

2023-2024

# Legislative Department Racial Equity Work Plan



**Legislative Department**  
RSJI Change Team

## SECTION 1



# The Experience of Working in the Legislative Department

### GUIDING STATEMENT

**The Legislative Department will provide a welcoming, inclusive work environment so that all employees, especially Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) employees, can thrive.**

## Department leadership is prepared to support all employees, especially BIPOC employees, to improve workplace culture and staff retention.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Assess policies Citywide related to management training, City offered trainings, and trainings department leadership have taken; identify gaps that could be filled by external training or coaching.
2. Collaborate with department leadership to develop a policy that requires all employees who manage others to take RSJI management training and a proposed list of required trainings.
3. Estimate costs of external training and coaching (if needed).
4. Implement requirement.



#### Progress Tracking

Number of Division Directors that have formally integrated a racial equity requirement in their performance evaluation.



#### Change Team Role

Supports division leadership and regularly checks in on progress.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and division leadership staff time.

## Department commits to long-term investments in organizational change through budgetary and staffing support that advance racial equity priorities and track progress towards reducing racial disparities in how staff experience working in the department.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Work with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) to gather information about racial equity-focused positions in City departments and budget allocations for racial equity work and interview staff in those positions to understand opportunities and challenges.
2. Develop a proposal for staffing and evaluating racial equity work for discussion with department leadership for possible addition in the 2025 Budget.
3. Council provides position and budget authority and dedicated funding to support this work.
4. Hire staff to support implementation of racial equity initiatives and facilitate culture change. Conduct a follow-up analysis every four years to track and evaluate progress towards improving racial equity outcomes in the department.



#### Progress Tracking

Department leadership agrees that dedicated budget and staffing are needed and propose a budget amendment during budget deliberations.



#### Change Team Role

Leads information gathering and development of proposal; engages with division leadership and the Council for position and budget authority; supports hiring process by helping to write the job posting and participating on hiring panels.



#### Resources Needed

Funding and position authority.

## Employees understand how department and division workplace policies address racial equity and have regular opportunities to provide feedback.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Build relationships with the Council President’s Office and LEG Human Resources to understand the policy change process, garner buy-in for Change Team’s efforts, and allocate resources for employee engagement.
2. Work with department leadership to create spaces where employees can openly discuss and give feedback on workplace policies to inform future changes, such as facilitated visioning sessions for employees to share the type of workplace culture they want to work in.
3. Host multiple visioning sessions (exact number TBD).
4. Use information from visioning sessions to create document(s) outlining workplace cultural norms or adjust existing workplace policies.
5. Encourage Division Directors and other managers to share existing policies proactively.



#### Progress Tracking

Analysis shows that employees are aware of workplace policies addressing racial equity and have had opportunities to provide feedback.



#### Change Team Role

Supports division leadership and regularly checks in on progress; assists with facilitated visioning sessions.



#### Resources Needed

Funding to contract with an external facilitator for visioning sessions.

## SECTION 2



# Implementing Work with a Racial Equity Lens

### GUIDING STATEMENT

**Employees of the Legislative Department are prepared to implement their work using a racial equity lens and are consistently applying a racial equity lens to their work.**

## Department provides racial equity education and training to strengthen all employees' ability to implement work with a racial equity lens.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Collaborate with department leadership to create and communicate a requirement that employees take at least four of the City's foundational racial equity trainings within the next two years.
2. Engage with employees and division leadership to identify what additional trainings are needed to support implementing work with a racial equity lens.
3. Determine if the City offers such trainings or if external trainings are necessary. If the City has existing trainings, division leadership encourage staff to attend the trainings. If external trainings are needed, Change Team works with SOCR and others to develop a list of recommended external trainings (including costs).
4. Division leadership use the division's professional development funds to provide external training for staff and/or encourage staff to use funds to attend trainings.
5. Track participation in four foundational trainings and use the performance evaluation process (see Outcome 2a) to determine if employees have met this requirement and if the trainings have been effective.



