



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 4
File #: 24-321

Board Meeting Date: 5/7/2024

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Warren Slocum, District 4
Subject: Introduction of an ordinance adopting Chapter 1.50 of the San Mateo County ordinance code to promote racial and social equity, inclusion and belonging, and establish key responsibilities for County officers and employees discharging their public responsibilities

RECOMMENDATION:

Introduction of an ordinance adopting Chapter 1.50 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code to promote racial and social equity, inclusion and belonging, and establishing key responsibilities for County officers and employees discharging their public responsibilities, and waive the reading of the ordinance in its entirety.

BACKGROUND:

The County is committed to advancing equity by creating the conditions that allow all County residents to fully participate in the economic and social opportunities of the county and prosper. Yet, the statistics indicate troubling limitations to shared prosperity in the Bay Area and San Mateo County, with the San Francisco-San Mateo-Oakland-Berkeley metropolitan area ranking first for economic prosperity, out of 56 large metropolitan areas in the nation, but ranking 46th on racial inclusion in that prosperity, as analyzed by the Brookings Institute's Metro Monitor 2023. In addition, San Mateo County residents show disparities in health, education, and economic outcomes based on race/ethnicity and other demographics.

In the United States, including in San Mateo County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) experienced centuries of inequality and systemic, institutionalized racism that have created a degree of racial inequity that cannot be remedied without deliberate, conscious efforts. Government agencies have played a painful and significant role in creating and maintaining racial and social inequities through explicit and implicit policies and practices. Intentional and explicit institutional commitments are necessary to reduce and eliminate barriers for marginalized people and create the conditions for all to reach their full potentials.

The County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Resolution to Advance and Improve San

Mateo County's Racial Equity Efforts (Resolution No. 078372) in 2021, and Resolution Committing the County of San Mateo to the Anchor Institution Framework and Calling for the Development of a Plan for Inclusive Staffing, Procurement, and Investment to Advance Equity for the County of San Mateo (Resolution No. 078744) in 2022. This ordinance builds on these resolutions to codify equity as a core practice for public service with specific structural practices.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this Ordinance is to declare that the County of San Mateo will intentionally address issues of inequity within our institution, proactively advance equity, inclusion, and promote a culture of belonging, as permitted by law. The charge of the Ordinance is for all aspects of County government to address and implement lawful strategies that target inequities that exist within the County organization and throughout our county and to implement strategies to affirmatively advance equity, inclusion, and promote belonging, resulting in more equitable outcomes for all residents. The goal is to support the conditions needed for everyone in the county to reach their full potential.

The proposed ordinance includes key actions to integrate equity into the following areas, categorized into three dimensions: individual, institutional (departmental), and structural (across departments). Specific actions in the ordinance are bulleted below:

- **Individual (Employee) Level:**

- Capacity building opportunities for staff to learn basic concepts of equity and competencies for supervision, management, and leadership.
- Integration of equity values in job descriptions for departmental leadership and executive leadership.

- **Institutional (Departmental) Level:**

- Annual or biannual Racial and Social Equity Action Plan.
- Review of existing policies and practices with an equity lens.
- Reviewing data and disaggregating by race/ethnicity and other demographics where possible to inform programming.

- **Structural (Countywide) Level:**

- Adoption of a statement of values to promote equity by the Board of Supervisors.
- Inclusion of Equity Impact Statements on Board of Supervisor memos.
- Equity metric included into performance tracking within and across departments as part of the budget process.
- Integration of equity as a core value for strategic and budgeting decisions.
- Advance an inclusive democracy through strategies such as diverse representation on County boards and commissions and increased community engagement efforts.
- Commitment to being an Anchor Institution, supporting inclusive staffing, procurement, and investment strategies.

- Aim towards a workforce reflective of the demographics of the county across classifications.
- Inclusion of an Office of Racial and Social Justice to support ordinance implementation.
- Serving as a leader on equity issues across the county.

All actions noted in the ordinance are as permitted by existing law. Implementation of the ordinance would begin January 1, 2025.

The County Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the proposed ordinance as to form.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT:

This ordinance will positively impact marginalized communities by intentionally integrating an equity lens into County operations where clients and the community receive services and public resources. The content for this ordinance was developed with input from equity leadership in government and the community. Specifically, feedback was integrated from the County Core Equity Team, Board of Directors, Equity in Government Community of Practice, REACH Coalition, Diversity and Equity Council, and the Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None