NEW YORK STATE | Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

5-Year Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

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2022-2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

AGENCY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS: 5

FRAMEWORK: EIGHT AREAS CRITICAL TO OPDV SUCCESS 6

Critical Success Factor 1: Informed and Committed Leadership: 6

Critical Success Factor 2: Clearly Articulated Roles and Responsibilities 7

Critical Success Factor 3: Policy Review and Development 8

Critical Success Factor 4: Dedicated Resources: 9

Critical Success Factor 5: Collective Accountability 10

Critical Success Factor 6: Education and Training 11

Critical Success Factor 7: Program Plan Implementation 12

Critical Success Factor 8: Performance Measures 13

CONCLUSION 14

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Order 187 was signed, August 23, 2018 to establish a coordinated government-wide initiative for promoting diversity and inclusion in the State workforce. Through Executive Order 187, the Office of Diversity and Management (later renamed the Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management) was established within the New York's Department of Civil Service.

The following year on January 4, 2019, the Office of Diversity, and Inclusion Management (ODIM) published the *Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan and the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation Plan.* These two plans outlined Statewide objectives for diversity and inclusion and provided state agencies with tactical guidance for establishing and maintaining standards to integrate diversity and inclusion practices into existing organizational responsibilities and activities.

The Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) is pleased to share its 5-Year Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan for Years 2022 – 2027. This Plan outlines OPDV priorities and goals to cultivate and promote a diverse and inclusive culture and ensure domestic violence and gender-based violence policies are trauma centered and culturally responsive.

These goals and objectives reflect our commitment to:

- support diversity programs;
- continuous learning and exploration and discussion of diversity topics;
- recruit qualified candidates of different backgrounds, experiences and talents;
- provide internal developmental opportunities;
- and assess what more we can do to nurture a supportive and inclusive work environment.

OPDV has adopted New York State's definition of "diversity" and "inclusion:"

DIVERSITY describes *"a mixture of individuals with unique characteristics that combine to support agencies to meet and exceed their organizational objectives."*

INCLUSION is *"a process that cultivates an environment that values collaboration, flexibility, and equity."*

Commitment to equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion adds value to OPDV's mission by creating a culture where employees come together to innovate and resolve critical issues effecting the residents of New York State. Cultivating an employee base whose demographic make-up reflects the many unique faces, voices, and backgrounds of those we serve is a crucial element in the pursuit of restorative justice and the empowerment of individuals to safely participate in decisions that affect their daily lives.

In creating this plan, OPDV will work to align diversity and inclusion goals with the Statewide goals set by the NYS Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management (ODIM). The Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan identified four comprehensive Statewide objectives:

1. Develop strategic leaders
2. Recruit and retain talent
3. Foster inclusive culture
4. Deliver effective programs and services

The *Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation Plan* identified eight areas critical to success at the enterprise and agency levels:

1. **Informed and committed leadership**
2. **Clearly articulated roles and responsibilities**
3. **Continuous policy review and development**
4. **Dedicated resources**
5. **Collective accountability**
6. **Education and Training**
7. **Program plan integration**
8. **Performance measures**

Relying on these overarching principles and objectives, agencies were then charged with developing their own diversity and inclusion implementation plans to both identify and elaborate on the specific actions they would be taking to improve their connections with employees, providers, survivors, and the many diverse communities of the State.

To that end, the next section will outline OPDV's specific priorities, strategies and actions that accompany each of the eight critical success factors outlined in ODIM's *Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan*.

AGENCY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

OPDV's overall objectives and goals of fostering diversity and inclusion throughout the agency will be accomplished through an effort to make services to victims of domestic/gender-based violence and sexual assault more trauma centered and culturally responsive. Within the last 2 years, NYS OPDV has extended its commitment to diversity and inclusion initiatives by developing and onboarding the Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion who is tasked with building the cultural responsiveness of the domestic and sexual violence statewide delivery system and internal capacity of OPDV.

During the next five years, OPDV seeks to continue making programmatic and operational enhancements to gender-based violence services and initiatives in consultation with staff by:

1. Facilitating one-on-one conversations with agency leadership including the Executive Director to discuss concerns and ideas for programming that expand our reach and value;
2. Identifying agency development speakers capable of touching on topics impacting gender-based violence (i.e., engaging men and boys; reproductive justice) to create a space for OPDV staff to develop their skillset and strengthen their analysis;
3. Continuing to revise OPDV's non-competitive positions to allow a broader spectrum of eligible professionals (from only DV program experience to larger human services experience);
4. Executive Director and leadership staff will continuously review its recruitment strategies after every procurement and completion of a new hire; and
5. Exploring and developing an evaluation tool/process to measure and analyze inclusivity of employee policies and procedures.

