



**Snohomish County Executive  
Department**

**Affirmative Action Plan**

June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021

Adopted by Snohomish County Council on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Snohomish County Executive on \_\_\_\_\_

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## I. Introduction and Summary

A central goal of the County's affirmative action efforts is to provide qualified members of underserved County populations fair and equal opportunities to gain and retain employment with the County in their fields of work. Achieving this goal requires recruiting and retaining a workforce where the balance of ethnicities of County employees more closely reflects the balance of ethnicities of qualified Snohomish County residents.

Due to the size of the County workforce, the County is an "EEO4<sup>1</sup>" entity for purposes of gathering and tracking employee demographic information for purposes of federally required reports. Definitions provided by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) are applied for purposes of the County's information tracking efforts and are utilized here to assess the County workforce. Per the EEOC definitions for an EEO4 entity, the federally designated racial and ethnic groups are White, Black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native. The designated job categories for County workers are: Administrative Support; Officials and Administrators; Paraprofessionals; Professionals; Protective Service Workers; Service and Maintenance; Skilled Craft Workers, and; Technicians.

The County's 2019-20 affirmative action plan identified potential areas in the County overall and at times in particular departments where certain racial and ethnic groups may be underserved. Analysis of County and department hiring trends for purposes of mandatory federal reporting<sup>2</sup> additionally identified areas where hiring and retention of possibly underserved ethnicities might be improved.

Over the course the year since the previous affirmative action plan the County has made notable progress towards affirmative action goals. Progress has additionally been made in identifying and developing potential strategies towards reaching County affirmative action goals. This has included work on finding ways to cast a broader and more effective recruiting net to better reach diverse qualified candidates, and how to improve retention of a diverse workforce.

As with all over County business, the State of Washington, and the nation, efforts towards affirmative action have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The nature and extent of the impact of the pandemic on the County workforce and County hiring and recruiting is unknown. Social distancing practices in both the near and long term will also impact County recruiting, retention, and hiring, as well as training relating to affirmative action issues. While pandemic related restrictions may

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/eeo4survey/e4instruct.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> As an EEO4 entity the County is required to provide a hiring analysis - the "EEO4 Survey" - in every odd-numbered year. Among other information, this survey tracks new hires across the various County Departments and whether the new hires are male or female, their ethnicities and job categories, and rates of pay.

impact County affirmative action efforts, efforts will be modified to adapt to the new normal and will continue.

## **II. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

It is the policy of the Snohomish County Executive to express the values of diversity, equity and productivity by treating County employees with dignity and respect in accomplishing the County's public service mission. The Snohomish County Executive reaffirms the County's commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action as codified in the Snohomish County Code ("SCC"). SCC 3.57.010 sets forth the County's Statement of Policy ("EEO Policy") and provides:

(1) It is the policy of Snohomish county to provide equal employment opportunity to all its employees and applicants for employment, and to assure that there is no discrimination against any person on the basis of his or her race, color, sex, religion, marital status, national origin, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, veteran status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability in accordance with state and federal laws. This policy extends to all areas of employment and to all relations with employees, including recruitment, selection, compensation, discipline, demotion, layoff, termination, testing, training, working conditions, awards, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment.

(2) As part of its commitment to equal employment opportunity, Snohomish county will rigorously take affirmative action to eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity encountered by women and racial minorities and to improve employment opportunities available to specific underutilized groups of women and racial minorities.

(3) In implementing this chapter, Snohomish county will carry out applicable federal, state, and local laws relating to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.

## **III. Equal Employment Opportunity Plan**

In compliance with SCC Chap. 3.57, the Snohomish County Executive proposes this written Equal Employment Opportunity Plan for 2020 – 2021. Pursuant to SCC 3.57.020(2), the County Executive hereby recommends the Plan for 2020 – 2021 to the Snohomish County Council for adoption. The County Executive will, as appropriate, recommend necessary amendments to this chapter and changes in staff or funding needed to comply with this Plan as provided in SCC 3.57.020(2).

The Plan is a strategic plan, designed to provide leadership and administrative directions to implement the provisions of SCC Chap. 3.57 in compliance with SCC 3.57.020. The Plan establishes aspirational goals that are not, and should not be,

considered as quotas. Pursuant to SCC 3.57.040, the chief officer (“director” or “elected official”) of each Executive department is responsible for implementation of the 2020 - 2021 Plan.

When evaluating the performance of the director of a department reporting to the Executive, consistent with SCC 3.57.020(3) the Snohomish County Executive shall consider the department’s progress in meeting Plan goals a significant factor. The electorate will evaluate the performance of an elected official who heads an Executive department regarding that department’s progress in meeting Plan goals.

