



## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE CHARTER**

**MISSION:** MHA/O is an inclusive peer-run organization dedicated to self-direction, honoring the voice of lived experience.

**PURPOSE:** The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee will advise our organization in the integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of the work at the Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon.

**COMMITTEE'S CREATION:** In January of 2018, MHA/O's leadership and Board of Directors wrote an Equity Statement to kick off our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative. We acknowledge that this statement is not reflective of where we currently are as an organization. It is, however, reflective of where we need to be in order to accomplish our mission of being an "inclusive peer-run organization dedicated to self-direction, honoring the voice of lived experience."

While we are making strides in realizing our Equity Statement, this is a continuous effort. Being committed to equity means being committed to constantly assessing our organizational values and the extent to which we are modeling or falling short of them. It also means listening to feedback from our stakeholders and others who have interacted with our organization and taking the time to understand and reflect on those interactions. We intend to do just that.

### **DEI VISION:**

- Lifts the voices of lived experiences at all intersections,
- Mirrors and honors the diversity of the community,
- Fosters a safe work environment,
- Establishes authentic conversations where honesty matters, and
- Educates our community on intersecting identities and a multi-cultural spectrum of abilities.

### **DEI VALUES:**

- Trust and Honesty
- Hope
- Empowerment, Voice and Choice
- Safety
- Justice
- Respect and Empathy

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Diversity:** The range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values systems, national origin, political beliefs, and cultures.

- Diversity means more than just acknowledging and/or tolerating difference. It's a set of conscious practices that seek to understand and appreciate the interdependence of humanity, cultures, and the natural environment.

**Equity:** Ensuring that everyone has support and access to the resources needed to be successful and identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of communities most impacted by systemic oppression.

- Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the policies, procedures and processes of institutions and systems, as well as in the distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society and organization.
- Equity differs from equality. Equality refers to treating everyone the same but does not necessarily lead to equitable outcomes because diverse communities have diverse needs and have faced varying obstacles and inequities.

**Inclusion:** Ensuring that people of all backgrounds, identities, abilities, perspectives, and beliefs have an equal opportunity to belong, achieve, and contribute to our community. An inclusive organization promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect where all people are recognized for their inherent worth and dignity, talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living.

**Cultural Responsiveness:** An understanding of how institutions and individuals can respond respectfully and effectively to people from all cultures, economic statuses, language backgrounds, races, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, religions, genders, sexual orientations, veteran statuses and other characteristics in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth, and preserves the dignity, of individuals, families and communities.

MHA AO understands that cultural competency is unattainable for any individual person. Therefore, we strive to be responsive to culture, and to continue our individual learning through active listening and independent research.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE:**

The third Tuesday of each month from 9:30am-11am.

### **GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTION:**

- Be present and respect the space.
- Share your experiences, use "I" statements.
- Assess your safety and use your discernment.

- Confront, critique, and challenge your discomfort.
- The stories of others are theirs to share, maintain confidentiality and trust among the group.
- Consider your privilege.
- Step up, step back. If you find yourself speaking a majority of the time, stop and give others an opportunity to share.
- If you experience yourself making judgements, ask yourself where those feelings come from.
- Consider and address the impact of actions rather than focusing on your intentions.
- Acknowledge pain or offense in the moment using “ouch” and have the option to discuss it or not at that time.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:** The committee will guide the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion at our organization through the following:

1. Assessing the implementation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan.
2. Monitoring the development, implementation, and evaluation of standards for cultural responsiveness for staff and the individuals they serve.
3. Focus and provide input on organizational policies and procedures to address diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and make recommendations when appropriate.
4. Evaluating and recommending solutions where organizational inequities exist.
5. Ensuring the maintenance and dissemination of best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizational policies, teaching, training, hiring, and retention of staff.
6. Serving as a resource for guidance and consultation regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion issues for staff.
7. Disseminating information about ongoing professional development training around diversity, equity, and inclusion for staff.
8. Seeking regular feedback from staff and individuals they serve to inform decision-making and understand opportunities for improvement. Surveys will be sent out when tied to a specific initiative. A button will be included on the DEI website page to allow people to give feedback, not to be confused with the grievance form. Feedback will be reviewed by the HR Department and the Chief of Staff before moving to the DEI committee to
9. Sharing the work of the committee with the organization as a whole.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee includes 9 members with the following roles and membership structure:

***Committee Roles***

Each role is selected based on a volunteer basis serving quarterly terms (3 months).

***Team Lead:***

- Spearhead for the group, facilitates meetings
- Meeting deliverables and goals – setting agenda prior to meeting
- Ensures team is meeting regularly with scheduled times and locations

***Agency Oversight Representative:***

- Partner with the HR Manager to present New Staff Orientations
- Reports on updates to organizational leadership
- Brings budget requests and other requests for approval to organizational leadership

***Note Taker:***

- Publish notes and distribute to the DEI committee
- Takes notes in meeting
- Including tracking of follow up items
- Decisions made in notes

***Task Master:***

- Timekeeper in meetings
- Project deadlines
- Keeps project and team agenda moving forward
- Tracks on follow-up items in between meetings and check in with teammates about tasks and deadlines

***Subject Matter Expert/Researcher:***

- Synthesize information for group
- Researcher, information gatherer

***Communicator:***

- Messaging to staff, including writing a section for the monthly newsletter
- Voice of the team
- Responsible for ensuring communication through one voice of team projects, process and information to larger agency

**COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPECTATIONS/COMMITMENT**

- Membership terms are limited to two years with the option for renewal. The DEI Committee year coincides with the MHA AO fiscal-year (July to June). The DEI Committee first commenced in July of 2019.
- Must have approval from supervisor to participate.
- Members are expected to commit at least three hours per month to the DEI Committee.

- The committee meets once a month, plus subcommittee meetings, and events on occasion.
- Attend DEI Committee meetings and be prepared to engage. Meetings are on the third Tuesday of the month, from 9:30 to 11:00.
- On occasion, members are expected to join a subcommittee and meet with your subcommittee outside of DEI Committee meetings.
- Subcommittee-leads report back to the DEI Committee.
- Members are expected to participate and attend DEI Committee sponsored events, training, and retreats whenever possible.
- DEI committee members will review and write policies and procedures on occasion.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The committee will inform the organization via email of open positions on the committee. The committee will convene, and review applications received. A maximum of 9 individuals may serve at one time.