

Office of Inclusion 2024 Annual Report





A letter from the Chief Inclusion Officer

As we reflect on the progress we've made over the past year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the collective effort and dedication each one of you has contributed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across state government. These values are not just ideals we aspire to; they are the core principles that guide how we work, make decisions, and support one another.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is rooted in the understanding that true inclusion is a journey, not a destination. When individuals feel valued, supported, and connected, they are more likely to remain engaged in their work and contribute meaningfully to the success of the organization. We know that fostering a sense of belonging leads to higher retention, productivity and collaboration.

We've been intentional in aligning our efforts across the enterprise to ensure that every agency, department, and office is working in harmony toward our shared vision of inclusion. We know that each agency is unique, and as such, we honor and support the diversity of approaches in how we address equity and inclusion, while still striving to standardize core components that guide our collective work.

One of our primary goals is fostering inclusive decision-making. It's imperative that the voices of those most impacted by decisions are included in the process. We want team members to have a seat at the table and an equitable opportunity to shape the decisions that affect them. By diversifying the voices involved in key decisions, we not only empower individuals but also create better, more informed outcomes.

Equally important is increasing awareness and education. As public servants, it's essential that we are all equipped with the knowledge and tools to understand ourselves and those that we work with and serve. By fostering a culture of learning, we ensure that we are continually growing in our ability to serve and advocate for those we represent.

In addition to education, we are committed to implementing inclusive policies and practices. By working together, we are revising internal structures to better define how we do business, ensuring that our operations reflect the values we espouse. These changes will serve as a foundation for a more inclusive, fair, and responsive workplace.

Finally, diverse representation is a key area of focus. We must take a hard look at the data to understand how opportunities and experiences differ based on demographics. We are committed to ensuring that all employees, regardless of background, have equal access to opportunities for growth and advancement.

As we continue this work in partnership, let us remember that it is both a personal and collective journey. It calls upon our heads and hearts. Let us be patient, kind and compassionate with one another as we move forward.

Thank you for your continued commitment to making our workplace—and our state—more just, accessible and inclusive. It has been a privilege to serve you all over the last year with strategy, intentionality and care.

Warm regards,

Priscilla A. Stallings

Priscilla Stallings, Chief Inclusion Officer

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Development Timeline.....	2
Office of Inclusion’s Strategic Impact Areas: 2024 Advancements.....	4
Inclusive Decision-Making	5
Awareness and Education.....	7
Equitable Policies and Practices.....	8
Diverse Representation.....	9



Introduction

The Office of Inclusion is one of four interagency offices housed within Minnesota Management and Budget. The team advances statewide strategies to incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into all aspects of enterprise policies and practices to make the State of Minnesota an employer of choice. In alignment with the guiding principles, goals, and values of the One Minnesota Plan, the Office of Inclusion's priorities acknowledge the historical context of racial inequity and recognize the intersectionality of identities within the communities we serve. Executive Order 19-01 established the One Minnesota Council on Inclusion and Equity in 2019, emphasizing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in state government practices. Executive Order 21-13 established the Governors Community Council, which produced the Long-range Plan (LRP). Implementing the Long-Range Plan allows the State of Minnesota to commit to improvements that will support recruitment, hiring, and retention for all employees, including Black, Indigenous, and people of color, veterans, LGBTQIA2S+ people, and people with disabilities.

