

# REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RACIAL EQUITY & FIVE-YEAR LOOKBACK

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**PREPARED BY**

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**SUBMITTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Senate Committee on Government Operations  
House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs



## INTRODUCTION

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3 V.S.A. § 5003(f) requires that “[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.”

This report is the fifth<sup>1</sup> such submission to the General Assembly from the Director and contains a comprehensive (though likely not exhaustive) list of the guidance and recommendations issued since July 2019 by the Director and/or the Office.

## HIGH-PROFILE TOPICS

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### Weather Events and Recovery

In the past year, Vermont has experienced a series of climate and weather events that have pushed many residents and agencies to the limit, both emotionally and infrastructurally. As described in *The Atlantic*:

*“July’s flood is just the latest in a string of extreme weather events in Vermont this year. After a historically warm January, a late-May frost may have destroyed more than half of the state’s commercial apple crop. By summer, smoke from Canadian wildfires choked the once-clean air. Then, during the week of July 10, heavy rains flooded the state capital, Montpelier, and washed out homes and businesses across the state. It was the worst flooding since Hurricane Irene, a ‘100-year’ storm that struck only 12 years ago.*

*Vermont is no longer the haven many believed it to be. And if this tiny, bucolic state isn’t safe, far from the ocean in one of the coolest parts of the country, it’s hard to imagine a place that is.”<sup>2</sup>*

Notably, the passage above was written *prior* to yet another major flooding event that would occur in December, causing another round of devastation and loss for many residents across the state just a handful of months after the previous one.

Much has been written about the inspiring efforts of community coalitions and local organizations who banded together during these crises to volunteer with cleanup and recovery efforts. Those efforts were undoubtedly physically and emotionally taxing, and deserve to be commended and lifted up as models of how communities should behave in general. Still, they were not without their problems.

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<sup>1</sup> Reports from prior years are available on the Office of Racial Equity’s website: [racialequity.vermont.gov/reports-documents](https://racialequity.vermont.gov/reports-documents)

<sup>2</sup> Bergman, Megan Mayhew. “Vermont Was Supposed to Be a Climate Haven.” *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 21 July 2023, [www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2023/07/climate-change-safe-states-vermont-floods/674780/](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2023/07/climate-change-safe-states-vermont-floods/674780/).

Unsurprisingly, reports of racial inequity emerged<sup>3</sup> during the summer’s post-flood recovery efforts, serving as a stark reminder that being acknowledged as a member of a “community” is often conditional. This was made especially clear to the Director during early flood recovery efforts in July, when the Director challenged the issuance of untranslated emergency communications and one senior-level official responded with “Let’s get this box checked so we can move on to other life-safety matters.” From the copious guidance in the Office of Racial Equity’s January 2023 Language Access Report and the years-long practice gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, it had been made abundantly clear that 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. As the American Civil Liberties Union recently noted, “language access is a civil right.”<sup>4</sup> The Office of Racial Equity further regards communicative autonomy as a *human* right, and as such, urges the State—particularly its legislature—to ensure adequate funding, staffing, and protocols to meet the needs of Vermont’s increasingly multilingual residents and visitors. This includes but is not limited to completing the necessary funding to support the translation of all the State’s vital documents, creating a licensure/certification program for translators and interpreters operating in Vermont, and properly staffing these statewide efforts by creating a stable, dedicated staff position that can serve as a central coordinator for the large volume of work it will take to accomplish these aims.

## Departures and Dismissals

The past year, the U.S. has seen numerous prominent women of color embroiled in highly publicized struggles that have forced or pressured them out of their employment roles, especially when those roles are related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Vermont has seen its share of the same<sup>5,6,7,8</sup>, and the response from self-professed allies has been as expected: verbal sympathy and consolation behind closed doors, but too few meaningful steps to prevent it from happening again. Occasionally, an institution might create a new equity-focused position in response to such events, but when a spate of harm then happens to the person who winds up filling that role, how can we expect those institutions to rectify the problems? One might assume they would consult their in-

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<sup>3</sup> Blair, Jenny. “Post-Flood Montpelier Table Set with Good Intentions, Concerns about Racism Had a Seat Too.” *The Montpelier Bridge*, 8 Aug. 2023, [montpelierbridge.org/2023/08/post-flood-montpelier-table-set-with-good-intentions-concerns-about-racism-had-a-seat-too/](https://montpelierbridge.org/2023/08/post-flood-montpelier-table-set-with-good-intentions-concerns-about-racism-had-a-seat-too/).

<sup>4</sup> Resendes, West. “Language Access Is a Civil Right, for Both Children and Adults: ACLU.” *American Civil Liberties Union*, 10 Jan. 2024, [www.aclu.org/news/disability-rights/language-access-is-a-civil-right-for-both-children-and-adults](https://www.aclu.org/news/disability-rights/language-access-is-a-civil-right-for-both-children-and-adults).

<sup>5</sup> Charlestin, Esther. “Community Forum: ACSD Must Confront Racism.” *Addison Independent*, 31 Aug. 2023, [www.addisonindependent.com/2023/08/31/community-forum-acsd-must-confront-racism/?fbclid=IwAR2ib1u6\\_TCN81aVq5Sheqy3NV3Ay90U-oMT2IV--pe1NjROtF8ic2zssAks](https://www.addisonindependent.com/2023/08/31/community-forum-acsd-must-confront-racism/?fbclid=IwAR2ib1u6_TCN81aVq5Sheqy3NV3Ay90U-oMT2IV--pe1NjROtF8ic2zssAks).

<sup>6</sup> Posley, Jacqueline. “My Last Plea as a Black Vermonter.” *My Last Plea as a Black Vermonter*, A Very Open Letter, 28 Sept. 2023, [verypublicopenletters.blogspot.com/2023/08/my-last-plea-as-black-vermonter-very.html?m=1](https://verypublicopenletters.blogspot.com/2023/08/my-last-plea-as-black-vermonter-very.html?m=1).

<sup>7</sup> “Burlington City Council Meeting - 8/14/2023.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 15 Aug. 2023, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Nu6vxtTCuo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Nu6vxtTCuo).

<sup>8</sup> Page, Guy. “Black Women Who Left VT DEI Jobs after Pushback Now DEI Consultants.” *Vermont Daily Chronicle*, 21 Sept. 2023, [vermontdailychronicle.com/black-women-who-left-vt-dei-jobs-after-pushback-now-dei-consultants/](https://vermontdailychronicle.com/black-women-who-left-vt-dei-jobs-after-pushback-now-dei-consultants/).

house equity professional(s), but it is so often the case that harm befalls these equity professionals precisely *because* the institution failed to heed their guidance, warnings, and pleas for help along the way. This not only creates burnout and churn in equity-focused roles, but it also creates a corrosive distrust among the general public and prospective candidates who will inevitably wonder when it will be their turn, or whether when they finally reach their limit “the event [will go] on as planned.”<sup>9</sup> As TIME reports:

*“It can be a lonely existence. According to a new report from McKinsey & Co. and LeanIn.org, one in eight women of color are a ‘double Only,’ meaning the only woman and only person of their race or ethnicity in the room at work. At every step up the ladder, their numbers decline; while entry-level roles boast 17% women of color, their representation plummets to 4% in c-suite jobs.*

*And there’s some work to do for the people around them. ‘When you have almost 80% of white employees saying they see themselves as an ally, far less than half are confronting discrimination when they see it. Far less than a quarter are advocating for new opportunities for women of color or mentoring and sponsoring women of color,’ Rachel Thomas, Lean In’s co-founder and CEO, told the Wall Street Journal. ‘So we see this pretty big gap right now between intent and action when it comes to women of color.’”<sup>10</sup>*

The effects are far-reaching and deeply impactful: Research has demonstrated that experiencing racism in the workplace has tangible health-deleterious effects, and that “racial discrimination has been linked to allostatic load (i.e., cumulative biological stress) among African American women. However, limited attention has been given to psychosocial processes involved in the stress response—critical for understanding biological pathways to health—in studies examining racial discrimination as a social determinant of health.”<sup>11</sup>

## ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

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### Pay Equity

In April, the Office of Racial Equity invited the Department of Human Resources to collaboratively commence an inquest into pay parity across State employees. This undertaking will be primarily conducted by the Office and the Department, and will begin with a sample of job titles with the highest representation of people of color. For years, the Department has provided

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<sup>9</sup> Zucker, Noah. “University President Suddenly Collapses and Dies Onstage ‘devastating’ School.” *The US Sun*, The US Sun, 19 Sept. 2023, [www.the-sun.com/news/9131553/joanne-epps-temple-university-president-death-philadelphia-education/](http://www.the-sun.com/news/9131553/joanne-epps-temple-university-president-death-philadelphia-education/).

<sup>10</sup> Kalita, S. Mitra. “A Woman of Color Cannot Save Your Workplace Culture.” *Time*, Time, 28 Sept. 2021, [time.com/6102048/women-of-color-workplace-culture/](https://time.com/6102048/women-of-color-workplace-culture/).

<sup>11</sup> Allen, A.M., Wang, Y., Chae, D.H., Price, M.M., Powell, W., Steed, T.C., Rose Black, A., Dhabhar, F.S., Marquez-Magaña, L. and Woods-Giscombe, C.L. (2019), Racial discrimination, the superwoman schema, and allostatic load: exploring an integrative stress-coping model among African American women. *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.*, 1457: 104-127. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14188>

workforce reports that include information related to the age, sex, and racial representation among State employees. Data from the FY'23 workforce report appear below.

### Workforce Equity

According to the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report:

- The percentage of classified State employees who identified as people of color was 5.7% in FY'23. This represents an increase of almost 34% since FY'21. By comparison, the percentage of workers in the civilian workforce in FY'23 who were identified as people of color was 5.6%. It is important to note here that this comparison only includes State employees who are part of the “classified” workforce, not the “exempt” workforce into which most supervisory and managerial positions fall. State employees of color are still underrepresented in supervisory and managerial positions: In FY'23, there were a total of nine, representing only 2.1% of employees considered Managers or Supervisors.