#### **IV. Responsibility for Implementation**

##### A. Monitoring and Coordination

Pursuant to SCC 3.57.030(1), the director of personnel (“Director of Human Resources”) or their designee shall be the County’s Plan Officer and shall coordinate the equal employment opportunity efforts of the County. The Director of Human Resources has designated the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer (“EEO Officer”) to handle the responsibilities under SCC Chap. 3.57.

The EEO Officer shall monitor the Plan adopted in accordance with SCC Chap. 3.57 and shall, at least annually after consulting with departmental representatives, submit a written report to the County Executive containing appropriate recommendations for equal employment opportunity in accordance with SCC 3.57.030(2).

##### B. Departmental Responsibilities

In accordance with SCC 3.57.040, the director or elected official of each Executive department is responsible for the implementation of the 2020 - 2021 Plan within their department. Consistent with the requirements of SCC 3.57.040, the director or elected official shall designate one (1) or more representatives for the department and shall provide adequate time for each representative to carry out their duties under SCC Chap. 3.57 effectively.

Executive departments are held accountable for ensuring equal employment opportunity and the success of the Plan in the workplace that leads toward a diverse workforce. Within ninety (90) days of the adoption of this Plan, each Executive department shall develop and provide to the EEO Officer a draft equal employment opportunity implementation plan with the following elements:

- A. Identification of under-represented Equal Employment Opportunity Job Categories (“EEO Job Categories”).

- B. Projection of expected hiring opportunities in the coming twelve (12) months to identify opportunities for equal employment opportunity.
  
- C. Identification of strategies to achieve equal employment opportunity such as recruitment and outreach to diversified applicant pools for targeted under- represented EEO Job Categories.

Assistance will be provided by the EEO Officer and Human Resources in assessing and revising as necessary the draft Department specific plans with the goal of having plans specific to each Department finalized by the end of the calendar year 2020.

Individual department implementation plans should identify strategies designed to achieve equal employment opportunity goals and eliminate barriers in achieving such goals. This includes activities such as recruitment and outreach to diversify applicant pools for targeted under-represented EEO Job Categories.

The departments are expected to document their outreach and recruitment efforts. These efforts should be reported on a semi-annual and annual basis to the Human Resources Director and the EEO Officer as part of documenting the County's equal employment opportunity efforts and progress for monitoring purposes.

The departments should use a variety of equal employment opportunity techniques, examples of which include:

1. Equal employment opportunity planning with hiring goals set by gender and race/ethnicity.
  
2. Non-discrimination policy and program for all aspects of employment.
  
3. Equal employment opportunity indicator for job ads and postings (e.g., "Equal Employment Opportunity Employer").
  
4. Targeted advertising, outreach, and recruitment to diversify the applicant pool in conjunction with general recruitment.
  
5. Establishing and maintaining relationships with organizations, agencies, and institutions for the purposes of diversity recruitment in conjunction with general recruitment.
  
6. Participation in community and institutional events for the purposes of diversity recruitment in conjunction with general recruitment.

7. Posting, notification, training, and implementation of equal employment opportunity policies to ensure equity and diversity friendly work environment and resolution avenues for equal employment opportunity issues.
8. Candidate selection processes that are non--discriminatory.

D. Departmental Representatives

Each departmental representative is to maintain an on-going liaison with the Human Resources department relating to equal employment opportunity as required by SCC 3.57.050(1)(a). In compliance with SCC 3.57.050(1)(b), the departmental representative participates in the development, implementation, and monitoring of departmental equal employment opportunity programs. In accordance with SCC 3.57.050(1)(c), the departmental representative attends meetings called by the Director of Human Resources. The departmental representative also performs such other duties as the director may assign as provided for in SCC 3.57.050(1)(d).

A departmental representative shall report directly to the director of their department on all matters concerning equal employment opportunity pursuant to SCC 3.57.050(2).

**V. Dissemination**

A. Internal Dissemination

Snohomish County's Plan will be disseminated to department directors and department representatives.

The County's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, as set forth in SCC 3.57.010, will be permanently posted at each work site. Employees will have access to the Plan upon request and shall be informed of this right.

Copies of the Plan are available for review as follows:

- A. EEO Officer (printed copy)
- B. Human Resources Department
- C. Internal County website
- D. Alternative format can be requested for individuals with disabilities by

contacting (425) 388-3810 or for TTY (425) 388-3700

The County's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, the County anti-harassment, discrimination, and retaliation policies and compliant procedures<sup>3</sup>, and the purpose and overall goals of the Affirmative Action Plan should be communicated to new employees as part of the new employee orientation presentation.

