

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN  
January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023



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## **Acknowledgements**

As the appointing authority for the Department of Health Services and the Equity and Inclusion Officer for the Department of Administration, we acknowledge that we have reviewed and firmly endorse the content of this Equity and Inclusion Plan. We are committed to ensuring equal employment opportunity, freedom from discrimination, and affirmative action in compliance with state laws and policies as well as federal laws. By formally integrating equity and inclusion values and practices into existing processes, the Equity and Inclusion Plan enables progress and results to be measured agency wide.

### **Appointing Authority:**

Karen E. Timberlake  
Secretary-designee, Department of Health Service

Date: 07-15-2021

### **Equity and Inclusion Officer:**

Angi Zilliox (Department of Administration – Division of Personnel Management – Region 4)  
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### **Date of submission to DPM/BEI:**

Date: 07-15-2021

### **Individuals identified below contributed to the development and review of the Equity and Inclusion Plan:**

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## Equity and Inclusion Commitment Letter

The Department of Health Services (DHS) hereby reaffirms our commitment to the principles of equity and inclusion for all employees and job applicants. This commitment is evident not only in the absence of discrimination but in the embrace of the unique perspectives informed by each individual's race, color, ancestry, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, neurodiversity, veteran status, marital status, and all other [protected groups](#) under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Law.

The Department of Health Services is firmly committed to compliance with state laws and policies, as well as federal laws, for equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The Department of Health Services recognizes that equal employment opportunity is a legal, organizational, and economic necessity in order to maximize the quality and diversity of the state's workforce and to best serve the residents of Wisconsin. This commitment is extended to all job applicants and employees in every type of position and at every level, including unclassified, classified, project, limited-term, volunteers, interns, and work-study personnel.


The Department of Health Services also acknowledges that a mere commitment is not adequate to dismantle the structural oppression that is embedded in state laws, policies, and workforce expectations. To combat the inequities this has created and continues to create, the Department of Health Services also commits to deep reflection on its role in contributing to and perpetuating this oppression, and to concerted action to reconstruct systems by centering equity and inclusion and creating a safe, welcoming, and affirming organizational culture.

As part of the Department of Health Services' commitment to this overall process, we intend to navigate within our current legal and policy framework to ensure the consistent application of equity and inclusion principles to all employment practices within our agency. We equally commit to identifying and advocating for legal and policy changes that would better position our agency to achieve equal employment opportunity and freedom from discrimination.

The Department of Health Services Equity and Inclusion (E&I) Plan establishes an iterative and ongoing process to advance equity within our agency. This Equity and Inclusion Plan has our total support, and the Department of Health Services pledges to put forward its best good faith efforts to achieve the goals identified in the Plan. We expect each manager, supervisor, and employee of the Department of Health Services to aid in the implementation of this plan. DHS will maintain a monitoring and reporting system to ensure the overall adherence to the principles and requirements of the E&I Plan. The plan is available for review on the Department of Health Services [Website](#).

We look forward to working with the Division of Personnel Management (DPM), Bureau of Equity and Inclusion to implement our policies and programs in efforts to correct the effects of past oppression, eliminate current discrimination, prevent it going forward, and to build and celebrate a motivated and skilled workforce that is reflective of the population we serve.

Karen E. Timberlake  
Secretary-designee

Signature:   
Date: 8-24-21

Angela Zilliox  
E&I Officer

Signature: Angela Zilliox  
Date: 8-24-21

## Introduction

As Wisconsin's primary statewide health agency, the Department of Health Services (DHS) is uniquely positioned to lead the charge of ensuring the health and wellbeing of the people of our state, while working collaboratively across the enterprise. This responsibility is reflected in DHS's mission of *protecting and promoting the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin*, and – in a broader way – in its vision of *everyone living their best life*. In addition, DHS has committed to infusing an *equity lens* throughout all of its work, including across each of the agency's core "strategic pillars," or key areas of programmatic focus: Behavioral Health, Long Term Care, and Destination Workplace. DHS's pursuit of this mission and vision, as well as its efforts to embed and engrain an equity lens, exists within a broader context of issues like systemic racism and other forms of discrimination and bias that limit the potential for prosperity, health, and wellbeing for many Wisconsinites.

In his Executive Order #59 (E.O. 59), Governor Tony Evers emphasized the foundational role that a diverse state workforce plays in positioning state government to allow all agencies – including DHS – to successfully carry out their missions. By eliminating barriers created by various forms of oppression, and building a diverse and inclusive workforce, DHS will be better positioned to develop policies and provide services that more effectively help all Wisconsinites achieve health and wellbeing, and ultimately live their best life.

Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter Employment Relation (ER) 43, Wisconsin Statute 230; and Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook Chapter 800 require the Division of Personnel Management (DPM) Administrator to establish and promulgate personnel rules, standards, and procedures to ensure equity and inclusion throughout the state civil service system. Accordingly, it is required of all state agencies with 30 or more permanent classified employees to develop a three-year Equity and Inclusion Plan (E&I Plan) that outlines the steps taken to comply with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action requirements, including building a workforce reflective of the available labor market and communities throughout our state.

This Equity and Inclusion Plan articulates the framework and strategy that DHS commits to implementing in order to bring the words and spirit of E.O. 59 to life, to develop a more diverse workforce, and to foster a safe and welcoming workplace for diverse staff. This plan will allow DHS to fully realize its mission as an agency in service to every person in our state.

The Equity and Inclusion (E&I) Plan provides a high-level overview of DHS's commitment to centering diversity, equity, and inclusion within our recruitment, retention, and agency culture policies, programs, and practices through 2023. The plan establishes the goals, objectives, timeline, and strategies to improve equity in our workplace development efforts. It consists of an analysis of workforce data, identification of areas of opportunity revealed by the data, and development of goals and strategies to address those areas of opportunity. Further, it helps to lay a more sustainable foundation for planning and development of future iterations of DHS's E&I plans.

In early 2020, DHS was poised to convene an Equity and Inclusion workgroup to assess our environment and workforce at DHS, identify opportunities for improvement, and create a robust work plan with specific goals and strategies to address recruitment, retention, and workplace culture. The intention was to begin implementation of the plan by fall of 2020. In February, the COVID-19 pandemic demanded multiple resources from DHS, and as a result, this important work was delayed, but was reignited in the summer of 2020.

Currently, DHS is in the process of establishing an advisory body that will assist the Equity and Inclusion workgroup in conducting and analyzing workforce analysis data. DHS members from each division and office have been selected to serve on this advisory body, known as the Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council (HEDI). HEDI will hold its first meeting in July, 2021.

A workforce analysis has been conducted by the Equity and Inclusion workgroup and will be passed on to the HEDI to carry out the goals, objectives, and strategies that have been developed by the Equity and Inclusion Workgroup. The Equity and Inclusion Workgroup will provide the HEDI with additional data to assist the body in prioritizing and improving retention, recruitment, and workforce culture across the department.

The DHS Secretary will champion diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts throughout the agency to ensure staff and management show deference to diversity, equity, and inclusion work now and going forward. This includes identifying opportunities to improve coordination of workforce equity efforts across multiple divisions, bureaus, and offices, as well as identifying and providing the resources, support, and direction necessary to fully

implement the E&I Plan. To this end, the Department of Health Services is committed to creating and sustaining the necessary infrastructure to address and eliminate any workforce disparities in a way that is coordinated, strategic, and deliberate.

## Workforce Analysis

### Methodology & Approach

In order to evaluate retention, recruitment, and workplace culture across DHS, the Equity and Inclusion Workgroup and members of the Bureau of Human Resources leveraged existing data to conduct a current-state analysis. To evaluate retention and recruitment, the Equity and Inclusion workgroup developed a range of questions to understand experiences of current DHS employees and then worked with the human resources team to get raw data to complete this analysis. To evaluate workplace culture, the Equity and Inclusion workgroup leveraged the DHS Stay and Grow survey to explore themes of respect, professional development, leadership, and belonging at DHS.

