicated to recruiting and hiring diverse talent. The Law Department is engaging in actively searching for and considering diverse candidates for open positions to ensure diverse slates of candidates for entry level and other hiring. To that end, the Department is partnering with law schools and student affinity groups to raise its visibility and strengthen its relationship with diverse law students.

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**ACTIONS TO ADVANCE EQUITY IN PROGRAMS/POLICIES/SERVICES (I.E., PRIORITIZATION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE EVALUATION/IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND SERVICES;**



## **UTILIZATION OF EQUITY ZONES IN APPLICABLE SELECTION PROCESS/PROGRAMMING...):**

The Law Department is committed to DEI awareness and improvement. For the first time since the creation of the Law Department, there is a “Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan” (in almost-completed form) and a specific departmental attorney who, with the Law Director, will be responsible for DEI oversight within the Law Department. Key elements (among others) of the new Strategic Action Plan include:

### **1. DEI Training**

The Law Department, as demonstrated in its Strategic Action Plan, is committed to fostering a fair, inclusive, and collaborative work environment, where everyone can excel. The Law Department will participate in Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging training, including implicit bias and unconscious training, on an annual basis. Law Department staff will be encouraged to attend continuing legal education courses and events sponsored by affinity bar associations.

### **2. Becoming Involved in Community-Based Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives**

The Law Department encourages involvement in community building initiatives including:

- CMBA Cleveland Legal Collaborative (a “modest means” equal justice initiative)
- Brief Advice Clinics Sponsored by The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, the CMBA, and the courts

The Law Department will strive to participate in existing professional pipeline programs at the high school, college and law school levels, including the following CMBA pipeline programs:

- The 3R’s: Rights, Responsibilities, Realities Program (high school)
- Stephanie Tubbs Jones Summer Leadership Academy (high school)
- Louis Stokes Scholars Program (undergraduates)
- Minority Clerkship Program (summer between 1L and 2L)
- Diverse Attorney Career Fair
- REAL (Racial Equity and the Law) workgroups

In sum, diversity of perspectives and backgrounds leads to superior and innovative legal results and solutions for County clients and residents.

### **3. Review & Evaluation of Diversity Goals**

Law seeks to embed inclusion and equity in everything we do. It is important to maintain substantiable equitable practices. As such, Law will periodically monitor and measure diversity efforts in key areas such as improved retention. Law will also participate in the CMBA’s Cleveland Legal Inclusion Plan, Inclusion & Diversity Benchmarking Survey & Racial Equity Tool Kit.

## Department/Agency: Medical Examiner

The Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office is a public service agency responsible for the investigation of violent, suspicious and sudden and unexpected deaths and the provision of laboratory services. The agency is committed to the dignified and compassionate performance of these duties with impartiality and the highest professional levels of quality and timeliness in the service of the general public, medical and legal communities and the overall public health of the citizens of Cuyahoga County.

The Medical Examiner's Laboratory supports the investigative functions of the Medical Examiner and staff. The Laboratory performs scientific examinations in the areas of Forensic Pathology, Trace Evidence, DNA, Parentage and identification, Toxicology, Drug Chemistry and Firearms & Toolmarks.

The Medical Examiner's Office utilizes and makes available the information gathered from these investigations to those citizens and personnel who have an interest in developing ways to prevent these types of tragic deaths from happening in the future. Data is also utilized to monitor the effectiveness of publicly funded projects that are already in place and to identify gaps in the system.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

Worked with any building management partner to increase SBE/MBE/WBEs. Engaged MBE firm to take over janitorial services for the building.

Submitted accurate, timely, and comprehensive updates to the 24-month purchasing forecast.

Complied with the 30-day minimum solicitation period for formal Bids, RFPs, and RFQs.

Procurement staff attended available trainings to ensure understanding of the County's supplier diversity program requirements.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

Hirings are posted through the certifying organizations of the specialty areas (ballistics, toxicology, DNA, etc) Hiring personnel for our department can be difficult due to lack of nationwide diversity in some of the more specialized areas.

For the vacant positions, job descriptions will include work experience equivalents for formal education requirements when possible but due to specialized formal education and certifications are almost always required.

We instituted more diverse interview panels for 2023 and will continue to do so where applicable. The chain of command of the position up for hire is the interview panel in most cases.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Committee activities:

Organized a **Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Diversity Walk**, which was also a wellness event worth 10 wellness points, for the **beginning of November**. Details will follow once everything is confirmed.

Held a World Food Day Potluck.

For the next couple weeks we will be reaching out to the Churches and Organizations for the upcoming Holiday Donation Drive (Starting 11/20-12/17).

This is to determine the supplies needed as a guide to drive our donation goals.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

Our suppliers are highly specialized and dictated by performance requirements for accreditation and certifications.

Most of our planned procurements for next year are highly specialized sole source or government contracts. We will use SBE Set Aside Programs where applicable?

We continue to work with external partners to increase SBE/MBE/WBEs.

We provide an accurate and comprehensive 24 month purchasing forecast (including informal procurements) with staffing limitations in our procurement section?

When possible we will be reviewing specifications and requirements for procurements to promote participation and competition amongst a broader pool of qualified vendors.

We encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all personnel.

