

Memorandum



Date: April 23, 2013

To: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: Diversity Task Force Action Report

Launched in August of 2012, the Miami-Dade County Diversity Task Force (Task Force), comprised of Jennifer Moon, Lucia Davis-Raiford, Mary Lou Rizzo and Deputy Mayor Edward Marquez, was charged with developing a Countywide Diversity and Inclusion Plan (Diversity Plan) to identify comprehensive strategies to remove barriers to equal opportunity that may exist in the County's employment practices pursuant to Resolution R-477-12. The Task Force must also identify best practices to improve the ability to recruit, hire, promote, retain, develop and train a diverse workforce.

The overall purpose of the Diversity Plan is to provide shared direction, encourage commitment, eliminate attitudinal barriers and create alignment so that County departments will approach their workplace inclusion efforts in a coordinated, collaborative and integrated manner.

Summary of Actions Taken

The Task Force has developed objectives and goals and objectives based on the Miami-Dade County Strategic Plan and Board directive, which include:

- Identifying staff in each department to assist with carrying out the Diversity Plan;
- Updating policies and procedures to be promulgated by the Office of the Mayor;
- Retaining a diverse and qualified workforce by ensuring an inclusive and robust recruitment process; and
- Ensuring that employees at all levels of the organization are engaged in the cultivation of an inclusive work environment.

Next Steps

The Task Force recognizes that there may be "invisible" barriers which may contribute to exclusion and may manifest as discrimination. Research and experience has shown that negative attitudes held about a group of people because of differences in individual characteristics such as race, culture, thought or opinion, gender, socioeconomic background, age or disability, can lead to a lack of acceptance, perpetuation of stereotypes and power imbalance in the workplace. Unlike physical and systemic barriers, these attitudinal barriers are often unquantifiable and cannot be overcome simply through the implementation and enforcement of anti-discrimination policies and procedures.

Ongoing education is essential to promote understanding of the experience of exclusion, overcoming negative stereotypes and preconceptions to ultimately eliminate any barriers that may be the root cause of exclusion. Accordingly, the County will provide "Diversity Matters" training to all County employees on a biennial basis. This e-Learning training will provide material on diversity and inclusion principles and will increase employee cultural awareness, knowledge and skills; diminish attitudinal barriers and promote and foster inclusion in the workplace. It will be provided to all County employees, supervisors, managers and executives.

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Training especially developed for management and Executive level employees will ensure accountability and compliance with diversity management policies and procedures. The Task Force will develop a cost analysis and timeline, including roll-out date(s), for each phase of the County-wide "Diversity Matters" training.

As a demonstration of the County's commitment to diversity and creative inclusion, "Diversity Matters" is designed to ensure that all employees have improved access to information on their rights, responsibilities and appropriate workplace behavior.

Additionally, the Task Force will continue to meet on an as-needed basis to ensure compliance with the Diversity Plan. With the retirement of Mary Lou Rizzo from County service, Arlene Cuellar from the Internal Services Department, will serve as a member of the Task Force.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Deputy Mayor Edward Marquez at 305-375-1451.

c: Robert A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Members, Diversity Task Force
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor