



**OREGON DEPARTMENT**  
*of* **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

**INCREASING OUR IMPACT**  
**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY**  
**ACTION PLAN, FISCAL YEARS 2025-2030**

**TsaiComms, LLC**

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*Our action planning process was facilitated by [TsaiComms, LLC](#).*

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## MESSAGE FROM ODVA LEADERSHIP

Dear Community Partners,

We are delighted to share our aspiration to advance our work with and on behalf of Oregon's veterans through *Increasing our Impact: Fiscal Years 2025-2030 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) Action Plan*.

While we explored many DEIA-related needs, issues, and opportunities facing ODVA, some primary themes emerged regarding our future:

### I. Our Internal Work

1. *Workforce*. Develop a Diverse Workforce Skilled in Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility
2. *Learning*. Equip our Team Members for Quality Service Delivery
3. *Communications*. Communicate Effectively About our DEIA Work
4. *Information*. Leverage Data to Inform and Evaluate our Work
5. *Accessibility*. Ensure Accessibility to our Services

### II. Our External Work

6. *Partnerships*. Strengthen and Expand our Work through Strategic Partnerships
7. *Communications*. Communicate Externally About our DEIA Work
8. *Outreach*. Increase Outreach to Largest-Growth and Traditionally Marginalized Veteran Communities
9. *Information*. Increase Visibility and Effectiveness through Partner Data

What follows is a narrative summary of our action plan and the plan itself. We are committed to being accountable for implementing our plan. To that end, we have identified goals, strategies, tactics, measurable outcomes, leads, and timelines to guide our work.

We invite all ODVA staff, veterans, and community partners to join us in this critical work. Together, we can create a more equitable and inclusive future for Oregon's veterans and their families and, with intention, leave no one behind.

**Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs**  
**June 2025**

## PLANNING INFORMATION SOURCES

### OVERVIEW

ODVA identified, gathered, and evaluated both qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources to help guide our action planning.

### INFORMATION SOURCES

The following sources informed our action planning:

- *TsaiComms Assessment*. We reviewed the findings and recommendations of the internal evaluation conducted in 2024 by our partner contractor.
- *Leadership Priorities*. We integrated the known priorities and focus areas identified by our agency's leadership.
- *Sample DEIA Action Plan*. We reviewed the content of a sample action plan developed by our Deputy Director.
- *Data*. We reviewed data from the federal Veterans Administration on Oregon's current veterans, and its 10-year projections.
- *Operational Review*. We reviewed ODVA's current DEIA-related work, structure, and data collection.
- *ODVA Strategic Plan*. We reviewed the larger agency strategic planning process underway at ODVA.
- *DEIA Committee*. We solicited the experiences, insights, and expertise of the members of our DEIA staff committee.

## PLAN FORMAT & TERMINOLOGY

### OVERVIEW

ODVA's DEIA Action Plan is summarized on a spreadsheet that is organized into two sections – internal and external. Both sections have stated goals, and each goal has associated strategies, tactics, outcomes, leads, and timelines for phased implementation over five years. Our staff will review our plan quarterly and evaluate our performance toward our expected outcomes annually. We will make adjustments as we learn and grow and as opportunities and conditions shift.

### TERMINOLOGY

Here are definitions of the terms used in our action plan:

- *Goals.* A broad aim toward which our efforts are directed: what we are trying to achieve.
- *Strategies.* A plan of action designed to achieve our goals; how we will pursue our goals.
- *Tactics.* A specific action step required to deliver on a strategy: the group of actions we will take to fulfill our strategies.
- *Outcomes.* Measurable results we expect to see when we are successful: the specific outcome metrics behind what we are trying to achieve.
- *Lead.* The person or position(s) responsible for championing an area of work and ensuring that activity is coordinated, and progress is tracked.
- *Timeline.* The phased implementation of components of our plan over five years.

## **MISSION, VISION, VALUES, & DEIA STATEMENT**

### **OUR MISSION**

To serve and honor veterans through our leadership, advocacy, and strong partnerships.

### **OUR VISION**

Veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.

### **OUR VALUES**

Respect, Integrity, Stewardship, and Excellence.