We will participate in all planned activities of Diversity Department and Procurement for increasing vendor inclusion such as vendor fairs.

- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

Hiring personnel for our department can be difficult due to lack of nationwide diversity in some of the more specialized areas.

Will your recruitment strategy for the vacant position(s) involve job posting(s) and/or outreach collaboration(s) with diverse community organizations, culturally specific groups or entities?

For the vacant positions, job descriptions will include work experience equivalents for formal education requirements when possible but due to specialized formal education and certifications are almost always required.

We instituted more diverse interview panels for 2023 and will continue to do so where applicable.

When interviewing for a supervisor/management/leadership position, we plan to include at least one (1) interview question related to experience and importance of advancing “diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

Provide details on specific actions your agency will take to promote equitable development and promotion within your agency amongst all demographics (i.e., race, gender, ethnicity...).

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

CCMEO is still planning on outreach to local schools to boost minority participation in forensic oriented STEM education opportunities

We plan to incorporate the Equity Zones Map/ Policy to provide additional consideration for projects/programs that impact the County’s Equity Zones where applicable?

We plan to use the Equity Assessment Tool (EAT) to evaluate a program/policy/service using the equity lens) where applicable?

No details as we lost our outreach manager in October and a replacement has not been hired. Committee

Activities:

We intend to plan an additional Diversity Potlucks. Since we have the Holiday Party and Summer Party, maybe we consistently plan for Fall and Spring?

We discussed outlining how attendance will work ahead of time as well.

We decided for those who brought items, they would start to grab food at the start time and then 15-30 minutes later we can open it up to all others interested.

Reshma intends on working on the cookbook.

We are also considering DEI Craft/Decorating Events for the beginning of the year and will follow-up during upcoming meetings.

Potentially In January or doing a "Palentines" Day in February.

Following up on Harvest for Hunger starting in March/April so we work on planning for

May. Lastly, our next Newsletter will be going out the beginning of January.

Jodie was nominated for the Spotlight and additional topics will follow, including DEI committee members names as a "Get to Know Us".

Also following up on the gender-neutral restrooms and having personal contact information reflect gender- identity preference.

# Personnel Review Commission 2023 DEI Status Report

## Overview of the Personnel Review Commission (PRC)

The Personnel Review Commission (PRC) was established in 2011 by the County Charter as an independent agency of the new County Government. The PRC is responsible for ensuring an employment system based on merit and fitness; in other words, the PRC is responsible for ensuring a system of employment wherein decisions are based on qualifications and performance. The Charter defines four general areas of responsibility for the PRC: civil service testing, administration of the County's classification and compensation systems for non-bargaining, classified employees, hearing appeals of certain employment decisions of the County Executive and reviewing, auditing, reporting and making recommendations regarding the County's compliance with federal, state and local laws regarding personnel matters within the County Executive's organization and departments.

The PRC has established operations to meet these four general areas of responsibility. The civil service testing team is responsible for achieving efficient and effective testing procedures, and the goals for that division are centered around the time it takes to complete their fundamental processes. Their operations include collecting metrics on the amount of time from posting of a vacancy to the point they establish an eligibility list for the position; their goal is to complete the process for new and revalidated competitive tests in 35 days. In addition, the team strives to complete repeat competitive tests in 20 days, and non-competitive tests in 10 days.

The classification and compensation team is responsible for maintaining the County's classification system which includes approximately 350 classifications. Each year, the team is responsible for completing the review and updating 25% of the classifications in the system. Beyond the maintenance work, this team is also responsible for responding to requests from the County to create new classifications, revise current classifications and delete unused classifications. The team also takes on additional projects such as reviewing classification series to identify redundancies and inefficiencies in the system.

The compliance auditing function In the PRC's appellate function, the agency strives to resolve appeals within sixty (60) days of the appeal being filed.

The PRC's vision is an optimal workforce to serve Cuyahoga County's citizens. The agency's mission is to achieve an optimal workforce through best practices in merit and fitness, and through the agency's steadfast commitment to its agency values – integrity, efficiency and quality in our work.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The Personnel Review Commission actually engages in very few contracts, and in 2023 we were not involved in procuring any new goods or services. Of the contracts we do have, the only one that will expire in 2024 is our contract with Examity, the vendor that provides remote testing and proctoring for the PRC's civil service operations.

When the PRC first solicited proposals for remote testing and proctoring in 2021, the agency posted the RFP twice and only received proposals from one entity that could provide both of these services. This is a niche industry and at that time the majority of remote testing services were uniquely suited for academia. In 2023, we began the procurement process for the current contract which expires in June, 2024. We have asked our current professional staff to reach out to colleagues who may have experience with additional vendors to broaden the realm of vendors who can respond to the RFP when it is issued in December.

The PRC did not complete an Equity Report in 2023. Our agency did submit an accurate and timely purchasing forecast and updates it as needed. Our 'procurement staff' consists of one person, our Senior Administrative Assistant, who attends all the procurement-related training available to her.

