



Administrative Manual of Operating Procedures

Procedure #: 04.02	Procedure Title: Community Engagement and Outreach		Revision #: 1.0
Original Issue Date: 4/30/2026	Revised Issue Date: N/A	Next Review Date: 4/30/2028	Responsible Department: Office of Equity
Statutory References: N/A		Ordinance References: MCO 108.03	
Appendices: Appendix A.1 – Community Engagement Flowchart Appendix A.2- Outreach Flowchart Appendix B – Community Engagement in Milwaukee County Overview Appendix C - Community Engagement Toolkit Appendix D – SWOT and PESTEL Resource		Forms: (1) Technical Assistance Request Form (2) Language Access Assistance Form (3) Equity Impact Planner	

1. OBJECTIVE:

- A. The purpose of this Administrative Manual of Operating Procedures (AMOP) is to establish a standardized, countywide framework for conducting community engagement and outreach activities. This procedure ensures that all Milwaukee County departments implement consistent, equitable, and effective practices that align with the County’s strategic goals and Chapter 108 of the Milwaukee County Code of Ordinances. This AMOP supports informed decision-making, strengthens community trust, and advances racial equity by embedding structured engagement practices into County operations.

2. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Community Engagement.** The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.
- B. **Community Engagement Continuum.** A structured model created by the Milwaukee County Office of Equity that charts a progression of engagement levels, from basic information-sharing to full community decision-making (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Shared Leadership).
- C. **Equity/Equitable.** The just, fair, and impartial treatment, acceptance, or behavior of people without favoritism or discrimination. Equity means righting wrongs, doing what’s right, and giving people what they need to thrive, which is different from equality, which means everyone gets the same thing regardless of circumstance or need.
- D. **Health and Racial Equity Accelerator.** A hub of online resources created by the Milwaukee County Office of Equity designed to communicate racial equity, understand power dynamics to drive change, challenge personal biases, and create culture and practices that center the lived experience of residents in decision making.
- E. **Key Stakeholders.** Both internal and external individuals, agencies, or organizations who participate in the planning, development, implementation and decision-making process of an activity, process, or service delivery.
- F. **Outreach.** Communication and engagement efforts aimed at informing community members about issues, opportunities, or decisions, serving as a foundational step in community engagement.



3. OVERVIEW:

A. Milwaukee County Office of Equity (OOE):

- i. The Milwaukee County Office of Equity (OOE) shall serve as the lead department responsible for guiding, coordinating, and monitoring the implementation of this policy across all County operations. They will serve as liaisons, assisting departments and officials in actualizing their community engagement efforts.
- ii. OOE Community Engagement Manager: Meets with departments and provides tailored feedback regarding proposed community engagement initiatives after the submission of formal technical assistance (TA) requests. Additionally, the Community Engagement Manager shall coordinate with the Community Engagement Community of Practice (COP) to serve as evaluators in years one and two.
 - a. In the event that the OOE Community Engagement Manager is unavailable, OOE will designate a qualified representative from the office to serve as the lead for that period. This individual will represent OOE in relevant meetings and communications and will provide the necessary guidance and oversight to ensure that all tasks and responsibilities continue to move forward as planned.
 - b. The appointed lead will work to maintain continuity in the engagement process, support coordination with partners and community stakeholders, and ensure that project activities remain aligned with the goals and expectations outlined in the scope of work.

B. All Departments:

- i. Support community engagement and feedback efforts by collaborating with the OOE Community Engagement team and aligning departmental engagement work with the county's vision and the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#).
- ii. Provide subject-matter expertise to help inform discussions, materials, and community conversations related to their respective areas.
- iii. Assist in sharing engagement opportunities, updates, and relevant information through departmental networks, communication channels, and community partnerships.
- iv. Review and consider community feedback and insights, ensuring that input gathered through engagement efforts informs departmental planning, decision-making, and program implementation.
- v. Provide staff support or coordination when needed to ensure engagement activities and related tasks are carried out effectively.

C. Community of Practice (COP) and other advisory groups:

- i. The COP will be responsible for assisting in the evaluation of this AMOP. The COP will coordinate with OOE's Community Engagement Manager to analyze:
 - a. Data collection metrics of departments' community engagement and outreach efforts.
 - b. Collected feedback from departmental staff and community members.
- ii. They will serve as a key partner in strengthening our community engagement by elevating opportunities for residents to share their perspectives and ensuring that feedback is gathered in inclusive and accessible ways. Leveraging their trusted relationships and networks across Milwaukee County, they will also help communicate our work more broadly, ensuring community members remain informed, connected, and engaged throughout the process.

