

**GUIDELINE FOR DHS DIVERSITY COMMITTEES
A BLUE PRINT FOR
FORMING, STORMING, TRANSFORMING AND PERFORMING**

Across the state and at the Divisional level, DHS has implemented Diversity Committees intended to support diversity efforts among a designated service area. The intent of this blue print is to provide guidelines in order to assist DHS Divisions or Field Districts to initiate or reinforce the local diversity committee(s).

During the Forming Stage:

Administration Support and Leadership

It is critical at the forming stage for Administrator(s) to provide leadership and direction to the committee. This support and leadership is more than just requesting or expecting that “somebody” will take care of this initiative. A formula for success includes the administrator(s) participating and maintaining a level of connection with the committee for the long run.

Good Practices

- Attend the initial meeting and state the overall vision.
- Request ongoing reports and receive updates from the committee chairperson(s).
- Promote and expect participation from different levels of the Division or District area.
- Inform managers about attendance expectations; monitor attendance.
- Identify and allocate a budget for committee activities.
- Assist in addressing barriers or challenges.

Chairperson(s)

It is recommended to create a chair and co-chair structure. Preferably one of the chairs is a manager and the other chair a represented staff.

Good Practice

- Create an Agenda that is real and action driven.
- At every meeting include an educational component for participants.
- Request a note taker that is not a member of the committee.
- Distribute the minutes, or the highlights, with the rest of the workforce.
- Maintain the administrators/managers inform and in partnership.
- Chair and Co-chair should meet in advance of the meeting, identify outcomes for the meeting.

Membership

The size of the group will depend on the size of the Division or District represented. Generally, a functional committee includes no more than 10 participants. A recommended approach is for management to send an invitation via e-mail for participation, management select representatives. Avoid requesting volunteers in an open meeting. The potential is to encounter a volunteer with low credibility among peers or a staff who has performance issues.

Good Practices

After committee members are selected, members need to understand that he/she is representing the local work place. As a representative, the staff will need to provide ongoing information to the base group about the direction/activities of the committee. Management will need to provide opportunities for this communication to take place. Management will need to support the rep(s) to attend the required meetings and be able to participate in related activities. It is recommended for management to support and value the committee rep participation by incorporating his/her time commitment as part of his/her work responsibility. If the rep can not attend one of the meeting a backup system need to be in place including a co-worker or a manager.

During the Storming Stage

- Enhance the vision for the committee from the initial direction given by Management/Administration. The committee must support the business of the organization.
- If necessary re-define goals and objectives of the committee.
- Develop a plan with measurable and realistic goals and outcomes with a time frame.

During the Transforming Stage

- Develops group norms like roles and responsibility for the committee as well as for the members. Define issues such as how long members will serve and expectations of members.
- Define the scope of the work... is this committee a decision-making or an advisory?

- Provide consistent communication, both internally with members and externally with stakeholders and the organization.
- Agree on ground rules for the committee, see attached example.

During the Performing Stage

- Evaluate the original intent
- Evaluate participation and organization engagement
- Set new goals and objectives
- Celebrate accomplishments

Ground Rules

- Educational opportunities about Diversity and Cultural Competency begin with the committee members.
- Check your title at the door
- What happens in Vegas.....
- Speak freely
- Keep an open mind
- Hear the other person out
- Share ideas
- Don't prejudge solutions
- Work together
- Take your role as Ambassador seriously
- Meeting attendance (sign in)
- Distractions
- Meeting location
- Show up on time
- Make the Ground Rules visible
- Have fun, but get the job done....