The agency did not hire any new personnel in 2023, but we anticipate hiring new staff in early 2024. Our professional staff positions require advanced degrees in Industrial and Organizational Psychology; past recruitment efforts have targeted academic institutions that offer degree programs in this field. We are currently working to identify those degree programs associated with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) so we can include those in our recruiting efforts going forward. Our future recruitment efforts will also include experience and education requirements that can serve in lieu of minimum qualifications for our jobs. Our interview panels are constrained by the fact that the PRC is a relatively small agency and flat organization; however, whenever possible we emphasize diversity in our interview panels.

The PRC strongly supports the County's D, E & I initiatives as many of them align with the agency's Charter responsibilities. We make any diversity-related training that is available to the County Executive's mandatory also available to the PRC's employee, and we mandate participation in all training mandated for the County Executive's organization. Staff have been continuously informed of the PRC's D, E & I initiatives, and they're involved with gathering data on the effectiveness of these initiatives. The PRC supports professional training and development of all its staff, and has a robust professional development policy which supports training at all levels of our organization. The PRC encourages employees to seek out professional development training opportunities through the County's Learning Management System as well as through outside training providers and professional organizations.

This past year, the PRC developed and implemented three initiatives to support the County's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts. Because the PRC serves as a gatekeeper to County employment by defining minimum qualifications, establishing job requirements and screening applicants to determine whether they meet the minimum qualifications for the position for which they've applied, the agency is uniquely suited to ensure that our practices do not include unnecessary barriers to employment, particularly when those barriers may adversely affected protected classes of individuals.

The PRC develops classification specifications for the classified positions; these are documents which define the essential functions of the class and the minimum qualifications for the position. To define minimum qualifications the PRC works with subject-matter experts, usually hiring managers, to identify the ideal combination of education and experience that provides the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to qualify the candidate for the position. These are included in the classification specifications for each classification, and the minimum qualifications usually include this additional statement – "or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience." Prior to screening applicants, the PRC works with hiring managers to define these 'equivalency' statements. Until 2023, these equivalency statements have not been publicized to

applicants in job postings. This past year, the PRC worked with the Department of Human Resources to ensure that equivalency statements are now included in the job postings. This is an important equity initiative; research shows that the higher the education requirement for a position, the more likely the requirement is to adversely impact protected classes. By broadening the list of acceptable qualifications, the PRC expects this initiative will open up employment opportunities to persons who would have previously likely self-selected themselves out of the application process. The goal of this initiative is to broaden the County's applicant pool by increasing the diversity of the applicants who are considered for County employment in the classified service.

A second initiative involves reviewing driver's license and certification requirements in the classified jobs. Over 30% of the County's classifications require a driver's license. Research shows that these requirements can disproportionately affect certain groups of applicants. Driver's license requirements may discourage disabled person from applying for jobs and foreign-born citizens may encounter more challenges in trying to obtain a driver's license. Also, applicants with revoked licenses for past offenses are more likely to be in protected classes. Because of these effects, the PRC needs to ensure that the driver's license requirement doesn't create unnecessary barriers to employment. As a result of this initiative, the PRC was able to eliminate driver's license requirements in nearly 25% of the classifications that were reviewed. In 2024, the PRC will begin reviewing the certification requirements in the nearly 30% of the County's classifications that require certifications.

In 2023, the PRC began working with the Departments of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to explore the potential use of text-analyzer software. This software can identify and resolve unconscious bias in documents such as vacancy postings, classification specifications and position descriptions. The department of D, E & I is contemplating its use for documents created in the procurement process. The PRC is collaborating with Human Resources to develop the Request for Proposals to solicit vendors for this service and plans to begin the procurement process once the budget allocation for the services has been approved. The goal of this initiative is to promote a more diverse workforce by ensuring that our job documents are inclusive and do not discourage applicants from any particular group from applying for employment with the County.

In 2021, as a result of the pandemic, the Personnel Review Commission added remote testing and proctoring to its civil service testing operations. At that time, the PRC was using a scheduled testing model for applicants coming into our offices for a civil service exam; the test was scheduled for a particular time and applicants were expected to take the test at that time unless they filed a request for rescheduling. Once our remote testing became a standard part of our operations, we changed to a testing center model for two reasons. First, this provides convenience to test takers who could now take the test at a time of their choosing, and secondly, this was an equity strategy to ensure that applicants without access to technology necessary for remote testing (a computer and camera are needed) were not prevented from testing for County classified positions.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The PRC's planned procurement efforts in 2024 include renewal of the PRC's contract with the Archer Company, collaborating with Human Resources to acquire text analyzer software/services, and the procurement process to solicit bids from vendors in the remote testing and proctoring space.



The PRC does not intend to solicit competitive bids for the work currently performed by the Archer Company; this vendor provides a proprietary tool that serves as the foundation for the County's compensation system for non-bargaining employees. Engaging in a competitive process to select a new vendor would be extremely cost-prohibitive as switching to a different system would require the costly re-analysis of 340+ classifications to determine appropriate pay rates for them.

The PRC will work with Human Resources to determine whether the text analyzer project is a candidate for the SBE Set Aside program. At this point, we have not identified whether there are any internal or external partners to increase SBE/MBE/WBEs in the remote testing and proctoring industry, but the PRC is committed to the County's DEI objectives and will participate in the SBE set aside program if it is appropriate for this service.