Directors, administrators, and management should periodically highlight/discuss/explain the intent of the County's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and the Plan's goals and objectives at staff meetings or other venues to ensure employee understanding. These discussions should occur at least on an annual basis.

#### B. External Dissemination

For compliance purposes, copies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Plan will be provided to appropriate federal agencies upon request. The Policy and Plan will be made available to the public on the County's website.

The EEO Officer, Human Resources and departmental hiring officials will inform individuals and organizations representing minorities, females, persons with disabilities, covered veterans, and educational institutions of Snohomish County's commitment to equal employment opportunity. The EEO Officer, Human Resources department and departmental hiring officials will actively encourage their assistance in recruiting and employing underutilized people of color, women, and persons with disabilities.

The Human Resources department or the EEO Officer will provide the unions with an electronic and/or hard copy of the Plan.

The Human Resources department and departmental hiring officials will ensure that Snohomish County presents itself as an equal employment opportunity employer by including statements to that effect in job announcements and advertisements.

Individuals reflecting aspects of diversity such as age, color, race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and national origin will be depicted in County publications with the employees performing a variety of roles and functions.

## **VI. Utilization Analysis**

Per SCC 3.57.070(4), utilization analysis compares the representation of women and

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<sup>3</sup> Currently set forth in Executive Order 2018-01.



people of color in the County's work force to the available and qualified labor available in an area. The representation of the County's work force is contained in a Work Force Analysis ("WFA"). That data is derived from the County's human resources information system (High Line through an Actuate program) designed to identify the number and percentage of employees within the EEO-4 Job Categories by gender and race/ethnicity. Note: The High Line system defines departments, divisions, and employees in a manner that may not align with a typical organization chart but is the best information available at this time.

The EEO-4 Job Categories are as follows:

- Officials and Administrators
- Professionals
- Technicians
- Protective Service Workers
- Paraprofessionals
- Administrative Support (Including Clerical and Sales)
- Skilled Craft Workers
- Service-Maintenance

**Officials and Administrators:** Occupations in which employees set broad policies, exercise overall responsibility for execution of these policies, or direct individual departments or special phases of the agency's operations, or provide specialized consultation on a regional, district or area basis. Includes: department heads, bureau chiefs, division chiefs, directors, deputy directors, controllers, wardens, superintendents, sheriffs, police and fire chiefs and inspectors, examiners (bank, hearing, motor vehicle, warehouse), inspectors (construction, building, safety, rent and housing, fire, A.B.C. Board, license, dairy, livestock, transportation), assessors, tax appraisers and investigators, coroners, farm managers, and kindred workers.

**Professionals:** Occupations which require specialized and theoretical knowledge which is usually acquired through college training or work experience and other training which provides comparable knowledge. Includes: personnel and labor relations workers, social workers, doctors, psychologists, registered nurses, economists, dietitians, lawyers, systems analysts, accountants, engineers, employment and vocational rehabilitation counselors, teachers or instructors, police and fire captains and lieutenants, librarians, management analysts, airplane pilots and navigators, surveyors and mapping scientists, and kindred workers.

**Technicians:** Occupations which require a combination of basic scientific or technical knowledge and manual skill which can be obtained through specialized post-secondary school education or equivalent on-the-job training. Includes: computer programmers, drafters, survey and mapping technicians, licensed practical nurses, photographers, radio operators, technical illustrators, highway

technicians, technicians (medical, dental, electronic, physical sciences), police and fire sergeants, inspectors (production or processing inspectors, testers and weighers), and kindred workers.

**Protective Service Workers:** Occupations in which workers are entrusted with public safety, security, and protection from destructive forces. Includes: police patrol officers, firefighters, guards, deputy sheriffs, bailiffs, correctional officers, detectives, marshals, harbor patrol officers, game and fish wardens, park rangers (except maintenance), and kindred workers.

**Paraprofessionals:** Occupations in which workers perform some of the duties of a professional or technician in a supportive role, which usually require less formal training and/or experience normally required for professional or technical status. Such positions may fall within an identified pattern of staff development and promotion under a "New Careers" concept. Includes: research assistants, medical aides, child support workers, policy auxiliary welfare service aides, recreation assistants, homemakers aides, home health aides, library assistants and clerks, ambulance drivers and attendants, and kindred workers.

**Administrative Support (Including Clerical and Sales):** Occupations in which workers are responsible for internal and external communication, recording and retrieval of data and/or information and other paperwork required in an office. Includes: bookkeepers, messengers, clerk-typist, stenographers, court transcribers, hearing reporters, statistical clerks, dispatchers, license distributors, payroll clerks, office machine and computer operators, telephone operators, legal assistants, sales workers, cashiers, toll collectors, and kindred workers.