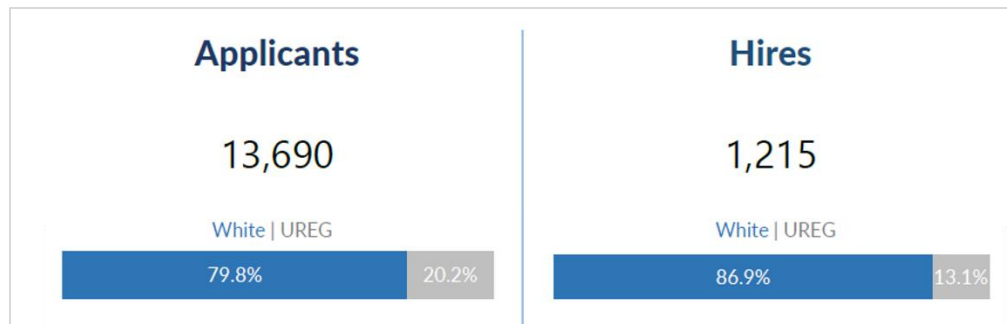
	Num	Percent	Average Salary	Average Age	Average LOS	Percent Female	Percent Male	UREG
Manager	423	5.5%	\$104,711	50.5	16.1	49.6%	50.4%	2.1%
Supervisor	1,167	15.3%	\$84,123	47.6	14.3	52.8%	47.2%	3.1%
Non-Management	6,040	79.2%	\$64,410	44.0	9.0	52.1%	47.9%	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$69,699</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>52.1%</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>

Source: The State's Human Resource Information System (VTHR). Data include only classified employees of the Executive Branch for Fiscal Year 2023. Average Salary is annual base salary of full-time employees and does not include benefits or overtime. Average YOS is average length (years) of service. UREG is underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. See Appendix D for the definition of UREG as used in this report.

Note: A managerial employee is defined in 3 VSA § 902(18) and a supervisory employee in 3 VSA § 902(16). Per Personnel Policy 6.3 the criteria used to determine a managerial designation include: the extent to which a position has influence or makes decisions regarding policy, budget, and personnel; and the organizational structure of an agency or department into divisions or major sections. The criteria used to determine a supervisory unit designation include: the number of employees supervised; the degree and type of supervisory discretion exercised; and the extent to which supervision is a significant component of the individual's job duties.

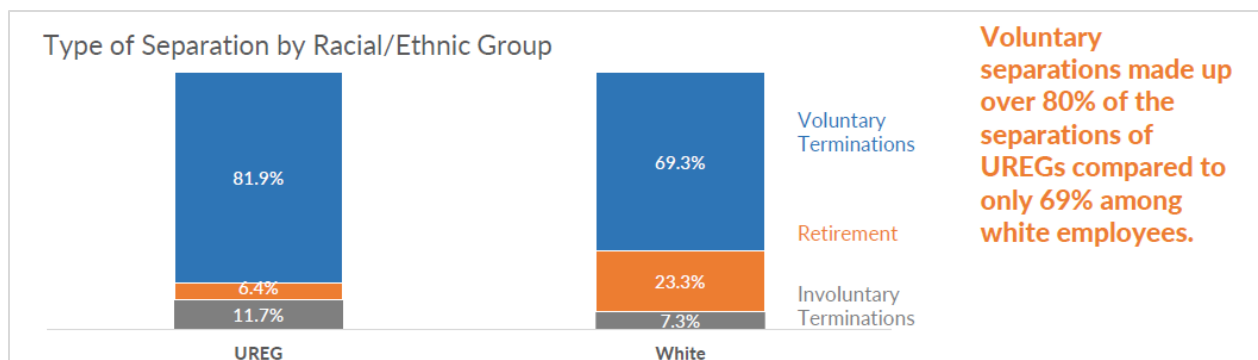
*from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report*

- Applicants for state service who identified as people of color were 20.2% of total applicants. People *hired* into state service who identified as people of color were 13.1% of total hires. By contrast, applicants for state service who identified as White were 79.8% of total applicants, but were 86.9% of total hires.



from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report

- Among the people whose state service ended in FY'23, racial and ethnic disparities remained present. White employees who left state service were fired in only 7.3% of cases. Nearly a quarter of them (23.3%) left state service through retirement. By contrast, state employees of color who left state service in FY'23 were fired more often than their White counterparts were, at a rate of 11.7%. Another 81.9% of employees of color who left state service quit.



from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report

- The State continues to pay employees of color less on average (\$61,704 for state employees of color, \$70,193 for White employees). The average age of employees of color is lower than the average age of White employees, so it is possible that a portion of this pay difference may be attributable to the distribution of entry-level positions among younger employees. In its report, the Department of Human Resources notes that

*“A pay gap analysis does not in itself indicate a lack of pay equity. Job related factors that could account for this gap include a difference in median pay grade (UREG median = 23 vs. white median = 24) and step (UREG median step = 4 vs. white median step = 7)... A pay gap analysis provides a high-level view of any differences in pay between groups without accounting for job related factors, such as occupational differences, tenure and so on. A more detailed pay equity analysis would be required to identify if there is a difference between similarly situated individuals.”*

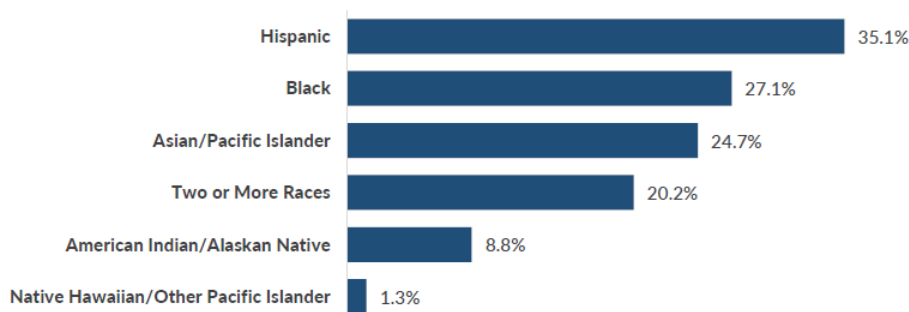
The anticipated findings of the aforementioned pay equity inquest currently being undertaken by the Office of Racial Equity will offer further analysis of this point, but it is important to acknowledge here that while the Department’s note on the limitations of pay gap analysis is correct, it omits any critical analysis or acknowledgement of the fact that differences in Pay Grade and Step are often themselves the result of hiring discrimination, and that those “job-related factors” are often manifestations of the same individual and systemic biases that can easily get explained away through otherwise ostensibly neutral data reporting. In other words, a pay gap analysis does not necessarily indicate employment discrimination between employees who are not similarly situated, but the fact that certain employees are not similarly situated is often the result of employment discrimination, so it cannot be presumed those “job-related factors” were uncontaminated by bias.

**Table 59 Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups (UREG) and Sex Profile - Fiscal Year 2023**

	Gender			Race/Ethnic Status		
	Female	Male	Total	UREG	White	Total
<b>Number</b>	3,973	3,657	7,630	441*	7,189	7,630
<b>Percent</b>	52.1%	47.9%	100%	5.8%	94.2%	100%
<b>Average Salary</b>	\$69,601	\$69,803	\$69,699	\$61,704	\$70,193	\$69,699
<b>Turnover</b>	12.7%	13.4%	13.0%	23.5%	12.4%	13.0%
<b>Average Age</b>	45.4	44.3	44.9	41.0	45.1	44.9
<b>Generation</b>						
<b>Silent</b>	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
<b>Baby Boom</b>	15.6%	15.1%	15.3%	9.1%	15.7%	15.3%
<b>Generation X</b>	41.5%	38.3%	39.9%	32.9%	40.4%	39.9%
<b>Millennial</b>	38.5%	39.8%	39.1%	48.1%	38.6%	39.1%
<b>Gen Z</b>	4.5%	6.8%	5.6%	10.0%	5.3%	5.6%
<b>Ave. Years of Service</b>	9.9	10.6	10.2	5.8	10.5	10.2

**Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups (UREG) employees had a lower average salary and a higher turnover rate compared to white employees.**

\* Detail on UREG Representation



**Male and female employees have nearly identical average annual salaries.**

Source: The State's Human Resource Information System (VTHR). Data include only classified employees of the Executive Branch for Fiscal Year 2023. See Appendix D for the definition of Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups (UREG) as used in this report. See Note on Table 15b for definitions of Generations.

*from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report*

- The gap in turnover rates remains disparate. When comparing the 20 job titles with highest representation of employees of color against the 20 job titles with highest turnover in



FY'23, five job titles overlap on both lists. In other words, five of the job titles with highest turnover are also five of the job titles where employees of color are most likely to be found. The Director acknowledges that not all turnover is bad; turnover includes roles that have been vacated due to promotion or retirement. However, as with the data on separation rates listed above, understanding the qualitative information behind these statistics is absolutely key—more important than knowing *how many* people left their roles is knowing *why* people left their roles.