The PRC has received approval for its request for continued financial support to continue its remote testing and proctoring, and the agency has begun the procurement process in expectation that a selection will be made before the agency's current contract expires in June, 2024. This will involve exploring the vendor space for these services to determine all available vendors in this space; they will be contacted as part of our procurement process.

Our procurement staff, i.e. our Senior Administrative Assistant routinely reviews the purchasing forecast to ensure that we have included all our planned procurement activities. We will encourage diversity, equity and inclusion training for any vendors we select through the procurement process.

In the event that the PRC needs to conduct interviews for a leadership position, our questions will include at least one (probably more) questions about D, E & I, because most of our operations involve opportunities to advance the County's D, E & I objectives.

Discussions are underway to explore the possibility of a collaboration between the PRC, DEI and HR to develop a panel discussion webinar on the County's hiring process. In addition to being a helpful source of information for new and existing County employees, this could become a tool for use in the regional community, to support the County's efforts to recruit underrepresented applicants through entities such as the Veterans' Service Commission, the Re-entry program and Workforce Development.

## 2024 Highlights and Performance Metrics

The PRC is currently engaged in tracking the impact of the D,E &I initiatives underway at the agency. We recently confirmed with Human Resources that equivalency statements have been posted in 35% of the postings made by the County since September, 2023. In some cases, the County's jobs don't have equivalency statements because the required qualifications for entry are so low that equivalencies do not exist, in other cases the equivalencies are already included in the requirements as written in the posting. Occasionally equivalencies were not included in the postings because the minimum qualifications are under review by the PRC's Classification and Compensation team. The PRC will be working diligently with the Talent Acquisition team to address these issues, with the expectation that we will be able to include equivalencies in at least 50% of the postings by June, 2024; the PRC is also committed to reviewing 100% of the postings to determine whether equivalencies can be included.

While the PRC has completed the driver's license review, the agency has not yet begun the review of certification requirements in County classifications. The PRC expects to complete 100% of this work by the end of 2024, including any modifications necessary to the class plan to eliminate or revise certification requirements.

The PRC expects to complete the Request for Proposals and contracting process for remote testing and proctoring in time to engage a vendor before the current contract for these services expire in June, 2024. The PRC is collaborating with the Human Resources department to begin the RFP process for text analyzer services with the expectation the RFP should be issued by end of quarter 1 in 2024; our goal is to issue a contract for these services by mid-2024.

## Department/Agency: Enter Department/Agency Name

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Department of Public Safety and Justice Services is to provide a wide range of public safety and justice services to residents and first responders of Cuyahoga County, while embracing current and new technologies in the public safety field.

The major divisions of Public Safety and Justice Services include Cuyahoga Emergency Communications (CECOMS), the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Witness Victim Services (WVS), and Fiscal and Grants. The administrative arm of Public Safety and Justice Service also manages the myriad of activities funded by the Opioid Settlement Fund, while the staff members assigned to the Fiscal and Grants unit also provide technical assistance and financial review for this fund. Public Safety and Justice Services also provides an administrative home and several employees dedicated to the Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center, which is a joint intelligence gathering operation with the City of Cleveland and other law enforcement agencies.

In addition to the Department's various operations, programs and services, the Department of Public Safety and Justice Services provides information about crime victims' right, safety planning, emergency preparedness, various law enforcement and first responder trainings, citizen volunteers, current publications, grant announcements, public safety communications updates, and other valuable resources.

Related Justice Services Agencies include: Clerk of Courts, Cuyahoga County Law Department, Local Emergency Planning Committee, Medical Examiner, Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center, and the Sheriff's Department.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**
  1. Public Safety and Justice Services has complied with all SBE/MBE/WBE requirements when releasing RFPs or otherwise engaging in procurement. All guidelines set forth by the Office of Procurement and Diversity, and the Department of Equity and Inclusion are followed when purchasing goods or services.
  2. Public Safety and Justice Services worked diligently to provide an accurate 24 month purchasing forecast, which will allow the department to adhere to purchasing requirements over the next two years.
- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**
  1. Public Safety and Justice Services expanded personnel recruitment efforts to increase applicant success, while simultaneously seeing better retention patterns in most divisions. Together with the Department of Human Resource and the Personnel Review Commission, hiring managers worked to expand eligibility within job descriptions by interpreting experience pre-requisites as liberally as possible.

Retention was improved presumably due to an equity pay adjustment issued by Cuyahoga County in early 2023. Additionally, employees within the department who operate under a collective bargaining agreement saw a pay increase that helped tremendously with recruitment and retention, as starting wages were higher than other similar employers.

