Department of Human Services

2022 Equity Plan

Introduction

In 2015 the Center for Social Inclusion and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) delivered the Dane County Racial Equity Analysis & Recommendations report to Dane County leaders. This report contained five recommendations, each with phased actions to achieve each recommendation. *One such recommendation was to develop "department specific racial equity plans with timelines for implementation and designation of accountability for advancing racial equity within each department's lines of business"*.

The Dane County Department of Human Services Equity Plan *is intended to achieve that recommendation* by clearly articulating measurable actions or deliverables (also known as "tactics") within the county framework of areas of opportunity. See Appendix A for further definition of each area of opportunity.

The DCDHS Equity Plan formally presents the tactics the Department has identified as part of its strategic planning process, Vision: Next (see Appendix B), and places them within the *area of opportunity* framework. This Equity Plan also provides greater detail than the limited number of tactics presented in Vision: Next. A strategic plan intentionally focuses on Department-wide significant changes necessary to achieve the strategic priorities. Therefore, it cannot and should not present an exhaustive list of the things we are currently doing or intend to maintain that will support those priorities. Further, it should not focus on the many things that the Department does on a daily basis that support our priorities, and changes that are implemented at a smaller level (Division or program level, for example) that advance our priorities.

DCDHS is excited to use this Equity Plan to describe tactics that DCDHS will actively continue or maintain as well as tactics that are happening at a smaller scale within specific divisions in the Department. Advancing racial justice in Dane County and within DCDHS will take the effort of many employees over a great period of time. Those efforts are important and should be documented. The Equity Plan is a valuable tool in adding transparency to the work that is happening at all levels of our organization.

Organizational Commitment

Tactics DCDHS will start or continue to imbed equity and inclusion in Departmental operations.

- By the end of 2022 complete a self-assessment of language access across selected DCDHS programs and services. (Vision: Next, 2022 Tactics)
- By the end of 2022 complete foundational work (training and policy discussions) to enable the development and implementation of a Racial Equity Social Justice (RESJ) Toolkit in 2023. (Vision: Next, 2022 Tactics)
- Continue anti-racism work across CYF and PEI systems and units using resources from the YWCA, culture committee work, Culture Next, *Let's Talk About It* newsletter, and other resources
- The CYF/PEI Policy Committee will continue to use the Race-Equity-Impact Assessment Tool (Center for the Study of Social Policy) when developing and revising Division policies. Ongoing through 2022.
- Support the work of the RACE Committee that organizes and offers department-wide presentations on DEI topics in observance of heritage months. In 2022 the RACE committee plans to offer presentations for Black History Month in February, Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May, Pride and Juneteenth both in June, National Hispanic Heritage in September or October, and Native American and Alaska Native Heritage month in November.

Leadership Development

Tactics DCDHS will start or continue to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff, develop a shared definition of racial justice for the Department, and provide DCDHS staff training and development opportunities to prepare them to lead and/or support the Department's equity work.

- Continue partnership with YWCA to provide equitable leadership series for all managers and supervisors in 2022. (Vision: Next, 2022 Tactics)
- EAWS will continue to offer regular DEI presentations in observance of heritage months in addition to those offered department-wide. (EAWS)
- Continue the Capital Consortia Leadership Academy, in partnership with FEI. This series of trainings provides staff and leaders an opportunity to build their leadership skills and includes sessions on implicit bias and managing conflict. (EAWS)
- Support staff attendance in outside trainings such as the UW Diversity Forum. (EAWS)
- Enhance Trauma Informed Care Philosophy by providing training and group activities and discussions to better understand trauma and how it impacts individuals we work with and serve. (EAWS)
- CYF will continue to offer opportunities for employees to complete certifications and college credits, in partnership with Madison College, especially for staff of color. These opportunities help provide opportunities for SSS to promote to program leaders and coordinators. (CYF)
- As positions become vacant the Department will continue to convert them to bilingual positions, where needed, to hire staff that mirror who we serve. As new positions are created the Department will continue to assess bilingual needs.
- EAWS is updating the Economic Support Specialist (ESS) test and interview questions to take into account lived experiences and not just school/degrees. This will help diversify the candidate pool. (EAWS)

