



## RACIAL EQUITY BUDGET TOOL

Date Submitted:

Department: Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC)

*Please note: each response field below has a 2,500 character limit.*

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 1: DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

**What activities are you doing to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce in your department? What are the associated costs of these activities?**

OCC sees the hiring of diverse talent as an extension of who we are. We strive to create a workplace that reflects the community of which we are part of and serve. We are looking beyond just advertising in minority professional publications, we are looking to increase our outreach through partnerships with affinity organizations like the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA), National Bar Association (NBA), Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), Wisconsin African American Bar and Wisconsin Hispanic Bar. We are also working with National Association of Minority and Woman-Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF) to help us attract talent that may not know of the opportunities within Milwaukee County. Our team is becoming more involved in community activities to enhance recognition of OCC, including working with local law schools to gain insights into local diverse talent coming through the legal pipeline. +

**How do you use professional development and advancement opportunities to advance equity in your department's workforce? What resources are used to support these opportunities for professional development and advancement?**

In lieu of providing market rate salaries, we offer the best training and skill enhancement in areas of practice requiring advanced training thereby allowing for position advancements. Our team is participating in Manager Training and Leadership Development opportunities. We are also continuing to develop our communication skills through the use of DiSC profiles and sessions with leadership development coaches. We have implemented department-wide mentoring and have encouraged senior team members to work with junior team members by providing feedback, their assessment of work product, and the delegation of challenging work. We are introducing 1:1 meetings for all staff to encourage progress on our departmental and individual SMART Goals.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 2: PEOPLE-FOCUSED DESIGN

**How and when have service users, particularly users of color, and other key stakeholders been engaged to inform decisions about your requested budget (Who was involved, what was the forum, what were the results)?**

The OCC lenses all decision-making through the eye of equity and inclusion. We are heavily engaged with leadership throughout the County on issues of equity and inclusion. Our office also has four (4) racial ambassadors and several others wanting to participate in future programs.

**What are the multi-lingual needs of your department's service users? How do you use your budget to meet these language needs?**

We currently have two (2) fluent Spanish speakers in our office without an additional cost to our budget. We encourage and support our team to obtain language capabilities if they are so inclined.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 3: EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

**Our employees can be a great resource for innovation and knowing what is working well and what needs work. Have you engaged a diverse group of frontline employees to inform decisions about your proposed budget changes? If yes, how was input solicited, who was involved, and what were the results?**

OCC as a team is engaged weekly in matters concerning the overall health of our office, which includes the continued work being done on racial equity and navigating through the financial crisis in our County. We have shared with our team the restrictions that have been placed upon our operations for the foreseeable future and what that might look like in terms of being able to provide salary increases or bonuses. We have also explained that our search to fill a long vacant position, and much needed role will remain open in 2020 due to these restrictions. The fact that we had interviews with several diverse candidates prior to our hiring freeze makes it all the more vital that our position be funded in the next year.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 4: IMPROVED PERFORMANCE & EQUITABLE PRACTICE

**Describe ways in which racial and economic data was used to prioritize resource distribution. (Data can include sources found in the resources section of this tool, department collected data, or any other relevant data from other sources.)**

Our efforts to manage our expenditures relate to identifying and executing operational efficiencies. We are a high functioning, low-staffed, low budget law department (currently, twenty-two (22) total FTE, with a diversity rating of 23%, with one (1) open attorney position, which represents the County and all its agencies and departments on a myriad of complex subjects. We are in the midst of launching a legal practice management system that accurately track team's work hours to produce metrics that will drive resource allocation, and assist with managing budget targets; that aids the department in providing clients with the highest level of service by using self-service tools along with service level agreements (SLAs) and analytics to demonstrate efficiency of OCC's work.

**What are the positive or negative racial equity implications of your proposed budget changes? For reference departments may refer to the "Form 1 – Major Changes" tab of your Supplemental Forms 2021 spreadsheet. Any change with identified impacts should be described.**

Because are not able to fund our open position, we have had to shift responsibilities among our team members, all while the intake of matters has increased from wage claims to mental health matters to Section 1983 case to department contracts requiring attention. This, in additional the economic impact of Covid-19 and the need to furlough several hours a week, has had substantial impacts upon our team members relating to work-load, work-life balance, and has taken an emotional toll on morale. Our inability to provide our team with the additional resources needed to make their lives more balanced is particularly impactful on our single-parent team members, our members who are primary caregivers for others, and our team members who themselves are managing health issues.

**What are the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences to disadvantaged communities of your proposed budget changes?**

**a. What analysis did you do to determine the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences?**

The continuous reductions to our budget make it extraordinarily challenging for us to provide the best-in-class service we strive to give our clients and members of the public who rely upon us as their resource and gateway to mental health services. Our reduced hours and limited staffing, which feeds into our inability to take on additional work, create a vacuum for the very community whose inequity we are trying to address.

**b. What will your department do to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from your proposed budget changes?**

Frankly, we will work harder with less. We will once again evaluate our priorities. This will come at a higher toll in morale, turnover and service to our clients. There is no mitigation when we quite simply cannot meet the demands placed upon our office to serve those who need our services the most.