2. Public Safety and Justice Services worked with its internal DEI committee to review demographics within the department and will continue to review and recommend changes to job descriptions to encourage more diverse candidate pools. The internal DEI committee also discussed ways to recognize and celebrate diversity within the department by informing co-workers about non-mainstream or non-majority holidays and traditions, inviting others to share cultural information that is important to them and their community. Additional work in this area will happen in 2024.
  3. Public Safety and Justice Services ensured that interview panels included people of color and gender diversity so that successful candidates would feel confident that they would be welcomed onto a diverse team. Additionally, interview questions include at least one question connecting DEI to the subject matter of the position for which candidates were interviewing.
  4. New employees, including new supervisors or managers, participated in the County's DEI townhalls. Many employees also participated in the optional session regarding mental health microaggressions. Attending these sessions sparked additional internal conversation and positive energy around inclusion.
  5. Public Safety and Justice Services continued to convene an employee DEI committee throughout 2023. Some progress was stalled due to medical leave and absences by the team members, but new dates have been set for 2023, ensuring continued success.
- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
    1. Public Safety and Justice Services' Deputy Director worked with each manager to develop a menu of performance metrics to track throughout the second half of 2023 and into 2024. Embedded within those metrics are various data points that can be used to assess equity in programming, including cities or zip codes where services or trainings are provided, and diversity of consumer base including services to individuals with limited English proficiency (See #3 below for additional information).
    2. Public Safety and Justice Services regularly reviews service maps to determine where usage of programs is greatest, where need is greatest, and where additional efforts can be focused to ensure programs and services are reaching those who may be underserved. This is particularly true of Witness Victim Services, where it is known that crime disproportionately impacts communities of color. Outreach is regularly done in communities across the county to ensure all residents have access to services.
    3. Race, ethnicity and language access are tracked whenever possible. Witness Victim regularly tracks the demographics of the individuals accessing services and provides culturally specific and culturally appropriate training. Language access lines are regularly used by Witness Victim and by emergency call takers.

4. Department leadership began work on a communications campaign aligned with the goals of the Opioid Settlement Fund programs. The campaign will focus on harm reduction strategies and increasing access to valuable tools such as Narcan and Fentanyl test strips, while also publicizing the availability for treatment. Such an approach ensures limited stigma or shame, while increasing hope surrounding recovery. The campaign will launch in 2024 and will be targeted to underserved communities with higher rates of fatal accidental drug overdoses.
5. Department leadership developed a Workforce Enhancement program to encourage diversity within the public safety field. This program will launch in 2024 and will include a paid internship for an under-represented student who may not otherwise have access to such an opportunity due to limited funds or limited exposure to the field. The project will also provide an online platform that will highlight the different public safety job openings across the county, including their requirements, pay, testing dates, etc.. By housing the information in one location, prospective candidates can review all options available to them, hopefully making them more likely to complete the testing, application and hiring process. The final step in this project is to work with training programs and hiring authorities to regionalize application processes and testing opportunities, hopefully allowing prospective candidates to meet the requirements of multiple agencies with one test or one training program.
6. Department leadership developed selection criteria to be used when selecting communities to assist with their local match for the federally funded Assistance to Firefighters Grant stream (AFG). Communities within the County's Equity Zones will be prioritized when determining which communities to assist. The department's 2024 budget may provide limited opportunity to provide such assistance, but the guidelines will remain in place and ready for enactment when funds allow.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**
  1. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services submitted complete and comprehensive 24-month purchasing and contracting forecasts for the upcoming year and will continue to submit all required information in CY2024.
  2. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will adhere to the minimum 30 day posting period requirement for formal bids, RFPS, and RFQs.
  3. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will continue to strive to incorporate consumer demographics and/or Equity Zones into all purchasing efforts.
- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

1. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will continue to use diverse interview panels for employees. At a minimum, the Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will strive to have interview panels that are diverse in gender, race/ethnicity, and other socioeconomic demographics. Interview questions will consistently have questions that relate the position's subject matter to DEI topics.
  2. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will work with HR to share job postings with diverse community organizations. As positions are posted and candidates are screened, Public Safety and Justice Services will review requirements and equivalencies with the Personnel Review Commission to ensure a diverse candidate pool.
  3. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will continue to convene a Labor Management Committee for all bargaining employees to ensure a vehicle for timely and equitable attention to all labor issues.
  4. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will continue to convene its internal employee led DEI committee to ensure employees have a voice in determining departmental efforts around workforce equity.
- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
    1. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will use the Equity Zones Map/Policy for program investment, as appropriate, to provide additional consideration to projects that impact Equity Zones. Program areas that will be reviewed for appropriate investment in Equity Zones encompass determining which communities may qualify for assistance meeting local match requirements for federal grant programs (such as Assistance to Firefighters), domestic violence programming including training for police and court personnel located in areas that fall in Equity Zones, and emergency management funding opportunities that could increase focus on serving those within Equity Zones.
    2. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will use the Equity Assessment Tool to apply the "equity lens" to its Witness Victim Services division. Witness Victim's goal is to ensure equal access to the justice system for all victims of crime.
    3. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services commits to continuing to collect aggregated data for all program areas. This will be implemented using internal staff resources. Data will be used to make informed programming and funding decisions.
    4. Department of Public Safety and Justice Services will work with nonprofit partners and culturally specific agencies to increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding by diverse demographics on its programs, policies, and procedures. Specific activities planned for CY2024 include participation in community-based health and wellness fairs, emergency management exercise development with groups representing ethnic and religious minorities, and delivery of outreach materials to community centers, libraries, and federally qualified health centers.

## Department/Agency: Public Works

The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works includes over 600 employees who plan, design, and maintain a network of roads, bridges, sewers, and County-owned buildings, throughout the County with a \$180,000,000.00 annual operating budget. Additionally, the County Airport and the County Animal Shelter are operated by the Department of Public Works. An overview of the Department's responsibilities is listed below:

- Assisting 59 municipalities located within Cuyahoga County with the maintenance and repair of over 750 route miles of County Roads
- Maintaining and repairing over 25 route miles of County Roads located within two townships
- Maintenance, repair, and capital improvements on 209 bridges and 140 culverts
- Maintenance and repair of 27 County-owned buildings
- Design, maintenance, and repair of storm and sanitary sewers located within 37 communities and two townships.

