

Commonwealth of Virginia Diversity Opportunity and Inclusion Plan

On January 19, 2022, Governor Youngkin signed Executive Order 10, which provided a concrete plan to further strengthen and focus the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to include the promotion and expansion of equal opportunity for all Virginians in the Office’s work. The inclusion of Opportunity is a critical factor in making Virginia the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Since the first days of the Youngkin Administration, the Commonwealth has dedicated resources to promoting ideas, policies, and practices that improve quality of life and expand economic opportunities for Virginians. At the same time, this plan and the programs and policies to promote Diversity, Opportunity and Inclusion within the Commonwealth’s agencies and authorities have significantly expanded.

In 2000, the Equal Employment Opportunity policy (DHRM, Policy Number 2.05) was implemented to promote respectful workplace and non-discrimination practices. Since that time, plans have evolved to address changing social and economic conditions, with Virginia state government becoming more diverse—even more diverse than the Commonwealth overall.

Our focus in 2023 and beyond is to continue to increase opportunities for all Virginians. The goals and objectives below build upon the plan --- and the promise --- of Executive Order 10. They continue our focus on creating a culture of inclusion where all Virginia state employees are recognized for their contributions, further provide the opportunity for growth through skills development to achieve both personal and professional goals, and will institute regular employee engagement surveys to allow leaders to obtain feedback on a regular basis.

The building block of the Administration’s approach to Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion—Executive Order 10—is included herein. You will also find three goals and multiple objectives below to be used as the framework for agencies to update your own plans and to report annually on Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion targets and accomplishments. These goals are intended to provide guidance. Agencies should establish measurable objectives that align with agency business operations and mission.

Goal 1: Access and Success

Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.

Objective 1:

Continue to improve hiring processes and increase access to potential applicants from diverse populations.

- a. Expand sources for recruiting diverse talent.
- b. Continue to utilize the “Alternative Hiring Process” for people with disabilities.
- c. Utilize interview panels that include members of diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Objective 2

Continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.

- a. During onboarding, ensure new employees are made aware and understand the agency's inclusive principles and practices.
- b. Promote training and development opportunities to all levels of staff; enable staff to participate in programs that are designed for professional growth. (See Goal 3 - Objective 3 for more details.)
- c. Ensure accessibility for diverse needs including but not limited to language access, digital access, and access for individuals with disabilities.
- d. Collect employee feedback from multiple sources, including surveys, exit interviews, grievances, and hotline investigations and address validated concerns.

Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture

Create and sustain a culture that welcomes and embraces diverse opinions, independent thinking, and respectful interactions to deliver optimal results for the organization and its customers.

Objective 1

Persist in creating and maintaining a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.

- a. Provide employees with disabilities the necessary accommodations for them to be successful.
- b. Promote respect of all individuals and provide clear expectations for collegial interactions and compliance with the *Civility in the Workplace Policy*.
- c. Encourage cross-collaboration and rotational assignments among employees to enrich the employee experience, promote education and growth, foster diversity of thought, and inspire innovative solutions.
- d. Offer events that recognize, value, and honor diversity and independent thinking.

Objective 2

Continue to provide an environment where conflicts, concerns, and complaints are aired and addressed expeditiously.

- a. Promote productive methods of conflict resolution through mediation, counseling, and training in respect for free speech and expression.
- b. Promptly address inappropriate workplace behavior.
- c. Promptly address concerns and complaints through a standard process that is consistently followed.

Goal 3. State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

Maintain a plan and infrastructure that continues to provide individualized skills training and career development for state employees. Agencies report annually on DOI goals and accomplishments.

Objective 1

Continue to amplify opportunities to advance the goals outlined in this framework.

- a. Incorporate the DOI plan into the agency's strategic plan and reporting efforts.
- b. Design processes to openly share DOI resources and best practices across agencies and units.

Objective 2

Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness with the Department of Human Resource Management.

- a. Institute systems of assessment, reporting, accountability, and continuous improvement to optimize the realization of the agency's and/or department's goals.
- b. Align DOI responsibilities and tasks with other human resources functions and provide a point of contact within the agency's leadership team or human resources department to this office.
- c. Engage agency leaders and key stakeholders in reviewing and analyzing reports to identify achievements as well as opportunities for improvement.
- d. Review and assess internal policies and procedures throughout the agency and/or department to identify opportunities to further organizational excellence.

Objective 3

Continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.

- a. Offer training and educational workshops for skills training, leadership development, and career advancement.
- b. Develop talent management programs such as mentorships, succession planning, and coaching programs with the assistance of professional organizations and institutions of higher education.
- c. Ensure training programs are available to all employees, including through multiple modes of facilitation (*e.g.*, classroom, virtual, online self-paced, etc.)
- d. Increase training opportunities.