### **OUR DEIA STATEMENT**

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) recognizes the harm done to marginalized and underserved veterans and their families. We are committed to addressing these inequities through our policies, programs, and services as a veteran-focused agency.

ODVA intends to continue leading veteran equity initiatives nationally. We are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) within our organization and for our Veterans. This commitment is reflected in agency staffing, programming, and efforts to serve and honor veterans through our leadership, advocacy, and strong partnerships. Our actions, outlined in our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility mission, Affirmative Action, and Strategic Plans, demonstrate this commitment. The following principles guide our approach:

- Modeling and promoting a welcoming, safe, and inclusive organizational culture for veterans, their families, and caregivers we serve, and where ODVA's staff can thrive, including the many veterans who have chosen ODVA for their post-military careers.
- Accountability for "Equity IN" focused on hiring a diverse staff, retention, inclusion, community engagement, communications, and sustainable best practices.
- Accountability for "Equity OUT" focused on technology access, unintended consequences, workforce development, community building, outreach, and partnerships.
- Foster an inclusive and welcoming environment where all veterans receive fair and unbiased service from the agency staff.

- Advance diverse, equitable, and inclusive access through culturally responsive programs focused on engaging veterans.
- Advocate, support, and provide resources for veterans experiencing behavioral health concerns.
- Ensure everyone needing veteran's services and benefits that are owed to them, or their families, can receive access and follow up by agency staff regardless of

**NARRATIVE SUMMARY:  
Fiscal Years 2025-2030 DEIA  
ACTION PLAN**

**Section I. Our Internal Work**

We recognize the need to strengthen our internal capabilities to better serve and advocate for Oregon’s veterans. By improving internally, we can enhance our role as advocates, service providers, and partners. To guide these efforts, we have identified five key goals for improvement.

**Goal 1. Workforce: Develop a Diverse Workforce Skilled in Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility.**

Achieving our DEIA goals requires a workforce that is knowledgeable, engaged, and committed to continuous learning. We will build this workforce by focusing on both new hires and current staff.

**Strategy a.** For new hires, we will embed DEIA into our hiring and onboarding processes through the following tactics:

- Add job-relevant DEIA responsibilities and agency values to job ads, screenings, and interviews.
- Train interview panels on implicit bias and DEIA inquiry practices.
- Cover DEIA responsibilities, resources, and processes during onboarding.
- Create and train staff on DEIA-focused hiring standards.

**Strategy b.** For both new and existing team members, we will integrate DEIA into performance management. This will foster a culture of accountability and action through the following tactics:

- Add DEIA responsibilities to quarterly performance assessments.
- Offer DEIA coaching and learning for managers and staff.
- Incorporate DEIA-specific competencies into staff performance evaluations. Performance measures will assess individual contributions to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and accessible workplace, including demonstrated inclusive behaviors and team-building practices; engagement in DEIA-related learning and development; support for colleagues from underrepresented or marginalized groups; and the use of equitable and accessible approaches in decision-making and collaboration.
- Support all staff—including historically marginalized groups—with mentoring and leadership programs.
- Support and resource employee resource groups (ERGs).

**Goal 2. Learning: Equip our Team Members for Quality Service Delivery.**

To ensure our DEIA work is effective, we must foster a culture of continuous learning. By viewing DEIA as an ongoing journey, we will encourage our team to see learning as essential and valuable.

**Strategy a.** First, we will ensure all staff have a shared understanding of DEIA and its value to our work. This will be achieved through the following tactics:

- Require quarterly learning on DEIA fundamentals for all staff.
- Collect, evaluate, and use data on annual learning and coaching.

**Strategy b.** Next, we will build on these foundations by expanding our team's DEIA knowledge, skills, and capacity. This will include:

- Offer quarterly DEIA topic-specific learning opportunities.
- Provide managers with quarterly coaching on application of DEIA in the field, including successes, challenges, and experiential learnings.

**Strategy c.** Finally, we will adopt a DEIA lens in all decision-making, strategic planning, project prioritization, and resource allocation through the following tactic:

- Develop, approve, and train staff on utilization of a DEIA lens in decision-making.