#### Progress Tracking

Increased participation in foundational racial equity trainings. Share of professional development funds used for racial equity-related trainings (\$ for racial equity trainings/total professional development \$ per division).



#### Change Team Role

Develops recommended curriculum for City-led trainings and list of recommended external trainings; engages with employees and division leadership to identify additional trainings; collaborates with division leadership to implement training requirement.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and division leadership staff time. Additional funding may be needed for external trainings.

## **Department provides division-specific resources and ensures that employees have the necessary tools to help them conduct racial equity analysis.**

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Assess tools for conducting racial equity analysis already in use by divisions (e.g., Auditor’s adapted Racial Equity Toolkit) and gather feedback from lessons learned about using such tools. Conduct research on tools used by other organizations and jurisdictions and integrate best practices as needed.
2. Convene workgroup to determine needs by division and develop customized tools to support incorporating racial equity analysis that is appropriate to the division’s body of work.
3. Engage with division leadership about proposed tools to collect feedback and assist with identifying policies/practices to use as pilot projects.
4. Pilot use of new tools (e.g., select a few policies/practices to analyze).
5. Gather feedback from employees to evaluate tools and revise as needed.
6. Use of racial equity analysis tools is required by all employees and discussed as part of the performance evaluation process.



#### **Progress Tracking**

Analysis shows that employees are familiar and comfortable with using racial equity analysis tools and have routinely incorporated use of the tools.



#### **Change Team Role**

Conducts research to develop customized analysis tools and engages with division leadership for feedback and implementation/evaluation support.



#### **Resources Needed**

Change Team and division leadership staff time.



**Department offers a “bank” of resources and tools specific to the needs of its employees to support implementing work using a racial equity lens and eliminating implicit bias in the hiring process.**

ACTION ITEMS

1. Determine what resources are likely needed by department employees (e.g., writing or communicating with racial equity lens, developing a potential menu of services that can be offered by the Change Team if there is capacity) and begin compiling existing materials. (Aligns with and supports Outcome 2c)

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2. Identify where there are gaps and work with employees and others outside of the department (e.g., Citywide Change Team Co-Leads) to explore whether there are any existing resources to fill these gaps. (Aligns with and supports Outcome 2c)

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3. Compile resources in a centralized location accessible to all employees (e.g., SharePoint site) and share with entire department and solicit feedback from employees on additional ideas and resources.

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4. Update “resource bank” annually and periodically remind employees about the resource (e.g., semi-annual information sessions).

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5. Solicit feedback from employees on ideas to improve the “resource bank” and how it is used.



**Progress Tracking**

Assess if/how employees are using the resource and what improvements could be made and the number of work products (e.g., reports, legislation) that included racial equity as part of the focus.



**Change Team Role**

Leads creation of “resource bank” and feedback gathering efforts.



**Resources Needed**

Change Team staff time.

## Employees are consistently applying a racial equity lens to their work.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Identify a division (or divisions) interested in piloting a requirement for training and conducting work using a racial equity lens as part of their annual performance evaluation. Collaborate with leadership to develop evaluation standards based on best practices and begin preparing supervisors to evaluate employee performance based on the standards.
2. Division leadership communicates this expectation to its employees, encourages them to use existing professional development funds to deepen and operationalize their racial equity analysis, and provides sufficient time and additional support as needed so employees can reasonably meet expectations.
3. Division leadership updates performance evaluation materials to include assessment of racial equity analysis skills.
4. Pilot evaluation process with employees.
5. Share lessons learned with Change Team and other department leadership.
6. Engage with LEG Human Resources and division directors to formalize racial equity performance evaluation requirement across the department.



#### Progress Tracking

Number of Division Directors that have formally integrated a racial equity requirement in their division's performance evaluation.



#### Change Team Role

Supports division leadership and regularly checks in on progress.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and division leadership staff time.

