



DATE: April 19, 2018

TO: Agency Directors

FROM: Governor Jay Inslee

SUBJECT: INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL WORK ENVIRONMENTS

In early November, I asked each of you to recommit to building work environments that are respectful, supportive, and inclusive to everyone. When state employees have the workplaces they deserve, they are able to do their best work for the people of Washington. As leaders, I expect each of you to identify and take action to address problems in your agencies that stand in the way of respectful work environments, and that each of you promote diversity, equity and inclusivity in the services provided by your agencies.

A couple of months ago, the Office of Financial Management's State Human Resources Division asked your deputies to respond to an agency assessment survey. After reviewing the responses, along with other relevant data and information, we have identified several areas of opportunity for improvement that span state government. There is room for improvement in how we create rules and policies, reach collective bargaining agreements, train new employees, and align our goals, as well as our trainings in general, our reporting processes, and our agency culture.

Next Steps

Having identified these challenges, State Human Resources will work with agencies and workgroups to develop a roadmap for making improvements. Throughout these efforts, I expect your active engagement and support. The attached improvement plan contains details of these initial efforts.

To start, I expect each of you to take the following actions:

Action Required	Completion Date
1. Identify a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) liaison. This person will serve on an ad hoc workgroup to help with statewide strategies and best practices for policies, training, employee onboarding, reporting processes, and business alignment. This person may also represent you on the standing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.	May 7, 2018
2. Review your agency's diversity, equity and inclusion policies to identify strengths and gaps. These policies consist of, but are not limited to, sexual harassment prevention; discrimination; diversity and inclusion; reasonable accommodations; Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, and workplace behavior/civility. Your DEI liaison will help develop model policies and templates, so your prompt attention to reviewing these policies will help set the stage for this statewide effort.	June 1, 2018

<p>3. Identify your agency’s current policy/process to track compliance for required training. If none exists, develop an action plan to develop a policy/process. Your human resources staff can help identify best practices for developing compliance tracking methods for training.</p>	<p>June 1, 2018</p>
<p>4. Review your agency’s process for handling personnel investigations. If none exists or the process needs improvement, develop an action plan to establish a stronger process or create a new one. Your review should include how you resource this work, the timeliness of your investigations, and other related barriers to address employee complaints promptly. Your human resources and DEI liaison designee can help identify best practices.</p>	<p>July 9, 2018</p>
<p>5. Review the past three years of your agency’s formal and informal reporting. This review is to include information on harassment, discrimination, and workplace behavior/civility complaints, grievances, torts and settlements. Create an action plan as needed to improve identified opportunities.</p>	<p>July 9, 2018</p>

Provide all action items by their respective completion dates to the Office of Financial Management’s State Human Resources, Workforce Development Planning and Strategy Manager, Ann Reiter at ann.reiter@ofm.wa.gov.

I expect each of you to proactively engage in learning about the impacts of the power and privilege that is inherent in the positions you hold. Communicate to your managers, supervisors, human resources team, and employees that having a respectful, supportive, and inclusive work environment is a top priority. Encourage them to come forward with any concerns, and remind them of their options for raising those concerns. As a leader of your organization, it is your responsibility to model respectful and inclusive behavior, and to ensure that all employees meet this expectation. I rely on each of you to assume responsibility for routine, proactive assessments of the work environment in your agency.

Going forward, engage your agencies in Results Washington’s employee engagement efforts; the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council coordinated by State Human Resources; and the Human Resources Managers group. These groups will be key partners in working on many strategies listed in the action plan, and we need your agency’s active participation.

Our goal is to provide the positive workplaces our employees and Washingtonians expect. Your prompt attention to these initial assignments will help us continue to strengthen the foundation we need to move forward.

Washington State has one of the best governments in the nation, but like other employers, we have issues we need to address. I ask each of you to fully engage in these efforts, and I will not accept anything less.

Thank you for your commitment.

INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL WORK ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN

OFM State Human Resources (SHR) will work with agency staff in the following areas.

Rules and Policies

- Assist each agency in identifying any gaps in existing required policies.
- Further develop opportunities for workplace environment input from staff regarding problems and solutions.
- Work with agencies to provide clarity on required and recommended harassment, discrimination, and diversity and inclusion policies, including exploring the need for additional required policies.
- Increase awareness and reinforce by identifying additional methods to communicate about these policies with employees.

Training

- Update the state's required sexual harassment prevention course, reflecting a progression of expectations as employees climb the leadership ladder, and build in methods to assess the effectiveness of the courses.
- Integrate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into other trainings, so that DEI is how we operate and not seen as a separate initiative.
- Explore the need to develop and deliver additional trainings, such as bystander intervention training, trauma-informed interviewing, and management power and privilege awareness.
- Ascertain that all agencies are tracking compliance with required trainings.

Employee Services

- Identify best practices for incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion when onboarding new employees so they understand, at the onset, that Washington State is committed to respectful and inclusive workplaces.
- Help employees at all levels know how to hold each other accountable in building and maintaining a respectful workplace.
- Institute additional reporting requirements for agencies to report on DEI practices.

Reporting Culture and Processes

- Lead the development of clear expectations for reporting processes.
- Adopt best practices to improve pathways for employees to escalate concerns about their workplace environments.
- Work with HR professionals on handling complaints, including looking at the effectiveness of investigative processes and areas for improvement.
- Provide a reporting mechanism for agency HR directors to elevate issues to agency leaders.
- Proactively identify potential problem areas by looking across various data and information sources, such as voluntary resignation rates, results from the state's Employee Engagement Survey and Exit Survey, as well as complaints, grievances, torts, and settlements.
- Determine options for reporting outside of an employee's "home" agency.
- Work with labor partners in creating and maintaining safe workplaces.

Business Alignment and Integration

- Enhance agency strategic plans so that all agencies have DEI goals and strategies represented.
- Convene a workgroup to include the Human Rights Commission, Attorney General's Office, and State HR to discuss opportunities to share and improve agency policies and practices.
- Develop culture assessment tools that can be used routinely by management to identify areas of risk and opportunity.