### **Goal 3. Communications: Communicate Effectively About our DEIA Work.**

We recognize that effective DEIA work requires clear communication, and keeping our team informed and aligned about our work.

**Strategy a.** Provide consistent and frequent DEIA communications through the following tactics:

- Share quarterly DEIA updates via e-news and all-staff meetings.
- Communicate DEIA-compliant policies, procedures, trainings, and announcements.

**Strategy b.** We believe trust is built through transparency. Recognizing that our DEIA journey may have ups and downs, we will implement the following tactics:

- Include successes, challenges, and next steps in all DEIA updates.
- Address non-DEIA-compliant communication with education on reporting and accountability.

**Strategy c.** To ensure accountability, we will create pathways for communication and reporting of DEIA-related concerns from staff. We will implement the following tactic:

- Create a link for anonymous feedback and comments to be shared with our DEIA committee.

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#### **Goal 4. Information: Leverage Data to Inform and Evaluate our Work.**

We aim to ground our DEIA work in real-world metrics and data. This includes not only the number of veterans we serve but also their demographics. Comparing our data with other sources will help us refine our efforts to reach and engage diverse veteran communities.

**Strategy a.** We recognize gaps in our current data. To address this need, we will adopt systems and processes to collect, report, and use demographic data on veterans served through the following tactics:

- Implement a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system with training and data standards.
- Provide clear, useful demographic reports.
- Train managers to use data to improve programs, services, and advocacy.
- Train staff on consistent data collection, management, and reporting.

#### **Goal 5. Accessibility: Ensure Accessibility to our Services.**

To effectively serve all veterans, we recognize the need to continually assess and improve our accessibility.

**Strategy a.** Ensure accessibility of our facilities, websites, materials, and communications to ensure access and compliance with ADA standards. We will implement the following tactics:

- Conduct annual audits and share findings, improvements, and resources needs.
- Create a process for veterans to request accommodations.
- Offer materials in multiple accessible formats.

**Strategy b.** Ensure non-English-speaking veterans can access our services and information through the following tactics:

- Provide translation and interpretation services, as needed.
- Create outreach materials in multiple languages, focusing on those most spoken by Oregon veterans.

## Section II. Our External Work

As we strengthen our internal capacity, we must also focus on our external DEIA efforts. This dual commitment ensures we stay focused on veterans and our key state and nonprofit partners. To enhance our external impact, we have identified four key goals for focus.

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### Goal 6. Partnerships: Strengthen and Expand our Work through Strategic Partnerships.

We recognize that veterans receive services from many organizations other than ODVA, and our partners are crucial to this work. While we value these partnerships, we see opportunities to strengthen and strategically expand them. Building more partnerships is important, but ensuring they are strategic, well-managed, and mutually beneficial is key.

**Strategy a.** We will start by identifying and pursuing priority partnerships through the following tactic:

- Prioritize a manageable number of state agency and private provider partners.

**Strategy b.** Next, we will identify shared priorities, areas of focus, work plans, and desired outcomes with partners through the following tactic:

- Develop written partnership agreements outlining priorities, focus areas, and annual work plans.

**Strategy c.** Finally, we will regularly share resources with, from, and among partners and related parties by:

- Sharing data, program reports, materials, trainings, and lessons learned as outlined in partnership agreements.

### Goal 7. Communications: Communicate Externally About our DEIA Work.

We recognize the need to improve both internal and external DEIA communication. To strengthen our external communication, we will ensure consistent, transparent updates with key partners and constituents on our DEIA progress, challenges, and next steps.

**Strategy a.** Ensure consistent and frequent DEIA communications. We will

- Provide quarterly DEIA e-news and annual in-person updates to constituents.
- Receive and share regular updates from partners regarding their DEIA work related to veterans.

**Strategy b.** Ensure transparency about our DEIA progress, challenges, and next steps by:

- Including our successes, challenges, and next steps in all e-news and annual updates.

**Strategy c.** Develop, implement, and evaluate content from continuous feedback loops regarding our programs and services. We will:

- Regularly conduct listening sessions, focus groups, community forums, surveys, and use a virtual comment box to invite, collect, and synthesize feedback.