- Promote employment opportunities at Badger Prairie Health Care Center within the Latinx and Hmong communities. (BPHCC)
- Badger Prairie, EAWS, PEI, and CYF review information regarding employees who have ended employment and/or conduct exit interviews to improve employee retention for people of color.
- In 2022 add case managers to ACS units that were previously exclusively filled with social workers. This allows work to be done by individuals who pursued human services-related degrees beyond social work, which should improve the diversity of backgrounds within units. (ACS)
- CYF has added LTE case managers as a recruitment tool to help attract social work students into positions while they complete their license requirements (CYF).
- Analyze and summarize DCDHS staff race, ethnicity, turnover, tenure and other diversity measures. Post data on our public-facing website once per year. (Planning & Evaluation unit)

Program Innovation

Tactics DCDHS will start or continue to evaluate programs and procedures with a racial justice and social equity lens, to collect and report on data to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes, and to develop programs in partnership with our community stakeholders and customers.

- Complete and operationalize a database for Immigration Affairs to inform program development, by February 2022. (PEI)
- Continue review of equity in recruitment and AmeriCorps member support in the Partners for After School Success program. Include additional training and support for summer members by August 2022. (PEI)
- Develop and begin using transracial educational materials for existing foster parents and new applicants by March 2022. (PEI)
- Launch revised foster care licensing practices and addendum to licensing tool that addresses transracial parenting by March 2022. (PEI)
- Continue partnership with UW Madison and UW Medical foundation to insure medical access to those individuals who are uninsured through Emergency Medical program, as well as other Medical coverage programs. (EAWS)
- Continue partnership with Madison Dane County Public Health to insure that minority communities are receiving tuberculosis treatment and care through our partnership. (EAWS)
- Worked with Planning and Evaluation to develop reports that look at service to racial groups and comparisons – CLTS; BHRC; AAA (ACS)
- ADRC has internal workgroup to improve outreach to communities of color (specifically Black, Latino, Hmong communities) for those that are eligible for long-term care services (ACS)
- Drug Court Programs assessed program data using the Equity and Inclusion Assessment tool from NADCP (ACS)
- Supporting collaboration between JMHC and Centro Hispano providing case management for select Centro support group participants (ACS)

- The Immigration Affairs Office will work in partnership with Centro Hispano and the Community Immigration Law Center to launch pro se clinics to support asylum seekers.
- In early 2022 the Planning and Evaluation unit will develop, and routinely include, an appendix to all reports that acknowledges the limitations of the terminology, labels, and data used around race and ethnicity in the report. (Planning and Evaluation)

Collaboration

Tactics DCDHS will start or continue to pursue increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of our network of program and service delivery partners, to seek the feedback and input of clients and communities served, and to build collaborative relationships with communities.

- Examine potential tools to measure the strength of partnerships and actions to increase the strength and effectiveness of partnerships. (Vision: Next, 2022 Tactics)
- By fourth quarter 2022 launch "lunch and learn" virtual meetings for staff and partners to talk about programs and services offered. (Vision: Next, 2022 Tactics)
- Quarterly meetings with UW-Madison School of Social Work directors regarding internships changes/strategies, hiring, recruitment, retention and onboarding of IV-E students (CYF/PEI)
- Our AmeriCorps Member is out in the community working with a diverse population to help people obtain medical services through BadgerCare outreach. This is done with Dane County Jail residents, and community organizations like The Beacon, Bethel Lutheran, and Madison Central Library. (EAWS)
- Attending monthly Steering Committee meetings (Health Watch, etc.) focused on resources within our community and assisting the underserved population. (EAWS)
- Expand and engage the membership of the Immigration Enforcement Response Team (IERT) comprised of partner stakeholders including law enforcement, schools, non-profit immigration agencies, health organizations and others to enhance information-sharing, coordination and service capacity to better serve our immigrant and refugee clients by July 2022 (PEI)

Resource Mobilization

Tactics DCDHS will start or continue to dedicate resources (financial, in-kind, and staffing) to advance racial justice in our community.