Mission

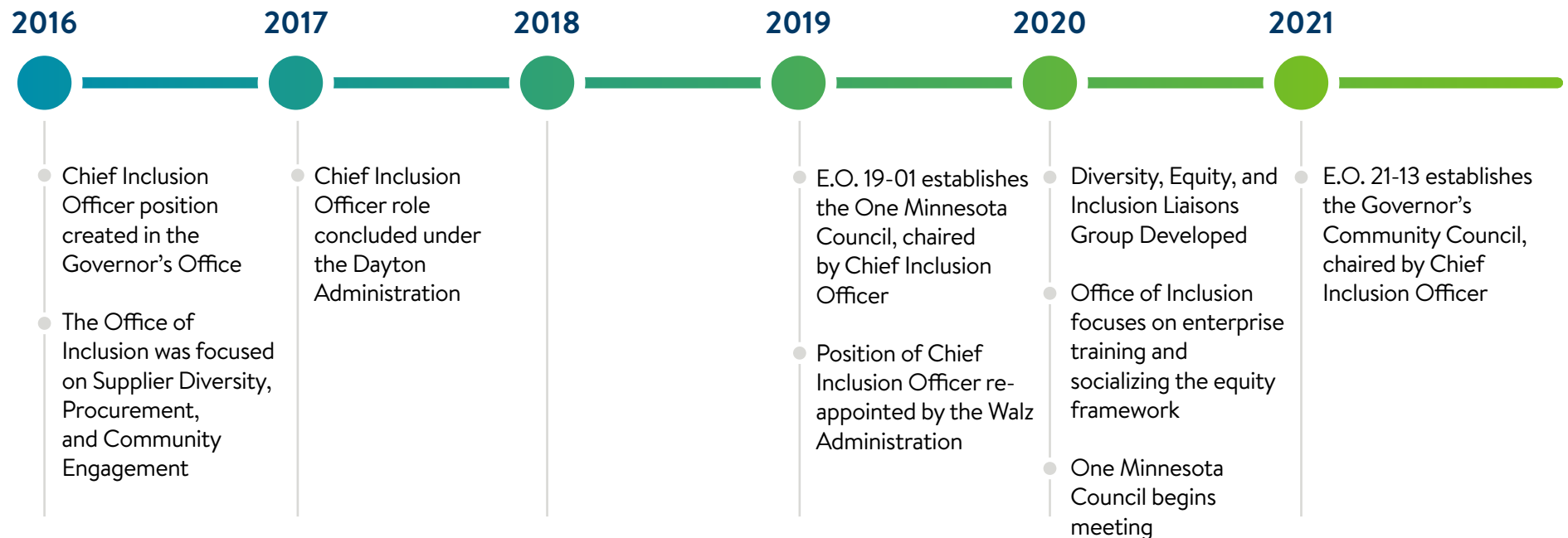
The Office of Inclusion is dedicated to fostering an equitable, inclusive, accessible, and just environment where employees are valued and provided equitable opportunities. Through collaboration, education, and data-driven approaches, we drive inclusive policies and practices.

Vision

We envision a state government that reflects the rich tapestry of our state, fosters equitable opportunities, and serves as a beacon of inclusivity.

Office of Inclusion Development Timeline

The Office of Inclusion began its work with a focus on supplier diversity, procurement, and community engagement. Over time, its mission, scope, and organizational home evolved in alignment with changing executive priorities. The office expanded its role to lead enterprise-wide equity initiatives, support policy development, and provide strategic guidance to cabinet agencies. Through multiple administrations and executive orders, the Office of Inclusion became a central driver of the state's long-range equity planning, employee engagement, and inclusive policy reform efforts.



Office of Inclusion Development Timeline

2022

- Long-range Plan (LRP) approved by One MN Council
- The office of Inclusion planned and convened the Governor's Martin Luther King Celebration for 2023
- The Office of Inclusion moves to MMB and shifts focus to the employee enterprise
- OOI recommends state move towards data disaggregation in HR functions

2023

- E.O. 23-12 redefines the scope and structure of the One MN Council and Governor's Community Council
- Office of Inclusion worked with MMB and the Governor's office to establish policy language in EO 23-14
- LRP approved by Gov. Office and OOI communicates and implements the LRP into cabinet agency strategic plans
- Realigned Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Liaison Agency Equity Change Plans to the Governor's Long-range plan Recommendations
- Chief Equity Officer role created to focus on equity and inclusion for residents
- State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool co-created

2024

- State of MN Equity Analysis Tool modified by Office of Inclusion based on user feedback and implemented across Cabinet agencies
- Office of Inclusion restructures and adds 4 positions to OOI team
- 1st Annual report on GCC's Long-Range Plan implementation delivered to Governor's office
- New Council appointments announced
- One MN Council and Governor's Community Council are Relunched and Chief Equity Officer added as a co-chair and vice chair of councils
- Policy Refinements
- Pilot 'Human Resources and Labor Relations Enterprise Policy Review Group'
- Inclusive executive communication training and development held for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Liaisons and Enterprise Employee Resource Group Chairs.
- Quarterly Inclusion Partners meetings launched to connect with enterprise employees

