



**ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY.
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RSJI and Workforce Equity

When the Race and Social Justice Initiative was first announced, Workforce Equity rapidly emerged as a paramount issue for City employees. As an employer, the City of Seattle has the responsibility to ensure that hiring, promotion and discipline are supporting racial equity. For many City employees, proof of the City's commitment to Race and Social Justice rests with the integrity of its efforts to end racial inequities in the workforce.

Workforce Equity is led by the Personnel Department and an Inter Departmental Team (IDT) known as WEPAC - Workforce Equity Planning and Advisory Committee. WEPAC is co-led by the directors of the Office of Civil Rights and the Personnel Department.

The Workforce Equity Planning and Advisory Committee works to:

- Ensure the City's workforce diversity reflects the diversity of the population.
- Increase upward mobility opportunities for employees and professional development opportunities that lead to promotions.
- Focus additional efforts to increase workforce diversity where overall diversity is low or where some racial / ethnic groups are underrepresented.

Workforce Equity tools available to the City's HR professionals (including departmental hiring managers) include:

- City of Seattle Out Of Class Hiring Policy (attached)
- Best practices – out-of-class hiring (attached)
- Best practices - useful tips in hiring and interviewing practices (below)
- Accountability and Performance Reviews (below)

Workforce Equity Report

In conjunction with the Workforce Equity Planning and Advisory Committee, RSJI Core Team members Monica Beach and Shana Smith did research into promoting upward mobility and equitable hiring processes. They conducted a survey of the City's Human Resource professionals and analyzed the results with the Racial Equity Toolkit. Previous efforts on upward mobility had focused on improving interviewing skills of applicants. This report instead focused on how the City could better facilitate interviews and how interviews can be conducted in less bureaucratic ways. The report recommended focusing on the hiring and interview process to develop best practices. The best practices are described below.



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Best Practices - useful tips in hiring and training practices

- Ensure that all of your Human Resource professionals and hiring supervisors have undergone training for Citywide RSJ Best Practices and on how to incorporate racial equity throughout the hiring process.
- Create a racially diverse set of reviewers for each stage of the hiring process who are trained in the goals of the RSJ Initiative. Use this group for résumé review and for each round of interviews. The goal is to use racial equity tools as a means to broaden the pool of qualified applicants rather than narrowing the group to a small select pool of competitive candidates. A good resource for résumé review and interview panels is your departmental Change Team.
- Identify and share sets of interview questions that have gone through the RSJ Equity filter. For many positions, a common set of questions and desired responses can reduce Citywide disparities during the Interview process.
- Make sure to have a diverse representation on the interview panel. Include people from the RSJI Change Team, Core Team, another department and/or from the community.
- Work closely with your Human Resources department to ensure that RSJ tools are being used with integrity. Consult your HR professionals if something unexpected comes up in the interview process.

Performance Expectations and Reviews

Accountability is critical to ensuring that racial equity is incorporated in all programs, policies and procedures of the City. Accountability tools include departmental Directors' accountability agreements, job expectations and employees' performance evaluations.

Accountability Agreements come from the Mayor's Office and outline the Department's work priorities. In addition, RSJI annual work plans have included incorporating RSJI into managers' job descriptions, performance objectives, and performance evaluations. A few departments have taken the additional step to do so for all positions.