**Table 60 Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups (UREG) Representation for Classified Job Titles – Fiscal Year 2023**

UREG Representation of Most Populous Job Titles FY '23			Job Titles with the Highest UREG Representation FY '23		
Job Title	Ave. Num.	% UREG	Job Title	Ave. Num.	% UREG
Correctional Officer I	278	21.6%	MV Direct Client Services Specialist I	52	25.0%
Family Services Worker	165	9.1%	Correctional Officer I	278	21.6%
Trooper	158	9.5%	Associate Mental Health Specialist	15	20.0%
Transportation Operations Technician II	146	1.4%	Registered Nurse II - CSN	17	17.6%
Correctional Officer II	106	6.6%	Correctional Educator	23	17.4%
Benefits Programs Specialist	94	7.4%	Civil Engineer I	36	16.7%
Transportation Operations Technician III	84	1.2%	Corrections Services Specialist I	19	15.8%
Sergeant	80	0.0%	Program Technician I	19	15.8%
Administrative Services Coordinator I	77	2.6%	IT Systems Developer II	19	15.8%
Reach Up Case Manager II	61	4.9%	Corrections Services Specialist II	19	15.8%
Program Technician II	60	10.0%	IT Systems Developer III	36	13.9%
Probation & Parole Officer	54	3.7%	Probation & Parole Officer II	31	12.9%
Environmental Analyst V - General	53	3.8%	Administrative Services Manager I	24	12.5%
MV Direct Client Services Specialist I	52	25.0%	Civil Engineer III	17	11.8%
BGS Custodian II	52	11.5%	BGS Custodian II	52	11.5%
Administrative Services Coordinator II	51	7.8%	VR Associate Counselor	18	11.1%
Environmental Analyst VI	45	0.0%	Public Health Analyst III	19	10.5%
AOT Area Maintenance Supervisor II	44	2.3%	Family Services Worker Trainee	19	10.5%
Licensed Nursing Assistant	42	4.8%	Program Technician II	60	10.0%
Family Services Supervisor	42	2.4%	Trooper	158	9.5%

*from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report, emphasis added*

**Table 33 Turnover Rates for Classified Job Titles – Fiscal Year 2023**

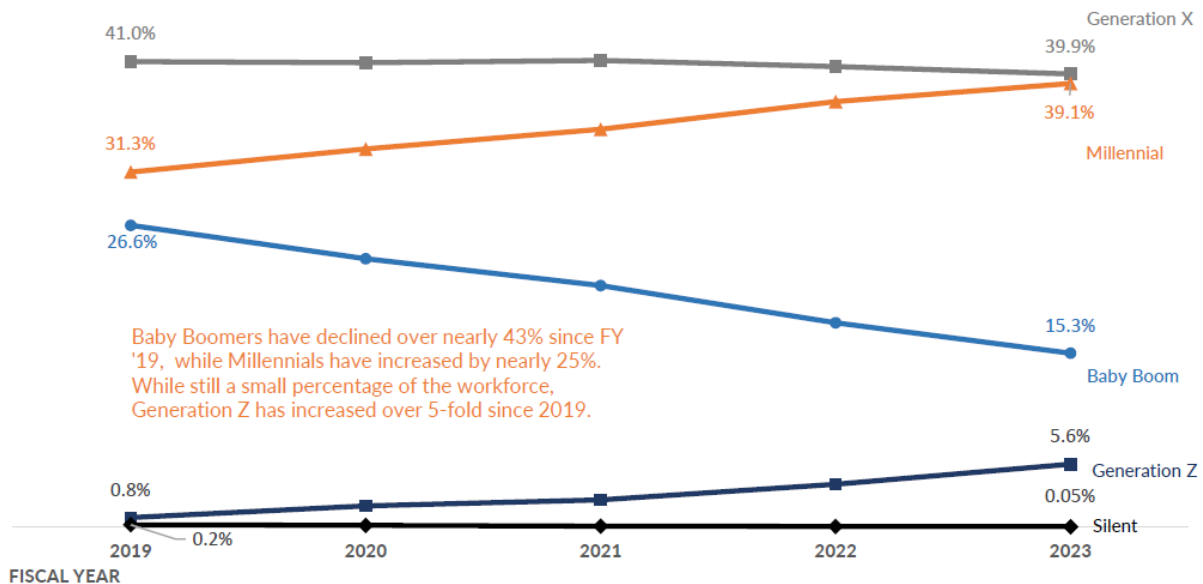
Turnover of Most Populous Job Titles FY '23			Job Titles with the Highest Turnover Rate FY '23		
Job Title	Ave. Num.	Turnover	Job Title	Ave. Num.	Turnover
Correctional Officer I	267	53.3%	Family Services Worker Trainee	16	87.5%
Family Services Worker	185	8.7%	Correctional Officer I	267	53.3%
Trooper	148	16.2%	PSAP Emergency Communication Dispatcher I	22	46.5%
Transportation Operations Technician II	129	27.1%	Job Center Specialist II	27	44.4%
Correctional Officer II	107	10.3%	PSAP Emergency Communications Dispatcher II	17	42.4%
Benefits Programs Specialist	106	19.9%	VVH Institutional Custodian	13	40.0%
Transportation Operations Technician III	88	5.7%	Information Center Representative II	14	35.7%
Sergeant	83	4.8%	Nurse Case Manager / URN I	30	33.9%
Administrative Services Coordinator I	78	14.1%	Administrative Services Manager I	13	32.0%
Motor Vehicle Direct Client Serv Spec I	58	25.9%	Administrative Assistant A	16	31.3%
Probation & Parole Officer	58	3.5%	VR Associate Counselor	16	31.3%
Reach Up Case Manager II	54	9.3%	AOT Senior Manager II	11	28.6%
Custodian II	53	0.0%	Tax Examiner III	11	28.6%
Transportation Operations Technician I	52	23.1%	Transportation Operations Technician II	129	27.1%
Financial Specialist III	49	6.1%	Environmental Analyst III - General	19	27.0%
Program Technician II	49	14.3%	Registered Nurse II - CSN	19	27.0%
Environmental Analyst V - General	48	4.2%	Licensed Nursing Assistant	45	26.7%
Licensed Nursing Assistant	45	26.7%	Motor Vehicle Direct Client Serv Spec I	58	25.9%
Civil Engineer I	45	6.7%	Transportation Operations Technician I	52	23.1%
Community Correctional Officer	40	2.5%	Epidemiologist III	13	23.1%

*from the State of Vermont FY'23 Workforce Report, emphasis added*

- To understand fully the impact of racial inequity on recruitment and retention, the State will need to measure the outcomes of different age groups and generational cohorts. Since the Millennial and Gen Z age cohorts are the most racially and ethnically diverse in the U.S. and in Vermont, our efforts to make the State workforce more racially equitable will necessarily have a greater impact on younger applicants and employees and our efforts to make the state workforce more age inclusive of younger employees will be more likely to have a positive impact for employees identified as people of color. As the Department of Human Resources notes, “If trends continue, in the next several years Millennials will equal or overtake Generation X as the largest percentage of the workforce, and Generation Z will surpass Baby Boomers.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Fastiggi, Beth et al. “State of Vermont Workforce Report Fiscal Year 2023”. Jan 12 2023.

**Table 15b Employee Distribution by Generation – Fiscal Year 2019 vs. Fiscal Year 2023**



Source: The State’s Human Resource Information System (VTHR). Data include only classified employees of the Executive Branch for Fiscal Years 2019 to 2023. Note: Generation Z are those born 1997 and later (age 26 or younger in 2023); Millennials are those born from 1981 to 1996 (age 27 to 42 in 2023); Generation X are those born from 1965 to 1980 (age 43 to 58 in 2023); the Baby Boom are those born from 1946 to 1964 (age 59 to 77 in 2023); and The Silent Generation are those born from 1945 or earlier (age 78 or older in 2023). <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/>

## WORKGROUPS

The State has struggled to rein in the growth in the number of working groups it creates. From the 2023 Director’s report:

*“It is the Director’s recommendation that all branches of State government reassess the landscape of equity-focused workgroups to determine*

- *whether new workgroups are needed for a particular task/topic,*
- *whether existing workgroups can take on any new duties needed,*
- *whether any new workgroups need to exist in perpetuity or can serve as “task-and-finish” groups that will dissolve after a certain milestone is met,*
- *whether new workgroups will call upon the same set of community members who already sit on multiple workgroups,*
- *whether the compensation for the work is appropriate given the amount of work required by the members of the prospective new workgroup, and*
- *what work product or deliverable is expected of a new workgroup and how it will be effectively utilized or advanced by the State.”*

[...]

*Further, the siloing of work through creation of duplicative or parallel workgroups requires thoughtful planning about the practical ways in which these various groups are intersecting or collaborating, and the adequacy of the*

*per diem compensation structure that is offered to some of the members of these workgroups.”*

In the four months following that report, the Legislature proceeded to create over a dozen new working groups, at least 10 of which required direct support, participation, or consultation from the Office of Racial Equity. In fact, one of those working groups created in the 2023 legislative session was the Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination in Schools, a task-and-finish group whose purpose is “to study and give recommendations for how to address harassment and discrimination experienced by students.” This is not to be confused with the Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council created by Act 129 of 2012, whose statutory purpose is “to provide advice and recommendations on harassment, hazing, and bullying prevention strategies and resources; and to coordinate statewide activities related to the prevention of and response to harassment, hazing, and bullying.” When comparing the membership lists for both these groups, the overlap and duplication becomes even more apparent:

<b>Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council</b>	<b>Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination in Schools</b>
	the Chair of the Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council
the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals’ Association or designee	the Executive Director of the Vermont Principals’ Association or designee
the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee	the Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association or designee
the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee	the Executive Director of the Vermont Superintendents Association or designee
the President of the Vermont National Education Association or designee	the Executive Director of the Vermont National Education Association or designee
the Executive Director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission or designee	the Executive Director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission or designee
the Executive Director of the Vermont Independent Schools Association or designee	
other members selected by the Commissioner	the Secretary of Education or designee
	the Executive Director of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee
	the Executive Director of Vermont Legal Aid or designee
	the Executive Director of Outright Vermont or designee
	the Executive Director of Racial Equity or designee
	the Executive Director of the Vermont chapter of the National Association of Social Workers or designee

In other words, this year a temporary working group was created to examine issues of harassment and bullying in schools, half of whose membership already constitutes a standing Council that has existed for 11 years and is focused on the topic of harassment and bullying in schools. Remixing the same entities on the same subject matter but under a different name still caused those entities to carry the same baggage, interpersonal interactions, and workload constraints they already had as members of the standing workgroup.

