

WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF EQUITY

Read the full proposal on [our website](#).

GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR THE OFFICE OF EQUITY

EQUITY (definition)

Developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to those who have been historically and currently marginalized, including tribes. It requires the elimination of systemic barriers that have been deeply entrenched in systems of inequality and oppression. Equity achieves procedural and outcome fairness, promoting dignity, honor, and respect for all people.

ANTI-RACIST GOVERNMENT

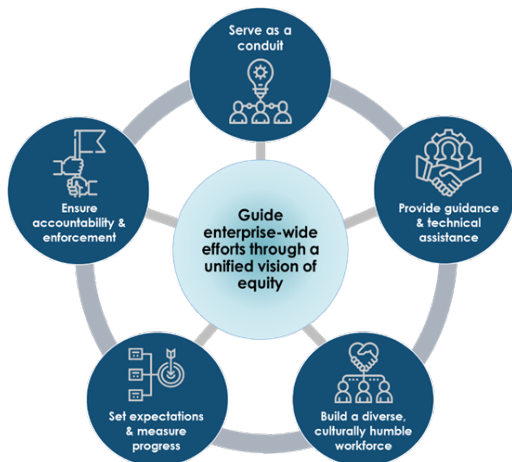
The Office of Equity should lead the state toward becoming a truly transformed government enterprise—one that **embeds equity and justice into every action**, and where doing so is simply the default. We believe that such a system is achievable and that a critical step forward is to **declare and manifest WA State as an anti-racist government system**. Doing so will send a powerful message across the state and help communities hold the enterprise accountable to change that is neither incremental nor reactionary—but rather—**change that is transformative**.

VISION

Everyone in Washington has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

MISSION

The Office of Equity will promote access to equitable opportunities and resources that reduce disparities and improve outcomes statewide across government.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES for a Fully Resourced Office of Equity

The Office's scope should be internal to state government and focused on dismantling systems of racism and oppression, and rebuilding systems of equitable opportunity. Decision makers should resist the urge to charge the Office with programmatic work and service delivery that should be led by respective state agencies, as it could detract from the Office's core mission and set the Office up for failure.

Building Synergy with Partners in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- The Office of Equity should **build collaborative, complementary relationships** with commissions, committees, and other groups that have missions centered on employee and community representation, protection of human and civil rights, and the promotion of equitable, inclusive government.
- The Office of Equity should **serve as a hub for resources and guidelines**, weaving together efforts and strategies among partners to ensure coordination and forward momentum (see page 83).

The Office of Equity's mission and responsibilities are **non-duplicative**. It should work with key partners to:

- Provide guidance and assistance to agencies
- Facilitate spaces for discussion and planning
- Co-create shared resources with communities
- Standardize equity-related language and competencies
- Inform workforce development and training in DEI and cultural humility
- Ensure all communities and identities are represented in processes
- Identify policy and systems barriers & make recommendations to eliminate them

Leading with Community

Community voice must be at the center of all decision making. All agencies should engage with communities in meaningful ways to ensure priorities and solutions are community generated.

The Office should **conduct outreach and engagement in partnership with state entities that serve as focal points in government for their represented communities**. These efforts must ensure engagement is barrier-free, fully inclusive of all identities, and does not replicate systems of oppression. (For additional recommendations, see pages 80-83.)

 <p>Community engagement means building relationships</p>  <p>Government must share power and resources with communities</p>	<p>Community engagement requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• time and resources• going into communities• working with grassroots organizations• practicing cultural humility and an open mindset• sharing power in all phases of work• community-driven conversations and solutions• agencies to continuously innovate in order to meet communities where they are• barrier-free access and digital equity (see pages 64-67)
---	---

Transparency and Accountability

To remain **accountable to communities**, the Office of Equity should convene a **Community Advisory Board** that sets the Office's priorities and timelines. (see pages 72 and 81-82)

Re-envisioning Data: In true partnership with communities, the Office of Equity and agencies should collect data and stories in ways that **unmask inequities and shed light on solutions**. (see pages 95-99)

Measuring Progress: The Office of Equity should **systematically measure agency progress**, using statewide and agency-specific process and outcome measures. Performance information should be displayed on an **online dashboard**. (see pages 95-99)

What's your greatest hope or dream for your community?

Community member responses:

"That every parent's dreams for their children will have a fair opportunity to be fulfilled."

"I dream of a place with sincere, compassionate, and sensitive conversation between decision-makers and community members and laws that reflect this."

"That each individual can aspire to be what they want to be and will see themselves represented in Government, leadership and in all types of careers."

"That Latinx immigrant, Yakama indigenous, and AAPI voices would be centered in decision-making."

"That black and brown persons are no longer systematically disenfranchised."

"My greatest hope is to be a part of a truly inclusive community."