4. PROCEDURE:

A. Community Engagement:

i. Initiation

- a. Departments shall begin the community engagement process by identifying the issue, project, or opportunity that requires engagement and determining the purpose of involving community stakeholders. Departments may review the [Community Engagement Flowchart](#) and consult the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#) to support this preliminary work. This includes assessing who will be impacted, the intended outcomes of the engagement effort, and whether the proposed intervention is necessary and appropriate.
- b. It is recommended for departments to conduct a situational analysis, such as a SWOT, PESTEL, or similar assessment, to evaluate internal and external factors that may influence the initiative. These analyses support strategic planning by identifying organizational strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. [This guide](#) outlines the benefits of a SWOT and PESTEL analysis.
- c. Prior to scheduling a Technical Assistance (TA) meeting with the Office of Equity (OOE), departments shall complete the [Equity Impact Planner](#) to identify potential equity considerations and establish a baseline understanding of the initiative's anticipated impact.

ii. Planning

- a. Departments shall submit the [OOE Technical Assistance Meeting Request Form](#) to initiate consultation with the Office of Equity Community Engagement team. Prior to the meeting, departments shall review the relevant administrative procedures and resources, including [AMOP 04.01 – Language Access and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) Policy](#), [AMOP 09.01 – Effective Communication Procedure](#), and the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#), to ensure that engagement efforts are inclusive, accessible, and aligned with County standards.
- b. During the TA meeting, the department and OOE shall collaboratively review the proposed engagement initiative. This meeting shall include, at minimum:
 1. Conducting an environmental scan, if one has not already been completed;
 2. Identifying key internal and external stakeholders;
 3. Defining the scope, purpose, and goals of the engagement effort; and
 4. Determining appropriate methods for outreach and engagement.
- c. Following the TA meeting, departments shall complete the [Equity Impact Planner](#) a second time to reflect updated planning considerations and to measure growth in understanding and preparedness following OOE consultation.

iii. Design

- a. Departments shall design engagement activities in a manner that promotes equitable participation and meaningful community involvement. This includes selecting meeting times, formats, and locations that are accessible and convenient for the intended audience. Departments shall develop communication and engagement materials that

are clear, culturally responsive, and accessible to individuals with varying communication needs.

- b. All materials and engagement activities shall comply with the requirements outlined in [AMOP 04.01 – Language Access and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) Policy](#) and [AMOP 09.01 – Effective Communication Procedure](#) to ensure equitable access for individuals with limited English proficiency and individuals with disabilities.
 - c. Departments shall also ensure that all outreach, branding, and marketing materials comply with Milwaukee County branding standards and any sponsor branding requirements, where applicable.
- iv. Implementation
- a. Departments shall conduct the approved community engagement activities in accordance with the engagement plan developed during the planning and design phases.
 - b. During implementation, departments shall ensure that engagement opportunities are inclusive, accessible, and structured to encourage meaningful participation from identified stakeholders, particularly those most impacted by the initiative.
 - c. Departments shall coordinate with OOE, as needed, to address barriers to participation and ensure that engagement efforts remain aligned with County equity goals.
- v. Evaluation
- a. Following the engagement activity, departments shall collect and review qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the effectiveness of the engagement effort.
 - b. Evaluation measures may include participation levels, demographic representation, participant feedback, and the extent to which community input informed decision-making.
 - c. Departments shall assess whether the engagement goals were achieved, identify opportunities for improvement, and document any barriers or successes observed during implementation.
 - d. OOE is available to assist with data collection materials and to ensure data collection standards. Data will be retained by the OOE for central management.
- vi. Post-Engagement
- a. After the evaluation phase, departments shall conduct a debrief to review outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations for future engagement efforts.
 - b. Departments shall document key findings, including successful strategies, challenges encountered, and opportunities for improving future community engagement practices. This information shall be retained to support continuous improvement and inform future outreach and engagement planning.

B. Outreach:

- i. Departments shall review the [Outreach Flowchart](#) and identify the purpose, goals, and intended audience for all outreach activities prior to implementation.

- ii. Departments shall develop outreach materials that are accessible and aligned with the County’s communication standards. All outreach efforts shall comply with [AMOP 04.01 – Language Access and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) Policy](#) and [AMOP 09.01 – Effective Communication Procedure](#) to ensure equitable access to information.
- iii. Departments shall distribute outreach materials using appropriate communication channels based on the intended audience. These channels may include digital communications, print materials, community partners, public meetings, or other relevant platforms.
- iv. Departments shall track outreach efforts and evaluate their effectiveness by monitoring participation, reach, feedback, and overall outcomes to inform future communication strategies.

5. REVISION HISTORY:

Rev. #	Summary of Changes	Date of Change	Author
1.0	New procedure	4/30/2026	Office of Equity staff