Office of Inclusion Progress in 2024

Enterprise-wide Alignment



- › **Spearheaded** the redesign and relaunch of the One Minnesota Governor's Council and the Governor's Community Council, collaborating with the Office of Equity, Opportunity, and Accessibility and the Office of Public Engagement to strengthen organizational and community impact.
- › **Produced** the inaugural annual report on the Governor's Community Council's Long-Range Plan to Address Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, driving engagement with over fifty enterprise implementation partners to showcase progress in state government diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) practices.
- › **Expanded** the Office of Inclusion's impact by strategically adding capacity and enhancing office infrastructure to better serve the enterprise's diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities.
- › **Enhanced** the Office of Inclusion's visibility and accessibility by launching a comprehensive office website and expanding diversity, equity and inclusion-related resources, providing wider access to valuable tools and information for the entire enterprise.
- › **Provided** proactive guidance, support and oversight to cabinet agencies in advancing their equity and inclusion efforts, meeting biannually with cabinet agencies to monitor and drive progress across state government.
- › **Redesigned** the agency equity change plan template to drive alignment with Long-Range Plan priorities, creating accountability to enterprise diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and building an actionable bridge to cabinet agency strategic planning goals, which the CIO advised on in 2023.
- › **Developed** a dynamic progress dashboard to track and measure agency advancements in the Long-Range Plan issue areas, offering clear insights into goal achievement and supporting continuous improvement.
- › **Advised** the Governor's office and state leaders on strategies for achieving enterprise-wide alignment and accountability to employee retention and inclusion goals.



Inclusive Decision-Making

- › **Integrated** diversity, equity and inclusion liaison insights into policy development, co-designing enterprise leadership competencies and practices that align with the organization's commitment to inclusion.
- › **Launched** an enterprise-wide Human Resources/Labor Relations review group in December 2024, partnering with the Enterprise Human Resources Management team, fostering cross-team collaboration, engaging diverse employee perspectives, and enhancing data-driven decision-making to develop inclusive and effective policies, practices, and procedures.
- › **Increased** the representation of employees from diverse backgrounds in policy feedback processes.
- › **Enhanced** collaboration among human resource partners, driving cross-agency communication and policy changes that positioned Minnesota as an employer of choice committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- › **Held** a listening session for the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Men of African American Heritage Employee Resource Group to introduce the office and learn from employee experiences.
- › **Partnered** with Employee Insurance to improve the engagement survey for the State Employee Group Insurance Program (SEGIP), strengthening the health, Employee Assistance Program, and well-being offerings for state employees and their families.
- › **Provided** continuous thought partnership to the Enterprise Conflict Management Design Group, offering strategic insights to support the creation of a cohesive and effective conflict management framework across the enterprise.

Spotlight: Quarterly Inclusion Partners Meetings



In 2024, the Office of Inclusion convened three Quarterly Inclusion Partners Meetings, addressing more than 100 participants including senior leaders and individual contributors from across the enterprise. As a result, agency partners left these meetings with key insights from reports on inclusion efforts, resources to bolster equity efforts, and a greater understanding of workforce inclusion strategies to help ensure enterprise-wide alignment.

The April meeting highlighted the work of the Minnesota IT Services Office of Accessibility Office of Accessibility, the Enterprise Translations Office, and the Olmstead Implementation Office, expanding awareness of the functionalities of each office and the unique ways they support inclusion and equity efforts.

The July meeting helped increase attendees' understanding of workplace culture and belonging through presentations and collaborative discussion. Staff from the Enterprise Employee Engagement and Experience team shared results from the state's latest engagement and inclusion survey, highlighting the role of career advancement in boosting satisfaction. Minnesota Management & Budget's Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging provided insights on fostering a culture of belonging across the state, and participants joined collaborative discussions focused on improving employee experiences and engagement.

At the October Inclusion Partners Quarterly Meeting, attendees heard from Office of Inclusion and Results Management staff on the origins of the One Minnesota Council and a high-level overview of the Governor's Community Council's Long-Range Plan. Attendees came away with increased understanding of the One Minnesota inclusion and retention goals tied to the plan, which Office of Inclusion staff shared insights on the role of data in advancing equity and inclusion.

Collectively, these three Quarterly Inclusion Partners Meetings served as a tremendous asset to statewide governmental work by equipping inclusion partners with tools and insights that improve collaboration and support enterprise-wide alignment.

