



CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

07-05-18

IP2

Date: July 5, 2018
To: Simon Andrew, Assistant to the City Manager
From: Stefanie Bowers, Equity Director & Human Rights Coordinator
Re: Racial and Socioeconomic Equity Review Toolkit

In August 2016 through August 2017, the following City Departments: Neighborhood and Development Services, Police, Human Resources, Finance, and Human Rights evaluated a current procedure, policy, program or service, and a new and/or potentially new procedure, policy, program or service using a racial and socioeconomic equity review toolkit. Toolkits provide a mechanism for institutionalizing the consideration of race/ethnicity, income, national origin, ESL, sex, disability, youth, and many other indicators that may influence outcomes for persons. These departments were intentionally selected because they have one or all of the following: 1) the services provided are heavily relied upon by persons of color or immigrant populations; 2) the community has expressed concern on how the services are delivered; or 3) the services provided impact large groups or persons in the community.

With the goal of continuing to advance social justice and racial equity within City procedures, policies, programs, and services, several City departments, including Parks and Recreation, the Housing Authority, the Fire Department and the Library are currently using an equity review toolkit.

These Departments are using a three-step process to gather information that will be used to inform planning and decision making about public policies and programs. Each step is enumerated below.

Step 1: What is the impact of the proposal on determinants of equity?

The aim of the first step is to determine whether the proposal will have an impact on equity or not.

Step 2: Who is affected by the proposal?

This step identifies who is likely affected by the proposal.

Step 3: Opportunities for action?

The third step involves identifying the impacts of the proposal from an equity perspective. The goal is to develop a list of likely impacts and actions to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

Proposals by Department:

Parks & Recreation

- Using recent Tree Inventory data, compare the tree canopy coverage of a variety of neighborhoods and compare with data of income levels and race to prioritize future tree planting projects to provide equity throughout the community.
- Map and evaluate home address locations of recreation summer camp participants to determine if all neighborhoods are represented in the children we serve.
- Map and evaluate home address locations of Group Swim and Private Swim lessons. Compare data with progression through the first four levels of swim lessons to determine if all neighborhoods are represented and having similar success in learning to swim.

- Map and evaluate home address locations of individuals who rent garden plots. Compare with garden locations to determine future locations and outreach to expand community gardens.

Fire

- Emergency Services Youth Summer Camp – look at participant addresses to determine if all neighborhoods/schools are being represented. Consider transportation alternatives to increase participation.
- Unattended Cooking Fires—take a deeper look at our data to evaluate factors tied to incidences of fire. Target neighborhood groups/schools in areas determined to be at higher risk.
- Ride Along Program—evaluate participant demographics to determine if all neighborhoods/schools are being represented.

Housing Authority

- Survey current participants and new voucher holders to determine if our Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated briefings are creating participation barriers to working families.
- Review HUD mandated briefing materials to determine the impact of Limited English Proficiency on Housing Choice Voucher program (HCVP) participants' understanding of family obligations and reporting procedures.
- Review and analyze the impact of periods of ineligibility for families terminated or denied housing assistance.

Library

- Determine if any populations are adversely affected and denied library services due to fines and fees.
- Monitor conduct reports regarding teens to determine if racial minorities are disproportionately affected. Identify ways to ensure fair and equal treatment.
- Study the ways that racially diverse groups obtain information about library services with a goal to improve information delivery to identified populations.

After each Department has completed its toolkits, the results and findings will be shared with Council and the community. In the near future, staff will report out on the progress of those departments that participated in the first toolkit reviews to get an update from each of them and learn more about recent outcomes.