- Select a service area, secure office location(s), hire, and onboard a bi-lingual JFF community social worker by May 2022. (PEI)
- Coming in 2022 – Offering one-time infrastructure development to help prepare outpatient providers for an open network of providers under contract with DCDHS in 2023. This is designed to cultivate opportunities for growth and development of BIPOC and other targeted services. (ACS)
- Coming in 2022 - AAA Outreach to SE Asian Community for the purpose of increasing health education and social isolation reducing activities for SE Asians outside of the City of Madison comparable to services provided for Black and Latinx older adults. (ACS)

- Outreach clinics operated by Anesis providing case management to assist those who are stabilizing following a behavioral health crisis. Anesis established an outreach location at Mt. Zion Church in 2020 and will be expanding locations to other sites that have strong ties to underserved communities. (ACS)
- Continue open CCS network which has launched many providers owned and operated by persons of color. (ACS)
- Ensure distribution of equitable benefits (BadgerCare, FoodShare, W-2, Wisconsin Shares, etc.) for all applicants. (EAWS)
- Continue to provide behavioral health support to youth in partnership with community centers (PEI)
- Voluntary client satisfaction surveys provided by social workers for feedback in child protective services (initial assessment) started in June 2022 (CYF)
- Innovations Grant for Restorative Justice in partnership with Briarpatch Youth Services for at risk youth started March of 2022 (CYF). Dane County Community Restorative Justice youth justice collaboration with YWCA of Madison matters that has expansion the municipal diversion programming in 2022 (CYF).

Appendix A – Defining Areas of Opportunity

The Dane County Office of Equity and Inclusion requires Departments to submit annual Equity Plans which identify goals and actions within five areas of opportunity: organizational commitment, leadership development, program innovation, collaboration, and resource mobilization. Dane County Department of Human Services (DCDHS) defines these areas of opportunity as presented below.

Organizational Commitment

The Dane County Office of Equity and Inclusion includes strategic planning activities within the organizational commitment area of opportunity. The Dane County Department of Administration has defined organizational commitment as actions they "will take to imbed equity and inclusion in Departmental operations"[1]. GARE states that they have "seen success with advancing racial equity and government transformation with the following six strategies"[2], one of which is building organizational capacity, which they further defined as the commitment to the breadth (all functions) and depth (throughout hierarchy) of institutional transformation. GARE also states that organizations need to approach this work with a racial equity framework "that clearly names the history of government and envisions and operationalizes a new role; and utilizes clear and easily understood definitions of racial equity and inequity, implicit and explicit bias, and individuals, institutional, and structural racism."[3]

Informed by these definitions, DCDHS defines organizational commitment as *tactics DCDHS will start or continue to imbed equity and inclusion in Departmental operations.*

Leadership Development

Leadership development is commonly understood to mean any and all activities to expand the capacity of individuals within the organization to perform leadership roles[4]. The Dane County Department of Administration has defined leadership development, as related to racial equity, to include "developing the cultural competencies of employees, contractors, and purchase of service providers, who reflect the community and understand and embrace diversity"[5]. The Dane County Office of Equity and Inclusion has included mentorship and internships as activities within the leadership development area of opportunity.

