



## PERSONNEL POLICY

### SUBJECT: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

DATE: January 1, 2017

Number: 306-16

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#### I. Statement of Policy

Fulton County respects, values and celebrates the unique attributes, characteristics and perspectives that make each person who they are. We believe that our strength lies in the diversity among the broad range of people and communities we represent. We consider diversity and inclusion to be a driver of excellence and seek out diversity of participation, thought and action.

The County's approach to an equal employment opportunity workplace is based on three key principles: equality, diversity and inclusion. The County promotes equality by removing barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.

The County accepts and respects each person as an individual. Success and competitiveness are built on our ability to embrace diversity, and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions.

The County desires to create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted, but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with our vision and values.

The County is committed to being a model employer, business partner and responsive service provider that is well prepared to meet the needs of the County's diverse constituency. In the pursuit of organizational excellence, equal opportunity, and equal access, Fulton County Government will recruit, hire, and promote a diverse workforce and group of contractors that delivers inclusive local government services. This policy affirms the County's commitment to create a culture of inclusion that encourages collaboration, innovation, flexibility, cultural competence, and civility. In addition to fostering integrated and inclusive service principals, this policy articulates the County's commitment to incorporate diversity and inclusion considerations in business administration, policy planning, resources allocation, service programming, and human resources management.

These policies do not create a contract of employment. Employment for non-classified employees remains "at will".

This policy also establishes the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance (DCRC) and the position of Chief Diversity and Compliance Officer (CDCO), reporting to the County Manager, to lead the development of a Countywide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan and implementation strategy. Lastly, this policy establishes a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan to guide the County in developing program goals, objectives and strategies.

## **II. Background and Applicability**

This policy shall apply to all Fulton County Departments, Divisions, Offices, Grantees, Contractors, Sub-Contractors and other entities that provide services to the public on behalf of the County.

## **III. Establishment and Implementation of Procedure**

The County Manager, in consultation with the Chief Human Resources Officer and the County Attorney, is authorized to establish and modify, as needed, a procedure for implementing this policy.



## PERSONNEL PROCEDURE

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#### I. Definitions<sup>1</sup>

- A. Workforce Diversity: As a concept, diversity includes everyone and encompasses variations among people including how they communicate, differences of thought, customs, beliefs, and life experiences. A workforce is considered diverse when organizational staffing is comprised of individuals with varied experiences and perspectives working together to help the organization pursue organizational objectives efficiently, effectively and equitably. A highly diverse workforce achieves organizational objectives by leveraging unique perspectives from individuals of varied national origins, linguistic backgrounds, races, colors, disabilities, ethnicities, genders, ages, religions, sexual identities, gender identities, socioeconomic statuses, political expressions, veteran statuses, lifestyles and family structures.
- B. A Culture of Inclusion: A culturally inclusive environment engages employees, clients and business partners in a manner that values their differences, solicits their perspectives and contributions, and integrates their individual perspectives and contributions with organizational investments, strategies, and outcomes. Inclusivity leverages diversity throughout the organization by encouraging collaboration, flexibility, cultural competence, civility, equity, and organizational excellence.
- C. Supplier/Contractor Diversity: Practices that ensure Fulton County will encourage the use of minority owned and historically underutilized and disadvantaged small business vendors as suppliers to include: women, veterans, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered (LGBT), and service disabled veteran owned, businesses.

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<sup>1</sup> The definitions included herein are based on definitions included in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's "Guidance for Agency Specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plans" (2011); and Georgetown University Child Development Center's "Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care; Vol. III (1998)."

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- D. Valuing, Managing and Institutionalizing Diversity: An organizational commitment which fosters an acceptance, understanding, and appreciation for the differences that exist among its members. Valuing diversity is fundamental to meeting the needs of diverse client populations and developing skillsets that empower individuals to demonstrate an acceptance of the differences among different groups of people during service delivery. Managing and institutionalizing diversity involves the development of skillsets that empower individuals to utilize their differences to create an organizational climate that improves organizational operations and workforce performance.
- E. Cultural Competence: An ability to provide services, support or other assistance that are responsive to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language and behaviors of individuals who are receiving services in a manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring maximum participation in the program. The five necessary elements to develop cultural competence include: 1) Valuing Diversity; 2) Conducting Cultural Self-Assessment; 3) Understanding and Acknowledging the Dynamics of Difference; 4) Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge; and 5) Adapting to Diversity.
- F. Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance (DCRC): Lead office that coordinates and collaborates with County Officials and Departments in the development and implementation of initiatives to promote diversity, cultural competence and inclusion.

## II. Guidelines

- No job applicant or employee should receive less favorable treatment because of sex, race, age, ethnic origin, marital status, military status, pregnancy and/or maternity status, civil partnership status, any gender re-assignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or disability;
- Employees should be protected from discrimination because of association;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion should be promoted within the workplace;
- Fair and equitable treatment should be the hallmark of every aspect of working life at the County, from written procedures through and including every decision made;
- The County will promote a culture where employees recognize the value that a diverse and inclusive workforce brings to the County, and where colleagues and external associates are treated with dignity and respect; and
- The County shall create an environment where anyone believing they have been subjected to discrimination, victimization or harassment in the workplace is entitled and feels safe to raise such concerns. We are

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committed to ensuring that the process for dealing with such concerns is straightforward and will be addressed in a compassionate, efficient and timely manner.

### **III. Responsibilities**

#### **A. County Manager**

- Possess ultimate responsibility for compliance with the provisions of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Ensure that departments implement the provisions of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy and related procedures to ensure that County operations, facilities, employment, programs, services, activities and benefits are provided in such a manner as to promote diversity and inclusion;
- Establish the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance with appropriate resources and staffing;
- Designate Director of Diversity and Civil Rights who also serves as the Chief Diversity and Compliance Officer reporting to the County Manager; and
- Appoint Diversity Advisory Committee.

#### **B. Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Compliance**

- Ensure County Compliance with all equal opportunity and access federal and state laws and related County policies/ordinances;
- Develop/Implement Countywide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan;
- Coordinate implementation of Countywide Diversity and Inclusion strategies pursuant to the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan;
- Work with department Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DIL), as appropriate, to coordinate employee engagement activities and training sessions;
- Oversee the development and implementation of County Department diversity strategies;
- Review and provide comments on Department diversity strategies;
- Coordinate the updating of the County's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan every five years;
- Provide technical assistance/resources/support to Fulton County departments on diversity, inclusion and cultural competence issues;
- Monitor, assess and report progress towards goal attainment associated with the Diversity Strategic Plan; and
- Develop such other policies and procedures necessary to improve diversity, inclusion and cultural competence impacting County

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C. Appointing Authorities

- Assign a senior professional to lead department workforce diversity and inclusion planning and implementation strategies/actions;
- Develop plan outlining actions/activities that will be taken to achieve the specific priorities identified in the County-wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan;
- Identify a responsible management official and resources for each action/activity; and
- Be consistent with applicable law, merit system principles, County Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Policies and any other applicable non-discrimination laws and regulations.

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