**Skilled Craft Workers:** Occupations in which workers perform jobs that require special manual skill and a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the process involved in the work, which is acquired through on-the-job training and experience or through apprenticeship or other formal training programs. Includes: mechanics and repairers electricians, heavy equipment operators, stationary engineers, skilled machining occupations, carpenters, compositors and typesetters, power plant operators, water and sewage treatment plant operators, and kindred workers.

**Service-Maintenance:** Occupations in which workers perform duties which result in or contribute to the comfort, convenience, hygiene, or safety of the general public or which contribute to the upkeep and care of buildings, facilities, or grounds of public property. Workers in this group may operate machinery. Includes: chauffeurs, laundry and dry cleaning operatives, truck drivers, bus drivers, garage laborers, custodial employees, gardeners and groundskeepers, refuse collectors, construction laborers, park rangers (maintenance), farm workers (except managers), craft apprentices/trainees/helpers, and kindred workers.

For purposes of the Plan, the following race/ethnic categories are used:

**White (not of Hispanic origin):** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

**Black (not of Hispanic origin):** All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

**Hispanic:** All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

**Asian or Pacific Islander:** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.

**American Indian or Alaskan Native:** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

The available and qualified labor force is derived from the Labor Force Availability ("LFA"). The data for Labor Force Availability come from information generated by the United States Census Bureau<sup>4</sup>, which identifies the qualified individuals in the labor force by gender and race/ethnicity within the EEO Job Categories described above. The Utilization Analysis compares the WFA to the LFA and identifies any differences between the two (2) as a percentage. "Under-Utilization" occurs when fewer people identified by gender and race/ethnicity are employed in a job category than are available in the labor force (*i.e.*, where WFA is less than LFA). This difference is found by subtracting LFA for a job category from the WFA for the same category.

## VII. Under-Utilization

Analysis of the County workforce demographics developed for purposes of the 2019-20 Affirmative Action plan and the 2019 EEO4 survey in combination with Census Bureau estimates show a disparity between the racial and ethnic populations of County employees and the racial and ethnic populations of the County at large. While the population of County residents identifying as White is approximately 78%, the percentage of County employees identifying as White is significantly higher. The estimated County population percentages of individuals identifying as Asian or Hispanic

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<sup>4</sup> The Equal Employment Opportunity Tabulation ("EEO Tabulation") is sponsored by four (4) federal agencies consisting of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Employment Litigation Section of the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs at the Department of Labor, and the Office of Personnel Management. The most recent definitive cumulative data available is from 2010. The 2020 census that would provide much more definitive and current information has been impacted by the pandemic and delayed.

are both over 10%, but both groups combined make up less than 10% of the overall County workforce.

County hiring reflects similar numbers, with White candidates being hired far more frequently than non-White candidates. Analysis of new hires and trends over the previous several years indicates hiring of individuals identifying as White is increasing while hiring of individuals identifying as Asian or Hispanic is declining. As indicated above, this reflects a potential disconnect<sup>5</sup> between the County workforce and the developing population of the County as a whole.

### **VIII. Proposed 2020-2021 Equal Employment Opportunity Goals**

1. On-going coordination between Human Resources, the EEO Officer, and Departmental leaders to assess Departmental specific Affirmative Action plan goals and progress towards goals during the calendar year.
2. Provide EEO training on County policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation for all newly hired County staff, and at least every other year for existing staff.
3. Enhance efforts to recruit, hire and retain people of color with an emphasis on Hispanics, Asian/Pacific Islander and African American as consistent with evolving County demographics and the face of the County workforce.
4. On-going analysis of overall County and departmental specific recruiting efforts and hiring trends and retention of employees.
5. Further develop coordination between Human Resources, the EEO Officer, and the specific Departments regarding County branding and marketing, and outreach to and networking with community leaders and sources of qualified candidates for County positions.
6. Continue to build coordination between Human Resources and the EEO Officer with the County Equity and Inclusion Task Force regarding strategies to increase representation of underrepresented County populations.

### **IX. Internal Audit and Reporting Requirements**

Snohomish County believes an important element in effectively implementing a written equal employment opportunity plan is an adequate internal audit and reporting system allowing progress to be monitored and management kept informed. In coordination with the HR Director and the EEO Officer, County Departments are expected to monitor and evaluate Department performance and progress on

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<sup>5</sup> It is important to recognize that the Census Bureau estimates for the County population in general do not consider how many members of the various ethnic and racial groups are qualified for employment in the various County positions.

identifying and addressing Departmental work force demographic disparities.

