

Implement at least one internal organizational policy or practice change that supports health and/or racial equity.

**Expected Outcomes:**

Review your organization’s policies, procedures, mission, and vision statements to identify areas to improve equity. Based on your findings, identify, and implement one policy or practice change internal to your local health department/district by the end of the funding period.

**Key Definitions:**

1. **Health Equity**- is the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Racial Equity**- is a process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.<sup>2</sup>

**Advancing Health Equity Through Policy and Practice Change:**

Through the implementation of **policies** and **practices** that are considerate of health and/or racial equity, local health departments can improve the health and well-being of their communities, and achieve positive organizational outcomes in the following areas:

- Staff Engagement and Retention
- Staff productivity and Efficiency
- Organizational Competency
- Workplace Diversity
- Public Health Programs and Services

**Applying an Equity Lens to Policy/Practice Changes Within Your Organization:**

**Below are examples of equitable policy and/or practice changes that were implemented by LHDs:**

1. A local health department expanded its hiring **practice** by creating an internship program with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) to build a workforce pipeline to attract candidates and staff from diverse backgrounds.
2. A local health department implemented a health and racial equity training **policy** that requires staff to complete training annually to boost staff competency and ability to serve diverse patients. The policy includes examples of acceptable trainings as part of policy compliance.
  - Another health department updated its staff performance evaluation measures to include an equity training requirement.
3. A LHD implemented a new **practice** change that integrated a new questionnaire during intake to screen patients for social determinants of health to make referrals to organizations who may have resources to address patient needs such as housing, food security, employment opportunities, etc.
4. A LHD implemented a new **practice** that requires translators to be present at community outreach events.

Recommended Tools/Resources:

1. Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative: Local Health Department Organizational Self Assessment for Addressing Health Inequities: <https://justleadwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/REJI-Toolkit-2nd-Edition-2020-Final.pdf>
2. JustLead Washington: Racial Equity Justice Initiative (REJI): Organizational Race Equity Toolkit <https://justleadwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/REJI-Toolkit-2nd-Edition-2020-Final.pdf>

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control. (2022). *What is Health Equity?*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [www.cdc.gov/healthequity](http://www.cdc.gov/healthequity)

<sup>2</sup> Race Forward. *What is Racial Equity?*. <https://www.raceforward.org/about/what-is-racial-equity-key-concepts>