This is only one example, but it is an illustrative one that begs the question: Is this sustainable? Vermont finds itself in a difficult stage: It is a small state with high civic engagement and a very accessible state government, so it has historically been able to accomplish a great deal of intensive policy work through the low-cost or no-cost labor of workgroup members and “citizen legislators.” However, over the years, the volume of research, drafting, deliberation, public engagement, investigation, and convening has grown substantially. So has the opportunity cost for performing those activities. As a result, that increased burden creates disparities in who can afford to be civically engaged and who cannot, especially when workgroups seek more diversity in their membership and call upon the same dozen well-known people and organizations to represent the interests of historically marginalized groups. Yet, despite the increased need for this important work, the State does not currently appear to be financially equipped to be able to afford to hire or meaningfully compensate those civically engaged community members whose service on the State’s boards and commissions has fueled important policy and budget transformation. Put plainly, the State is too large to keep relying on volunteers to keep government going, yet too small to be able to pay what the work is truly worth. One wonders how many members of State-created workgroups would have vested in the State pension by now if the hours they contributed had been deemed staff hours instead of committee appointment service.

The following is a list of workgroups the Director or Office has supported or engaged since the 2023 report.

GROUP <sup>13</sup>	FORMAL TITLE <sup>14</sup>
AITAG	Act 1 Technical Advisory Group [M]
ABELHSAS	Adult Basic Education and Literacy HSCP Student Access Study [M]
AIAC	Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council [C]
CCB	Cannabis Control Board [L]
CJC	Vermont Criminal Justice Council [VC]
CYFAAC	Child Youth Family Advocate Advisory Council [M]
CVPP	Community Violence Prevention Program Working Group [M]
EJAC	Environmental Justice Advisory Council [M]
EJIAC	Environmental Justice Inter-Agency Committee [M]
ELs	Equity Liaisons [C]
ESESAWG	Ethnic and Social Equity Standards Advisory Working Group [M]

<sup>13</sup> This list does not include the many coalitions and workgroups performing equity work in Vermont’s communities. It includes state-created or state-led groups, which have the distinct characteristic of being legally mandated to serve their specified function and meet defined expectations.

<sup>14</sup> [M]—Director is a member of this workgroup. [L]—Director serves as liaison or advisor to this workgroup. [C]/[VC]—Director is a chairperson or vice chairperson of this group.

FPJIY	Facility Planning for Justice-Involved Youth [M]
FIP	Fair and Impartial Policing Committee
GWEDC	Governor's Workforce Equity and Diversity Council [L]
HEAC	Health Equity Advisory Commission [M]
HHB	Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Advisory Council
HRC	Vermont Human Rights Commission [L]
ICAR	Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules
IPWG	Interagency Prevention Working Group [M]
JRII-DV	Justice Reinvestment - Domestic Violence Response Systems [M]
LAOB	Land Access and Opportunity Board [M]
LEDC	Law Enforcement Data Collection [M]
NCJRP	National Criminal Justice Reporting Project [M]
RDAP	Racial Disparities in the Criminal & Juvenile Justice System Advisory Panel [M]
REAP	Racial Equity Advisory Panel [ED]
RJSAC	Racial Justice Statistics Advisory Council [ED]
RRCC	Rural Recovery Coordination Council
SEC	Social Equity Legislative Caucus
SHCSTF	State House Curatorial Special Task Force [M]
TSR	Traffic Stop Regulation [M]
TRC	Truth & Reconciliation Commission
VCNAA	Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs
WGPPIDCJI	Working Group on Policies Pertaining to Individuals with Intellectual Disability Who Are Criminal-Justice Involved [M]
WGSPHDS	Working Group on Student Protections from Harassment and Discrimination in Schools [C]

In addition to this non-exhaustive list, Vermont is also home to numerous community-based organizations performing important and impactful equity work across the state. It is equally important that the state actively engage with and support these organizations, given their deep contacts in communities and their contributions to the state's advancements in equity.

### Summer Government Accountability Committee

An important, yet largely unnoticed action taken by the Legislature in 2023 was the dissolution of the standing Government Accountability Committee and creation of the Summer Government Accountability Committee through Act 53 of 2023. The Committee's stated intent is "to reexamine the principle of government accountability by focusing on how evidence is used to inform policy, how information is publicly conveyed, and how legislation can best be formed to achieve its intended outcomes." Specifically, the Committee is tasked with considering the following:

1. ways to ensure that the Legislative Branch is accountable to the people of Vermont by creating new processes and metrics by which to measure accountability;
2. ways to ensure equity in pay across commissions, boards, and joint legislative committees based on the nature of the service and required skill level;

3. ways to ensure equitable participation on boards and commissions and in any public engagement process mandated by the State or General Assembly by providing appropriate compensation and material support; and
4. codifying mechanisms for controlling and restraining the increasing number of commissions, boards, and joint legislative committees.<sup>15</sup>

All the topics listed above are of incredible importance to the future of the state’s governance, and are of particular interest to the Office of Racial equity, especially listed items 2 through 4. Act 53 stipulates that the Committee is expected to accomplish this work over the course of four meetings—or, more accurately, that members will only be *compensated* for a maximum of four meetings.

The Office provided two rounds of testimony<sup>16</sup>, which included a set of recommendations on the substantive topics of inquiry and also on the Committee’s process itself. Noting the importance of hearing from a broad set of interested parties—particularly those who do not typically have a direct line to government or the legislative process—the Office looks forward to working with the Committees on Government Operations in the 2024 legislative session to explore more deeply the qualitative and quantitative information that will help the Legislature make positive transformative change to the way it handles data and workgroups.

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## FIVE-YEAR LOOKBACK OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Statewide Equity Plan

In the autumn of 2019, the Director presented a first draft of a statewide equity plan for consideration and adoption. The intended goal of the plan was that the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary branches would each be reflected in and bound by the metrics and goals outlined in the plan, and would work collaboratively and independently to accomplish a shared set of goals that would advance inclusion and equity in Vermont. Due to the nature of state government’s role in the lives of everyday residents and visitors, a plan of this nature necessarily involves Executive agencies more than Legislative or Judiciary departments because of the breadth and variety of functions that the state’s Executive agencies fulfill. However, an equally steadfast commitment is expected from all branches of government. In developing the draft statewide equity plan, the Director 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. Following eight rounds of revisions informed by the feedback from these entities, a 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, and no clear or overt process for incorporating equity and inclusion into any other statewide or branch-specific strategic plans have been facilitated. While many of its contents are now moot, a copy of the draft statewide equity plan appears in Appendix B of this report.

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<sup>15</sup> No. 53. *an Act Relating to Boards and Commissions.*, [legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2024/WorkGroups/SummerGAC/Highlights/Committee’s%20Enabling%20Act-%20Act%2053,%20Sec.s%202%20&%202a.pdf](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2024/WorkGroups/SummerGAC/Highlights/Committee’s%20Enabling%20Act-%20Act%2053,%20Sec.s%202%20&%202a.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> <https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/document/2024/384/Witness/Xusana%20Davis#documents-section>

Of the many guidance and policy inquiries the Office of Racial Equity receives, one of the most frequent requests is from colleagues across state government lamenting the lack of a centralized plan or set of clearly delineated shared equity values and goals. The Director shares in that disappointment, having witnessed each of the three branches of government independently engage in exercises designed to identify and coordinate high-level goals to serve the people of the State of Vermont more effectively. Examples include

- the years-long efforts of the legislative Government Accountability Committee, particularly its 2021 goal to update the Act 186 population level outcomes. The Director worked with the Government Accountability Committee, the Chief Performance Officer, continuous improvement professionals in the Agency of Human Services, members of the public (through community consultation sessions), and others to generate a recommended update to the Act 186 population level outcomes. This recommendation was not taken up in the committees of jurisdiction in any of the legislative sessions since those efforts occurred.
- Growing emphasis on the importance of metrics and data collection to understand disparities in policy or outcomes, including updates to statutes governing law enforcement demographic data collection practices and the creation of new roles and divisions in state government focused on data collection and disaggregation.
- Multiple rounds of strategic plan updates in the Executive branch, particularly those occurring after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which rendered many of the state's existing goals and metrics either moot or of secondary importance when compared to the sudden need to pivot toward addressing the health, economic, and social recovery the pandemic necessitated.
- Interim updates to the Judiciary's five-year plan and the creation of its Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Commission by the State Supreme Court. Recent conversations between the Commission and representatives from the National Council of State Courts have confirmed that Vermont is one of few states whose judiciary has a committee of this nature, and that of the states whose judiciaries *do* have similar committees, none have engaged in the amount of public engagement that Vermont's DEI Commission has.

All these examples demonstrate a clear and deliberate effort by all three branches of state government to make their work more equitable and data-driven. What remains is decisive, uniform affirmation of these shared desires. The Office of Racial Equity does maintain an Office-level strategic plan and other foundational guiding documents that delineate its mission, values, goals, deliverables, and a theory of change for its work. These guiding documents inform the Office's work across all branches of state government and in communities, which indirectly informs the work of those various entities. However, 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.

## TOPICS REQUIRING CONTINUED ATTENTION

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### Upholding Our Values on Equity

The Office of Racial Equity has articulated a set of values that include

- Process equity,



- Systemic solutions for systemic problems, and
- Transformative change over transactional change.

The Director has seen noticeable and valuable progress in the culture shift that it takes to advance equity in government systems. Still, there are some parts of state government that remain committed to upholding the status quo at the expense of greater inclusion. As a result, the Director has been perplexed, disappointed, and at times incensed by some of the continued recalcitrance and hostility to basic principles of equity and justice that have been demonstrated by leaders across state and local government in Vermont. As if justice and inclusion have lost their appeal or trendiness, some leaders appear now to require *more* pressure to be mission-driven and inclusive than in prior years.