Across all three areas, retention, recruitment, and workplace culture the Equity and inclusion workgroup put emphasis throughout the analysis on 81-01, 81-02, and leadership positions within 81-03 ranges. The workgroup believed that evaluating leadership and measuring it over a period of time is important in creating systematic change. Multiple research studies support this ideation illustrating that diversity in leadership positions in a company produces increased adaptability, a broader service array, variety in viewpoints, and more effective execution of agency goals

Before reviewing the results, it is important to note the inevitable limitations of this analysis. Specifically, language and racial-ethnic classifications are often taken-for-granted and assumed as universal and scientifically accurate. For at least the past twenty years, scholars and academic disciplines have urged updated language and categorization to reflect the varieties of humankind. The American Anthropological Association calls for the elimination of the term “race” given the harmful impacts the inaccurate “distinctions” have produced. Their statement reads:

*“Because so much harm has been based on ‘racial’ distinctions over the years, correctives for such harm much also acknowledge the impact of ‘racial’ consciousness among the U.S. populace, regardless of the fact that ‘race’ has no scientific justification in human biology. Eventually, however these classifications must be transcended and replaced by more non-racist and accurate ways of representing the diversity of the U.S. population.”*

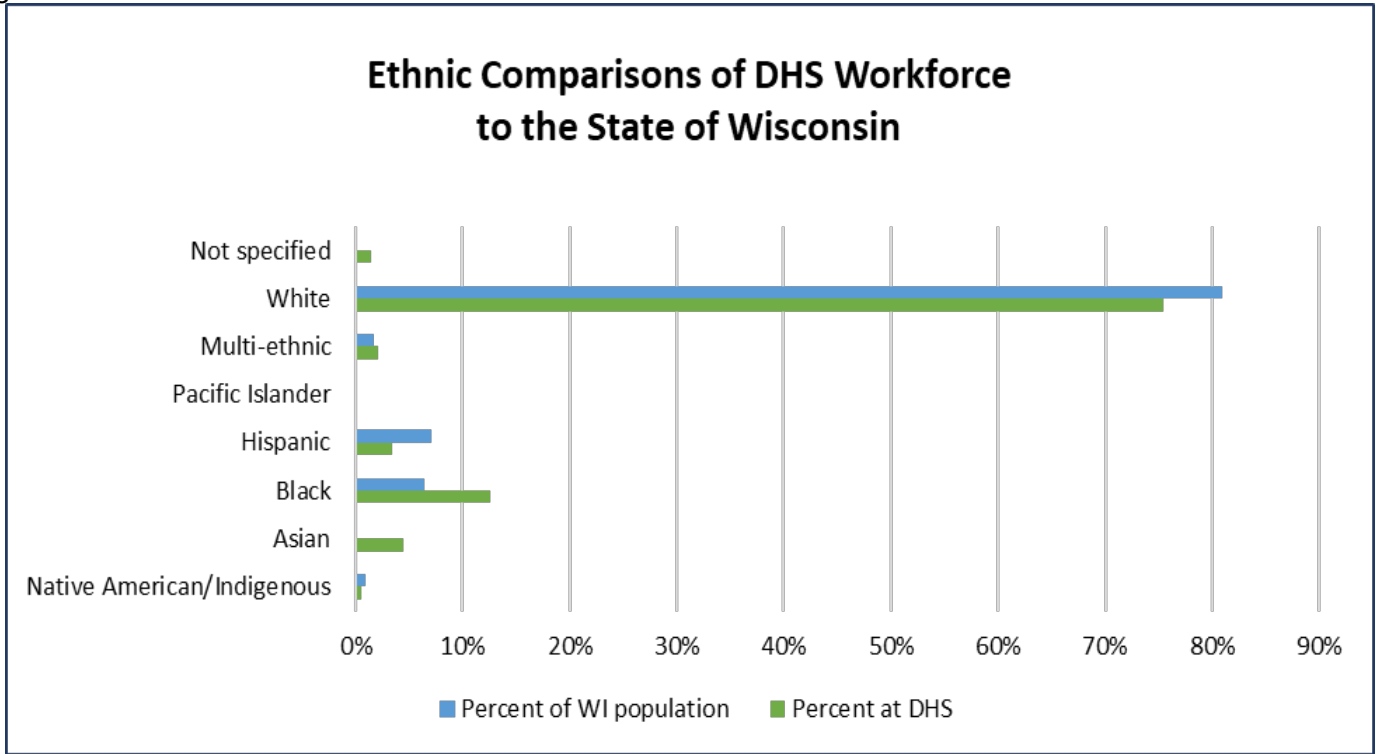
Our report attempts to use/incorporate updated and respectful language in our description of the findings and in our recommendations moving forward.

Nonetheless, the analysis shared below does provide useful insights regarding retention, recruitment, and workplace culture. As shown below, the equity and inclusion workgroup identified challenges within each of these three areas and then developed proposed strategies that can be used to make improvements. After reviewing analysis of recruitment, retention, and workplace culture, the following section will outline these proposed strategies.

### Recruitment

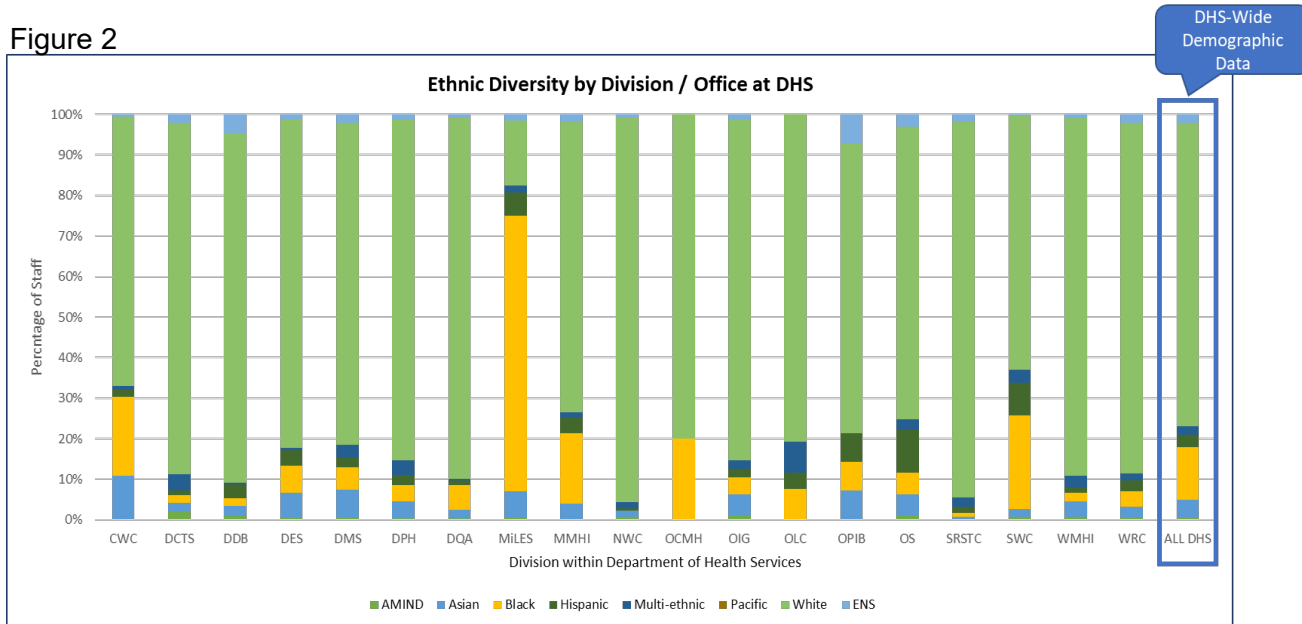
To evaluate recruitment at DHS, the workgroup considered ethnic diversity across DHS, by department, and in leadership positions. To begin, the workgroup reviewed employee representation for the current DHS workforce in relation to the state population. The current DHS workforce is predominantly white. African/American (Black) employees make up the next largest group of DHS employees with a higher percentage than the relative percentage of the African/American individuals in Wisconsin. Individuals who identify as Native American/Indigenous or Hispanic/Latinx are underrepresented at DHS. Figure 1 highlights these findings visually.

