



2024 ANNUAL REPORT:

Major Themes and Five-Year Lookback

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STATUTORY FOUNDING

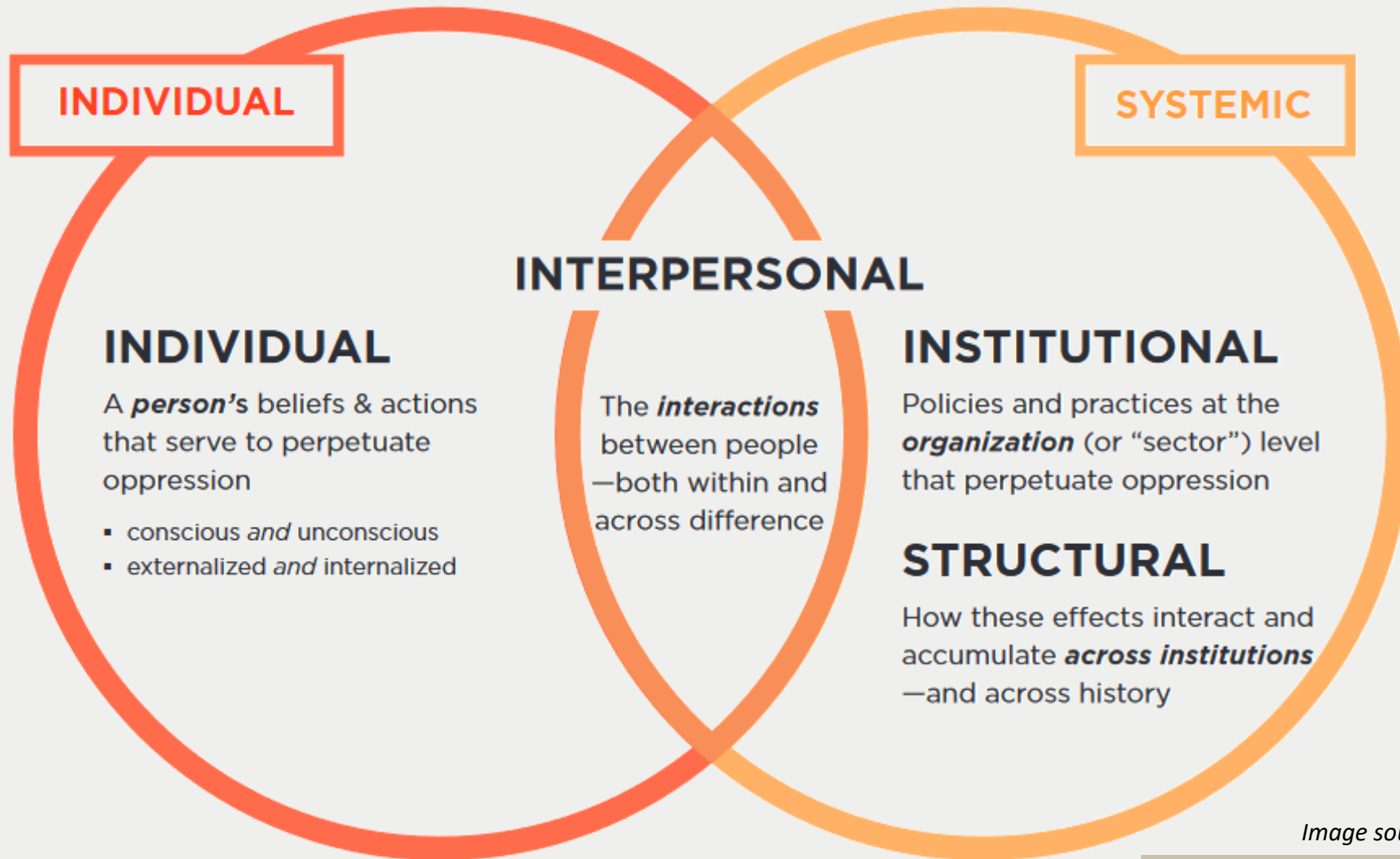
3 V.S.A. § 5003(f)

“[o]n or before January 15, 2020, and annually thereafter, the [Executive Director of Racial Equity] shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations demonstrating the State's progress in identifying and remediating systemic racial bias within State government.”

3 V.S.A. § 5002(c)(3)

“on or before January 15, 2020, and annually thereafter, [the Racial Equity Advisory Panel shall] report to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations on:(A) the extent to which the State is achieving the performance targets and measures as developed pursuant to subsection 5003(c) of this title; and(B) the nature and quality of the collaboration between the Governor's Cabinet and the Executive Director.”