GARE states that organizational capacity for racial equity takes two important forms: training and infrastructure. "Training increases understanding of institutional and structural racism and use of racial equity tools". They go on to say, "Drawing insight from the literature on collective action, the collective impact model, and building management capacity, organizational infrastructure must be created that enables a diverse array of stakeholders to work toward a shared vision of equity. Change will not occur if just one person or department is assigned the duties of advancing equity. Staff teams within every

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[1] Dane County Department of Administration (n.d.). *Equity Plan*.
https://equity.countyofdane.com/documents/PDFs/Equity%20Plans/Department-of-Administration-Equity-Plan.pdf   retrieved 12/27/21.
[2] Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (Sept. 2015*). Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action*. https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf   retrieved 12/27/21.
[3] ibid
[4] Wikipedia (May 29, 2021). *Leadership Development*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leadership_development   retrieved 1/21/22.
[5] Dane County Department of Administration (n.d.). *Equity Plan*.
https://equity.countyofdane.com/documents/PDFs/Equity%20Plans/Department-of-Administration-Equity-Plan.pdf   retrieved 12/27/21.

department must be sufficiently knowledgeable, equipped with the necessary tools, and given responsibility for incorporating racial equity policies and processes into their regular job duties if a jurisdiction is to advance its goals successfully."[6]

In alignment with these definitions and our strategic plan, DCDHS is defining leadership development within our Equity Plan to include *tactics DCDHS will start or continue to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff, develop a shared definition of racial justice for the Department, and provide DCDHS staff training and development opportunities to prepare them to lead and/or support the Department's equity work*.

Program Innovation

According to the Dane County Department of Administration, program innovation means, "Developing a framework to support diverse, underserved, and isolated communities involves innovation that responds to specific local goals and needs. This includes developing new programs and evaluating existing ones for equity, inclusivity, and cultural relevancy. These strategies create programs that build awareness of cultural bias and build cross-cultural understanding. Being aware of social trends and community needs and developing responsive programs helps to strengthen our connection to the community."[7]

This definition aligns with GARE's third, of six, strategies to advance racial equity, "implement racial equity tools". They state that such tools normalize and routinize the practice of considering racial impact when making and implementing policy, developing programming, and making programmatic changes. They further state that such racial equity tools should promote racially inclusive collaboration and engagement, should use data to set and monitor goals, should develop cross-sector, cross-jurisdictional partnerships to achieve systemic change, and educate on racial issues and raise racial awareness.

GARE's fourth strategy is to "be data-driven"; to "measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes, and second, to develop baselines, set goals, and measure progress towards community goals"[8].

In alignment with these definitions, DCDHS is including *tactics DCDHS will start or continue to evaluate programs and procedures with a racial justice and social equity lens, to collect and report on data to measure the success of specific programmatic and policy changes, and to develop programs in partnership with our community stakeholders and customers* within the program innovation area of opportunity.

[6] Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (Sept. 2015*). Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action.* https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.
[7] Dane County Department of Administration (n.d.). *Equity Plan*.
https://equity.countyofdane.com/documents/PDFs/Equity%20Plans/Department-of-Administration-Equity-Plan.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.
[8] Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (Sept. 2015*). Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action*. https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.

Collaboration

"Involving local partners within and outside of County government enables us to do more as a team than we can do alone with an effort to increase outreach and impact. Partnerships among County Departments, local businesses, and purchase of service agencies helps us work more effectively while connecting us to new and changing communities. Sharing resources allows us to access tools and competencies that complement and enhance our programs and services reach broader county goals for sustainability. These strategies describe how the Department of Administration will work to foster this kind of collaboration."[9]

GARE strategies for racial equity include "partner with other institutions and communities". They state: "The concept of collective impact hinges on the idea that in order for organizations to create lasting solutions to social problems on a large-scale, they need to coordinate their efforts and work together around a clearly defined goal." And "Equitable collaboration with communities of color is critical to ensure that social change efforts are informed by the lived experience of the communities they seek to benefit."[10]

In alignment with these definitions, DCDHS will include *tactics DCDHS will start or continue to pursue increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of our network of program and service delivery partners, to seek the feedback and input of clients and communities served, and to build collaborative relationships with communities* within the collaboration area of opportunity.

