



SEPTEMBER 2024

**SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA**

Equity Work Plans 2025

Guidance for Equity Change Teams, HR Liaisons,
and Department Leaders



Presented by
Equity Core Team

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Official Equity Statement

As the capital city of Minnesota, Saint Paul is a community that believes in fostering inclusivity and equality, creating spaces where everyone's voice is heard and valued. We strive to uplift and serve our residents and City of Saint Paul employees with dignity and respect, and center humanity and autonomy in all that we do.

We recognize the need to address systems and beliefs that perpetuate harm and inequity against marginalized peoples and are committed to dismantling racism, prejudice, bias, and discrimination in all forms. By engaging all our communities in the process of governing, we ensure our residents stand to benefit from the policies we build together.

Our leaders are guided by an unapologetic equity agenda, which promotes the belief that true equity is building a city that works for all of us.



Equity Core Team

The Equity Core Team meets bi-weekly to strategize, coordinate, and collaborate on equity and inclusion initiatives citywide. The team provides direction to Equity Work Plan development and the structure and content of quarterly Equity Change Team meetings.



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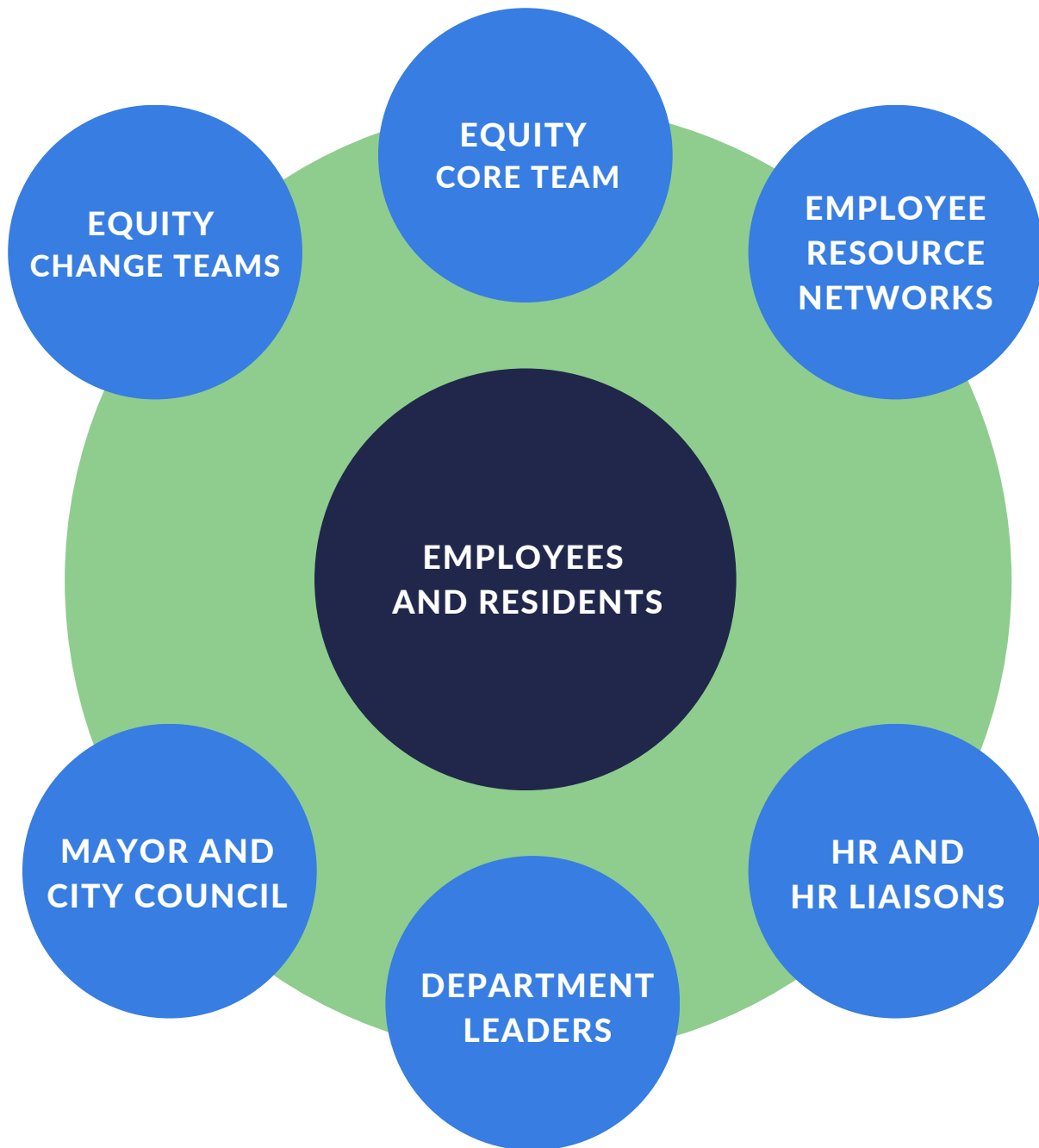
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Equity and Inclusion Ecosystem

The Equity and Inclusion Ecosystem shows who must work together to carry out the work of the Equity Work Plan in 2025. Employees and residents are at the center of the work. If we are successful, we will continue to build a city that works for all of us.