For example, Act 106 of 2022 “requires the Executive Director of Racial Equity, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, and the Commissioner of Public Safety to jointly examine all motor vehicle violations for the purpose of making recommendations on whether or not statutes should be repealed, modified, or limited to secondary enforcement.” At the time of its introduction, it was made expressly clear the bill’s intent was to reduce traffic enforcement disparities among motorists, especially racial disparities disproportionately harming motorists of color.<sup>17,18,19</sup> Once the legislation was signed into law, a working group was assembled to carry out the mandate of Act 106. The members of the working group worked diligently to conduct a deep review of the state’s traffic code and identify provisions that could be modified or repealed, but faced opposition from one key involved party who challenged efforts to make any recommendations that were explicitly rooted in principles of equity and inclusion because the final language of Act 106 did not explicitly feature those words or a statement of legislative intent indicating that an equity lens should be utilized (a particularly weak argument considering the Director was one of the only three parties named in the legislation). Further, it took more than a full year of pleading with the working group to wrestle a begrudging agreement from all parties to conduct minimal community outreach so that members of the public could share their experiences and insights to inform the working group’s final output.<sup>20</sup> Due to how close this delay came to the working group’s legislative reporting deadline, the community engagement sessions were ill-timed, rushed, short-noticed, poorly-attended, and largely unknown to communities across the state. The working group members who shouldered the majority of the planning, execution, and analysis for the community outreach were those same few who had spent over a year proposing it—and also the same few who received the bulk of the community’s critiques of the shortcomings of the process.

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<sup>17</sup> Mearhoff, Sarah. “With Policing Bills Reduced to Studies, Justice Reform Advocates See a Pattern of Inaction.” *VT Digger*, 25 May 2022, [vtdigger.org/2022/05/24/with-policing-bills-reduced-to-studies-justice-reform-advocates-see-a-pattern-of-inaction/](https://vtdigger.org/2022/05/24/with-policing-bills-reduced-to-studies-justice-reform-advocates-see-a-pattern-of-inaction/).

<sup>18</sup> Amato, Dom. “Legislation Could Discourage Some Police Traffic Stops.” *https://www.Wcax.Com*, 27 Jan. 2022, [www.wcax.com/2022/01/27/legislation-would-change-way-police-enforce-some-traffic-violations/](https://www.wcax.com/2022/01/27/legislation-would-change-way-police-enforce-some-traffic-violations/).

<sup>19</sup> Seguino, Stephanie. *TESTIMONY TO HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS*, 9 Mar. 2022, [legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Government%20Operations/Bills/H.635/Witness%20Documents/H.635~Stephanie%20Seguino~Written%20Testimony~3-9-2022.pdf](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Government%20Operations/Bills/H.635/Witness%20Documents/H.635~Stephanie%20Seguino~Written%20Testimony~3-9-2022.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> For more on the importance and quality of community engagement in decision-making, see the [Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#) and the [Ladder of Participation](#).

Examples like this contributed to the Director’s December testimony to the Summer Government Accountability Committee, during which the Committee was advised that the Legislature should “be clear and deliberate with legislative intent language. If equity and inclusion are part of the reason [a] workgroup was created, say so in the enabling order. When this language is removed through the negotiation and drafting process, the removal/absence of the language is used as a way to thwart, undermine, or avoid the workgroup conducting its work with an equity lens.”<sup>21</sup>

## Selected Research & Resources

The Office of Racial Equity thanks its community and research partners for their diligent work to gather, analyze, and report on data that help to identify and address inequities. A large amount of research on varied topics has taken place this past year. A small set of them are listed below:

- Vermont
  - o May 2023 report of the Governors’ Workforce Equity and Diversity Council which includes recommendations for making State websites more inclusive.
  - o 2023 [report](#) on the Universal School Meals Act.
  - o 2023 [report](#) of the Department of Finance and Management on unfunded budget pressures, see especially (C)(ii) childcare fee scale and (C)(iii) Reach Up benefits.
  - o 2022 [report](#) on the Task Force on Equitable & Inclusive School Environments.
  - o 2022 report from the working group on civil asset forfeiture including a non-consensus section with targeted recommendations.
  - o 2023 [update](#) to the “State of Vermont’s Children” annual report by Building Bright Futures, containing data on child welfare and early childhood education.
  - o Vermont is now the first state in the country to have fully divorced Temporary Assistance for Needy Families work requirements from benefits payments. As with nearly all equity-driven policy in the U.S., this has broad positive effects for communities of color *and* for other communities as well.
- New England
  - o 2023 [study](#) in the Journal *Rural Sociology* titled “Misrecognition and Well-being in Culturally White Northern New England” discussing demographic shifts in rural New England showing more people of color, and the tendency of rural White residents to “other” and discriminate against people of color.
- National
  - o 2023 [report](#) of the Last Prisoner Project titled “State of Cannabis Justice,” which includes current and previous legislation on cannabis reform, history of prohibition, and a 50-state scorecard.
  - o 2023 [report](#) of the Public Assets Institute on the impact of the new Child Tax Credit law. Note: The Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit are now available regardless of immigration status in Vermont.
  - o 2023 [updates](#) on national incarceration statistics on race, ethnicity, gender.

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<sup>21</sup> Davis, Xusana. *EDRE - SGAC Recommendations*, 13 Dec 2023, legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2024/WorkGroups/SummerGAC/Documents%20and%20Testimony/EDRE%20SGAC%20Recommendations/W~Xusana%20Davis~EDRE%20-%20SGAC%20Recommendations~12-13-2023.pdf

- 2023 [paper](#) of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston discussing racial wealth disparities.
- 2023 report of the U.S. Department of the Treasury titled “Disparities in the Benefits of Tax Expenditures by Race and Ethnicity” discussing ethnic disparities in taxation.
- 2022 [report](#) of Health Affairs titled “The Problem of the Color Line” discussing racial disparities in health access from Health Affairs. Contains interactive maps that include Vermont.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Five-Year Lookback of Policy Recommendations

The following table provides a snapshot of recommendations made by the Director/Office of Racial Equity from 2019-2024. It is not exhaustive and generally does not include informal, agency-specific guidance/recommendations generated by the Director or the Office. It also does not include recommendations that were made on specific legislative proposals while those proposals moved through the lawmaking process.

Recommendation	Source	Date	Status
Adopt and fulfill the statewide equity plan	ORE General Policy Proposal	November 2019	
Change statutory exemptions for public records inspection so that Department of Correction's (DOC) rule CVR 13-130-036 would allow those released from custody longer access to records of their incarceration or supervision, and/or update DOC internal guidance- so staff practices actually reflect that formerly supervised persons are not subject to a 1-year limit on access to their own records.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2023	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Appropriate adequate funding to the Office of the Defender General to remedy the lack of resources provided by Act 177 of 2018 so the State can fulfill its intention to provide equitable defense services to all people in Vermont	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Require all law enforcement agencies to implement a model policy on religious head coverings in criminal bookings and to implement a more inclusive version of the Fair and Impartial Policing policy that eliminates immigration enforcement loopholes.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	Action needed from VCJC/LEG
Expand categories/definitions of family members/relatives for whom SOV employees are eligible for taking family leave	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	Action needed from LEG/GOV

Create a religious exemption to the Tobacco 21 statute to permit minors under 21 to possessing tobacco as part of spiritual/religious ceremonies and rituals.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	Completed
Prohibit “brick-and-mortar” businesses in VT from refusing to accept cash as a form of payment.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	In development
Amend state tax code to treat settlements on workplace harassment monetary claims the same as workplace injury monetary claims.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	In development
Remove all instances of the term “alien” or “illegal alien” when referring to immigration status from all statutes.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2022	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Require Secretary of Education to work with the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards in Schools Advisory Working Group to develop and maintain a model curriculum on teaching against hate speech and hateful imagery/symbols, enabling students to recognize discrimination, and to provide teaching materials, technical assistance, and coordination to school districts and superintendents to implement.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Informed other action
Task the Ethnic and Social Equity in Schools Advisory Working Group with developing a model curriculum on hate speech/hateful imagery and a model policy on racial equity.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Informed other action
Require school boards to adopt a policy on racial equity at least as stringent as the model policy to be developed by the Secretary of Education.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Informed other action
Task the Secretary of Education to convene task force to make recommendations on how to end suspensions and expulsions for all but the most serious student behaviors	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Informed other action
Change composition of Judicial Nominating Board from 11 members to 9, removing one appointee from the House, one appointee from the Senate, and one appointee from the Vermont Bar, and adding the Executive Director of Racial Equity as an appointee.	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV

In 4 VSA 602(a)(2), change "well-qualified" to "qualified"	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Remove requirement for candidate to have 10 years legal experience with at least the past 5 years practicing in Vermont; change to 10 years total legal experience in any jurisdiction, with at least 2 years of 10 being in Vermont	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
In 4 VSA §602 (c)(9) Delete “Courtroom Experience” replace with “Legal Experience”, strike “Vermont” from “Rules of Evidence” to ensure easier entry into VT Judiciary for candidates from outside of VT	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
In 4 VSA §602 (c)(10), add “Diversity of experience. A candidate shall have a broad range of lived experience, and candidates shall be drawn from diverse backgrounds to represent the interests of ethnic communities and communities of color throughout the State.”	ORE General Policy Proposal	October 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Develop a formal practice of anonymizing candidate identifiers for first-pass hiring committee review.	ORE General Policy Proposal	2020	
Draft & publicize a Values Statement that State government is committed to language access.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Require State agencies to adopt a model minimum language access plan.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Increase compensation for State-contracted language service providers to allow them to pay their employees a living wage.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Require State agencies to file a language access plan with ORE to ensure that minimum recommended best practices are met statewide.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Require agencies to review and revise their plans on a defined schedule. ORE suggests reviewing once per year for	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	

the first 5 years following implementation, then every 5 years thereafter.