**Strategy d.** Conduct and report the findings of annual audits of all DEIA programs and initiatives through the following tactic:

- Our metrics and methodology for evaluating progress are clear and measurable, and our DEIA committee establishes a plan, process, and timeline for our audits.

**Strategy e.** Ensure comprehensive and robust communication across multiple platforms, venues, and channels. We will:

- Develop and implement plans to leverage social media, newsletters, text, community radio, print and online publications, in-person events, and other channels.

**Strategy f.** Engage with state legislators and policy makers to advocate for policies that support diverse veterans and align with ODVA's DEIA goals. We will:

- Provide regular briefings and reports to legislative bodies on the progress of our DEIA initiatives, and the DEIA issues, needs, and opportunities we identify.

## **Goal 8. Outreach: Increase Outreach to Largest-Growth and Traditionally Marginalized Veteran Communities.**

While the overall number of veterans in Oregon is declining, the veteran population is becoming more diverse, with women, Latino, and multiracial veterans making up the largest groups. These populations are also projected to grow significantly over the next decade, with increases of 2.8% for women, 1.3% for Latino veterans, and 1.4% for multiracial veterans. To effectively serve and advocate for these communities, we will:

**Strategy a.** Reach and effectively serve more women veterans (+2.8% growth by 2033) by:

- Developing and resourcing a multi-year strategy to reach, engage, and serve more women veterans.

**Strategy b.** Reach and effectively serve more Latino veterans (+1.3% growth by 2033). We will:

- Develop and resource a multi-year strategy to reach, engage, and serve more Latino veterans.

**Strategy c.** Reach and effectively serve more multiracial veterans (+1.4% growth by 2033). We will:

- Develop and resource a multi-year strategy to reach, engage, and serve more multiracial veterans.

**Strategy d.** Ensure outreach to and culturally responsive services for LGBTQ+ veterans by:

- Developing and resourcing a multi-year strategy to ensure we reach, engage, and serve LGBTQ+ veterans.

**Strategy e.** Ensure aging veterans with disabilities and houseless veterans can access our technology and communication platforms. We will:

- Audit our existing technology and communication platforms for accessibility and resource needed improvements.

**Strategy f.** Ensure rural, urban, aging veterans are effectively engaged and served by:

- Developing and resourcing a multi-year strategy to ensure we reach, engage, and serve rural veterans.

#### **Goal 9. Information: Increase Visibility and Effectiveness through Partner Data.**

Veterans are served by many state and county agencies and partner organizations including our tribal partners, but we currently lack demographic data from these entities. This gap limits our ability to fully understand who we are reaching, engaging, or missing, and makes it harder to evaluate and improve our programs. Better data will help us develop more effective services and advocacy for Oregon's veterans. To address this gap, we will:

**Strategy a.** Identify ODVA's primary provider partners that serve the largest numbers of veterans by:

- Researching provider partners by volume of veterans served annually.
- Prioritizing and narrowing our provider list by the numbers of veterans served.

**Strategy b.** Adopt policies and processes to collect demographic data on veterans served by other state agencies and private providers. We will:

- Craft policies and processes that incentivize collecting and reporting demographic data.
- Train agencies and providers on data collection and reporting.
- Share ODVA and provide data in aggregate with the public, legislature, partners, providers, and constituents.



