



# Office of Labor Standards Race & Social Justice

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COVID-19 Response  
Change Team  
RSJI Discussion Group  
Update on Budget Transparency  
Skills Trainings  
Domestic Workers Standards Board  
Per Diem Policy  
Racial Equity Toolkits (RETs)  
2022 Preview

In Remembrance:  
Block Print by our colleague and friend  
**Sarah Leyrer**



**Seattle**  
Office of Labor Standards

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## Workplace Equity

Community | Business | Race & Social Justice

Our mission is to advance labor standards through thoughtful community and business engagement, strategic enforcement and innovative policy development, with a commitment to race and social justice.

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## 2021 Highlights

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# Centering Race Equity in COVID-19 Response - 2021 Update

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- Meeting emerging needs through policy changes and additions
- Increase access to labor standards information
- Mitigating burden on community-based organizations
- Meaningful enforcement efforts – \$11,452,296 assessed for workers in 2021
- Partnerships and equitable access to COVID-19 resources



# Update: Budget Transparency

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1

In August 2020 Change Team requested that we work to build a more transparent and inclusive budgeting process. Department leadership researched

3

Built a proposed plan for more frequent information sharing and processes for staff to forward budget proposals.

Creation of background (“primers”) on budget processes and proposals.

Rolled out the plan to Change Team and all-staff prior to implementation.

2

Interim Director and Finance Manager researched best practices and lessons learned from other departments to consider and evaluate in OLS processes.

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Management Team committed to piloting these new processes in 2021, with the intention to evaluate success and adjust if needed.

# Sharpening Skills / Deepening Practice

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1

Language Access Toolkit & Best Practices, featuring Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs colleagues

3

Racial Equity Toolkit: Spheres of Accountability Training, featuring Office for Civil Rights colleagues

2

Racial Equity Toolkit (3 Part Series), featuring Office for Civil Rights colleagues

4

Gender Justice Training, featuring Office for Civil Rights colleagues

5

Equitable Supervisory & Management Practices, featuring JustLead (Management Team)

# Change Team

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**Our mission** is to eradicate institutionalized implicit and explicit racism within the Office of Labor Standards.

## 2021 Challenges

- Continuity with membership and leadership turnover
- Burnout

## 2022 Goals

- We are still here!
- Reinvigorating Change Team's role at OLS
- Working together with our new Deputy Director to promote RSJ work

# RSJI Discussion Group

## Goals

- 1 Create a safe space to discuss RSJ issues within office and in external work
- 2 Use source material to deepen understanding of history of racism and contemporary issues
- 3 Connect RSJ issues in society with OLS' work and personal experiences

## Sample Sources

- *So You Want to Talk about Race?* – Ijeoma Oluo
- *Exterminate all the Brutes* – HBO documentary series
- *Regulating the Poor* – Francis Fox Piven & Richard Cloward
- *The Sum of Us* – Heather McGhee



# Domestic Workers Standards Board (DWSB) Per Diem Policy

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- Reducing barriers to participation in Board activities by compensating participants for lost opportunity costs.
- Lost opportunity costs may include cost of forgoing paid work, childcare, or any other costs incurred that enable full and sustained participation in Board activities.
- Eligible board members receive \$25/hour via gift cards for qualifying DWSB activities, including monthly public meetings and subcommittee meetings, required trainings, and the Board's Annual Retreat.
- Policy is retroactive to January 1, 2022. Required documentation includes Eligibility Attestation Form, verified attendance, written receipts.



# Racial Equity Toolkits

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# Settlement Check Distribution

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## Goal Statement

Eliminate racial disparities in speed and success of distribution of settlement funds for BIPOC workers, particularly those who experience language barriers, immigration barriers, housing instability, mistrust of government, and lack of access to banking.

## Engagement

- Internal discussions with OLS staff
- Consultation with OCR, FAS, EEOC, claims administrators, and other jurisdictions
- Survey of workers who received settlement funds in 2021

## Issues Identified

- High risk associated with pre-paid debit cards and alternative payment platforms
- Check distribution is time/labor intensive
- Reliance on third parties to distribute checks means less OLS control over distribution process
- Pandemic-related contact limitations

# Recommendations

## Develop Written Policies

Pilot payment guidelines for settlements and findings, internal check distribution procedure, updated Settlement Agreement language

## Clarify Roles & Expectations, Share Tasks (Internal)

Reduce time between receipt of employer settlement payment and distribution of checks to workers

## Clarify Roles & Expectations With Employers & Claims Administrators (External)

Streamline process, avoid checks expiring, allow checks to reach workers faster

## Require Distribution by Employers & Claims Administrators in Large Cases

Utilize scale, incentivize employers' effective distribution, mitigate administrative burden for OLS

# Demographic Data Toolkit

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## Goal Statement

Through thoughtful demographic data collection and analysis about the communities that we serve, we can better assess and identify gaps in our efforts to improve the lives of BIPOC workers and better tell the story about how we are advancing economic justice through policy, enforcement, and outreach, with a focus on BIPOC communities.

## Engagement

- Presented outcome and results to DARE team, DARE team participants provided feedback on survey design and language to use concerning privacy issues.
- Consulted with internal and external city departments who collect similar survey; including: SDOT, City Demographer, SOCR and student/researchers from universities.

## Issues Identified & Addressed:

- Identified most “skipped” questions in the survey and will work on revising these questions.
- Images in the survey were confusing, these images were deleted.
- The potential for an incomplete or low response rate left gaps in data, created new tool in database to better track completed surveys.
- Concern that that the survey and translations may not adequately preface or explain the reason, context, or nature of the question being asked.

# Recommendations

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## Improve Response Rate

Higher touch efforts to increase use ie. incentives and conducting survey over the phone or in person.

## Improve Survey Design

Utilize response Likert scale response options and shorter questions.

## Accessibility

Simplified language translations.

# 2022 Preview

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Continuation of Race &  
Social Justice Discussion  
Group



Enhancing and Improving  
Language Access Work



Immigrant Rights Racial  
Equity Toolkit



Advancing Domestic  
Workers Standards Board  
2021 Recommendations



Thank you!