Train State employees on how to use specific accounting codes to bill for different types of language services to aid in the tracking and reporting of language access service-related expenditures.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Finalize the cost estimate for translation of vital documents on a programmatic level.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Track any costs relating to updating existing vital documents that have already been translated, and costs related to translating existing translated vital documents into additional languages.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Require all State entities to maintain records of the type of language service provided and the language in which the service was provided to facilitate language access services evaluation.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Evaluate whether additional staff positions are necessary to support equitable language access implementation.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Designate at least 1 primary State employee and 1 secondary to be a point of contact for language access within each department.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Permit agencies to request additional staff positions for language access implementation.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Permit agencies to exceed level funding budget requests if requests are related to vital document translation or other language access services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Include information on how to access free language services in any mailed or electronic communication.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Ensure that notices of language access services communicate that such services are free to access.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	

Identify all vital documents across all 3 branches of State government.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	Implemented partially
Track expenditures related to keeping vital documents up to date as part of overall language access expenditure tracking.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Create a plain-language summary of long or technical vital documents before translation to ensure translated information is relevant and accessible.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Audit all State records management software systems for their ability to identify people who may require language access services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Configure records management software systems to alert State employees to arrange for interpretation services or other language assistance services prior to meetings with the clients who need them.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
At all public-facing offices, utilize “I Speak” cards with a with a standard written list of yes/no questions in VT’s most commonly spoken languages, plus an electronic device with a video ASL version to facilitate providing language access services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Train State employees to use “I Speak” cards and how to access existing state-contracted language service providers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Prioritize accessing the services of dedicated, trained interpreters from State-contracted service providers rather than relying on multilingual State employees to interpret on behalf of clients.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Implement standards regarding quality of service, certification, and conflict of interest for multilingual State employees before asking them to provide interpretation services that entail more than a casual welcoming conversation.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Consider creating a new time reporting code in the State employee timekeeping portal to pay certified multilingual employees for providing language services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	



Identify State employees to oversee testing and training for language access.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Regularly test language access services with “secret shopper” programs.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Provide additional support and training as needed if tests reveal deficiencies in State employees’ language service skills.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Include notices of the availability of language assistance on the home page of every State website.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Make a video version of the notice of the availability of language assistance in ASL.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Display the website links to notices of language services in the language they are translated into, not in English.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Create a mechanism by which people can request translated versions of websites. Make sure any link to information about translation requests is displayed in languages other than English.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
If Google Translate is used, ensure that there are obvious disclaimers in multiple languages about the limitations of Google Translate. Ensure that any Google Translate disclaimers are located in an obvious place at the top of a webpage and that the links to the disclaimers are displayed in languages they are translated into.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Include information about how to request interpretation services within the Google Translate disclaimers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
All notices of the availability of language access services must say that language access services will be provided to the public at no cost to the person requesting the services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Create videos in the ORE recommended languages for notices of language services, including ASL, that explain the complaint process.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	

Translate complaint pages into more languages than English.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Use State-contracted interpreters to facilitate communication between the complainant and State employees.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Audit the mobile and tablet versions of State websites for usability in English and for usability when translated into other languages.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Complete a disability accessibility and mobile/tablet usability audit each time there are significant updates made to State websites.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Create public service and emergency communications with manually translated captions (not auto generated) and video or audio readings in Vermont's most commonly spoken languages.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Produce emergency communications and public service announcements in video format to improve access for people who are not literate in their native languages.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Use open captions in English in addition to closed captions to assist Hard of Hearing and late-deafened people who are not familiar with technology in accessing captions.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Choose one video conferencing platform to simplify language access protocols across all State government branches.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Publish detailed guides on how to use in each of the video conferencing software platforms (Microsoft Teams, Zoom/ZoomGov, and WebEx).	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023
Distribute a link to the relevant video conferencing software guide when setting up video conferencing meetings with members of the public or when posting notices of public meetings that will have a remote access option.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023

Translate video conferencing software guides into the most commonly spoken languages in Vermont and include notices of the availability of free language access services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Purchase a paid ZoomGov account if a State entity frequently interacts with people who require video remote interpreting services.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Implement best practices for using videoconferencing software with video remote interpreters in LAP report when utilizing the services of video remote interpreters.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Implement job training programs or other initiatives that aim to recruit additional interpreters and translators to Vermont to increase the supply of locally knowledgeable language service providers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Increase compensation to State-contracted language assistance service providers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Establish statewide translation and interpretation licensure and/or certification programs. Consult with all applicable concerned parties when designing statewide standards for language assistance service providers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Develop a complaint procedure for when State employees receive complaints regarding the quality of service provided by State-contracted language service providers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Any licensure/certification program should be designed to remove barriers to the profession, such as subsidizing the cost of licensure/certification so that such requirements do not decrease the availability of language services professionals.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Provide educational materials and tests for jobs that require licensing/credentialing but do not require English language proficiency in more languages than just English.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Audit all State websites for accessibility to people with disabilities who rely on assistive technology.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development

Perform an accessibility audit any time a State website's contents are added to or updated.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Create a dedicated link on the home page of every State entity discussing the available accessibility resources that members of the public can access if they need accommodations.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Invest the resources necessary to ensure ADA compliance.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Translate the links to disability accessibility resources into languages other than English.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Translate all public service announcements and emergency communications into ASL.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Use live or manually translated captioning services for all important public service announcements and emergency communications.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
If relying on automated captioning, review automated captioning for errors and correct them before distributing any video materials publicly.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	In development
Add open captioning in English addition to videos in addition to closed captioning whenever possible.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Create a plan for addressing communication access within State buildings for people with hearing loss, such as installing hearing loops in at least one meeting room in each State-owned building.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Conduct a statewide assessment of ELL students' needs with regards to multilingual liaisons who can assist ELL students and their families in overcoming language barriers.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	
Provide sufficient resources to schools to remedy the current lack of multilingual liaisons following the statewide needs assessment.	2023 Language Access Report	January 2023	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Declare racism a public health epidemic.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Action needed from LEG/GOV

Support legislation to mandate hate crimes reporting and uniformity in reporting across agencies.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Informed other action
Support legislation to add confidentiality provisions for Complainants in AGO civil investigations.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Support legislation to allow the Attorney General’s Office to seek compensatory damages on behalf of victim.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Support legislation to review the “malicious motivation” standard for hate crimes.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Informed other action
Increase funding for the Human Rights Commission to add capacity to receive and address complaints.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented partially
Increase funding for the Agency of Administration Racial Equity office to add capacity to advance equitable policy across state government.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented partially
Create a model policy that bans hateful symbols, explicitly including the Confederate flag, from school grounds.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Support legislation to require schools to develop written policies on the use and display of hate symbols in schools.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Support legislation to ban the use and display of hate symbols in schools.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Create a model policy on culturally offensive mascots.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented fully
Support any legislation designed to ban or review the use of culturally offensive mascots.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented partially
Adequately resource the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards in Schools Advisory Working Group.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented partially
Implement the recommendations of the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards in Schools Advisory Working Group.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Implemented partially
Engage the Ethnic and Social Equity Standards in Schools Advisory Working Group in broader issues of equity in schools.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Informed other action
Provide a hardship supplement for low-income legislators.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	

Encourage the Vermont Bar Association and Office of Attorney Licensing to collect race/ethnicity data for attorneys.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Encourage and support a rule change to include professional and lived experiences with diverse communities as criteria for selection of judges.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Support legislation to ease residency, years-of-practice, and trial-focused experience requirements for candidates to the bench.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Encourage, support, and create mentorship opportunities for new attorneys, specifically attorneys of color with retired judges in Vermont.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Encourage a consistent and impartial interview process for the Judicial Nominating Board.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Create more mentorship opportunities for emerging leaders/candidates.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Encourage visible and meaningful allyship from long-time leaders and trusted leaders to support candidates of color.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Establish more emotional and social support for candidates for office.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Offer an optional “pledge” denouncing hate and VT nativism that candidates for elected office can take.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Provide grant funding for civics resources.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Translate any information and resources related to running for public office into Vermont’s most commonly spoken languages.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Create an information/resource hub informing residents interested in running for public office about important dates, payment requirements, and required documents.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Develop a model policy in the Secretary of State’s office regarding equity in Selectboards and post/promote the policy broadly.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	

Review models of public financing for public office and support legislative changes.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Examine ways to actively increase racial representation in boards/commissions.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	In development
Examine models from other jurisdictions on how to reduce, track, and educate the public about health disparities and other disparities by race.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	In development
Make racial equity an explicit criterion in redistricting decisions.	RETF Report 2	January 2021	
Mandate that all communications related to COVID-19 be translated into VT's most commonly spoken languages.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
At each testing site, provide COVID-19 educational material in the most appropriate languages for the region, and give out PPE.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Completed
Ensure that COVID-19 related grants (whether awarded to or administered by the State) include line items for translation.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	
Contract with or facilitate sub-contracting with refugee & immigrant service providers and/or translation service providers if the State or grantees lack cultural and/or linguistic expertise to provide core COVID-19 related services to people with refugee & immigrant backgrounds.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
Continue to consult with USCRI-VT & AALV to ensure people with refugee & immigrant backgrounds can access Unemployment Insurance & Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (or future versions of this benefit) in a timely manner with efficient troubleshooting.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented fully
For COVID-19 tests administered to Limited English Proficient people, ensure that interpreters who call patients relay accurate info.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	