Figure 1



Next, the workgroup evaluated the ethnic diversity within DHS, by division or office, to understand variances across the department.<sup>1</sup> While reviewing this breakdown by division, it is identified that some divisions have far less ethnically diverse representation than those such as Center Wisconsin Center (CWC), Milwaukee Enrollment Services (MiLES), Mendota Mental Health Institute (MMHI), and Southern Wisconsin Center (SWC) (See Figure 2). As a result of these disparities, the workgroup determined that strategic improvements need to be made in the recruitment and hiring practices such as candidate outreach, job posting outlets/exposure, applicant screening procedures, etc.

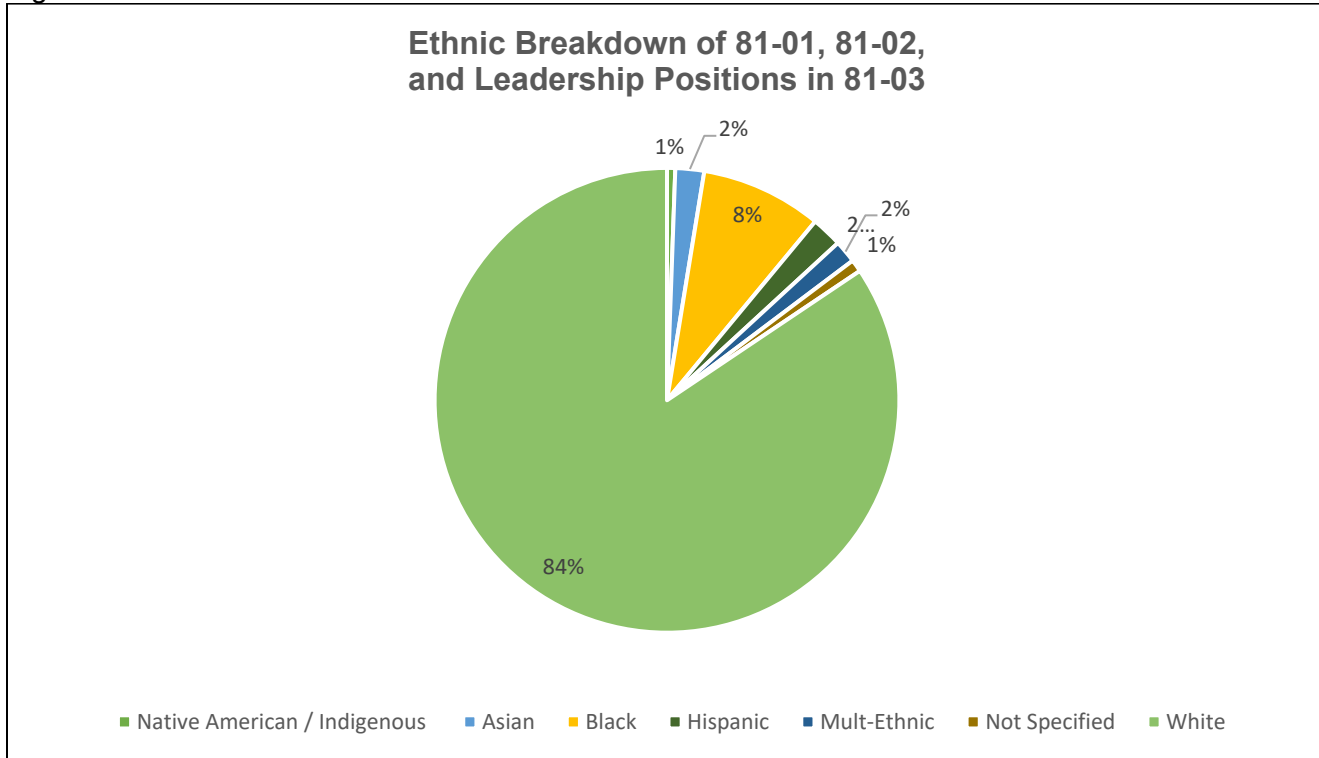
Figure 2



<sup>1</sup> The dataset provided includes Permanent, Project, LTEs (including Contact Tracers), and Unclassified. It does not include contractors.

Additionally, the workgroup evaluated ethnic diversity at the higher levels within the Department. As the below visualizations shows, across 81-01, 81-02, and 81-03 positions in DHS the large majority of individuals identify as white (See Figure 3).

Figure 3



Lastly, the Equity and Inclusion Workgroup analyzed hiring practices of leadership positions at DHS from 2018 through 2020. The data revealed that 85% of the staff hired for 81-01, 81-02, and supervisory 81-03 positions are individuals who identify as white (See Figure 4). Greater efforts such as social media campaigns, candidate outreach, and building relationships with universities / colleges across the country must be made to effectively recruit leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Figure 4

Year / Quarter	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Not Specified	White
<b>2018</b>						
Qtr1		1	1			7
Qtr2		1		1	1	10
Qtr3						8
Qtr4						10
<b>2019</b>						
Qtr1				1	1	11
Qtr2						9
Qtr3	1		3	2	1	25
Qtr4	1		2	1		24
<b>2020</b>						
Qtr1		1	2			18
Qtr2				2		12
Qtr3			2	1	1	20
Qtr4			3	1		17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>171</b>