In the initial assessment 5 key areas were identified in which the department could promote Racial Equity and Inclusion, these areas included:

- Human Resources
- Contracting and Procurement
- Public Works and Infrastructure
- Education

The department has since taken on and executed many initiatives moving the department towards its goals. Public Works is constantly evaluating and seeing where we could improve on the initial development plan. Below is a brief update on some of our key areas.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

### Human Resources

After the initial assessment the department developed a goal-based plan to move the various divisions within the department towards the goal of having a workforce that closely reflects the diversity of Cuyahoga County. Public Works continued to make strides towards this effort in 2023. In 2023 65% of all new hires were minority or women.

- Increase in minority/women representation in management
  - Senior Project Manager
  - Custodial Supervisor
  - Supervisor, Building Maintenance
- Increase minority representation in the construction laborer field. In 2023 63% (7 out of 11) new hires were women or minorities.
- Interview panels are diverse and include individuals that closely reflect the diversity of Cuyahoga County.

Public Works routinely attends job fairs at colleges with a diverse student population to increase the diversity of our applicant pool. One hundred percent of job postings include work experience equivalents in lieu of and in addition to formal education/degree requirements. In 2023 over 55% of all interview panels had minority

representation. Public Works encourages employees to attend leadership training opportunities when available. Team members are crossed trained to foster the dissemination and retention of intuitional knowledge. This allows Public Works to invest in our team members future while stabilizing our workforce. By cross training our team members we aid in their growth and development.

### Public Works and Infrastructure

Public Works uses the Economic Health Index as a factor when considering Roadway Operations and/or 50/50 Infrastructure Projects sponsored by the department. The Economic Health Score considers the Per Capita Income along with the percentage of households below the poverty level within a given community as a significant factor in determining the rank and scoring for infrastructure projects competing for funding provided by the Ohio Public Works Commission. Data for the current cycle is outlined below.

#### **Preventative Maintenance Funding Program**

- Equity Zone receives 10 out of a total 110 points
- Total amount awarded \$3,296,691.77
- Total amount awarded for projects impacting equity zone \$1,665,219.88

#### **50/50 Resurfacing Funding Program**

- Equity Zone receives 10 out of a total 110 points
- Total amount awarded \$5,120,322.50
- Total amount awarded for projects impacting equity zone \$3,249,365.50

### Contracting & Procurement

The Department of Public Works internal procurement procedures fosters the departments commitment to advancing supplier diversity. This is evidence by the Department of Public Works procurement staff actively engaging certified County SBE/WBE/MBE vendors in all procurements that are more than \$1,000. Public Works participated in Cuyahoga County's, "Pitch Day". This event was very successful and was attended by a diverse group of businesses. Potential vendors were able to learn about forthcoming procurement opportunities within the department of Public Works.

Public works continues to collaborate with Cuyahoga County's DEI department (DEI) to increase our utilization of SBE, MBE, WBE companies. Public Works continues to utilize the B2G Program to assist DEI in ensuring that 100% of the companies doing business with the Department of Public Works maintain reasonable compliance with the diversity goals. The Department has provided a 24-month forecast of contract and purchasing opportunities to the Cuyahoga County DEI department in accordance with the Executive Order #EO-2020-0003. Challenges still exist with the forecasting of specific procurement actions surrounding Capital projects. Public Works is committed to ensuring all formal procurements are advertised for a minimum of 30 days.

In 2023, the Department of Public Works awarded a total of 10 contracts to various engineering firms. Of the 10 contracts, 4 contracts were awarded to SBE/MBE/WBE firms. The remainder of the firms were required to meet a 30% goal for SBE, MBE, or WBE participation unless they received a waiver from DEI.

In 2023 the Department of Public Works awarded 25 construction contracts in the Road and Bridge, Sanitary, and Facilities Sections. Of the 25 contracts 13 contracts were awarded to either SBE, MBE, or WBE companies. The



remainder of the contracts required a 30% participation goal for SBE, MBE, or WBE companies unless provided a waiver by DEI.

In addition, Public Works has four commodities master contracts split between Road & Bridge, Facilities, Sanitary, and Fleet. Within those master contracts, we currently have 8 prime vendors that are registered SBEs and two prime vendors that are registered WBEs.

Many of our small business owners/new contractors continue to struggle with the paperwork required when responding to an RFP. Public Works participated in the DEI “Pitch Day” and invited perspective vendors out to discuss their challenges with paperwork and how we Public Works could better assist them in the RFP submission process.

### Education

Department representatives were again involved in the [True2U Mentoring Program | Cleveland](#) sponsored by the CMSD. “True2U is a volunteer mentoring program that helps every 8th grader in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District develop good decision-making skills and encourages them to leverage their strengths and interests as they start out on their paths to high school, college, and/or career choices. Mentors use their unique backgrounds and the True2U curriculum to assist students in better understanding themselves and the opportunities available to them.” This program exposes minority students to potential career paths represented within the department.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

Cuyahoga County Airport is proposing a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation goal of 10.8% for FAA funded contracts/agreements for projects funding in 2024-2025.