OPDV recognizes that this work must be done not just internally, but also throughout our engagement with external stakeholders. During the next five years, OPDV seeks to continue making programmatic enhancements in consultation with survivors, statewide advocates, community-based and culturally specific organizations, sister agencies, and other relevant stakeholders, which will be done in the following ways:

- The Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion will continue to build relationships with population-specific organizations across NYS.
- Facilitate provider calls with population specific agencies to provide information on state initiatives.
- Engage OPDV population specific agencies to host Survivor Listening Sessions, platforms for survivors to share their experiences navigating systems for safety.
- Engage population specific agencies to develop resource materials for gender-based violence providers engaging with population specific survivors.
- Engage with external stakeholders to identify community-based accountability programs and restorative justice initiatives.

FRAMEWORK: EIGHT AREAS CRITICAL TO OPDV SUCCESS

Critical Success Factor 1: Informed and Committed Leadership:

Leadership demonstrates its commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion values and services as a model for OPDV.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Demonstrate accountability, commitment, and involvement with regards to diversity and inclusion in the workplace***	**1.** Executive leadership seeks to convey the importance of diversity and inclusion in agency messaging, practices, and behaviors.	• Add diversity and inclusion discussion to the agenda for one executive leadership meeting per month. • Demonstrate diversity and inclusion practices and behaviors. • Ensure staff training opportunities are made regularly available. • Regularly distribute newsworthy items relating to diversity and inclusion.
	2. Agency encourages and regularly collects input from employees on diversity and inclusion.	• Through periodic observation and discussion, identify employee perceptions, then develop recommendations for future diversity and inclusion actions for management to use to expand efforts. • With input from ODIM, develop survey to collect staff input to assist with making changes to diversity and inclusion efforts and activity. • Complete annual diversity and inclusion survey to monitor progress.

Critical Success Factor 2: Clearly Articulated Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership provides clearly articulated guidance and support for diversity and inclusion initiatives. Supervisors need to be trained in diversity and inclusion awareness and proactively identify and resolve issues that hinder workplace diversity, respect, and inclusion. Employees serve as active participants in the development of agency priorities.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Increase management accountability for promoting and supporting OPDV diversity programs and objectives.***	**1**. Include commitment to diversity and inclusion objectives in performance plans.	• Ensuring all supervisory performance plans include a diversity and inclusion element.
	2. Ensure new supervisors have timely access to diversity and inclusion learning and training materials.	• Incorporating diversity and inclusion materials into appropriate SLMS trainings.
	3. Identify and resolve issues and behaviors that hinder workplace diversity, respect, and inclusion.	• Maintaining an open dialogue with staff members through surveys and/or focus groups to identify workplace issues that may inhibit the retention of a diverse workplace. • Communicating and building awareness of the roles and responsibilities each employee has in support of the agency's diversity and inclusion initiatives. • Developing an exit interview survey to better understand why employees leave and implement actions as may be needed.

Critical Success Factor 3: Policy Review and Development

Existing policies are reviewed for compliance with legislative and Executive directives. Newly developed policies are free of any implicit/explicit biases and promote a consistent approach to decision-making.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Review policies and guidelines to remove unintentional barriers and support accessibility and fairness***	**1.** Include commitment to diversity and inclusion objectives in programming and services.	• Launch LGBTQIA+ Endorsement Initiative, which will allow for NYS licensed DV providers to be endorsed by OPDV as providing LGBTQIA+ affirming services. • Develop a protocol to test language accessibility of the NYS DV/SV Hotline for quality assurance. • Foster intentional engagement with culturally specific organizations and survivors to consult on policy development process. • Review and update procurement processes to include invitations to minority- and women-owned as well as service-disabled owned businesses.
	2. Audit recruitment materials to ensure they are compliant with all applicable laws/regulations and foster confidence in the integrity of the hiring process.	• OPDV's non-competitive positions will continue to be revised to allow a broader spectrum of eligible professionals (from only DV program experience to larger human services experience). • Executive Director and leadership staff continuously review its recruitment strategies after every procurement and completion of a new hire. • Create internal and external procedures for representative applicant pools. • Explore evaluation tool to measure and analyze inclusivity of employee policies and procedures.

1.2 ***Enhance recruitment policies and practices for selection, hiring and retention.***	**3.** Outline clear courses of action that employees and program participants can take to report and address experiences of bias and discrimination, including tokenizing and microaggressions.	• Conduct audit of physical space of agency to ensure that it is culturally responsive and accessible. • Improve access to developmental opportunities for agency staff. • Update telework, work-in-place, and remote work policies to better support inclusion by increasing, as appropriate, flexibilities available to meet employee needs.

Critical Success Factor 4: Dedicated Resources:

Commit and allocate adequate and ample resources to sustain organizational changes in the short and long term.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Commit to change initiatives by allocating time and ample resources to relevant messaging and activities***	**1.** Determine specifical financial and staff requirements necessary to support diversity and inclusion initiatives.	• Conduct outreach and recruitment at job fairs and other events hosted by various organizations supportive of diverse communities, including disability advocacy and veteran groups. • Review financial and staff resources to participate in recruitment activities. • Update internal and external webpages with compelling messages that illustrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion. • Define and develop a comprehensive diversity and inclusion program to include relevant messaging.
	2. Collaborate with ODIM and other agencies/partners to increase resource capacity.	• Work with ODIM on opportunities to share resources, recruitment opportunities, information, and best practices.