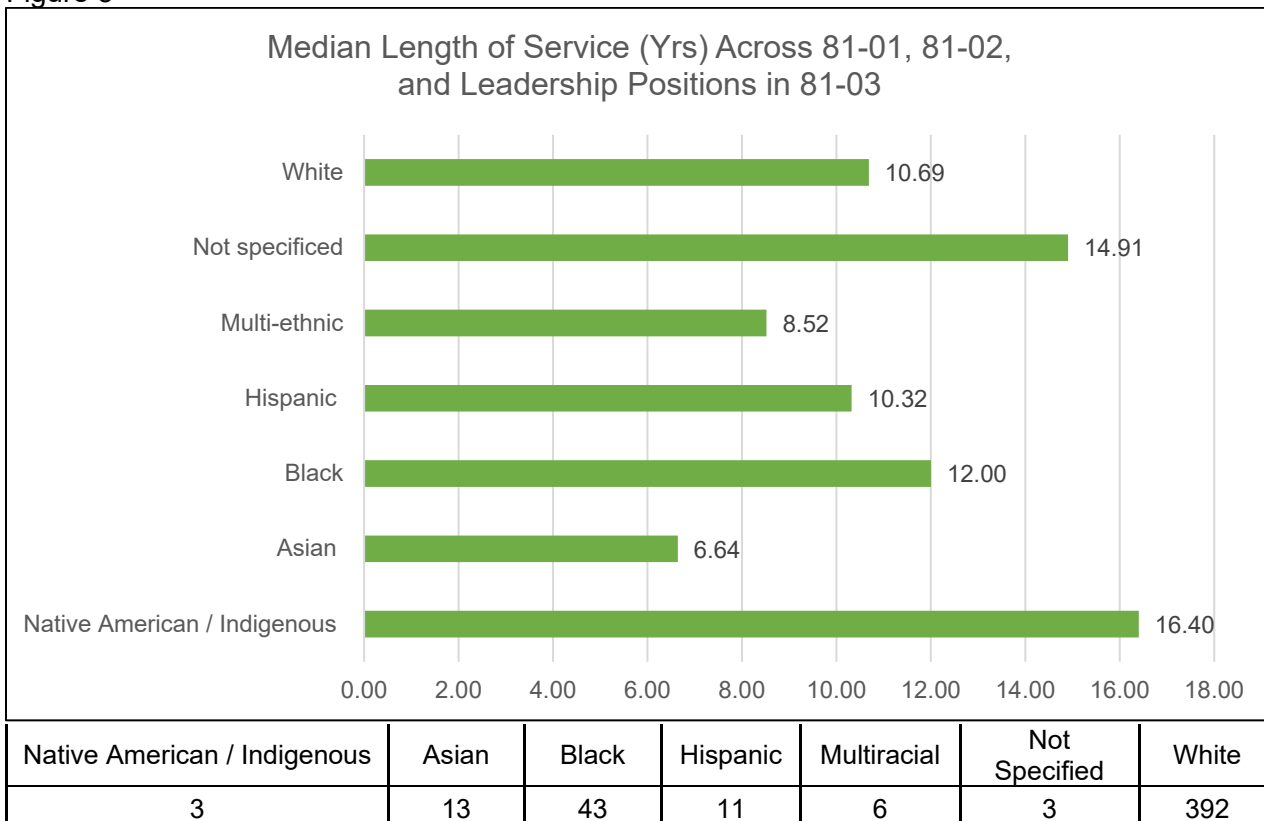


## Retention

In the area of retention, a closer look was taken specifically to the position levels of 81-01, 81-02, and supervisory level positions of 81-03, particularly with respect to length of service and salary compensation.

When considering length of employment at DHS, analysis underscores that Black, Not specified, and Native American / Indigenous employees have the longest median length of service at DHS. Asian and Multi-ethnic staff have the shortest median length of service at DHS (See Figure 5<sup>2</sup>). While the data shows promise, with the median length of service ranging from 6.64 to 16.40 years, the number of individuals of diverse backgrounds is limited. Research has shown the diversity within a company’s leadership increases adaptability, a broader service array, variety in viewpoints, and more effective execution of agency goals. This is especially important as we look to achieve the mission of DHS: to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin. This mission can only be accomplished if leadership understands the needs to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin.

Figure 5



To accurately analyze compensation among leadership positions, the workgroup categorized the range of 81-01, 81-02, and supervisory positions within 81-03 into classifications. The range of 81-01 positions itemized into eleven (11) classifications (see Figure 6). Figure 6 also displays the median hourly salary breakdown by ethnicity. Although the display does not highlight significant concerns regarding salary compensation, Figure 7 does illustrate the lack of diversity throughout all 81-01 classifications. Overall white employees hold 88% of the positions within 81-01. Lastly, the data shows zero (0) employee representation of Native American / Alaskan Native and Pacific Islander throughout 81-01.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The number of employees reflected in the length of service calculations in Figure 5 are listed at the bottom of the figure.

<sup>3</sup> The workforce analysis illustrated a negative correlation between length of service and employee salary. Employees who have a longer length of service tend to make less than employees who have been newly hired into the same classification. This discrepancy is magnified as length of service increases in comparison with new employees year over year.

Figure 6

81-01 Classifications	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Admin Manager						\$52.66
Capital Projects Manager			\$49.25			
Deputy Instit Superintendent				\$53.01		\$52.66
Dir Off Policy Init Budget						\$55.19
Financial Manager						\$52.18
Health Services Manager <sup>4</sup>	\$52.65	\$50.75				\$51.96
Inst Mgt Services Director						\$46.15
Inst Treatment Dir-Ch 980						\$73.33
Institution Superintendent				\$55.10	\$55.10	\$53.04
Institution Treatment Director						\$46.41
Nuclear Safety Manager						\$50.67
Policy Initiatives Adv-Exec		\$48.00	\$52.66			\$48.61

Figure 7

81-01 Classifications	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Admin Manager						5
Capital Projects Manager			1			
Deputy Instit Superintendent				1		5
Dir Off Policy Init Budget						1
Financial Manager						2
Health Services Manager	1	5				51
Inst Mgt Services Director						5
Inst Treatment Dir-Ch 980						1
Institution Superintendent				1	1	5
Institution Treatment Director						5
Nuclear Safety Manager						1
Policy Initiatives Adv-Exec		1	1			7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>

Similar trends were seen within 81-02 positions. Figure 8 displays all 81-02 classifications along with the median hourly salary arrogated by ethnicity. The data does show some significant salary discrepancies within classifications. In addition, Figure 9 illustrates that White staff represent 87% of all 81-02 positions and are the only ethnicity represented in 16 of the 23 classifications. Additionally, there is no representation of staff identifying as Pacific Islander.

Figure 8

81-02 Classifications	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Budget Policy Supv-Adv							\$44.94
Clinical Coordinator			\$39.77				\$39.77
Dhs Security Director							\$39.42
Disability Deter Prog Mgr							\$37.57

<sup>4</sup> The Health Services Manager (HSM) classification is used to cover many different positions at DHS ranging from Deputy Bureau Director, Bureau Director, Asst. Division Administrator, and Division Administrator. Therefore, a further analysis may be needed to accurately detect any salary discrepancies within the HSM classification.

81-02 Classifications	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Education Director							\$39.27
Financial Management Supv		\$40.06				\$44.11	\$42.63
Health Care Program Manager		\$41.33	\$42.23	\$42.23	\$42.23		\$42.27
Health Services Mgmt Supv				\$42.89			\$41.57
Human Services Supervisor	\$42.23				\$42.23	\$41.97	\$42.23
Nursing Administrator							\$46.97
Policy Initiatives Adv-Admin							\$44.78
Program And Policy Chief							\$42.38
Psychologist Chief		\$47.75					
Psychologist Manager							\$58.47
Psychologist Supv							\$46.97
Purchasing Agent Mgt Supv							\$44.64
Research Administrator							\$44.47
Research Scientist			\$47.79	\$42.39			\$41.33
Risk Management Manager							\$42.35
Social Comm Svcs Dir							\$42.23
State Registrar							\$42.89
Therapy Program Supervisor							\$41.36
Treatment Supv-Chapter 980							\$58.55

Figure 9

81-02 Classifications	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Budget Policy Supv-Adv							2
Clinical Coordinator			1				1
Dhs Security Director							3
Disability Deter Prog Mgr							3
Education Director							1
Financial Management Supv		1				1	6
Health Care Program Manager		3	6	1	1		22
Health Services Mgmt Supv				1			35
Human Services Supervisor	1				2	1	18
Nursing Administrator							1
Policy Initiatives Adv-Admin							7
Program And Policy Chief							7
Psychologist Chief		1					
Psychologist Manager							1
Psychologist Supv							5
Purchasing Agent Mgt Supv							2
Research Administrator							2
Research Scientist			1	1			13
Risk Management Manager							2
Social Comm Svcs Dir							2
State Registrar							1
Therapy Program Supervisor							4

81-02 Classifications	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Not Specified	White
Treatment Supv-Chapter 980							3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>141</b>

To get the best representation among 81-03, the workgroup isolated leadership positions. Data showed 31 classifications within 81-03. The median hourly salary isolated was analyzed by ethnicity for these classifications (See Figure 10). Figure 10 does reveal some salary discrepancies within classifications and Figure 11 illustrates White employees make up 79% of the leadership positions within 81-03. Furthermore, 20 of the 31 classifications have only White staff represented. Lastly, there is no employee representation of staff identifying as Pacific Islander.

