
CALENDAR YEAR 2023 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Department Name: OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

Equity Lead(s): Corinne Lockett

Date: 12/5/2023

EQUITY IMPACT PLAN REPORT

Review your department's Equity Impact Plan for CY 2023 at [Equity Impact Plans | Topics \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#). Using that plan, fill in each goal below and describe: 1) what was done to make progress toward the goal, 2) with whom (partners), and 3) how work toward this goal was measured/evaluated and the results. If you have data for the performance measures in your CY 2023 Equity Impact Plan, report them. Add more goals as needed.

Goal 1: Proactively assist County staff in achieving equity goals in each department's One Fairfax Equity Plan.

Goal 1 Progress: OCA attorneys continued to use an equity lens when reviewing County legal initiatives, changes in policy, Board Administrative and Action Items, and statutory Amendments to the County Code. Attorneys also continued to initiate conversations with agency staff to encourage ideas on how to incorporate equity into agency practice and procedure through office wide discussions and presentations. Attorneys also continued to respond efficiently and effectively to requests from county staff, while ensuring that the focus on equity is not lost in the process and continued implementation of legal and policy proposals to encourage incorporation of equity policies in all aspects of Fairfax County government.

Office attorneys continued to act as a sounding board for staff when completing equity impact statements for Board of Supervisors meetings.

Goal 2: Expand focused recruitment efforts that encourage a diverse applicant pool for open positions throughout the office in the county, and support culturally and ethnically diverse staff to succeed within the office.

Goal 2 Progress: Office staff continued to advertise employment and internship openings to an expanded legal community through bar associations that promote inclusion and diversity in the profession, regional law schools, local bar associations within the region, and on culturally diverse employment websites. The office encouraged attorneys to attend recruitment days at local law schools and regional career fairs to promote employment at the office to a wider range of applicants. More than 30 attorneys attended various local government attorney events, local bar association events, and diversity conferences throughout 2023.

CALENDAR YEAR 2023 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT

Goal 3: Increase opportunities for office wide participation and discussion on multiple One Fairfax initiatives and related issues.

Goal 3 Progress: The Office's One Fairfax Small Group Team encouraged office wide participation in quarterly brown bag get togethers to share ideas about books, essays, poems, etc., selections with an emphasis on keeping an open mind and learning from each other. The Small Group Team also encouraged office attorneys and staff to share and suggest discussion materials for viewing and discussion. At least one video presentation plus several other written materials suggested by One Fairfax to OCA attorneys and staff were presented, followed by discussion of materials provided on the One Fairfax page. OCA's Equity Ambassador, Cherie Mack, sent out periodic emails to the entire office to keep everyone informed about upcoming events, classes, seminars, etc., with a focus on diversity-related topics. The office also began maintaining an electronic office resource center for equity focused reading and learning materials as well as upcoming events within the office and across the Commonwealth.

To reach the goals of One Fairfax, the office continues to encourage attorneys and staff to explore both One Fairfax and outside diversity related resources and to share individual perspectives on diversity within the office. In addition, attorneys are encouraged to promote legal and professional excellence by preserving a culture of equity and fairness for all employees. In its work with County agencies, attorneys ensure that equity and diversity are considered and discussed with County agency staff, including encouraging discussion with the County agency's Equity Lead and/or OCA's Small Group Equity Team before approving responses. Internally, the Small Group Equity Team regularly selects written materials from suggested sources and encourages participation in meetings and brown bag lunches, previews and selects video presentations and facilitates related discussion for quarterly meetings, maintains an equity-based resource library, and sends regular emails about upcoming equity related trainings and events. Senior members of the office share opportunities to learn more about One Fairfax equity initiatives through regularly held office-wide meetings.

The office also has been implementing measures that foster the ability to attract and retain individuals with various backgrounds, cultures, and traditions that reflect the County's diversity. OCA has taken steps internally to further promote diversity in the applicant pool for open positions by posting advertisements for job openings with specialty bar associations. Further, the office has regularly attended job fairs hosted by these associations to solicit internship applications with the expectation that some of those interns might later become full-time employees. Senior management attorneys, among others, have also taken a variety of seminars and classes to develop a keener awareness of, and heightened sensitivity to, implicit bias in the legal profession. With the ongoing implementation of all of these measures, One Fairfax is the bedrock of practicing law in the County.

CALENDAR YEAR 2023 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT

Goal 4: Work with the Fairfax County Legislative Team to address current Virginia law which negatively impacts racial equity.

Goal 4 Progress: Office attorneys consulted with staff regarding potential racial inequities in Virginia law and how they impact local policy. Likewise, office attorneys coordinated with staff and the county legislative team to consult on drafting and supporting legislation needed in order to address inequities in the Virginia code as directed by the Board of Supervisors.

A few examples include providing diversity and equity related guidance to County staff both in the County's Diversion First and Co-Responder programs to promote implementation of policies and procedures to address cultural and diversity needs when responding to public safety calls that are related to substance use, developmental and/or behavioral health issues. Our office also worked with staff to amend the Virginia Code to allow virtual participation in public meetings. OCA has also contributed significantly to the successful implementation of the Fairfax County Economic Mobility Pilot and continues to consult in the implementation of the Trust Policy, which I would consider an equity initiative.

Describe other equity-related work completed in CY 2023 (efforts that advance racial and social equity that your department was involved in within the department or countywide) not in the department's Equity Impact Plan.

See above.