Grant homeless individuals access to testing and support increased infrastructure for homeless Vermonters impacted by COVID-19.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	
Address testing accessibility issues by collaborating with community organizations that serve marginalized groups locally to design and coordinate walk-in testing sites.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Completed
Assess which locations in Vermont have not had access to free testing without referrals needed. Using this assessment, prioritize test kits and human resources to allow for more focused testing for vulnerable populations and those in outbreak areas who lack resources or transportation.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
Conduct broader testing in prisons, in-state and out-of-state.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
Increase VDH resources in COVID-19 test result data entry, specifically for efforts in collecting race/ethnicity data from COVID-19 test results: Retroactively include all race/ethnicity data, including manually entering race/ethnicity data from paper COVID-19 test results; Assess and ensure that moving forward, hospitals are able to digitally transfer uniform data reporting on race/ethnicity data with their COVID-19 test results.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
Collaborate with community and health organizations to provide training on cultural humility and best healthcare form intake practices to providers that administer COVID-19 tests.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
Have VDH work with the Executive Director of Racial Equity, the Task Force, and other stakeholders to create a better system to collect, track, and report race data regarding health disparities from the Vermont Health Information Exchange to monitor and analyze racial disparities in healthcare on an ongoing basis.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
In Progress Establish a state-level relief fund for Vermonters who were barred from receiving federal	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Completed



stimulus payments due to their or someone else's immigration status.			
Order an in-depth assessment on people of color who have suffered income losses. This should include, but not be limited to, job losses and closures of minority-owned businesses.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	
Deploy a school-level needs assessment to determine need for multilingual liaisons in schools; Develop model policies/guidance to train and support multilingual liaisons	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Adopt/enhance in-school services and support to replace all suspensions and most expulsions for a narrow, clearly-defined list of behaviors after considering all other alternatives. Reduce law enforcement contacts for students facing discipline.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Informed other action
Change (through executive order and/or by supporting legislative action) the "severe or pervasive" standard for harassment claims under the Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. §4500 et seq.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented fully

Provide for independent reviews of final bullying determinations under the Agency of Education's model procedures on bullying, harassment and hazing	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Mandate schools to examine and address inequitable student access to internet, computers, and remote-learning support.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Target and commit additional grants and low interest loans for home improvements for low-income homeowners and buyers	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Direct more funding for housing vouchers, rental assistance, In Progress post-COVID utility/rent accrual, and homeownership programs with tailored outreach.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Update the housing laws/guide on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development site to require landlords to allow alternate documentation & medical/educational debt exceptions. Issue guidance to lenders doing business in the state to allow the same.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Study and make recommendations on reparations in the area of housing.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
Develop model policies on hiring, retention, and promotional path, and on the discipline and termination of employees	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
Prohibit (through executive order and/or by supporting legislative action) employers operating in the State of Vermont from preventing an employee from working for the employer following the settlement of a discrimination claim.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Completed

Amend the Fair Employment Practices Act, 21 V.S.A. §495 et seq. expand access to redress in workplace harassment cases	RETF Report 1	September 2020	
In Progress Direct funds for emergency broadband access to low-income households	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
In Progress Allow equitable access to technology and internet, especially for students and people living in rural areas	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Disseminate written & audio information about programs & eligibility criteria in VT's most common languages.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
Information and documentation requests should be clear and concise, with photographic/visual depictions of official documents when possible, and should allow adequate time for an English Language Learner to get help in compiling information and documents and for communicating with healthcare and social service providers, schools, employers, landlords, mortgage companies, etc.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Communicate to awardees of federal funding that, per Title VI the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166 of 2000, recipients of federally sourced funding are required to provide meaningful access for their Limited English Proficiency applicants and beneficiaries.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development

Mandate training for orgs & agencies receiving federal/state funding on Culturally & linguistically appropriate services, Federal laws on language access, Anti-racist practices, Effective communication, Recruitment, retention & promotion, Emergency response	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Implemented partially
All state agencies & departments collect, report, and release race/ethnicity data regarding services and benefits annually	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development
Adopt a different approach for allocating grants statewide. Grantmaking on a first-come, first-serve basis leaves behind the people and communities with barriers to information.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	Action needed from LEG/GOV
Ensure that equity becomes a key lens through which all emergency responses are viewed by, including racial/social equity in all emergency plans and emergency response protocols. The lens should consist of at least data disaggregation and analysis, and early outreach and resource distribution to vulnerable communities.	RETF Report 1	September 2020	In development

## Appendix B: 2020 Draft of Statewide Equity Plan

Below is the most recent version of the proposed statewide equity plan, developed between 2019 and 2020. The plan has not yet been adopted by any branch of state government, but even if it had, numerous intervening factors that occurred between 2020 and 2024 would have required the plan to be revised/updated to adapt to major events, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the surge of activity on racial justice following the summer of 2020, multiple natural disasters affecting Vermont, and more. Therefore, note that many of the plan's goals have either been accomplished through other pathways, or have been rendered moot due to changes in need and circumstance.

The State of Vermont is committed to advancing equity for all residents, visitors, and partners. Because racism and other forms of oppression have been built into governance systems across the nation, it is only through intentional and forward-looking action that we can disrupt these structural inequities, including and especially structural racism. Vermont values the presence and contributions of Vermonters of color, past and present, and strives to build a more inclusive state whose communities feel respected, protected, and represented. To that end, **the State of Vermont envisions a future in which**

1. **all state employees and contractors are treated equitably throughout their tenure with the State of Vermont, and are equitably represented in decision-making and leadership**

*The State commits to equitable hiring, contracting, promotional path, and protections against workplace harassment and discrimination.*

2. **all members of the public receive fair and appropriate treatment and services regardless of race or ethnicity**  
*Services are culturally informed and linguistically accessible, and treatment is consistent with the State's core values, in an empowering climate that encourages open access to government.*

3. **the State of Vermont implements and honors comprehensive, multi-sectoral systems that support current and future Vermonters to thrive within the state**

*Systems are outcomes-based, with appropriate consideration for the needs and contributions of historically marginalized populations, including through the state's policymaking and legislative processes, its justice and regulatory systems, its housing availability and affordability, its supports for young families and new families, its public and private employment sectors, its infrastructural planning, and the equitable delivery of services at the individual and community/population levels.*

To achieve this vision, the State of Vermont has created a Statewide Racial Equity Plan, delineating the outcomes that it commits to helping Vermonters achieve and the steps it will take to get there. We commit to this framework and to the principles that underlie it. These principles guide not only our substantive work, but also our approach to that work:

- **Process equity** ensures that impacted groups have true agency in shaping their futures, and work as partners with government. **Outcome equity** pushes us to be data-driven and to prioritize our efforts on areas of greater need and disparity.
- **Addressing structural problems with structural solutions** requires the humility to acknowledge government's role in historical inequity, and the creativity to reduce and eliminate unjustified disparities by revising and modernizing government functions.
- Pursuing **adaptive change** over technical change, or pursuing a transformative approach over a transactional approach, allows Vermont to look holistically at the many ways in which institutions and systems impact Vermonters. Through this approach, we can implement robust, multi-sectoral policies as part of our continuous improvement efforts.

The State of Vermont's Statewide Racial Equity Plan is designed to evolve flexibly as the needs of Vermonters change over time. It is our goal to be responsive to communities, and for all Vermonters to see themselves reflected in the plan. To that end, we acknowledge that transparency and accountability are paramount to any equity work, and we commit to implementing this plan as a joint effort between state and local government, non-government institutions, and public- and private-sector community partners. New and existing accountability measures will ensure that this plan is adhered to across state government.

For more information and accompanying documents, visit the Racial Equity Advisory Panel website.