## SECTION 3



# The Professional Life Cycle of Department Employees

### GUIDING STATEMENT

**The Legislative Department works deliberately and continuously to improve its policies, practices, and procedures to recruit and retain BIPOC staff, ensuring more equitable outcomes throughout the professional life cycle.**

## The Change Team has a collaborative and productive partnership with LEG Human Resources.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Request that a representative from LEG Human Resources (LEG HR) commit to attending and participating in Change Team meetings when appropriate.
2. Engage with LEG HR to discuss existing priorities, work plan, and potential projects and learn how they support each division during the hiring process (e.g., job description and posting, recruitment, resume review, interviews, candidate selection).
3. Establish shared goals and projects for Change Team and LEG HR.
4. Schedule recurring meetings between Change Team and LEG HR to discuss progress on priority projects.



#### Progress Tracking

Number of collaborative projects between the Change Team and LEG HR.



#### Change Team Role

Supports LEG HR and regularly checks in on progress.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and LEG HR staff time.

## Department intentionally recruits racially diverse job applicants to ensure the Department staff has a wide range of lived experience and knowledge and reflects the communities it serves.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Learn about LEG HR’s (and each division’s, if appropriate) current methods and data collection for the recruitment and application process. Establish benchmarks and develop targeted recruitment strategies to reach BIPOC communities, including outreach plans, tracking methods, and baseline metrics for recruitment and applicant pools. Review Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR)/other policies to find additional implementable strategies.

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2. Develop best practices and create expectations for hiring managers and staff who participate in hiring processes. Find resources (i.e., trainings, readings, reflection questions) related to racially equitable hiring practices.

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3. Revise or establish policies for recruitment with the goal of attracting more BIPOC applicants (i.e., making job titles and descriptions easier to understand for people who don’t “speak bureaucracy”).

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4. Train hiring managers on policies and practices.

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5. Review program implementation with hiring managers and analyze metrics to evaluate success.



#### Progress Tracking

Increase in BIPOC applicants (TBD from baseline data). Increase in managers that have training on recruiting diverse talent.



#### Change Team Role

Supports LEG HR in research, development of community pipelines for reaching broader applicant pools, policies and training programs.

Monitors implementation of new procedures.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and LEG HR staff time. May need additional resources to support recruitment efforts. be needed for external trainings.

## Department has policies in place to ensure all participants in the hiring process are well-trained on understanding and responding to implicit bias and assessing candidates' racial equity competency.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Learn about existing training for participants in the resume review and interview process.
2. Establish benchmarks and develop methods for tracking and analyzing hiring processes.
3. Develop best practices and create expectations for hiring managers and staff who participate in hiring activities. Find training resources related to racially equitable resume review and interviewing, including on implicit bias and how to assess racial equity competency.
4. Establish training expectation for anyone participating in hiring.
5. Review program implementation with participants.

#### Progress Tracking

Analysis shows increase in BIPOC representation across all levels of jobs in the department (TBD from baseline data) and in the racial equity competency of new employees.

#### Change Team Role

Supports LEG HR in research and development of policies and training programs.

Encourages staff training in racially equitable hiring practices.

Encourage use of racially equitable hiring practices.

Encourages hiring managers to include Change Team members in hiring processes to demonstrate new policies and practices.

#### Resources Needed

Change Team and LEG HR staff time; additional resources may be needed for training programs.



OUTCOME

3E

## Department establishes buddy program to help new staff in their onboarding experience to support new hires and increase job retention among BIPOC employees.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Develop a workplace buddy program (e.g., structure, goals, and events) and engage with division leadership for feedback and awareness.
2. Recruit employees to the program with the aim of having a racially diverse group that represents all divisions.
3. Implement program for all new hires and those hired within the last three months.
4. Evaluate program.



#### Progress Tracking

Number of employees participating in the buddy program.



#### Change Team Role

Develops, implements, and evaluates program; recruits buddies.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and “buddy” staff time.



