

## Operational Policy

<b>Policy title:</b>	Equity and Inclusion Committee		
<b>Policy number:</b>	ODHS 010-027		
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<b>Approved:</b>	Don Erickson, ODHS Chief Administrative Officer		

### Purpose

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) is committed to advancing service equity in all programs, policy decisions, and activities of ODHS. ODHS and The Office Equity & Multicultural Services (OEMS) are responsible for the systemic cultural change needed to advance the core value of service equity. Equity and Inclusion Committees (formerly Diversity Committees) support the agency's intentional advancement of service equity. Service equity promotes health, safety and independence for all Oregonians by adapting services and policies to recognize, address, and eliminate discrimination and disparities. Equity and Inclusion Committees (EICs) are recognized by ODHS as a vital component in diversity development and inclusive practices.

### Description

This policy covers the establishment, agency recognition and required support of EICs as action-driven advisory bodies. This policy establishes governance for these committees that includes [paid, protected time allotment](#) for approved members to conduct activities on behalf of the EICs.

### Applicability

This policy applies to all ODHS staff including employees, volunteers, trainees and interns.

As keepers of the public trust, all agency employees have a responsibility to comply with state and agency policies, administrative rule, state and federal law. Employees who fail to comply with state or agency policy, administrative rule, or state and federal law may face progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal from state service.

### Policy

1. This policy establishes the expectations and support of the EICs at all sixteen ODHS districts. These expectations and supports also apply to the creation of approved EICs in ODHS that function outside of the ODHS District structure.
2. For the purposes of this policy, EICs are defined as officially recognized committees organized as the primary vehicle for advising district and program field leadership to address how agency staff treat one another and the people we serve.
  - a. EICs shall operate in a manner consistent with ODHS mission, core values, policies, and federal, state, and local laws.
  - b. EICs shall clearly demonstrate how the group benefits the agency's diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts.

- c. EICs shall not be organized solely for general interest, recreation, sports, or hobby purposes such as a chess club or softball team, although an EIC may include such activities if the group can demonstrate how the activity relates to its larger mission and purpose.
  - d. EICs shall not be organized for prohibited political or religious purposes.
  - e. Official EICs shall be approved by the agency director, or a designee.
3. All EICs have a common purpose statement: To better assist and advocate for Oregonians, ODHS staff shall be empowered to educate and be educated on past and present disparities occurring in our communities.
  4. In order to obtain and maintain EIC status each group shall:
    - a. Be officially recognized by ODHS through a process that includes creation and approval of a committee charter, committee mission statement, list of members, and strategic plan.
    - b. Have a designated sponsor that is a district manager for self-sufficiency or child welfare programs or a regional manager for Adults and People with Disabilities programs.
    - c. Maintain at least five active members.
    - d. Meet at least once every 60 days.
    - e. Include a minimum of three members who are not ODHS staff and who come from historically underrepresented populations.
    - f. Submit an annual report by June 15th of every year to the agency director or designee.
  5. Unless a specific exception is granted in writing by the ODHS director or an approved designee, each EIC is responsible for:
    - a. Managing how it will be organized, which includes how formally or informally the group operates.
    - b. Selecting the committee's executive leadership and recruiting regular members.
      - a. Executive leadership are ODHS employee's, volunteers, trainees and interns who hold chair, co-chair or other officer positions in the EIC.
      - b. These positions are fully defined at the local chapter level.
      - c. Regular members are employees, volunteers, trainees and interns who have completed an EIC membership application, had the EIC membership application approved by management, submitted the EIC membership application to their local EIC chapter executive leadership, and been accepted as a regular member of the EIC.
    - c. Determining the frequency, location, purpose and content of meetings and activities.
    - d. Developing and maintaining group contacts, email and mailing lists.
    - e. Facilitating communication among regular members.
  6. In order to support ODHS efforts to become a more community accountable organization and to ensure community voices are represented in EICs, membership objectives shall include:
    - a. Aside from ODHS employees, a voting membership that is 51 percent underrepresented and underserved community members.
    - b. Community service providers, partnering agencies, contracted vendors, client advocates, and county providers.
    - c. Volunteers, trainees, and interns, and contracted employees.
  7. Approval for participation of community members, advocates and community partners is done by the committee in consultation with the management sponsor using the EIC Membership Request for Community Partner or Community Member Form.
  8. Reimbursement for mileage or childcare for community members, advocates, and community partners that are full members of the EICs, can be obtained through OEMS utilizing allotted diversity funding. Additional information can be found in the Committee guide.
  9. Once appointed as an EIC member by management, staff shall have the EIC duties added to the individual workforce development plan for the length of their term.
    - a. Supervisors shall prioritize supporting EIC members in fulfilling this job function.

- b. Employees shall provide 72-hour advance notification to their Manager of upcoming meetings and activities to allow time for Manager to arrange coverage.
  - c. Supervisors are encouraged to include staff participation in an EIC as part of Employment Development Plan (EDP).
10. EIC activities shall be paid work time.
- a. The agency shall allow regular members of an EIC up to eight (8) hours per month of protected time to attend meetings and activities for the group, and up to sixteen (16) hours per month of protected time for executive leadership dedicated to completing or fulfilling EIC duties, including but not limited to meeting and event planning and facilitation; working with community partners or district leadership; defining and refining strategic goals; completing required reports and budget planning; and data gathering and analysis.
  - b. Protected time means that when this time is requested, no other duties may take precedence as defined in sections 9 and 11 of this policy.
  - c. Reasonable travel time should be considered paid time in addition to the hourly for meetings or activities.
  - d. Managers shall use standard leave policy, process and criteria for responding to employees who request to use work time beyond what is allowed by this policy.
11. Supervisors shall approve request from officers and EIC members to attend an EIC activity unless the operational needs of ODHS cannot be met due to an emergency, coverage, workload issue, or unavoidable budgetary issue. The operational concern or business needs should be staffed with OEMS for guidance. Term lengths are defined by the EIC.
- a. If an EIC believes that there is an ongoing pattern of refusal by a supervisor for a committee member to attend EIC they may directly address this with the management sponsor.
  - b. If no resolution is reached, the issue may be moved to the next level of management who will consult with the supervisor, Office of Human Resources, and OEMS to resolve.
  - c. Misuse or false representation of EIC work done by an employee will be investigated and subject to discipline up to and including termination.
12. All individuals on the EIC shall complete Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, training offered by the ODHS Office of Equity and Multicultural Services.
13. Equity and Inclusion Committees shall not:
- a. Contract with a ODHS employees.
  - b. Participate in fundraising.
14. Equity and Inclusion Committees shall provide ADA accommodations as requested by participating members. Meeting this requirement is done in consultation with local managers in coordination with Human Resources ADA Manager

## References

[Oregon Accounting Manual 10.40.10 Non-Travel Meals](#)  
DAS 125-030-0006

## Forms referenced

Employment Development Plan

## Related policies

[DHS|OHA 060-018-01 Vacation Leave and Payoff Procedure](#)  
[DHS|OHA 060-002 Conflict of Interest Policy](#)  
[DHS|OHA-010-019 Healthy Meetings, Conferences and Events Policy](#)  
[DHS|OHA 060-003 Employees as Contractors](#)

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