## **X. Support of Programs**

Pursuant to SCC 3.57.070(9), Human Resources and the EEO Officer will continue to engage with and support County Departments in affirmative action efforts both for the County overall and for the individual Departments. This will inherently be an on-going and evolving process, and will be influenced by particular departmental operations and functions.

Anticipated support will include both historical and newly developed methods and practices. Examples of historical support that are anticipated as continuing include coordination and consultation on recruitment strategies and sources for candidates, partnering with Departments on community outreach and external recruiting and networking opportunities, strategies for retention and assessment of retention efforts, and analysis of hiring trends. Support methods may also include assistance with analyzing and improving job descriptions, and assessment and potential modifications to the application and interview process.

## **XI. Grievance Procedure**

As required by SCC 3.57.080, the employee grievance procedure described below will be used to remedy violations of SCC Chap. 3.57 where an employee grievance procedure is not otherwise available by law or collective bargaining agreement.

Employees have the right to seek resolution of alleged discrimination concerns and issues internally and/or externally by filing a completed complaint Intake Form with the County Equal Employment Opportunity Office, and/or enforcement agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Washington State Human Rights Commission. County personnel are encouraged to resolve issues internally and at the lowest level possible.

If agreed by the complainant, the respondent(s) to the complaint, and the EEO Officer, internal complaints may be mediated with the EEO Officer acting as mediator in an attempt to reach an agreed resolution. If mediation fails to resolve a complaint, the unresolved issues shall be investigated as per the County Executive's Order setting forth the County Discrimination, Harassment and Intimidation Policy, currently Executive Order 2018-01.

An employee may approach their immediate supervisor, any member of management within the County, their Department director, the Human Resources Director, or the EEO Officer regarding any equal employment opportunity concerns.

## **XII. Accomplishments**

From June 2019 to the present, the Snohomish County Executive Branch Affirmative Action accomplishments included but are not limited to:

- A. Prepared the Affirmative Action Plan for 2020 – 2021 which was submitted to and approved by County Council.
- B. Analyzed departmental specific demographics and identification of potential areas of underserved populations on a departmental basis.
- C. Disseminated departmental specific analysis to particular County Departments, met with leads in majority of County Departments regarding workforce demographics and development of departmental specific Affirmative Action programs, and assisted Departments in generating departmental specific strategies and programs.
- D. Prepared and analyzed information for and responded to federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission EEO4 survey regarding new hire information and demographics for County overall as well as particular Departments. Analyzed information developed for EEO4 survey to identify County and Department hiring and retention trends in relation to Affirmative Action efforts.
- E. Updated and revised County training on Executive Order 2018-01 and County prohibitions on discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and related complaint procedures and options.
- F. Prepared voiceover recordings for revised County training regarding Executive Order 2018-01 and prohibitions on discrimination, harassment, and retaliation for County supervisors, and for non-supervisory County employees. Uploaded trainings online for use by County personnel individually as refreshers on the topic area, and for new County employees.
- G. Provided training prior to Covid-19 restrictions live to Departmental groups including Road Maintenance and Solid Waste. Following Covid-19 restrictions, developed and presented remote training via Zoom to County Human Resources Department, at-large County supervisors.
- H. Assisted Human Resources and particular Departments in coordinating for and attending departmental specific outreach and marketing at area job fairs.
- I. Initial coordination between Human Resources, the EEO Officer, and the County Equity and Inclusion Task Force.

**Appendix I – U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts for Snohomish County**

<b>U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts</b>	<b>Snohomish County</b>
<b>Population, 2019 estimate</b>	822,083
<b>Population, 2018 estimate</b>	814,901
<b>Population, 2010 (April 1) estimates base</b>	713,296
<b>Population, percent change, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019</b>	15.3%
<b>Female persons, percent, 2019</b>	49.8%
<b>White alone, percent, 2019</b>	77.6%
<b>Black or African American alone, percent, 2019</b>	3.7%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, 2019</b>	1.6%
<b>Asian alone, percent, 2019</b>	11.6%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, 2019</b>	0.7%
<b>Two or More Races, percent, 2019</b>	4.9%
<b>Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2019</b>	10.4%
<b>Foreign born persons, percent, 2014-2018</b>	15.7%
<b>Language other than English spoken at home, pct. age 5+, 2014-2018</b>	20.6%
<b>Veterans, 2014-2018</b>	52,413

Source – U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, Snohomish County, July 1, 2019. QuickFacts data are derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Non-employer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, and Building Permits.



**Appendix II – Snohomish County EEO4 Survey for 2019**

Separately Attached