

**MOTION 2018-06: A MOTION  
OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION  
TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN EQUITY PILOT  
PROGRAM**

**PROPOSED  
MAY, 8, 2018**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Port of Seattle is committed to expanding opportunity, livability, and equity in our region; and becoming a model workplace for diversity and inclusion. We are working to promote social justice by reviewing our policies, practices, and procedures. The Port of Seattle's goal is to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion in the work that we do. This goal applies to how we identify and address priorities, navigate complex issues, engage employees, and work with the diverse communities we serve.

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

The Commission hereby directs Port staff to develop and implement an equity pilot program in 2018. The pilot program shall use an equity toolkit in no less than three departments and/or projects in the Port to inform the development of an equity policy directive.

**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION**

Our region is undergoing tremendous growth and the Port of Seattle is committed to ensuring the economic prosperity is shared by all communities in King county, regardless of race and place.

At the Port of Seattle, equity is viewed as a source of possibility and strength. We recognize it is an integral part of policy, processes, and programs that are woven into all daily activities within the port community. This effort is critical to:

- The core values of the organization
- Pursuing our mission and the Century Agenda
- Attracting and retaining talent with shared values
- Improving the quality of work-life integration
- Sustaining an environment that treats people and communities fairly and equitably

The Port is committed to becoming a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization by building awareness of the causes and impacts of institutional racism while evaluating policies and procedures to address any institutional barriers that may exist.

In 2016, the Port strengthened our commitment to become an anti-racism organization that courageously addresses obstacles to and opportunities for increasing equity in the agency's policies, procedures, and practices. The executive team participated in an institutional racism training to recognize the negative impact of institutional and structural racism. By building capacity to address racism, the Port will also improve its ability to recognize and address other forms of discrimination.

In 2017, the Port of Seattle was the first port to join the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national network of governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. Across the country, governmental jurisdictions are making a commitment to achieving racial equity, focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions, and working in partnership with others. When this occurs, significant leverage and expansion opportunities emerge, setting the stage for the achievement of racial equity in our communities. GARE captures best practices and with a network in 30 states and over 150 cities, they provide tools to put theory into action. The Port is able to leverage these best practices in meeting the goal of being a more equitable, diverse and inclusive organization.

For many years the Port of Seattle has worked to leverage its resources and work efforts to create opportunities for diverse communities, individuals, and small and women- and minority-owned business enterprises. We are dedicated to eliminating bias in our hiring practice and promoting better access to jobs, promotions, and contracting opportunities for women, people of color, and those in economically distressed areas of our region; establishing policies that support family-wage jobs and benefits; and using our influence through contracting and in the labor market to encourage other employers to do the same. In addition, the Port supports entrepreneurship and helping small businesses grow.

The Office of Social Responsibility directly engages with the immigrant, refugee, and minority communities to encourage participation in Port programs and affiliated industries. Our Workforce Development team leads efforts to expand and sustain workforce development, training, and job and business opportunities for local communities in Port sectors. The Small Business Program promotes Small and Women and Minority Business Enterprise opportunities at the Port. Human Resources develops programs addressing representation, diversity, and inclusion in the Port's internal workforce. And Public Affairs conducts community and stakeholder outreach and holds events in the region's communities.

In addition, the Commission chartered the Energy and Sustainability Committee on January 26, 2016, which established an equity work group tasked to develop recommendations to address disproportionate environmental impact of Port operations on disadvantaged communities. One of the recommendations called for pilot projects to utilize the Sustainable Evaluation Framework that includes areas that advance racial and social equity.

Many root causes of today's inequities are sustained by historical legacies, structures, and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion and discrimination. Modern institutions such as public agencies, companies, industries, higher education institutions, and other organizations have continued to create and perpetuate inequities, despite the lack of explicit intention. However, without intentional and explicit intervention, these institutions will continue to perpetuate inequities, in particular racial inequities.

Too often, policies and programs are developed and implemented without thoughtful consideration of racial equity. When racial equity is not explicitly brought into operations and decision-making, racial inequities are likely to be perpetuated. Racial equity tools are designed to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. Use of a racial equity tool can help to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all. Routine use of a racial equity tool explicitly integrates racial equity into governmental operations.

A racial equity tool:

- Proactively seeks to eliminate racial inequities and advance equity;
- Identifies clear goals, objectives and measurable outcomes;
- Engages community in decision-making processes;
- Identifies who will benefit or be burdened by a given decision, examines potential unintended consequences of a decision, and develops strategies to advance racial equity and mitigate unintended negative consequences; and,
- Develops mechanisms for successful implementation and evaluation of impact.

Local and regional government jurisdictions that are part of GARE are using racial equity tools. The City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), established in 2004, started using its racial equity tool during the budget process in 2007. The following year, the tool was expanded to be used in policy and program decisions. And in 2015, an Executive Order was issued by the Mayor directing expanded use of the racial equity tool, and requiring measurable outcomes and greater accountability.

The Port has the ability to implement policy change at multiple levels and across multiple sectors to drive larger systemic change to address historic inequities. Last year, the Port worked with GARE to develop a racial equity tool.

This effort will enable the Port to perform more effectively and sustain organizational performance by:

- Identifying and addressing barriers to opportunity (for example, internally for current employees, attracting future employees, in our Small/Women and Minority Business Enterprises efforts, in our role in the region as an economic engine, and in our efforts to build environmental sustainability)

- Producing innovative and effective solutions
- Achieving higher levels of employee engagement and commitment
- Building more collaborative relationships with the communities we serve

In order to achieve our goal of becoming a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization, we must coordinate efforts across the Port that are already addressing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Port is in the process of hiring an equity leader to plan, train employees, and engage with the community. This work is important and complex. The Port of Seattle's executive leadership recognizes that a successful Port-wide effort requires expertise, experience, and a consistent method of practice across the Port.