Resource Mobilization

The Department of Administration states that "these strategies describe how the Department will dedicate resources to equity and inclusiveness. A framework for increasing inclusiveness and equity requires resources in order to ensure that framework can make meaningful progress."[11] The Office of Equity and Inclusion includes budget initiatives as an action within the resource mobilization area of opportunity. Likewise, DCDHS will include *tactics DCDHS will start or continue to dedicate resources (financial, in-kind, and staffing) to advance racial justice in our community* within the resource mobilization area of opportunity.

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[9] Dane County Department of Administration (n.d.). *Equity Plan*.
https://equity.countyofdane.com/documents/PDFs/Equity%20Plans/Department-of-Administration-Equity-Plan.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.
[10] Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (Sept. 2015). *Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action*. https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.
[11] Dane County Department of Administration (n.d.). *Equity Plan*.
https://equity.countyofdane.com/documents/PDFs/Equity%20Plans/Department-of-Administration-Equity-Plan.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.

Appendix B - DCDHS Vision: Next 2021-2016

Defining and Centering Justice

In late 2019 the Department started its five year strategic planning process, committing to a plan that sought feedback and insights from partners, stakeholders, elected officials, communities, clients, and employees. Our five year strategic plan, Vision: Next 2021-2026, centers racial justice within our new Vision, Mission, and Values. Our first strategic priority is to advance racial justice. The use of the word justice was an intentional choice at every level of our organization. When values and mission were discussed - from staff surveys, staff workshops, work groups' conversations, and leadership conversations, the difference between equity and justice were discussed and the need to focus on justice was emphasized. We define *racial justice* as *fixing systems to offer equal access to both tools and opportunities such that race is no longer a predictor of outcomes*.

Equity and equality are often used interchangeably, but DCDHS recognizes that these terms are different. "*Equity is about fairness, while equality is about sameness*[12]." For example, as shown in Figure 1, giving both individuals trying to pick apples the same height ladder would achieve equality in the distribution of tools/resources as each individual has received the same, or equal, tool/resource. Equity requires, instead, that each of these individuals is given a different tool, based on their individual circumstances, in order for them to achieve the desired outcome – to be able to pick apples from the tree. Figure 1 also illustrates the concept of justice, fixing the tree so that both individuals have the same opportunity to pick apples from the tree, regardless of the side of tree that they are standing on. Justice sometimes looks like both of these individuals finding a better apple tree, together!
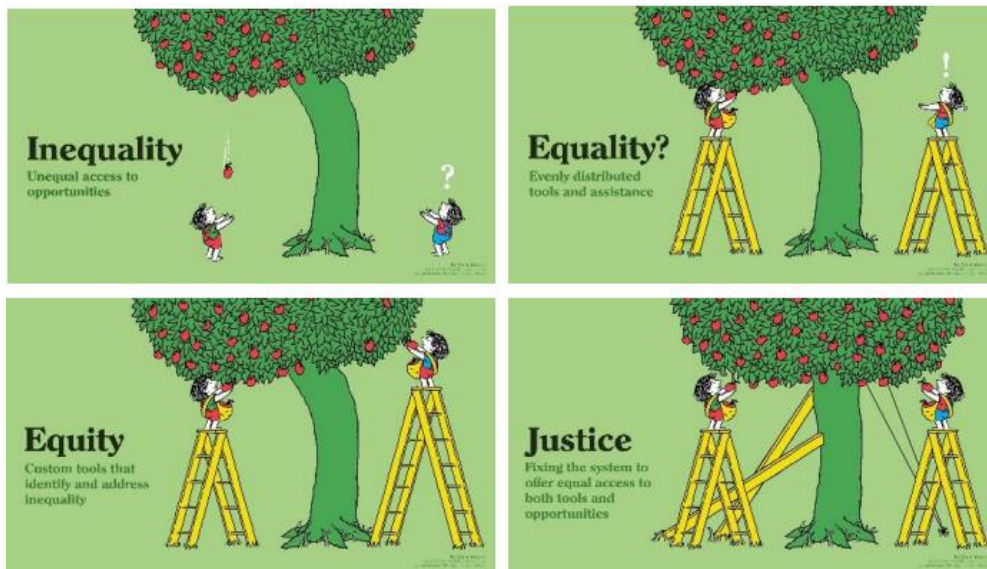
Figure 1: Defining Equity and Justice
Created by Tony Ruth for John Maeda's 2019 Design in Tech Report. Images retrieved from https://cx.report/2020/06/02/equity/ with use permission.