Public Works has many robust initiatives related to Diverse Equity and Inclusion. We will in 2024 continue our efforts in expanding current initiatives and look for new opportunities where available

## Department/Agency: Sustainability

Pursuant to Section 202.19 of the County Code, The Cuyahoga County Department of Sustainability shall have the following functions:

- a. Promoting environmentally sustainable business practices in the internal operations of the County;
- b. Collaborating with businesses, non-profit organizations, political subdivisions and government agencies to develop programs incorporating environmentally sustainable methods into accepted practice;
- c. Promoting economic development to support businesses that provide environmentally sustainable goods and services;
- d. Educating the public about environmentally sustainable practices;
- e. Advising, when requested, the County Executive and the County Council on policies and programs related to environmental sustainability; and
- f. Coordinate and collaborate with other directors and departments to achieve operational efficiencies and to eliminate redundancy within County government.

Sustainability currently has a staff of 3 full-time employees and 2 part-time employees. Mike Foley is the Director. Valerie Katz is the Deputy Director. Katheryne Starinsky is a full-time program director working on plastic reduction, internal and external green team development, and climate change education and programs. Additionally, David Nader works 30 hours a week on outreach events, and we have Shelbie Seeberg, a part time Public Policy Fellow from this summer who we have brought on for 20 hours a week until May 2024.,

Key programs include updating the County Climate Action Plan, continuing and expanding the Residential Solar Co-op program, expansion of scooter and bike share parking locations in Cleveland, East Cleveland, Cleveland Hts., South Euclid and University Heights; developing a basic Climate Change Education program; Electric Vehicle charging station expansion planning in the County; continued tree canopy work in conjunction with County Planning, Soil and Water and the County Board of Health; continued work on single use plastic reduction work, creating internal County Department Green teams, and developing roof top solar systems for at least 5 area high schools.

A majority of Director Foley and Deputy Director Katz's time is spent on work involving the new Utility the County has created – Cuyahoga Green Energy. In terms of the utility work, the big initiatives will involve Microgrid developments with at least 3 projects being designed in Euclid, Brooklyn and the Aerozone region.

## The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Sustainability led the creation of the new County Utility - Cuyahoga Green Energy and devised the plan for build out and operations of its work. In 2023 we hired its first Operator – Compass Energy Platform – and worked with the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to develop the parameters for how project developments will be procured which include County DEI policies embedded in them. The first sets of

projects will be designed in early 2024 and Compass will hire Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractors in mid-late 2024 with DEI goals included in the requirements.

Sustainability has worked with County Planning and the Soil and Water Conservation District to run the Healthy Urban Tree Canopy program for the last four years. Annually the program gives out \$1m through a competitive grant program to communities and non-profits for tree planting, maintenance, and planning activities. Points are awarded based on a number of factors, but heavily weighted towards applicants with low canopy and in historically disadvantaged communities. Each applicant's submission has to use the County Equity Zone map to show where the project is located. Points are allocated based on their Equity Zone map score.

Solar For Schools. Sustainability has developed a project with five local school districts in Federally designated Justice 40 Communities to put solar systems on High School roof tops. The project will work with the Ohio Schools Council to help with procurement of the systems and the Educational Service Center for renewable energy curriculum development. The five districts include Cleveland, East Cleveland, Euclid, Maple Heights and Cuyahoga Heights.

Solar For All. Sustainability has partnered with local communities and non-profits on an application to the USEPA for low-income, roof top solar systems in Justice 40 communities. The application involves over 15 Midwest communities including Pittsburg, St. Louis, Kansas City, Cincinnati, Grand Rapids and others and is being led by the local green bank which we have helped create, Growth Opportunities Partners. The total application is for \$250m. If successful, the County will receive approximately \$25m for solar work in DEI communities.

Vacant Lot Restoration Initiative with Food Strong and Rid-All Partnerships. Sustainability has partnered with the Department of Development on a 2-year grant to Food Strong and Rid-All Partnerships to work with 5 local groups of residents in Cleveland, East Cleveland and Maple Heights, the County Landbank and the City of Cleveland Landbank to restore vacant lots and create urban gardens for local food production. The projects are all located in Equity Zone regions identified by the County and include work in both helping to procure land from the landbanks and remediating soil, developing business plans and general organizational structures.

Rid-All Tree farm. Sustainability has worked with Rid-All Partnerships, a local organization located in the "Forgotten Triangle" neighborhood of Cleveland and dedicated to the development of urban farming to support creation of a new tree nursery, one of only two now that exist in the County. The nursery is growing native species trees for sale to local businesses and communities. Through year one it has sold out its stock of available trees.

Sustainability assisted Consumer Affairs and the Solid Waste District with the Sustainable Stores grant program, which offered small retailers up to \$5,000 to create programs to help them switch from plastic to reusable bags. Stores in DEI zones were given preference for grants, and a tool that helped identify whether stores were in a DEI zone was embedded in the application map. Administration of the program has since moved to the Department of Sustainability. A detailed analysis of the program was separately sent in by Katharyne Starinsky.