OUTCOME

3D

## Department has a consistent, department-wide onboarding process that supports new BIPOC employees and establishes expectations for racial equity work within the Department.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Learn about current onboarding policies and practices across divisions and review existing department policies related to onboarding.
2. Work with one division (e.g., Central Staff) to develop a pilot onboarding program.
3. Review SDHR/other policies to find implementable strategies.
4. Evaluate pilot onboarding process and make modifications as needed.
5. Implement onboarding process department-wide.



#### Progress Tracking

Analysis shows improvement in BIPOC staff responses to inclusion.



#### Change Team Role

Supports LEG HR in research and development of policies and practices.

Supports and monitors implementation of pilot onboarding process.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team and LEG HR staff time.





## Department participates in the City’s existing exit interview survey program to understand potential areas for improvement.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Engage with LEG HR and SDHR to learn about current exit interview practices within the department and Citywide.
2. Work with LEG HR and SDHR to ensure that the department is participating in the Citywide exit survey program. Change Team, department leadership, and supervisors encourage departing employees to take the survey.
3. Work with LEG HR and SDHR to develop methods to maintain respondents’ anonymity so that LEG HR and/or SDHR can produce a high-level report of exit survey data (Citywide and LEG, if possible) available to department staff and leadership.
4. Work with LEG HR and/or SDHR to determine additional resources necessary to restart SDHR’s production of an annual, high-level report of exit survey data and timeline for producing this report.



#### Progress Tracking

Number of departing employees who are encouraged to take the exit interview survey and complete the survey annually.

Develop a timeline (or identify next steps) to produce a high-level report of exit survey data to daylight any issues raised by exit interview responses for department leadership and Change Team.



#### Change Team Role

Supports LEG HR to encourage participation in exit interview process and evaluate responses to the survey.



#### Resources Needed

Change Team, SOCR, LEG HR, and SDHR staff time.

# Progress Tracking Summary

|                         | Outcome | Progress Tracking   |
|-------------------------|---------|---|
| Working Experience      | 1A      | Follow-up analysis shows improvement in the experiences of BIPOC employees or a decrease in the gap between the experiences of BIPOC and white employees in this area.  |
|                         | 1B      | Department leadership agrees that dedicated budget and staffing are needed and propose a budget amendment during budget deliberations.  |
|                         | 1C      | Analysis shows that employees are aware of workplace policies addressing racial equity and have had opportunities to provide feedback.  |
| Racial Equity Lens      | 2A      | Assess if/how employees are using the resource and what improvements could be made and the number of work products (e.g., reports, legislation) that included racial equity as part of the focus.   |
|                         | 2B      | Analysis shows that employees are familiar and comfortable with using racial equity analysis tools and have routinely incorporated use of the tools.  |
|                         | 2C      | Increased participation in foundational racial equity trainings. Share of professional development funds used for racial equity-related trainings (\$ for racial equity trainings/total professional development \$ per division).  |
|                         | 2D      | Number of Division Directors that have formally integrated a racial equity requirement in their division's performance evaluation.  |
| Professional Life Cycle | 3A      | Number of collaborative projects between the Change Team and LEG HR.  |
|                         | 3B      | Increase in BIPOC applicants (TBD from baseline data). Increase in managers that have training on recruiting diverse talent.  |
|                         | 3C      | Analysis shows increase in BIPOC representation across all levels of jobs in the department (TBD from baseline data) and in the racial equity competency of new employees.  |
|                         | 3D      | Analysis shows improvement in BIPOC staff responses to inclusion.   |
|                         | 3E      | Number of employees participating in the buddy program.   |
|                         | 3F      | Number of departing employees who are encouraged to take the exit interview survey and complete the survey annually.<br><br>Develop a timeline (or identify next steps) to produce a high-level report of exit survey data to daylight any issues raised by exit interview responses for department leadership and Change Team. |

*To fully achieve the outcomes in this work plan, some elements may need to be bargained or developed in partnership with City unions that represent Legislative Department staff.*