

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

March 7, 2023

Strengthening the County’s Commitment to Promoting Belonging, Inclusion, and Acceptance in the Work Environment

The County of Los Angeles (County) is actively working towards becoming an anti-racist organization. We must strengthen our commitment to maintaining a diverse, accepting, and inclusive work environment where all County employees experience belonging. On July 21, 2022, the Board of Supervisors (Board) unanimously established an Anti-Racist Los Angeles County Policy Agenda that addresses “generational inequality and systemic anti-Black racism” in all policies and programs Countywide. The goals of this work include achieving more equitable outcomes in family stability, physical and mental health, housing, education, employment and economic development, and public safety and criminal justice¹.

The motion also instructed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) “to ensure that all County department directors identify at least one Management Appraisal and Performance Plan goal each year that strengthens organizational capacity for cultural competency and vigilance to reduce racial stigma, inequality, and implicit bias within their respective departments” and to “evaluate existing County policies, practices, operations, and programs through a lens of racial equity in order to more effectively promote and

¹ Source: <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/147606.pdf>

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support policies that prioritize physical and mental health, housing, employment, public safety, and justice in an equitable way for African Americans.” In response to the motion and to accomplish these directives, the Anti-Racism Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative was established by the CEO to eliminate racism, bias, and inequity in the County. If we are truly to achieve anti-racism throughout our County, we must recommit ourselves to a multi-year effort that enables departments to implement actionable plans and make progress by investing in their capacity through training, staffing, and resources.

To strengthen the County’s anti-racist policy agenda and aligned equity initiatives, we will need to build workforce capacity to operationalize a culture and climate that fosters: 1) a sense of belonging among all workforce members; 2) a shared vision of the importance of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion; and 3) the equitable delivery of linguistically and culturally appropriate programs and services. In a recent article, UC Berkeley Professor, John A. Powell noted, “...A call for belonging and inclusion as the only sustainable solution to the problem of othering..., a set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities.”² Fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace culture where people understand the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion will also strengthen employees’ dedication to addressing the institutional and systemic racism experienced by the populations we serve. Each of our Departments must commit to and support its respective workforce by creating an environment where County employees feel valued and a sense of belonging, leading to better workplace satisfaction, team productivity, and employee retention.

While the entire workforce will need to adhere to the County’s policies on non-discrimination and anti-racism, the work truly begins with County leaders who are responsible for implementing and enforcing these policies. Department directors, managers and supervisors who interact daily with a majority of the workforce must have the skills and implementation strategies to champion the Board’s directives and the County’s policies on non-discrimination and anti-racism. This includes the ability to modify

² [The Problem of Othering: Towards Inclusiveness and Belonging - Othering and Belonging](#)

internal policies, procedures, and practices needed to successfully integrate and operationalize the Board's directives. Advancing this work will require the application of a racial equity lens to program and service planning, implementation, and evaluation. It will also require that each Department creates a plan that communicates the desired goal of a culture of racial equity, strategies to cultivate an enabling environment, and mechanisms for accountability.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Executive Director of Anti-Racism Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI), in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Human Resources (DHR), to develop and implement a new *ARDI Equity Training Series within the Los Angeles County (County) University*, which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. a sequence of trainings on fostering positive, healthy workplace cultures and climates in the County for the entire workforce;
 - b. a dedicated track for Department Heads, Chief Deputies, other County executives, and an identified Equity Champion in each department that will include, but may not be limited to, (i) identifying and understanding structural racism; (ii) addressing anti-Black racism; (iii) addressing and mitigating implicit biases; (iv) conducting historical, cultural, and structural analyses of racism; and (v) applying concepts of diversity, inclusion and belonging in the workplace;
 - c. a module dedicated to enhancing language access, communication, and plain language, including effective feedback loops on challenging conversations; and
 - d. a module dedicated to building an organizational culture of equity, including a tool kit of recommended equity initiatives that departments can implement to complement the Training Series. Initiatives can include speaker series, team building activities, cultural awareness events, and leveraging of County educational assets, like the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, to further learning.
2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of DHR, in consultation with the Executive Director of ARDI, to report back to the Board in writing, yearly, as

part of the Department Head performance review process, on the following:

- a. executive participation in ARDI Equity Training Series courses;
 - b. a list of specific behavioral-based metrics to evaluate the impact of the trainings within the departments;
 - c. department initiatives to positively impact employees and foster belonging, inclusion, acceptance, and collaboration within the workplace; and
 - d. Department Head's progress in achieving outlined equity metric goals based on their identified benchmarks.
3. Authorize the CEO to use delegated authority to execute agreements with one or more consultants to assist with the development of the training series, including recommended equity initiatives for County leaders and metrics by which to measure success.
 4. Direct the CEO to report back in writing in 120 days with a plan to implement the training series, recommended equity initiatives, and metrics, along with the staffing and funding resources needed to expand the capacity of ARDI and departments to implement.

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