Figure 10

81-03 Classification	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White
Area Administrator						\$38.17
Buildings Grounds St						\$36.62
Capital Projects Supervisor						\$46.23
Client Rights Supervisor						\$38.66
Corr Program Supervisor						\$34.19
Disability Determin Supv						\$32.49
Economic Support Supervisor	\$35.74		\$35.74		\$35.74	\$36.08
Facilities Management Officer						\$36.82
Financial Program Supervisor						\$33.33
Food Service Administrator						\$32.49
Health Care Supervisor		\$34.11	\$31.79	\$33.03		\$33.24
Health Information Supv						\$33.73
Health Services Supv			\$39.13			\$38.66
Inst Envir Services Supv						\$32.05
Inst Social Services Dir				\$41.24		\$41.24
Institution Unit Supervisor			\$33.52			\$36.61
Nuclear Safety Spec Supv						\$40.92
Power Plant Superintendent						\$34.11
Program And Policy Supervisor			\$34.65			\$37.71
Public Health Ed Supv			\$44.19			
Radiation Safety Spec Supv						\$39.16
Records Management Prog Supv						\$34.26
Research Analyst-Adv Supv		\$36.62				\$40.92
Social Services Supervisor	\$38.55		\$38.44			\$38.44
Staff Dev Program Supv						\$37.15
Supervising Officer 2				\$35.63		\$34.10
Supervising Officer-DHS				\$35.74		\$35.35
Teacher Supervisor						\$37.78
Therapist Supervisor						\$37.36
Treatment Coordinator						\$36.36
Vital Records Program Supv						\$38.98

Figure 11

81-03 Classification	Native American / Indigenous	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White
Area Administrator						3
Buildings Grounds St						6
Capital Projects Supervisor						2
Client Rights Supervisor						1
Corr Program Supervisor						2
Disability Determin Supv						17
Economic Support Supervisor	1		1		1	2
Facilities Management Officer						1
Financial Program Supervisor						10
Food Service Administrator						5
Health Care Supervisor		1	26	3		2
Health Information Supv						3
Health Services Supv			2			25
Inst Envir Services Supv						1
Inst Social Services Dir				1		3
Institution Unit Supervisor			1			33
Nuclear Safety Spec Supv						1
Power Plant Superintendent						6
Program And Policy Supervisor			1			2
Public Health Ed Supv			1			
Radiation Safety Spec Supv						1
Records Management Prog Supv						1
Research Analyst-Adv Supv		1				1
Social Services Supervisor	1		1			9
Staff Dev Program Supv						4
Supervising Officer 2				1		5
Supervising Officer-DHS				1		8
Teacher Supervisor						1
Therapist Supervisor						5
Treatment Coordinator						1
Vital Records Program Supv						2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>163</b>

In addition to salary, Discretionary Merit Compensations were reviewed for 2018 and 2019. A significant disparity was identified. White employees received DMCs at a proportion that was higher than their overall staffing proportion at DHS, while staff of color received DMCs at a much lower rate in comparison to their staffing proportion at DHS (See Figure 13). In reviewing the breakdown further, it is important to note that 16 out of the 19 divisions and offices awarded more than 75% of DMC to White employees; 11 of the 19 divisions

and offices awarded 90% of DMC to White employees; and three divisions and offices awarded 100% of DMC to White staff (See Figure 12).

Figure 12

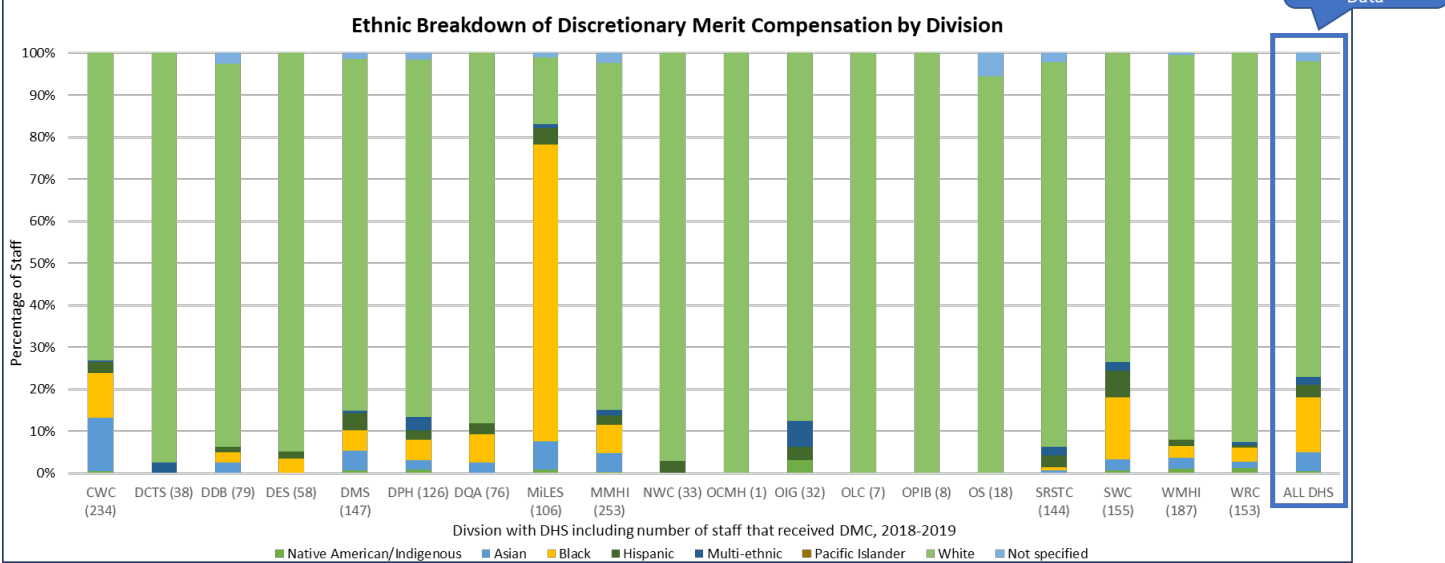
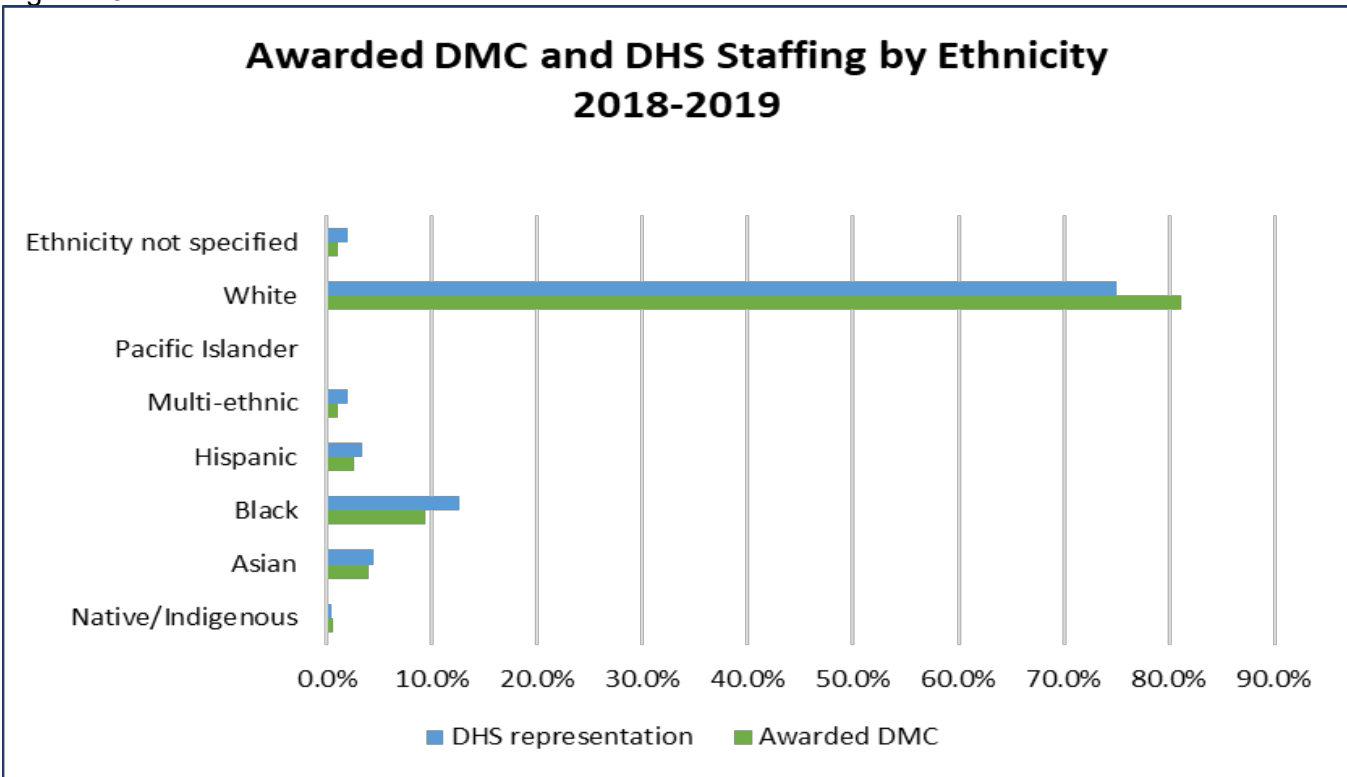