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[12] Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (Sept. 2015). *Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action*. https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf retrieved 12/27/21.

Vision, Mission, and Values

VISION: *Empowered people thriving in safe, just, and caring communities.*

MISSION: *Provide access to effective, innovative, and evidence-based services and resources that support wellbeing, opportunities to thrive, safety, and justice to persons of all backgrounds.*

VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY
We are stewards of public resources. We commit to the evaluation and review of our services and programs. We will be as transparent as possible through open communication within our own organization, with our partners, and with the communities we serve.

Figure 2: Our values support our Vision

COLLABORATION
We commit to building collaborative, inclusive, and informed relationships with staff, clients, partners, and the larger community to foster trust, respect, and effective partnerships across all programs and services.

RACIAL JUSTICE
We commit to pursuing racial justice through institutional change to actively dismantle policies, practices, messages, and attitudes that both perpetuate and fail to eliminate racism and differential outcomes by race.

DIVERSITY
We celebrate our differences, recognizing diversity as a strength that will help us effectively tackle the challenges we collectively face. We strive to create an inclusive culture by authentically bringing diverse voices and perspectives into discussions and decision-making.

EMPATHY
We recognize the existence of generational, historical, community and personal trauma. We approach every interaction, with clients and staff, with the empathy and compassion necessary to address trauma and repair harm.

GROWTH AND LEARNING
We commit to organizational learning and growth by listening, training, collaborating, and innovating, to ensure that our work is responsive, current, engaged, and focused on positive change.

DCDHS acknowledges the harm caused by systems that contribute to socio-economic and other disparities and inequitable outcomes, especially among communities of color. DCDHS understands that these systems still exist and seeks to chart a path of improvement by committing to a new aspirational vision, mission, and set of values.

Priority 1 - Advance Racial Justice

In the context of our strategic plan, defined strategic *priorities* as statements of the broad desired outcomes toward which the Department will work in the coming five years. Each of the five DCDHS strategic priorities have 4- 5 *initiatives*, one of several goals that will assist the Department in achieving the priority. These initiatives may change over the five year strategic plan timeframe, while the priorities will remain stable. Finally, Vision: Next defines *tactics* as measurable actions or deliverables to achieve an initiative. These *tactics* are intended to be updated on an annual basis.

DCDHS chose advancing racial justice as our first strategic priority intentionally. We acknowledge that people of color in Dane County experience significant racial disparities across a variety of measures. DCDHS acknowledges the harm caused by systems that contribute to socio-economic and other disparities and inequitable outcomes, especially among communities of color. DCDHS understands that these systems still exist and seeks to chart a path of improvement by disrupting these systems to create just communities for everyone.

Therefore, our first strategic priority is to *Advance racial justice in Dane County through the programs we fund, the services and resources we provide, and how we recruit and retain staff of color.*

We will achieve this through the following initiatives:

1. Enhance organizational commitment and focus on racial equity through department-wide trainings and conversations to develop shared understanding, enhance individual commitment, and build staff and organizational capacity.
2. Make changes to recruitment and hiring policies and procedures to increase retention, trust, and racial and ethnic diversity of staff.
3. Apply a racial justice lens to decision-making.
4. Expand the Purchase of Service (POS) network to include more providers of color.
5. Examine our policies and procedures for interpretation and translation to improve access for all members of the community.