Introduction and Citywide Goals for 2025

The three citywide goals for 2025 are centered on recruiting, hiring, and retaining a workforce that reflects the city of Saint Paul. This means the diversity of our city will be reflected in our employees. There will be a workplace culture that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful. And we are all responsible as an organization to embrace learning that deepens our anti-racist practices. It is our vision that Equity Change Teams (ECTs), HR Liaisons, and department leaders can have a direct impact on these three goals in a very meaningful way in 2025.



Build a Workforce that Reflects our City

To reflect our city means we have workers who look like our city, live in our city, and can relate to and understand the complexities of Saint Paul. That means that our workforce will need to be 50% Black, Indigenous, and People of Color just like Saint Paul's residents. We will hire and retain employees who are disabled, Veterans, who live in different parts of the city, and folks who come from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. It also means our workforce will overwhelmingly be city residents. And lastly, our workforce will have the knowledge, skill, and will to create equitable and transformative change for the employees and residents of Saint Paul. Here are some ways we think can help us get there:

Restorative Circles in Hiring Interviews:

This process has been piloted by HR in several interviews over the last couple years. Essentially, the first half of an interview is a restorative circle where everyone involved in the job interview, candidate and hiring committee, take turns answering the questions. It is a very human-centered approach to job interviewing. It takes the pressure off the job candidate and creates a respectful and inclusive environment for the duration of the interview. Almost every job candidate whose been through this process with HR has said things like “this is the best interview I’ve ever had” or “I wish more places would interview like this.” It demonstrates who we are as an organization and what we value from the very start of someone’s time with us. HR will be launching a policy and guidelines in the near future, and Equity Change Teams can work to implement this in their department.

Hiring Committee Membership:

If a hiring committee is assembled to interview job applicants, it is very important to center equity in the process. We believe that all hiring committees need to be reflective of the diversity of our city. They can do this by including some combination of equity change team members, community members, Saint Paul residents, people of different ages, and BIPOC folks. As we bring more people into our organization, we want to center equity, inclusion, and anti-racism and make sure job candidates know these are our city values before they ever start working for us. This is something Equity Change Teams can collaborate on with hiring managers within your department as well as your HR Liaison.

Build a Workforce that Reflects our City

Job Requirements:

One of the barriers of employment for many folks are job requirements or minimum qualifications like experience or education that they simply don't have. These requirements are necessary in most instances in order for the job applicant to be successful in the job. However, there are also departments in the city who've found ways to offer trainings once an employee is hired to provide them with the experience/education they need to meet these job requirements. HR is encouraging departments and Equity Change Teams to think creatively about how to increase job applicants and remove barriers to employment. Equity Change Teams can work to identify these barriers alongside HR Liaisons and hiring managers within their department.

Entry-Level Positions and Advancement:

Does your department have Right Track interns? Do you have positions created for Right Track interns to transition into once they're time with Right Track is completed? Currently, the city does a great job at hiring part-time staff that are BIPOC and also city residents (Around 2,108 employees, 86% are city residents and 69% are BIPOC). We don't do nearly as good at hiring the same folks for full-time positions (Close to 3,220 employees, only 30% are city residents and 32% are BIPOC). The Equity Change Team can work with your HR Liaison and department leaders to identify areas where Right Track employees could transition into full-time positions. Once these areas are identified, your department can work with HR to discuss position series so that it is clear how folks can advance within the organization once they are hired.

Equity Dashboard:

The Equity Dashboard was launched in Spring of 2024. It shows demographics of employees based on age, gender, and race/ethnicity. The data is updated daily and shows how well your department is doing in terms of hiring and retention of diverse employees. The Equity and Inclusion Division meets annually with departments to review their data. Department Equity Change Teams can work with HR Liaisons and department leadership to regularly check in about the data, especially when trying to fill open positions.

Onboarding Employees and Workplace Culture

This goal is rooted in our belief that we should be encouraging new employees to approach their roles with a mindset of inclusivity, openness, and a willingness to contribute to making Saint Paul a city that works for all of us. Onboarding employees and creating an inclusive workplace culture means we are growth oriented. We foster a mindset that values ongoing learning and self-improvement, especially in understanding and applying principles of equity. We want to promote a collaborative approach to working with diverse teams and interested parties, emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and understanding. Here are some ways we think can help us get there:

Welcome and Introduction:

The Equity Change Team could provide a personalized welcome to new employees. It is an opportunity to emphasize the City of Saint Paul's commitment to equity and inclusion and creating a sense of belonging for all employees. When new employees start, the ECT can send a welcome email to the employee and also invite them to the next monthly meeting.