Awareness and Education

- › **Launched** and facilitated quarterly inclusion partner meetings, engaging over 100 participants each quarter to share updates, provide resources, and deepen understanding of workforce inclusion strategies and collaborative efforts across the enterprise.
- › **Conducted** a landscape analysis of current agency-level opportunities for training, identifying key areas for growth and improvement to enhance enterprise-wide efforts.
- › **Advised and supported** agency partners in the development and successful launch of a new training, which debuted in Fall 2024, equipping employees with the introductory tools to better understand and avoid bias in the workplace.
- › **Delivered** informative presentations to audiences across the enterprise, including the Department of Human Services Equity Week, Employee Resource Group Summit, Enterprise Employee Resource Group Co-chairs, Senior Leadership Institute, the Governor's Office Employee Engagement Committee, Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinators, Affirmative Action Officers, Tribal Liaisons, varying leadership Teams, and Minnesota IT Service's Digital Accessibility Forum. These presentations shared expertise on the state's current strategies for advancing inclusion and inspired alignment and action across teams.
- › **Supported and guided** multiple state agency equity and inclusion initiatives, offering recommendations and insights to strengthen leadership development and foster the continued growth of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
- › **Fostered** leadership development by hosting in-person and virtual "Recharging Your DEI Grit" retreat with Dr. Jermaine Davis, empowering diversity, equity and inclusion liaisons (DEILs) and Employee Resource Group co-chairs with strategic communication tools and strategies to prevent burnout and maintain momentum in organizational change efforts.





Equitable Policies and Practices

- › **Co-developed** a State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool paired with a step-by-step user guide that supports the policy review process to promote inclusive policies, programs, and services for all Minnesotans.
- › **Designed** a process for enterprise implementation of the State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool and tracked tool adoption as part of bi-annual agency check-ins, measuring ongoing progress and accountability in the integration of equity considerations across agency operations. Eleven cabinet agencies reported adopting the State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool, while seven more reported using their own agency-specific tool.
- › **Provided** valuable insights to Minnesota Management and Budget's Strategic Workgroup on the Policy Management Manual, guiding the integration of an equity analysis lens into policy reviews, drafting processes, and development to support equitable outcomes.
- › **Piloted** a policy review process in collaboration with Enterprise Human Resources Management, applying the equity analysis tool to review five key policies in alignment with Executive Order 23-14. This ongoing review process will be supported by regular updates from the Office of Inclusion.

Diverse Representation

- › **Collaborated** with the Enterprise Human Resources Management to incorporate agency feedback into the revision of 5 key enterprise policies, including the Respectful and Inclusive Workplace Policy and Harassment and Discrimination policies, building alignment with the enterprise's commitment to a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- › **Partnered** with the Enterprise Employee Experience team to evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies, analyzing engagement, retention, and exit survey data to develop targeted inclusion and retention initiatives.
- › **Analyzed** disaggregated employee data, in collaboration with the Classification and Compensation and Results Management teams at Minnesota Management and Budget, to better understand demographic trends related to the One Minnesota Plan goals for inclusion and retention.
- › **Highlighted** the need for a new approach to managing employee demographic data to better inform and guide workforce strategies.
- › **Collaborated** with the Classification and Compensation team to conduct compensation analyses for selected job classes, actively working to support equal compensation practices.



Spotlight: State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool

The Office of Inclusion's role in fostering more equitable policies and practices hinges on one key development: an enterprise-wide State of Minnesota Equity Analysis Tool that has been collaboratively developed and operationalized over the last year.

The Office of Inclusion worked in partnership with the Office of Equity, Opportunity, and Accessibility, as well as equity practitioners from DHS, MNIT, and MnDOT to design an equity analysis tool that will help bring equity and inclusion considerations to the table as policies are created and revised and standards of practice are developed. The tool was piloted with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families implementation team and adjustments were made based on user feedback. Widespread adoption of the tool has been supported through the development of a user-friendly step-by-step guide and comprehensive training for agency implementers in partnership with Results Management, supporting the tool's effective use in promoting inclusive policies, programs, and services for all Minnesotans.

The tool is primarily a series of questions that guide users through a process of vetting policies, programs and initiatives through consideration of seven equity-focused criteria. Using the equity analysis tool will help to advance equity and inclusion in a number of ways:

- 1 Diverse subject matter experts have a more frequent seat at the table for decision-making processes as the lead implementers of and experts in the tool.
- 2 The tool guides users through important considerations related to community engagement, data and evidence, monitoring, and accountability.
- 3 By employing this tool, decision makers throughout the enterprise, regardless of prior exposure to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility principles and practices, will develop an inclusive lens for themselves that will help illuminate barriers and increase fairness to achieve equity across the enterprise.





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