Figure 13

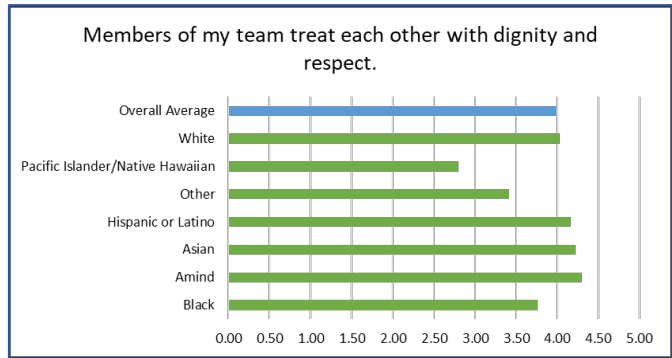
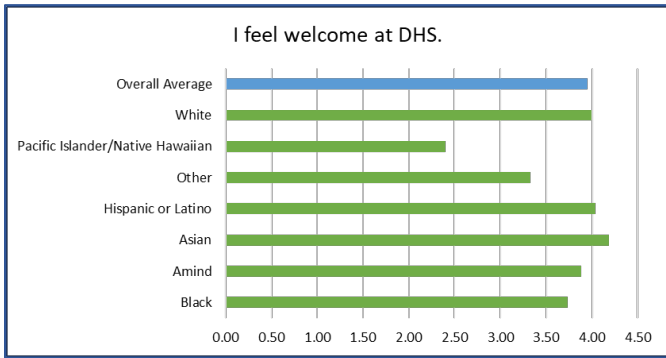


### Workplace Culture

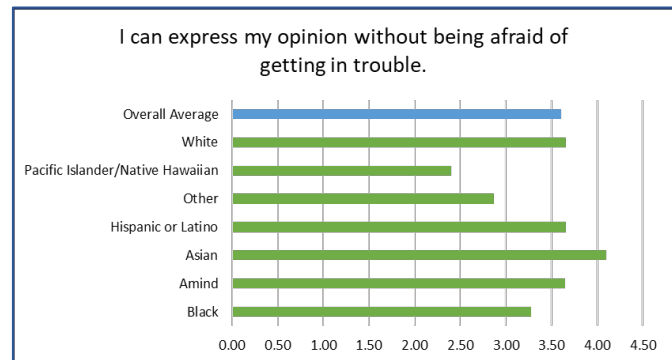
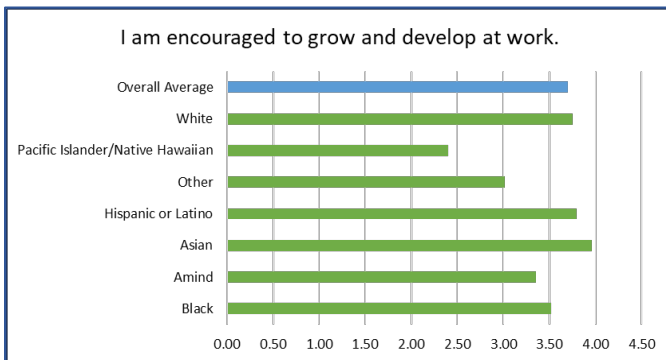
In order to look at workplace culture, questions from the annual Stay and Grow Survey were reviewed. The workgroup reviewed those specific to staff feelings of respect, job growth and development, leadership, etc.

First, when evaluating feelings of respect and belonging, analysis does reveal slight differences by ethnic group. As the below graphs show, those identifying as Black, Native American / Indigenous (AMIND), Pacific

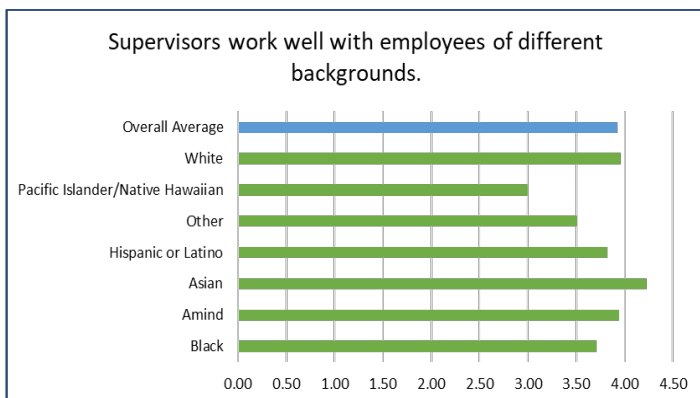
Islander / Hawaiian Native, or Other report below average scores when asked if they feel welcome at DHS and if their teams treat each other with dignity and respect.<sup>5</sup>



Furthermore, similar trends are visible when considering professional development at DHS. While most individuals report having clear expectations set for them at work, slight differences are visible when considering where individuals feel encouraged to grow and develop at work and whether individuals can express their opinions without being afraid of getting in trouble. In both cases, individuals self-identifying as Pacific Islander / Native Hawaiian, Black, or other report lower than average scores for both questions, while AMIND individuals report notably below average scores just for the former.



Similarly, when considering individual’s supervisors, analysis reveals that black, Hispanic or Latino, and Pacific Islander / Native Hawaiian individuals show lower levels of agreement when asked if supervisors work well with employees of different backgrounds.



<sup>5</sup> The current official definitions of “racial or ethnic groups” are provided in ER 43.02(6m) (Wis. Adm. Code) and Chapter 800.030.17 (Wis. Human Resources Handbook). They include: Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multi-Ethnic, Native American/Indigenous, Not-Specified, and White. These were the terms used to identify racial/ethnic groups on the Stay and Grow Survey.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis illustrates the need for significant improvements in recruitment, retention, and workplace culture at DHS. From 2018 through 2020 DHS has hired a total of 202 individuals into 81-01, 81-02, and supervisory 81-03 positions. Of the 202 individuals hired, 171 (85%) identified themselves as white. Furthermore, it is important that DHS improves its retention efforts. Multiple studies have shown that having diversity in leadership positions communicate to staff, particularly diverse staff that a pathway to leadership is possible. DHS must put forth a concrete effort to diversify its leadership to improve retention among staff of color. Additionally, an advanced analysis into salary disparities within the range of 81-02 and 81-03 classifications is needed to understand the reasoning behind the gap in compensation. To conclude, throughout a variety of questions in the Stay and Grow survey, specifically targeted to measure DHS as a destination workplace, staff of color rate the agency lower compared to their white colleagues.