Celebrating Diversity:

The Equity and Inclusion Division has created a Cultural Calendar, you can currently discuss adding with the Equity and Inclusion Division. The ECT is encouraged to work in coordination with department leadership to highlight and celebrate the diversity within the city through events, communications, and recognition programs. Having a cultural event or heritage month featured in each month's department meeting is a great way to celebrate diversity and honor the backgrounds of employees and residents of Saint Paul.

Culture Shares:

These can often be called "ice-breakers" or "community builders" but culture shares are an impactful and important way to start meetings regardless of the agenda. We do not want to treat meetings or fellow employees as transactional experiences. Other employees are our peers and colleagues that have their own backgrounds and lived experiences. Culture is how we do life on this planet and what makes us who we are, and we want people to feel welcome to share their ways of being with the people they work with. The Equity Core Team will share monthly culture shares with Equity Change Teams and departments can explore different ways to incorporate them into various meetings.

Onboarding Employees and Workplace Culture

Training Modules:

By the end of this year, there will be OpenSesame courses that cover the basics of equity and inclusion and an introduction to LGBTQIA+. ECTs can work with HR Liaisons to promote these courses to current and incoming employees. Have a plan for tracking progress and a timeline to complete the modules. When employees engage with these materials, we as an organization are communicating what we value and what's important to us. It's not the only answer to creating inclusive workplace culture, but it is a part of an effective strategy.

Resource Accessibility:

Ensure new employees have access to resources related to the City's equity work, such as the equity dashboard, Employee Resource Networks, Equity Change Teams, equity core team, and union information. Employees should know what's available to them from day one and how to engage with others across the city.

Engagement Survey:

Conducting an engagement survey gives an in depth view of employee engagement and workplace culture. Your Equity Change Team can collaborate with department leadership to engage staff to take the survey and develop a process of action once the results are in.

Becoming a Learning Organization

To be a learning organization means employees regularly practice creating, growing, and sharing knowledge and skills at all levels and departments across the City of Saint Paul. We envision a City of Saint Paul that embraces continuous learning and as a result is able to bring innovative ideas and increased creative problem solving to better serve the changing needs of our communities. At the department level, when one department is able to successfully build their culture continuous learning it can impact and influence other departments to in their own progress towards this goal. This goal requires an organizational as well as a personal commitment to bring out and bring forth learning within yourself and others.

Skill transferring/sharing:

Becoming a learning organization is about building regular practices as well as fostering an overall culture of learning. Equity Change Teams can play a pivotal role in creating opportunities for your colleagues to connect, learn, and grow together. Identify areas for skill growth among your department and resource professional development opportunities for your colleagues. This can be done, for example, at Equity Change Team meetings, department staff meetings, or in-person collaborative time. Explore how your Equity Change Team can leverage internal experts to build knowledge sharing opportunities through things like trainings or lunch and learns to share their knowledge and skills with their colleagues. Another approach might be to explore cross training opportunities for employees to learn how to do tasks of other divisions/departments.

Succession Planning:

Vital skills and institutional knowledge are often lost when staff resign. Work with your colleagues and HR liaison to identify process improvements to succession planning so that information and abilities are less dependent on any one individual. Identify areas and positions that have siloed knowledge and skills within your departments and build daily practices that might be implemented to spread those skills and knowledge more broadly across your department. Additionally, one of the hardest things as a new employee is not having organizational memory or sometimes even a guidebook on how to do certain tasks, but there are folks within your department who have a lot of knowledge, skill, and information that others can benefit from.

Becoming a Learning Organization

Unlearning and Conversations:

Think about how your Equity Change Team can identify white dominate culture in your organization and come up with opportunities to dismantle that. What are harmful behaviors or beliefs that discourage difference and devalue diversity that need to be unlearned? These are things that the Equity Change Team can work with department leadership to address effectively.

Goal Setting and Evaluations:

What is your department's current process for employee evaluations and goal setting? Many employees have shared that they have never been evaluated, and if they have, it is not a regular occurrence. In the HR department, we set the intention to have at least two (2) evaluations in the work year. This is a great opportunity for supervisors to provide feedback, check in with employees about how they are feeling about their role, determine goals for the upcoming year, and review progress on previous goals. Another key component of the evaluation and goal setting process is for supervisors to ask employees how they've engaged with or contributed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism in the workplace. Equity Change Teams can work with department leaders to review the evaluation process for their department and work to improve it.

Manager and Supervisor Training:

Are the supervisors and managers in your department attending the trainings and opportunities currently offered by the Learning and Development Team in HR? After developing a plan to get supervisors trained, track what percentage have attended each training. Here's a list of current offerings:

- Respectful and Inclusive Workplace: Harassment Prevention with Fran Sepler
- Respect in the Workplace & Workplace Conduct Policy
- Understanding the American Disability Act
- Conflict Management 101
- Understanding & Using Cultural Intelligence with Dr. Omari
- Emotional Intelligence with Luis Moreno
- Labor Relations 101

For inquiries, contact us.



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