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION & BIAS



WEATHER EVENTS AND RECOVERY

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 1-2

- Reports of racial inequity emerged during the summer's post-flood recovery efforts.
- Culture is an important predictor of whether or how effectively an agency, department, or branch will respond to the public need.
- “The state cannot claim to value its multicultural and disabled residents when it comes to matters of workforce growth and cultural offerings, but leave them to fend for themselves or develop impromptu self-support networks when increasingly frequent emergencies occur.”
- ORE Recommendation: Ensure adequate funding, staffing, and protocols to
 - complete the translation of all the State's vital documents,
 - create a licensure/certification program for translators and interpreters operating in Vermont, and
 - create a stable, dedicated staff position that can serve as a central coordinator for the work.

DEPARTURES AND DISMISSALS

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 2-3

- Nationally and in VT, women of color in visible equity-focused roles are being forced or pressured to leave their positions.
- It is unclear what meaningful steps have been taken to ensure this pattern does not continue...
- ...and so, it appears to continue: Since submission of the 2024 annual report, ORE has been made aware of additional questionable departures of staff of color.

WORKFORCE EQUITY AT SOV

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 3-9

- ORE is undertaking a pay equity inquiry with DHR collaboration.
- In FY'23, the percentage of classified State employees who identified as people of color was **5.7%**, compared to civilian workforce representation of **5.6%**.
 - For SOV, this represents an increase of almost 34% since FY'21.
 - This only includes Classified state employees, not Exempt (where most supervisory & managerial roles fall).
- State employees of color remain underrepresented in supervisory and managerial positions: In FY'23, there were nine, representing only **2.1%** of employees considered Managers or Supervisors.

WORKFORCE EQUITY AT SOV

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 3-9

- In FY'23
 - Applicants of color: **20.2%** of total applicants.
 - Hires of color: **13.1%** of total hires.
 - White applicants: **79.8%** of total applicants.
 - White hires: **86.9%** of total hires.
- SOV employees of color were terminated or quit at higher rates than White employees.

WORKFORCE EQUITY AT SOV

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 3-9

- SOV employees of color are still paid less on average than White employees.
 - This is not always the result of bias; differences in age, position, and tenure are influencing factors. Still, those factors are often the result of discrimination too.
- Turnover rates: Five of the job titles with highest turnover rates are also five of the job titles with highest representation of employees of color.
 - MV Direct Client Services Specialist I
 - Correctional Officer I
 - Registered Nurse II – CSN
 - Administrative Services Manager I
 - VR Associate Counselor

STATE-CREATED WORKGROUPS

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 9-13

- The State has struggled to rein in the growth in the number of working groups it creates.
- Since 2023 report, ORE has engaged with more than 34 state-created workgroups (some old, some new, some task-and-finish).
- ORE recommendation
 - **Not recommended:** A blanket reduction in workgroup number.
 - **Not recommended:** Omitting ORE or other equity practitioners from subject matter dialogue.
 - **Recommended:** A tactful approach to determining whether, why, and how to establish effective, inclusive, and sustainable workgroups.

STATE-CREATED WORKGROUPS

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 9-13

- Summer Government Accountability Committee
 - The Office provided two rounds of testimony, which included a set of recommendations on the substantive topics of inquiry and also on the Committee's process itself. The State has struggled to rein in the growth in the number of working groups it creates.
- The Committee's process itself was inequitable due to its statutory design.
- For true accountability in state government, more time is needed to conduct meaningful outreach and exploration of per diem rates, member recruitment, and more.

STATEWIDE EQUITY PLANNING

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 13-14, 35-36

- Consulted closely and often with the Chief Performance Office, the Secretary of Administration's office, policymakers in the legislature who had experience with justice and equity matters, and trusted members of the community.
- Eight rounds of revisions informed by the feedback from these entities
- Final proposed draft was advanced in October 2020.
- To date, no statewide equity plan has been adopted by any of the three branches of state government. Without a concrete directive endorsed by all three branches of state government, equity and inclusion efforts will continue to occur as a patchwork requiring the Office to continue trying to encourage consistency and shared vision.

FIVE-YEAR LOOKBACK OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

Primary pages: 18-34

- Non-exhaustive list of 155 policy recommendations originating from ORE or the Racial Equity Task Force.
- Very few have been taken up, for various reasons including lack of staffing capacity, lack of legislative action, and lack of awareness of the problem/recommendation among policymakers.



GRACIAS

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