Scooter and Bike Share Parking locations. Sustainability, working with the Department of Public Works received a grant via NOACA and the Ohio Department of Transportation to build out approximately 100 scooter and ebike parking locations for the County licensed scooter program. The majority of these sites are

located in Equity zone Census Tracts in Cleveland, East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights and will help make Micromobility usage better organized and more easily available in DEI communities. Bidding for the build out will occur in 2024.

General Outreach and Educational work. Sustainability tabled at over 80 farmers markets, community events and other related public gatherings throughout the year. Of those events \_\_\_ were in Equity Zone census tracts.

## Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Sustainability will be updating the Cuyahoga County Climate Action Plan in 2024 and will continue to utilize a framework that includes equitable programmatic and policy directives in the document.

Sustainability and the County Utility – Cuyahoga Green Energy will be advancing microgrid districts in Euclid and Brooklyn. In those microgrid districts DEI goals will be utilized for hiring EPC's. Additionally, we will try to expand these districts to assist community customers including those in Equity Zones.

Sustainability will be working again with County Planning and the Soil and Water Conservation District to administer the Healthy Urban Tree Canopy program and will continue to use scoring criteria for the competitive grant program which highlights Equity Zone census tracts.

Sustainability will administer the Solar For Schools project and bid out approximately \$1m in roof top solar projects for 5 school districts in Cleveland, East Cleveland, Euclid, Maple Heights and Cuyahoga Falls – all school districts located in Equity Zone census tracts.

Assuming we receive funding from the EPA, Sustainability will administer locally the Solar For All program and work with local partners to begin deploying up to \$25m for low income solar projects.

Sustainability together with Development will continue to fund in 2024 the Vacant Lot Initiative with Food Strong and Rid-All Partners to help neighborhood groups in 5-8 low-income communities take over vacant lots for local garden and food growing projects.

Sustainability will continue to fund in 2024 Rid-All Green Partners for continued operational support in building out their local tree nursery.

Sustainability, through an ARPA grant from Councilwoman Simon and working with the Solid Waste District and Consumer Affairs will continue to administer the Sustainable Stores program and will in 2024 purchase and distribute up to 25,000 reusable bags for low-income consumers to use for grocery and other shopping purposes.

Sustainability together with Public Works will put out an RFP for 100 scooter and ebike locations mostly sited in Equity Zone census tracts.

Sustainability will continue to do outreach in Equity Zone communities regarding basic Climate and Environmental education as well as on outreach regarding available programs.

## Department/Agency: Ohio Means Jobs Cleveland - Cuyahoga County

At Workforce Development we provide employment services with the goal of helping clients obtain the necessary skills in order to obtain employment. We also provide services to businesses in order to help link them to people who are looking to enter the workforce. We have partnerships with providers such as Towards Employment Youth Opportunities Unlimited who all offer different populations with a wide variety of services.

### The Year in Review (CY2023)

The following is a summary of CY2023 actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**

We work with a lot of Training Providers who are owned by minorities. We have made a commitment to make sure everyone on our staff is open to allowing small schools the opportunity to become approved training providers and receive government funding.

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**

Our Workforce Development Board has openly discussed their commitment to DEI in board meetings and have created strategic plans and formed partnerships in areas that contain minorities. One of the partners we work with is Urban League of Greater of Cleveland who's main mission is to provide to African Americans. We also collect monthly reports from all of our contracted providers. On those reports they are required to include the demographics in which they serve.

### Looking Forward (CY2024)

The following is a summary of CY2024 action commitments to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- **Actions to advance supplier diversity (i.e., spend with diverse vendors; partnership with diversity/outreach efforts, prompt pay performance...):**
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will submit timely, complete and comprehensive 24-month purchasing and contracting forecasts in CY2024
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will adhere to the minimum 30-day posting period requirement for formal bids, RFPS, and RFQs.

- Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will incorporate DEI standards in all service delivery contracts.
- **Actions to advance workforce equity (i.e., efforts to evaluate/revise job descriptions to be inclusive; efforts to recruit/hire/promote a diverse staff, efforts to improve equitable staff development/promotion/retention...):**

The Department of Workforce Development filled 1 County positions in 2023. The interview panel was diverse and contained minority and female representation. In addition to posting the position on the County website, the posting was shared with various workforce development networks. All workforce development staff are equitably assigned duties based on the specific position as we have no 2 positions that are the same. As a very small department, all staff have access to policies, manuals and training guides and are provided training opportunities equitably

- **Actions to advance equity in programs/policies/services (i.e., prioritization of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the evaluation/implementation of programs, policies and services; utilization of equity zones in applicable selection process/programming...):**
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will use the Equity Zones Map/Policy for its Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act Adult and Young Adult Programs to provide additional consideration to projects that impact equity zones in CY2024. The goal is to provide additional access points for program engagement in areas of greatest need. The identification of additional access points/sites will be ongoing in CY2024.
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will use the Equity Assessment Tool to apply the “equity lens” to its programs. The Board will incorporate DEI lens/framework in all aspects of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board commits to continue collecting disaggregated data for its programs.
  - Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board will create a Human Services strategy. A People Strategy to increase enrollment and participation by building trust with the people we serve.

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