Multiple studies have illustrated that diversity in leadership positions in a company produces increased adaptability, a broader service array, variety in viewpoints, and more effective execution of agency goals. It is the recommendation of the Equity and Inclusion workgroup that DHS look to improve its hiring practices for leadership positions. Additionally, the establishment of a mentoring program for staff of color could serve as an effective tool to increase diversity among leaders across the department. Furthermore, DHS should look to broaden leadership postings and target them to enhance a diverse applicant pool. To improve retention, DHS should look to narrow the salary gap among staff of color compared to their white colleagues who hold the same classification. A more equitable distribution of the DMC should be awarded across the department. Lastly, improvements should be made to the “Stay and Grow Survey” to accurately reflect the “true” feelings of all staff across the agency. The internal improvements across DHS will only enhance service delivery and likely result in to better health outcomes for Wisconsinites across the state.

## E&I Plan Implementation

### Workforce Analysis: Goals and Strategies

Based on the above-discussed analysis, the Equity and Inclusion workgroup, in collaboration with members of Human Resources and the Secretary’s Office, have identified the below strategies to improve recruitment, retention, and workplace culture at DHS.

Recruitment		
<b>Goal</b>		
By 2023, DHS will increase the number of marginalized <sup>6</sup> staff hired and / or promoted into open or available leadership positions by at least 15%.		
<b>Objective</b>		
1. By 2022, DHS will increase the number of marginalized individuals who apply for leadership positions by at least 5%.	2. By 2022, DHS will have established a policy where at least 20% of a hiring panel for a position will identify themselves as a marginalized individual.	3. By 2023, all divisions / offices will review policies to ensure all hiring panels and recruitment efforts are equitable practices.
<b>Strategic Activities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Training focused on the importance of recruiting a diverse staff and implementing the training into practice</li> <li>➤ Enhance metrics to effectively and efficiently monitor the department’s diversity recruiting efforts</li> <li>➤ Expand recruitment resources by targeting marginalized college students and individuals from diverse backgrounds</li> <li>➤ Development of an internship program for individuals of diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>➤ Feature diversity driven content on job postings</li> </ul>		

<sup>6</sup> **Marginalized populations** are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions. [Marginalized populations | National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health \(nccdh.ca\)](https://www.nccdh.ca.gov/resources/marginalized-populations/)



<b>Retention</b>		
<b>Goal</b>		
Through 2023, see continuous increase year over year in total length of service at DHS (not length of service in given positions) reported by marginalized individuals.		
<b>Objectives</b>		
1. Year over year increase the promotions of current marginalized staff into leadership positions across 81-01, 81-02, and 81-03 positions.	2. Establish DEI training for all leadership positions and have at least 100% of 81-01, 81-02, and 81-03 individuals complete training by 2023	3. For offices / divisions where DMC awards are disproportionately given to non-marginalized staff, review the awarding process to ensure the process is equitable each year.
<b>Strategic Activities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish a mentorship / leadership program for current staff who identify as a marginalized individual.</li> <li>➤ Identify or develop unconscious bias training for leadership positions</li> <li>➤ Launch trainings for all staff across DHS and leverage OS support to encourage individuals to complete training</li> <li>➤ Create feedback mechanism for staff (especially marginalized staff) to provide feedback on their experiences at DHS and opportunities for improvement</li> <li>➤ Meet with office / division leaderships to share out information on trends for DMC awards for their respective office / division</li> </ul>		

<b>Workplace Culture</b>		
<b>Goal</b>		
By 2023, see year over year increases in employee satisfactions as reported in the Stay and Grow survey by marginalized staff with regards to topics such as professional growth, sense of value, and cultural inclusion.		
<b>Objectives</b>		
1. Improved communication with all staff throughout DHS so they feel informed and have this reflected on the Stay and Grow Survey year over year.	2. Improved staffs feeling of being valued and appreciated across DHS and have this reflected in the Stay and Grow Survey year over year.	3. Improved staffs feelings of completing meaningful work across DHS and have this reflected in the Stay and Grow Survey year over year.
<b>Strategic Activities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leadership training on communication, appreciation, creating meaningful work, and additional trainings as it relates to workplace culture</li> <li>➤ Identify the team responsible for analyzing the Stay and Grow survey to better understand experiences of staff from marginalized populations</li> <li>➤ Consider opportunities to reduce the level of personally identifiable information provided in the survey to further promote honest feedback to further de-identify responses</li> <li>➤ Identify opportunities to leverage supervisors / mentors across DHS to encourage participation in the Stay and Grow survey</li> <li>➤ Identify opportunities to increase DEI-related education for all staff across DHS</li> <li>➤ Develop targeted discussion groups for individuals to engage in DEI-related conversations and work with BEI to provide facilitator training</li> </ul>		

## Strategic Plan

Strategy	KPI	Outcomes / Metrics	Responsible Staff / Office	Targeted Completion Date
<b>Recruitment</b>				
Enhance metrics to effectively and efficiently monitor the department's diversity recruiting efforts.	Review current recruitment metrics.	Establishment of an annual diversity recruiting benchmark report.	HEDI/HR	Quarter 1 2022
Expand recruitment resources by targeting marginalized college students and individuals from diverse backgrounds	Provide schedule of career fairs to attend and social media presentation to submit.	Attend virtual career fairs and utilize social media to enhance visibility of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across the department	HEDI/OHE	Quarter 3 2022
Feature diversity driven content on job postings	Review current content used in the hiring practice of the DEI Director posting.	Develop standardized language that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion within all job postings	HEDI/HR	Quarter 1 2022
Development of an internship program for individuals of diverse backgrounds.	Identify interest in internship programs from students in colleges and universities by marginalized staff.	Percentage of staff demographics within DHS will reflect the current state demographics	HEDI/OPIB	Quarter 4 2023
<b>Retention</b>				
Establish a mentorship / leadership program for current staff who identify as marginalized individual.	Identify interest in leadership programs by marginalized staff.	Increase the number of marginalized staff promoted into leadership positions.	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022
Identify or develop unconscious bias training for leadership positions	Research possible existing trainings regarding unconscious bias.	The establishment of an unconscious bias training that can be used to improve leadership skills across the department with a 75% completion rate for 81-01, 81-02, and 81-03.	HEDI	Quarter 1 2022
Launch trainings for all staff across DHS and leverage OS support to encourage individuals to complete training		Establishment of a set of DEI trainings to assist staff in better understanding of cultural differences.	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022
Create feedback mechanism for staff (especially marginalized staff) to provide feedback on their experiences at DHS and opportunities for improvement	Provide current exit interview questions.	The development of an exit survey for staff ending employment at DHS.	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022
Meet with office / division leaderships to share out information on trends for DMC awards for their respective office / division	Review current metrics for distribution of DMC awards.	The development of a report illustrating the demographic breakdown of DMC recipients on an annual basis.	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022
<b>Workforce Culture</b>				
Identify the team responsible for analyzing the Stay and Grow survey		The formation of a team of individuals from diverse backgrounds to review the	HEDI	Quarter 2 2022