Critical Success Factor 5: Collective Accountability

Identify short and long-term objectives and goals. Set benchmarks to report ongoing progress

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Conduct data analyses to develop meaningful diversity and inclusion data narratives and recommendations.***	**1.** Analyze demographic data collected and share results.	• Analyze demographic data to assist in establishing performance goals that enhance diversity and inclusion throughout the agency. • Follow up annually with updated diversity survey and measure progress and success.
	2. Use short and long-term approaches to meet diversity and inclusion objectives.	• Conduct ongoing succession planning discussions to address key-person dependence issues. • Identify ways to broaden necessary skill sets across the agency. • Develop and implement short- and long-term diversity and inclusion objectives across agency. • Follow-up, annually with updated survey to gauge progress, challenges, and successes. • Create internal and external pipelines for representative applicant tools.

Critical Success Factor 6: Education and Training

Develop and implement training programs that communicate expectations, discourage misunderstanding and build awareness.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Consider diversity and inclusion in agency training development and implementation.***	**1.** Offer access to information and resources on workplace policy, accessibility, reasonable accommodation, unconscious bias, and cultural competence.	• Review and revise, if needed, all training curriculum to ensure material reflects agency's diversity and inclusion framework. • Ensure materials promote critical thinking across diverse issues, experiences, and opportunities.
1.2 ***Provide employees with easy access to training and development opportunities***	**2.** Promote training and educational programs and encourage employee participation.	• Identify potential training topics and distribute publications/ articles that further promote the importance of diversity and inclusion to the Agency's mission. • Provide time and resources, if necessary, for employees to attend trainings that support the integration of diversity and inclusion principles into the agency work and practices. • Work with ODIM to schedule Implicit Bias Training annually to ensure all new employees participate in the training, including interns and Fellows.

Critical Success Factor 7: Program Plan Implementation

Incorporate diversity and inclusion principles into program planning, development, and service offerings.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Assess the effectiveness of Agency programs and services.***	**1.** Consider underrepresented groups in a comprehensive review of existing programs.	• Review policies to ensure there are no real or implied biases disadvantaging unrepresented groups in any way and revise as necessary. • Identify how diversity and inclusion can address challenges in gender-based violence programming and incorporate these ideas into future strategic planning. • Address gender-based violence issues and concerns that affect BIPOC communities through grant opportunities, enforcement of appropriate laws and regulations, consultations, technical assistance, enhanced public participation through OPDV and other sister agencies. • Promote diversity and inclusion principles to ensure inclusive programming, communications, and messaging as well as, relevant training for employees interacting with the public.
	2. Develop relevant and meaningful messaging to reach a variety of audiences.	• Develop and producing marketing and web materials to be accessible and supportive of diversity and inclusion principles. • Develop and produce materials that are accessible in a variety of languages and to those who are hearing impaired. • Develop and utilize lists of community-based outlets to expand outreach to target diverse audiences, including those serving minority affiliated institutions. • Increase engagement on social media outlets promoting gender-based principles and activities. • Research diverse internship opportunities as a pathway to increase interactions with communities of color.

	3. Consider diverse audiences when planning programs and events.	• Routinely review and share community demographics regarding gender-based violence issues. • Regularly engage with community leaders and providers to exchange best practices and expertise regarding diversity and inclusion regarding gender-based violence issues and activities.

Critical Success Factor 8: Performance Measures

Regularly collect and report diversity and inclusion data. Ensure leadership is regularly advised of progress made against annual performance goals as well as any specific challenges being faced by the Agency, providers, or other stakeholders.

Priority	Implementation Strategies	Actions
1.1 ***Collect, analyze, monitor, and report on diversity and inclusion cultural data.***	**1.** Establish baseline data report to analyze historical employee demographic data and monitor trends.	• Create a baseline report to analyze historical employee demographic data and monitor trends. • Create a baseline diversity and inclusion survey to obtain feedback from employees on their own experiences and perspectives.
	2. Provide regular reports to leadership on progress and assessment results.	• Formally provide progress reports to leadership against annual performance goals. • Provide regular reports on agency-wide successes; address specific complaints and identify corrective action taken.

CONCLUSION

OPDV's five-year plan lays out a course of action for achieving workforce diversity and inclusion by:

- recruiting from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants;
- cultivating workplace inclusion through collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and
- ensuring sustainability of our diversity and inclusion achievements by equipping leaders with the ability to manage diversity, measure results, and refine approaches based on data.

The plan details specific steps to enhance diversity and inclusion in the areas of leadership engagement, analytics and reporting, training, communications, strategic planning, and program enhancement.

This multi-level approach involves a long-term commitment toward a shift in culture, increased awareness of where additional work and guidance is needed, and a concerted effort to implement, maintain and sustain an environment fully supportive of diversity and inclusion.

Based on the reality that OPDV operates in a dynamic environment—one with several requirements and dependencies that could affect strategic priorities—the annual performance goals, measures, and targets may change over time.

As priorities change, we will assess the strategic goals outlined in this plan and make alterations to them as may be required at that time.