



Chapter 1: Non-Discrimination

Executive Policy 1-12

Resource Contact: Human Resources Director **Established:** January 19, 2005

References: Civil Rights Act of 1964, **Revisions Effective:** November 6, 2013
Civil Rights Act of 1991
Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Federal Executive Order 11246
Washington Law Against Discrimination, [Chapter 49.60 RCW](#)
[Governor's Directive 98-01](#)
Policies [1-10](#), [1-13](#)
Procedure [1-13-01](#)

Establishing Ecology's Commitment to Diversity

Purpose: This policy establishes and emphasizes Ecology's commitment to diversity and our corresponding internal and external diversity and inclusion practices, as they apply to Ecology's workforce and to Washington State residents.

Application: This policy applies to all Ecology employees, represented and non-represented. It also applies to our communications and interactions with the residents and citizens of Washington State.

1. Establishing Definitions.

Cultural Competence: The knowledge and awareness of cultures and cultural differences and our ability to interact respectfully and effectively with people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors, such as gender, in a way that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Diversity: As defined and adopted by the Department of Ecology:

- **Diversity encompasses everyone.** Diversity encompasses men and women with a wide array of experiences and of different races and cultural backgrounds, different ages and generations, veterans, people with disabilities, various family structures, sexual orientations, physical appearances, and religious preferences.
- **Diversity is both a value and a goal for Ecology.** As a value, diversity describes a workplace where the unique qualities, values, and perspectives of all individuals and populations are respected. As a goal, Ecology's workforce should reflect the diversity of the people in the state of Washington who are served by Ecology.

Environmental Equity (environmental justice): As defined by the League for Environmental Equity and Diversity (LEED), a subcommittee of Ecology's Diversity 2010 Committee (1994):

“Environmental Equity is the proportionate and equitable distribution of environmental benefits and risks among diverse economic and cultural communities. It ensures that the policies, activities and the responses of government entities do not differentially impact diverse

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social and economic groups. Environmental equity promotes a safe and healthy environment for all people.”

Interpretation: The translation of oral information from one language to another.

Primary Language: The language a person uses to think, process information, and most proficiently speaks. The primary language is most often the language learned from birth.

Translation: The conversion of written information from one language to another.

Workforce Diversity: The characteristics of workforce diversity are varied. They include, but are not limited to, race, gender, ethnicity, physical appearances, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status, economic status, job classification, work experience, educational background, military status, and work location.

2. Ecology is Committed to Diversity.

The Department of Ecology is committed to maintaining a highly skilled and diverse workforce that complies with all federal and state laws. We are also committed to conducting outreach to the diverse populations within the state and to providing services to these populations in a format that is understandable and appropriate for all citizens.

3. Ecology Designs, Implements, and Maintains a Diversity Strategic Plan.

The Department of Ecology maintains and implements a Diversity Strategic Plan that is endorsed by the Senior Management Team and supported by all levels of management. The strategic plan includes goals and strategies for recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining a diverse workforce within Ecology, as well as management accountability and workforce planning. The strategic plan is considered to be a “living document” and is subject to updates and revisions as needed or as requested by Ecology’s senior management.

Ecology’s Diversity Strategic Plan, resources, and activities can be found on the Human Resources Office’s internal website at <http://aww.ecology/services/es/DiversityHome.htm>.

4. The Ecology Diversity Team Works to Accomplish Diversity Goals.

The Ecology Diversity Team coordinates and works together to accomplish agency diversity program goals.

The Ecology Diversity Team is sponsored by Ecology’s Human Resources Director, and led by the Human Resources Office’s Recruitment, Training & Diversity (RTD) Manager and the Diversity Coordinator. The Team is responsible for:

- Providing feedback and suggestions on the content of Ecology’s Diversity Strategic Plan.
- Reviewing the progress toward goals defined in Ecology’s Diversity Strategic Plan.
- Reviewing and providing input to the programs, projects, and ideas being considered or designed by the Diversity Coordinator.
- Assisting the RTD Manager and the Diversity Coordinator in promoting and achieving the goals of the Diversity Strategic Plan.

- Increasing employees' awareness and understanding of diversity and cultural competency issues and values.
- Assisting in producing diversity events.

The Ecology Diversity Team meets quarterly or as needed. The Team reports progress on achieving the goals outlined in the Diversity Strategic Plan to Ecology's Human Resources Director on a quarterly basis, and the Senior Management Team on an annual basis.

5. Ecology is Committed to Environmental Justice.

Ecology is aware of environmental justice (EJ) issues and dynamics when working with communities or working on statewide policies and regulations that affect the public's health or a community's environment. Ecology supports employee awareness, understanding, and consideration of environmental justice through active use of the EJ checklist. Ecology also supports ongoing participation and collaboration with EJ efforts led by the Environmental Protection Agency and local governments in Washington State.

6. Language Needs Are Determined for all Information Intended for Public Distribution and Outreach.

Information from Ecology that affects the residents of the state needs to be presented to citizen groups in the language considered to be their "primary" language. Program managers are responsible to ensure that information from their programs is reasonably available to all citizens affected by an environmental program outreach or Ecology decision. Program publication coordinators and public involvement staff are responsible for verifying language needs for the particular audience. Programs are responsible to request and pay for interpretation and/or translation services and to include this cost in operating budgets.

7. Translations and Interpretations of Ecology Information are Performed by Ecology Translation Teams as Available.

Ecology has established translation teams in select languages spoken by designated Ecology employees. Program managers are responsible for ensuring translation and interpretation work is performed by employees who are current members of an established translation team for the required language, as available. Each translation team is responsible for establishing a certification process for the language they represent.

Translation teams are formed and dissolved as business needs and employee availability are determined. In the event no Ecology translation team exists in a needed language, programs are responsible for using outside interpreters or translators. Ecology's Human Resources Office maintains a contract with an outside interpretation and translation service for that purpose.

The Multilingual Interpretation and Translation Team (MITT) provides guidance and oversight to ensure success of the translation teams. Executive management and the Human Resources Director sponsor the translation teams. (To request translation services, use the [Interpretation and Translation Service Request Form](#), ECY 010-87.) Each translation team has a management sponsor who is responsible for staffing the team at the appropriate level.

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The MITT is also responsible for establishing policy and procedures regarding service delivery, certification of team members, and providing tools needed by the translation teams to do business. Membership on the MITT consists of the management sponsors, the Human Resources Director, the RTD Manager, the Diversity Coordinator, and a representative from the Office of Communication and Education.

Approved:



Maia D. Bellon
Director

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