Strategy	KPI	Outcomes / Metrics	Responsible Staff / Office	Targeted Completion Date
to better understand experiences of staff from marginalized populations		Stay and Grow survey on an annual basis.		
Consider opportunities to reduce the level of personally identifiable information provided in the survey to further promote honest feedback to further de-identify responses	Review current identifiable information included in the Stay and Grow survey.	The formation of a team of individuals from diverse backgrounds to review the Stay and Grow survey criteria on an annual basis	HEDI	Quarter 2 2022
Identify opportunities to leverage supervisors / mentors across DHS to encourage participation in the Stay and Grow survey		Improved communication regarding purpose and use of the Stay and Grow survey.	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022
Develop targeted discussion groups for individuals to engage in DEI-related conversations and work with BEI to provide facilitator training	Identify needed trainings to facilitate small group discussions at a local level.	Create a space where staff feel their voices are heard, respected, and utilized toward the improvement of workplace practices	HEDI	Quarter 4 2022

## Appendix

### Appendix A: Communication and Dissemination of Equity and Inclusion Plan

#### Internal Methods of Communication

- The DHS Communications team will work collaboratively with the Office of Health Equity's communications specialist to develop and implement an internal communications plan to ensure that staff are updated on the progress of the E&I Plan yearly.
- The agency's Equity and Inclusion Plan will be made available to all employees on the agency's internal website as well as PDF format via e-mail. Alternative formats will also be considered for those who may not have access to the website or e-mail.
- A memorandum detailing the location of the Equity and Inclusion Plan and the responsibility to read, understand, support, and implement equal opportunity and affirmative action will be sent to all staff on an annual basis.
- Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity statements and posters are prominently displayed and available in areas frequented and accessible to employees.

#### External Methods of Communication

- The agency's Equity and Inclusion Plan will be made available on the agency's public website or via e-mail. Alternative formats will also be considered for those who may not have access to the website or e-mail.
- The agency's job postings and HR-related materials will include the statement "DHS is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, ancestry, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, neurodiversity, veteran status, marital status, and all other [protected groups](#) under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Law." The agency will also ensure a representative ratio of diversity is on all marketing materials.
- Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity statements and posters are prominently displayed and available in areas frequented by and accessible to members of the public. Examples of posters displayed include: Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law, Employee Rights under the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Notice to the Public.

### Appendix B: Individuals Responsible for Directing/Implementing the Equity and Inclusion Plan

#### Agency Appointing Authority

The state agency appointing authority carries the overall responsibility for establishing an Equity and Inclusion Program, including goals, timetables, and compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations. The Appointing Authority:

- Communicates the direction and vision to agency leadership that ensures involvement and commitment to the agency's equity and inclusion efforts.
- Develops an equity and inclusion action plan to implement strategies that will comply with affirmative action, equity, and inclusion requirements, build infrastructure and culture committed to equity and inclusion, and incorporates equity and inclusion throughout the agency's work and public service.
- Engages a representative employee and stakeholder group in the planning and development process for the E&I Plan to review equity and inclusion related data, recommends opportunities for improvement, and provides support and shared ownership of agency strategies and desired outcomes.
- Ensures that designated personnel responsible for equity and inclusion efforts and programs are given the necessary authority, top management support, and resources to successfully implement their assigned responsibilities.

- Assesses and ensures internal workplace policies and procedures are equitable, culturally responsive, and promote inclusion.
- Provide professional development opportunities and resources that raise awareness, build knowledge and understanding, and encourage and promote an inclusive culture.
- Seeks advice and guidance from the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee on agency E&I programs, initiatives, and policies.

**Name of individual(s) responsible**

**Name:** Karen E. Timberlake

**Title:** Secretary-designee

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**Phone:** 608-266-9622

**Equity and Inclusion Officer**

The Equity and Inclusion Officer (EIO) or designee, as delegated by the EIO, is directly responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing the agency's E&I Plan. Currently, the EIO is a manager-level position with responsibility for three agencies assigned to Region 4 (DHS, DOR, and DVA). In addition to being responsible for E&I efforts, the EIO oversees all administration of Family Medical Leave Act (state and Federal), Medical Coordination, Reasonable Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act, and all investigations into Harassment and Discrimination complaints, with consultation from the DHS Office of Legal Counsel as needed. To help supplement and complement the work of the designated EIO, Region 4 BHR is exploring opportunities to create a staffing structure within our agency that is focused on and dedicated to internal equity efforts, including advancement and implementation of this E&I plan. The Equity and Inclusion Officer:

- Plans, guides, and advises the appointing authority and executive leadership in establishing and maintaining equity and inclusion plans, programs, and policies. This includes engaging the appropriate individuals and stakeholders throughout the development and implementation and continuous improvement activities of plan actions.
- Coordinates, develops, and implements equity and inclusion initiatives that support the agency's equity and inclusion plan goals.
- Keeps the agency head and agency leadership at various organizational levels informed of E&I developments, progress, and potential concerns.
- Ensures communication and dissemination of equity and inclusion plan, policy and program information, and employee access to the plan and related policies.
- Works with leadership to identify, coordinate, facilitate, and/or provide equity and inclusion training to increase awareness, support, and maintain compliance.
- Establishes and maintains internal monitoring, auditing, and reporting system to measure the effectiveness of the agency's programs and activities, ensure compliance, and meet state and federal requirements. This includes gathering, researching, and analyzing data.
- Audits hiring and promotion patterns and the selection of candidates for career development and training programs to remove barriers.
- Ensures agency selection criteria are objective, uniform and job-related, and that personnel decision-making processes adhere to EEO and AA principles.
- Promotes and coordinates agency participation in enterprise equity and inclusion programs and initiatives, including the State Student Diversity Internship program, the annual state diversity awards, the non-competitive appointment for certain disabled veteran's program, W-2 program, the disabled veteran's program, etc.
- Serves as the agency's point of contact for professional organizations and community groups to promote and assist with employment opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Attends at least 12 hours of equity and inclusion and agency supervisory training annually.
- Participates in and advises the agency's Equity and Inclusion Committee as a non-voting member.

**Name of individual(s) responsible**

**Name:** Angela Zilliox

**Title:** Region 4 E&I Program Manager

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## Equity and Inclusion Designee/Professional

The designee/professional is responsible for assisting with the implementation of the equity and inclusion plan efforts within their agency. The EI designee/professional:

- Ensures dissemination of all relevant equity and inclusion information to appropriate staff.
- Reviews policies, procedures, and practices, and recommends changes to the EIO.
- Assists in development, implementation, and management oversight of policies, programs, and procedures for the administration of E&I efforts for the agency.
- Assists with the promotion and coordination of agency equity and inclusion programs and initiatives, including the State Student Diversity Internship program, the annual state diversity awards, the non-competitive appointment for certain disabled veteran's program, W-2 program, the disabled veteran's program, etc.
- Ensures communication and dissemination of equity and inclusion plan, policy and program information, and employee access to the plan and related policies.
- Assist the EI Officer in conducting periodic audits of recruitment activity to measure the effectiveness of efforts and activities to attaining strategic equity and inclusion goals and objectives.
- Attends equity and inclusion and agency supervisory training annually.
- As designated, manages the agency's medical issues. This may include coordinating and monitoring the agency's FMLA and reasonable accommodation requirements to ensure compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act, and the Federal and State FMLA laws, with consultation from the DHS Office of Legal Counsel as needed.

### Name of individual(s) responsible

**Name:** Lisa Mortenson

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## Executive HR Manager/HR Manager

The Executive HR Manager/HR Manager is responsible for ensuring equitable and consistent administration and application of all personnel policies and provides direct supervision of the EI Officer and EI professionals. The Executive HR Manager/HR Manager:

- Maintains effective working relationships with agency EI officers and designees.
- Provides leadership to HR staff and others to ensure personnel decision-making processes adhere to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and equity and inclusion and principles.
- Ensures the hiring managers and supervisors work effectively with the EIO to develop and execute the E&I plan.
- Provides the EIO the support and data necessary to perform duties and responsibilities related to equity and inclusion.

### Name of individual(s) responsible

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