Monterey County – Mandated Civil Rights Training

OVERVIEW: The Civil Rights Office developed a mandated Civil Rights training for all County employees to address structural racism, implicit biases, and to learn how to advance local racial equity initiatives.

CHALLENGE: Twenty-five percent of Monterey County's 434,000 residents are Limited English Proficient (LEP)[1], mainly speaking Spanish or a Mexican indigenous language such as Mixteco, Triqui, Chatino, Tarasco, and Zapoteco. This population, along with other minority groups in the area, have suffered generations of exploitation and face barriers to access equitable services from the public and private sectors. Monterey County strives to provide quality services to all of its residents but it struggled to achieve this goal as the County did not have a platform across the organization to discuss how policies, programs, and services create disparate impacts, especially on communities of color.

SOLUTION: In 2017, the Civil Rights Office, in partnership with other County departments, developed a two-hour civil rights training to advance the conversation around racial equity. The curriculum guides employees on how to recognize their own implicit biases and learn how to address difficult conversations in the workplace around race, racism, and social justice issues. Participants have the opportunity to work together to review case studies and brainstorm solutions to local disparities by using a racial equity toolkit with experienced facilitators that challenge participants during the training.

INNOVATION: The Civil Rights training is versatile in that it can be taught to any audience. The content is designed to create an environment where participants understand different disparate impacts in communities of color and why race matters. The curriculum also allows participants to create a shared framework around biases, racism, and the impact they have on their behavior and decision-making processes. In addition, the training provides a racial equity toolkit that empowers participants to recognize if current policies, programs, and practices in their organization are perpetuating inequities, and how to

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[1] A limited English proficient individual does not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English.

work with stakeholders to address and implement changes. The Board of Supervisors recognized the importance of sharpening skills and strategies in this area and mandated that all County of Monterey employees complete Civil Rights training every two years.

RESULTS: Since implementation of the County-wide training, the response has been overwhelmingly positive with an average 84% approval rate. We analyze feedback by race to see how different groups are reacting to the material and if adjustments are needed to meet expectations from the participants and the organization. The responses, by racial group, have also been overwhelmingly positive. As the momentum of the training has picked up in the organization, there have been requests to provide training to other government agencies.

REPLICABILITY: The Civil Rights training is customizable to target the needs of any organization and has been provided as a one-time or series training to the Monterey County Bar Association, United Way of Monterey County, the City of Gonzales executive team, and youth in the justice system. The Civil Rights Office is currently in talks to customize and provide the training to other nonprofits and governmental agencies.

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OPTIONAL SUBMISSION:
Civil Rights Training (2 hour) PPT
Three-day Civil Rights Training PPT for the City of Gonzales Part 1, Part 2, Part 3
Civil Rights Training Participant Kit