<p><b>GROW THE ECONOMY &amp; INCREASE AFFORDABILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont's families can provide for themselves with dignity and security</li> <li>Vermont's State Infrastructure meets the needs of Vermonters, the economy, and the environment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encourage affordable homeownership in Vermont for new families and young families</b></p> <p>Commit grants for construction and rehabilitation of housing</p> <p>By 2022, Conduct analysis of disparities in land &amp; home ownership</p> <p>By 2022, Assess the impact of minimum parcel sizes on homeownership rates in Vermont</p> <p>Provide additional incentives for homeowners seeking to "downsize" to smaller properties</p>	Key Indicators	Homeownership rates, [R] Vermonters paying <30% of income for housing costs, [R]
	<p><b>Encourage greater participation in markets by Minority- &amp; Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)</b></p> <p>By 2023, Increase the number of MWBEs in Vermont by 10%</p> <p>Establish dedicated role in AGO to provide technical assistance to MWBEs</p> <p>Reduce disparate access to credit and technical assistance for MWBEs</p> <p>By 2021, create statewide database of MWBEs</p>	Key Indicators	SOV contractors/vendors identified as MWBEs MWBEs as share of total businesses in VT, [R] Small business loan discrimination/denial, [R]
<p><b>PROTECT AND EMPOWER THE VULNERABLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont is a safe place to live</li> <li>Vermont's families are nurturing &amp; supported</li> <li>Vermont's elders live with dignity &amp; in settings they prefer</li> <li>Vermonters with disabilities live with dignity &amp; in settings they prefer</li> <li>Vermont's youth achieve their potential</li> <li>Vermonters are healthy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduce economic disparity</b></p> <p>By 2021, Conduct analysis of racial disparities in Vermont's median wealth</p> <p>Provide and promote wage equity for Vermont employees</p> <p>Partner with local businesses and institutions to expand affordable childcare options</p>	Key Indicators	Unemployment rate (U-6 measure), [R] Median household income, [R] Adults living <200% of federal poverty line, [R] Access to affordable childcare and/or head-start programming, [R]
	<p><b>Eliminate disparate outcomes in housing availability, affordability, and quality/condition</b></p> <p>By 2023, Reduce homelessness by 20%</p> <p>Reduce eviction rates, particularly for historically marginalized groups</p> <p>By 2022, Reduce frequency of discriminatory rental experiences by 20%</p> <p>Increase access to affordable housing</p> <p>Commit additional grants &amp; low-interest loans for home improvements for low-income homeowners &amp; buyers</p>	Key Indicators	Housing evictions, [R] Rental maintenance defects, [R] [S] Rental occupancy rate, [R] Vermonters facing discrimination in housing rentals, baseline 2015 (Legal Aid Report) Homelessness rate, [R]
<p><b>MODERNIZE GOVERNMENT AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont has open, effective, inclusive government</li> <li>State workforce policies are aligned across agencies</li> <li>Vermont's data collection systems are robust &amp; inclusive</li> <li>State courts are fair, impartial, accessible, reasonable, consistent, free of discrimination, and well-managed, and safe</li> <li>State court systems are open, affordable, &amp; understandable</li> </ul>	<p><b>Eliminate disparate outcomes and increase process equity in criminal justice &amp; regulatory enforcement</b></p> <p>By 2021, Reduce disparities in arrests by 25%</p> <p>By 2021, Reduce disparities in charges by 25%</p> <p>By 2022, Reduce disparities in incarceration by 25%</p> <p>By 2022, Reduce disparities in incarceration by 25%</p> <p>Continually revise law enforcement training to reflect equitable &amp; anti-discrimination practices</p> <p>Strengthen complaint procedures for people experiencing bias or discrimination</p>	Key Indicators	Traffic stops and post-stop outcomes, [R] Use-of-force incidents, [R] Incarceration rate, [R] Granting & revocation of community monitoring, [R] Misdemeanor and felony sentencing, [R] Arrest rates, [R] Law enforcement officers who identify as people of color
	<p><b>Eliminate disparate outcomes in educational experiences and attainment</b></p> <p>Reduce disparity in discipline for students of color &amp; students living with disabilities</p> <p>Increase access to technology necessary to learn remotely</p> <p>Increase diversity and inclusion in faculty and administration roles</p>	Key Indicators	High school graduation rate, [R] High school graduates who will attend college, [R] Students in AP classes, [R] Students reading at grade level, [R] School suspension & expulsion rates, [R] [B] [S] Teachers who identify as people of color Schools meeting statewide social or ethnic studies curriculum standards Access to technology necessary to learn remotely Schools with an equity liaison or equivalent role School administrators who identify as people of color
<p><b>PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont's environment is clean &amp; sustainable</li> <li>Vermonters enjoy equitable access to the outdoors &amp; are not disproportionately exposed to hazards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Expand supports for immigrant and refugee families</b></p> <p>By 2021, Deploy a school-level needs assessment to determine need for multilingual liaisons in schools</p> <p>By 2021, Develop model policies/guidance to train and support multilingual liaisons</p> <p>Revise licensing procedures to allow newly arrived Vermonters practice their professions in VT</p> <p>By 2023, increase number of J-1 visa waivers utilized in Vermont</p> <p>Provide credentialing/licensing testing in Vermont's most commonly spoken languages</p>	Key Indicators	Number of professional exams offered in multiple languages J-1 visa waivers utilized in Vermont, [R]
	<p><b>Strengthen hiring, promotion, and continuing practices for SOV employees &amp; vendors</b></p> <p>By 2021, Improve &amp; integrate regular training in discrimination &amp; bias for SOV staff</p> <p>By 2021, Review &amp; update policy prohibiting discrimination &amp; harassment</p> <p>Build greater trust for SOV employees considering filing claims</p>	Key Indicators	SOV workforce who identify as people of color Average wages and salaries of SOV employees, managers and executives, race disaggregated, baseline 2010 SOV employment separation type and rate, [R] By 2021, all SOV employees have RE responsibilities incorporated into their responsibilities By 2022, 50% of incumbent SOV employees have RE responsibilities incorporated into their responsibilities Existence & adoption of model policy across state agencies Workplace complaints received by DHR & HCR related to racial bias or racial discrimination
<p><b>PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont's environment is clean &amp; sustainable</li> <li>Vermonters enjoy equitable access to the outdoors &amp; are not disproportionately exposed to hazards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengthen provisions against workplace harassment &amp; discrimination</b></p> <p>By 2021, Improve &amp; integrate regular training in discrimination &amp; bias for SOV staff</p> <p>By 2021, Review &amp; update policy prohibiting discrimination &amp; harassment</p> <p>Build greater trust for SOV employees considering filing claims</p>	Key Indicators	SOV employees trained in racial discrimination/implicit bias Court staff trained in racial discrimination/implicit bias Judicial officers trained in racial discrimination/implicit bias
	<p><b>Broaden ethnic representation in decision-making &amp; leadership</b></p> <p>Increase representation of historically marginalized groups in hiring roles</p> <p>Increase representation of historically marginalized staff in management roles</p>	Key Indicators	Rate & timing of SOV employee promotions, [R] SOV employees who are managers, supervisors, and executives, [R] Distribution of supervisors from historically marginalized groups across title and agency, [R]
<p><b>PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont's environment is clean &amp; sustainable</li> <li>Vermonters enjoy equitable access to the outdoors &amp; are not disproportionately exposed to hazards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Include equity provisions in all emergency plans &amp; emergency response</b></p> <p>By 2021, Establish plan for engaging Limited English Proficient communities during emergencies</p> <p>By 2021, Establish plan for engaging Underserved and Barriered communities during emergencies</p> <p>Develop anti-discrimination &amp; equity guidelines for emergency shelters &amp; food shelves</p> <p>By 2022, Conduct community risk assessments and mitigation plans for natural and human-influenced disasters</p> <p>Translate public emergency-related state communications into Vermont's most commonly spoken languages</p> <p>Build social cohesion to foster inclusion and minimize discriminatory behavior</p> <p>Conduct economic impact assessments post-emergency</p> <p>Include factors other than economic impact when prioritizing regions for recovery</p>	Key Indicators	Existence of community risk assessment and mitigation plan Adoption/implementation of anti-discrimination policies in emergency shelters & food shelters Smooth incorporation of equity provisions into mock/drift exercises Financial recovery post-emergency [R] [B] [S] Reported incidents of emergency-related discrimination or bias-motivated behavior
	<p><b>Reduce disparate outcomes in infrastructural &amp; environmental planning</b></p> <p>By 2022, Reduce exposure to environmental hazards by 5%</p> <p>By 2021, Update land access laws to include Environmental Justice criteria</p> <p>By 2024, Mitigate/reduce hazardous sites by 10%</p> <p>By 2022, Expand the coverage of public transit between, BTW and Statewide</p> <p>By 2022, Expand transit coverage between VT and NY/MA/MTL</p> <p>By 2021, Extend hours of operation of local transit services</p> <p>By 2021, Assess whether existing and planned investments in flood mitigation infrastructure are equitably distributed</p> <p>By 2022, Ensure safe drinking water supplies at schools and daycares</p> <p>By 2024, Reduce disparate and cumulative public health and environmental impacts on overburdened</p> <p>By 2021, Incorporate environmental justice considerations into ANR permitting processes</p> <p>Make funding for on-site wastewater and private water supplies (wells) available, accessible, and understandable (including translation of key materials for those with LEP)</p> <p>Make measures that increase resiliency (wetland protection, stream stability, public infrastructure) easily accessible for overburdened communities</p>	Key Indicators	Vermonters living near landfills, [R] Vermonters living near waste treatment facilities, [R] Vermonters living near flood zones, [R] Vermonters living near Superfund Sites, [R] Vermonters living with poor air quality (PM 2.5), [R] Average cost of public transportation, benchmark 2019 Statewide geographic residential patterns Existence and adoption of equity guidelines in all environmental planning processes Number of direct transportation options to and from Burlington, benchmark 2019 Number of direct transportation options to from Vermont from NY, MA and MTL, benchmark 2019 95% of schools achieve lead and PFAS standards (MCLs) By 2024, No violations of hazardous air pollutants from any permitted air source affecting an overburdened community By 2024, 50% of hazardous sites in overburdened communities have a Corrective Action Plan Increased adoption of river corridor ordinances in overburdened communities Average number of hours of local transportation service, benchmark 2019
<p><b>PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vermont's environment is clean &amp; sustainable</li> <li>Vermonters enjoy equitable access to the outdoors &amp; are not disproportionately exposed to hazards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduce disparate outcomes in outdoor recreation for residents &amp; visitors</b></p> <p>Present portrayals of people of color in the outdoors in proportion to our goals for participation</p> <p>Provide indigenous peoples with natural resource and wildlife materials needed for spiritual/cultural activities, increase recognition of indigenous people's history, culture, and stewardship of natural resources</p> <p>Offer free or low-cost outdoor programs and events to historically marginalized people</p> <p>By 2020, Update policy ensuring that Law Enforcement Officers in ANR consider and account for bias based on ethnic or racial groups when responding to public complaints</p> <p>Support increase in youth outdoor education opportunities</p> <p>Support Outdoor Recreation businesses operating in underserved regions of Vermont</p> <p>Include in DFW surveys information on race/ethnicity and relative comfort/safety in using public spaces and resources</p> <p>Sponsor/host outdoor events and activities for historically marginalized groups on state lands</p> <p>Assess implementation of H.880 as it pertains to inclusion of Abenaki place names on state parks signage</p>	Key Indicators	Engagement in outdoor recreation activities, [R] [B] [S] Visitors to outdoor spaces, [R] [B] [S] Complaints of harassment or discrimination on public lands # of prominence of such portrayals in Agency materials; # of partnered events hosted by and for people of color around natural resources and the outdoors Feedback from leaders of indigenous groups. Track use of free Abenaki hunting/fishing licenses, and the donations of natural resource materials. Number and geographic distribution of outdoor education programs Improvement in public survey responses regarding hunting/fishing licensing process 2022: Evidence of a system in place by which all new and replacement sign requests are reviewed for applicability to the Abenaki place name requirement; 2024: Number of signs generated with the alternative Abenaki place name added
	<p><b>Broaden inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups in ecological and infrastructural planning</b></p> <p>Provide adequate time for public comment</p> <p>Translate the Agency's most commonly-accessed, public-facing materials related to accessing public lands and key educational materials such as instructions for obtaining a fishing license.</p>	Key Indicators	Number of languages (including aids for the visual and hearing impaired) of key Agency documents and signage

MWBE - Minority & Women-owned Business Enterprises  
Disaggregated by [R] race [A] age [B] ability [S] socioeconomic status