Immediate Actions for the Governor and Legislature

1. Declare and manifest WA State as an anti-racist government system
2. Adequately fund the Office of Equity
3. Establish the Community Advisory Board in statute
4. Resource the Office of Equity and state commissions to conduct community outreach and engagement
5. Prescribe agency responsibilities in statute
6. Give the Office rulemaking authority

Proposed Roles and Responsibilities for a Fully Resourced Office of Equity

<p>REC 1</p> <p>Guide Enterprise-wide Efforts through a Unified Vision of Equity</p> <p>(page 78)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Establish a shared understanding of 'equity' that relates to government and communities ◆ Adopt an intersectional, multi-dimensional framework ◆ Promote a shared understanding of equity-related terms and concepts ◆ Get ongoing community guidance on definitions and statements ◆ In partnership with GOIA, establish the appropriate level of communication and consultation with tribal governments, non-federally recognized tribes, and American Indian organizations
<p>REC 2A</p> <p>Serve as a Conduit between Government & Communities</p> <p>(page 80)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Maintain a feedback loop with communities ◆ Share power and resources, and promote meaningful opportunities for engagement ◆ Build connectivity with communities that are underrepresented or isolated ◆ Convene a Community Advisory Board to set the Office's priorities and timelines ◆ Review and recommend changes to policies that govern board/commission membership and compensation ◆ Recommend strategies on how to center community voice in order to deliver barrier-free access to government services

Proposed Roles and Responsibilities for a Fully Resourced Office of Equity

<p style="text-align: center;">REC 2B</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Build Synergy with Partners in DEI</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(page 83)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Build collaborative, complementary relationships with partners in DEI ◆ Co-create resources and strategies ◆ Weave together efforts to ensure coordination and forward momentum ◆ Ensure all communities and identities are represented
<p style="text-align: center;">REC 2C</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Serve as a Conduit for State Institutions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(page 85)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Facilitate collaboration between agencies ◆ Facilitate systems and policy change ◆ Coordinate/convene workgroups to establish standards and produce innovative solutions ◆ Maintain an inventory of DEI efforts within and across agencies
<p style="text-align: center;">REC 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Provide Guidance & Technical Assistance to Foster Systems & Policy Change</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(page 86)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Serve as a clearinghouse for tools and resources ◆ Provide guidance and technical assistance to agencies on language assistance services ◆ Promote an 'upstream' approach focused on root causes ◆ Promote equitable decision-making practices ◆ Require every agency to have a DEI plan, and assist with plan development ◆ Require each agency to designate a 'DEI Liaison' who reports directly to the executive ◆ Establish a community of practice for mutual support and resource sharing ◆ Work with GOIA to uphold the significance of government-to-government relations and the expectation for working with sovereign nations
<p style="text-align: center;">REC 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Build a Diverse, Culturally Humble Workforce</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(page 92)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Collaborate with OFM and DES to identify workforce development needs, and develop policies and training on maintaining a diverse, inclusive, and culturally sensitive workforce ◆ Engage agency leadership and support their development in DEI-related areas ◆ Help ensure practices in DEI are applied to the full employment life cycle ◆ Elevate employee voices and work on equity issues that are important to them

Proposed Roles and Responsibilities for a Fully Resourced Office of Equity

<p>REC 5</p> <p>Set Expectations, Measure Progress, and Ensure Accountability</p> <p>(page 95)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lend visibility to important issues that are unheard or unseen ◆ Build the infrastructure to measure and show progress in a transparent way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Establish standards that apply across the enterprise ◆ Work with Results WA (or the equivalent performance management department within the Office of the Governor) and agencies to create agency-specific performance measures and a public dashboard to publish outcomes ◆ Shine a light on how data should be collected and used, and convene a workgroup to establish standards for the collection, analysis, and reporting of disaggregated data ◆ Work with OFM and DES to coordinate messages on the prospects and use of workforce data ◆ Model a supportive and engaging approach when working with agencies ◆ Support performance improvement process ◆ Publish each agency's performance and progress over its baseline ◆ Use rule-making authority to establish regulations around DEI plans, performance reviews, and other accountability processes ◆ Report directly to the Governor and submit a report to the Legislature every biennium ◆ Ensure the appointment process for the Office of Equity's Executive Director safeguards the Office's credibility and resiliency
<p>REC 6</p> <p>Reconvene the Task Force to:</p> <p>(page 100)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluate the state's implementation of an Office of Equity, including the level of funding provided for its operation ◆ Review guidance from the Community Advisory Board, the Office of Equity's strategic plan, strategic goals and standards for the enterprise, agency-specific performance measures and outcomes, and the state of DEI efforts across the enterprise ◆ Recommend any needed changes to the Office of Equity's operation and strategies

Links:

- [Task Force Information](#)
- [Meeting Materials](#)
- [Legislation \(E2SHB 1783\)](#)

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov

Contact

Christy Curwick Hoff
 Manager, Governor's Interagency Council
 on Health Disparities
Christy.Hoff@sboh.wa.gov

360-688-4699