

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

A SNAPSHOT

Oregon Youth Authority | September 2020



Overview and Goals

OYA has long recognized that youth of color and those who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, questioning, or intersex) are overrepresented in the state's juvenile justice system and in its own care and custody.

While the agency has done some important work already in addressing the needs of these populations, we recognize that there is much more work to do. In 2019, we began laying the groundwork for an agency-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiative.

Major goals include:

- Evaluating our direct-care processes and programs to find and dismantle inequities and improve outcomes for marginalized youth.
- Creating and maintaining a culture that welcomes and supports diverse employees, while ensuring that a wide variety of differences are well-represented in our workplace.
- Addressing systemic issues that negatively impact marginalized youth and families by building a DEI lens into all our work, re-examining our policies, and effectively engaging with organizations that support marginalized communities.

Actions in 2019-21

- Hired a DEI manager to oversee our efforts (completed)
- Created position for a diverse workforce recruiter (recruitment in progress)
- Conducted youth forums in our close-custody facilities statewide to get their views on DEI (completed)
- Engaging staff statewide at all levels in forums to discuss DEI (in progress)
- Contracted with TsaiComms to conduct equity assessment of our policies and procedures (survey done; implementation in progress)
- Conducted DEI development and education with our Executive Team, led by outside expert (in progress)
- Devoted our fall joint management team meeting (managers from all areas of the agency) to DEI and racial justice
- Seeking contracts for mentoring programs for youth of color (in progress)
- Also in development: Equity Lens Guide, Equity Scorecard, DEI Steering Committee, division-specific DEI goals, and integrating DEI into our performance management system