



Scope of Equity Work



For all residents of Michigan to experience equitable opportunities to grow and thrive, we need to promote a shared understanding of the root causes of systemic disparities. The information below highlights current and future efforts centered on directly challenging and fundamentally transforming systems through intentional strategies and proactive steps founded on an equity platform.

Building Internal Capacity to Create and Sustain Equity Long Term

MDCR's senior leadership team recognizes the importance of having staff who are trained and equipped with the expertise necessary to effectively communicate, train, perform and practice their skills through a racial equity lens. Race continues to play a defining role in determining inequities within a complex system shaped by history, culture and institutions that routinely create advantage and disadvantage based on skin color. Training on racial equity and inclusion is at the forefront of how we shape policies, procedures and culture. In response to this need, we have identified specific objectives to build the internal capacity required to create the long-term implementation of equity. Specific goals of this training:

1. Develop, train, and identify a core team – agents of change – made up of representatives from every division and unit of MDCR.
2. Provide all members of the core team with at least 50 hours of racial equity training.
3. Develop a capacity-building plan and organizational structure to institutionalize equity within and outside of MDCR.
4. Develop a train-the-trainer module centered around advancing racial equity within local jurisdictions and organizations.
5. Develop and provide resources and tools to advance racial equity within local jurisdictions.

This capacity-building effort is an eleven to twelve-month project that we expect to start in August of 2018. The training outline and timeline are subject to change, and the location and exact dates are to be determined by MDCR and consulting agency. All phases, sessions, content material, processes and resources will be overseen and modified as necessary by MDCR's Equity Officer.

Interagency Workgroup

The Interagency Workgroup is made up of diverse agencies from across the state that are focused on equity. These organizations meet approximately once a month to discuss potential collaboration around topics of diversity, inclusion, health, equity and more. The workgroup is

currently made up of representatives from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR), the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The workgroup is currently working on a multi-departmental racial equity inventory to identify points of intersectionality within each department's curricula content in an effort to determine shared and isolated areas of strength. This process will establish a collective template that informs future opportunities for strategically promoting and implementing equity.

State of Solutions

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights is the leading organization in a collaborative focused on developing intentional strategies to improve health, wellbeing and equity for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds in the state of Michigan. The collaborative receives technical assistance from State of Solutions and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, referred to as Phase I. If the collaborative is successful in obtaining grant funding from State of Solutions and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, it will seek to expand internal staff training into an interagency training opportunity. This project is centered on a 12-month program to train a core group from state agencies/departments on the root causes of systemic inequity and the impact of discrimination while developing a common language and framework strategically designed to operationalize equity. This collaborative presently includes MDHHS, MPHI and MDE. This training will help each department reshape policies and practices through an equity lens and the shared knowledge will serve to educate our sectors and our communities in how racism, poverty, trauma and place all play a role in the shaping of disparate outcomes. This collaborative will practically and strategically cultivate a partnership and inter-agency shared language aimed at changing the dominant narrative and the system that sustains inequitable outcomes. MDCR and its partners in this effort are working to identify additional departments to join the collaborative.

Michigan Council for Government on Equity and Inclusion¹

MDCR aims to provide a constant venue for dialogue that explores the role of local and county governments in equity. The Council meetings will serve as a networking space where participants identify and share challenges, strategies, barriers and best practices. Conversations will focus on existing and non-existing policies and practices that promote and/or obstruct equity and inclusion. The goal of the Council is to create safe space for cross-sharing of information and knowledge while developing statewide strategies that address the root causes of inequitable practice and identifying best implement solutions that maximize equitable outcomes for all. MDCR's role is to:

- Create and facilitate quarterly conversations and a venue for collaboration across city and county lines.
- Provide guidance, identify common issues and assist in the process of developing systemic solutions, recognizing that each unit of government is at a different stage.
- Offer diversity and inclusion and related training as needed
- Establish a network where best practices are shared
- Provide support to engage and organize others
- Suggest framework, terminology and topics for conversation, such as:

¹ MDCR aims to launch and hold first Council convening by September of 2018.

1. Identifying social determinants that shape access to health, education, employment and more.
2. Reviewing the intersectionality of systems of advantage and disadvantage
3. Exploring the historical role of government and institutional inequities
4. Developing strategies to operationalize equity
5. Developing accountability systems
6. Creating community-driven equity community profiles to inform processes of change

The Truth and Racial Healing Transformation Initiative (TRHT)

MDCR is part of the TRHT State Advisory Council and collaborates with the Council for Michigan Foundations and the four participating communities of Lansing, Kalamazoo, Flint and Battle Creek to aid in implementing the TRHT process throughout each community. MDCR has community liaisons assigned to each site, providing services and assistance while participating in numerous projects and internal initiatives. In addition, MDCR's leadership is raising awareness of the TRHT process throughout the state and connecting with other cities and counties interested in embracing this initiative in their own cities and communities.

Equity and Inclusion Training

MDCR offers training solutions to create and sustain organizational change. Content for the workshops include themes such as:

- **The Business Case for Diversity**
How diversity brings with it more innovation, creativity and a greater variety of perspectives.
- **Systems of Advantage – the Narrative**
How societal messages sustain a message that is oppressive to some and advantageous to others.
- **The Impact of In-and-Out groups, Polarized Messages and Cognitive Scripts**
The impact of the human pre-disposition to form in-and-out groups, messages that differentiate groups based on socially-constructed categories and the unconscious association process rooted in cultural conditioning.
- **A Common Language Through an Equity Lens**
The importance of defining the terms used in conversations about equity and providing clear definitions that promote shared understanding and a foundation for equitable change.
- **Ideal Culture vs. Real Culture – Dissonance Between Conscious and Unconscious Values**
Examining the dissonance that exists between our egalitarian conscious values and our unconscious biases and providing a venue to identify and interfere with factors that shape the disconnect between what we believe we do and what we actually practice.

For more information regarding these workshops and next steps, see “Training Solutions Through an Equity Lens.”

Contact MDCR Equity Officer Alfredo Hernandez at 517-249-1731 for more details.