	c. Adopt a DEIA lens in all decision-making, strategic planning, project prioritization, and resource allocation	i. Develop, approve, and train staff on utilization of a DEIA lens in decision-making	90% of staff report actively utilizing the DEIA lens in decision-making	Executive Team & DEIA Coordinator	
<b>3. Communications: Communicate Effectively About our DEIA Work</b>					
	a. Provide consistent and frequent DEIA communications	i. Provide quarterly DEIA e-news and verbal all-staff updates	90% of staff report that quarterly updates are informative, useful, applicable, and repeatable	Strategic Communications Director	
		ii. Share policies, procedures, training, and announcements compliant with DEIA	90% of staff are able to identify ODVA's successes, challenges and next steps	Strategic Communications Director	
	b. Ensure transparency about DEIA progress, challenges, and next steps	i. All e-news and all-staff updates include successes, challenges, and next steps ii. When communication is reported that is not DEIA compliant, provide education on reporting processes and accountability measures	90% of staff are able to identify ODVA's successes, challenges, and next steps 100% of staff are able to share reporting and accountability processes	Strategic Communications Director & DEIA Coordinator Strategic Communications Director & HR Administrator	
	c. Create pathways for communication and reporting of DEIA-related concerns from staff	i. Create a link for anonymous feedback and comments to be shared with DEIA committee	100% of staff report knowledge of and access to the anonymous reporting link	HR Administrator and DEIA Coordinator	
<b>4. Information: Leverage Data to Inform and Evaluate our Work</b>					
	a. Adopt systems and processes to collect, report, and use demographic data on veterans served	i. Select, implement, and populate a customer relationship management (CRM) system	CRM is in place and being populated	Executive Team	
		ii. Provide user-friendly and practically useful demographic reports	100% of managers report receiving practically useful and user-friendly demographic reports	Strategic Communications Director	
		iii. Train managers on how to use reports to develop, evaluate, and improve programs and services	100% of managers report using demographic reports to inform program development, evaluation, and improvements	Strategic Communications Director	
		iv. Train staff on procedures for data collection, management, and reporting to ensure accuracy and consistency	100% of managers can ensure that staff are trained and following data collection procedures	Managers	
<b>5. Accessibility: Ensure Accessibility to our Services</b>					
	a. Ensure accessibility of all facilities, websites, materials, and communications to ensure access and compliance with ADA standards	i. Conduct annual audits and report findings, needed improvements, and required resources ii. Develop and share a process for veterans to provide information about needed accommodations	ODVA implements plans of action to rectify shortcomings identified in annual audits 90% of veterans needing accommodation report being able to share that information easily	Executive Team Strategic Communications Director	
		iii. Provide materials in multiple formats	90% of veterans with disabilities report increased access via multiple formats	Strategic Communications Director	
	b. Ensure non-English-speaking veterans can access services and information	i. Offer translation and interpretation services, as needed	90% of non-English speaking veterans report linguistic access	Strategic Communications Director	

ii. Develop outreach materials in multiple languages, prioritizing those most spoken within Oregon's veteran community	90% of non-English speaking veterans report linguistic access	Strategic Communications Director
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**Section 2. OUR EXTERNAL WORK**

**6. Partnerships: Strengthen and Expand our Work through Strategic Partnerships**

a. Identify and pursue priority partnerships	i. Prioritize a manageable number of state agency and private provider partners	100% of staff have access to who DEIA partners are and why	Executive Team and DEIA Coordinator
b. Identify shared priorities, areas of focus, work plans, and desired outcomes with partners	i. Develop written partnership agreements outlining priorities, focus areas, and work plans	100% of ODVA staff and partners report that partnerships are clear, productive, and mutually beneficial	Executive Team
c. Regularly share resources with, from, and among partners and related parties	i. Share data, program reports, materials, trainings, and lessons learned as agreed	100% of ODVA staff and partners report the partnership enhances their resources	DEIA Coordinator and Strategic Communications Director



**7. Communications: Communicate Externally About our DEIA Work**

a. Ensure consistent and frequent DEIA communications	i. Provide quarterly DEIA e-news and annual in-person updates to constituents ii. Receive and share regular updates from partners regarding their DEIA work related to veterans	75% of constituents report that quarterly and annual updates are informative and useful 75% of ODVA staff report that constituent updates are informative and useful	Strategic Communications Director Strategic Communications Director
b. Ensure transparency about DEIA progress, challenges, and next steps	i. All e-news and in-person updates include successes, challenges, and next steps	100% of constituents are able to identify ODVA successes, challenges, and next steps	Strategic Communications Director
c. Develop, implement, and evaluate content from continuous feedback loops regarding programs and services	i. Regularly conduct listening sessions, focus groups, community forums, surveys, and use a virtual comment box, to invite, collect, and synthesize feedback	100% of feedback is evaluated and responded to by the DEIA committee	Strategic Communications Director
d. Conduct and report findings of annual audits of all DEIA programs and initiatives	i. Metrics and methodology for evaluating progress are clear and measurable, and DEIA committee establishes a plan, process, and timeline for audits	Audits are on a set schedule and achieve an 80% completion and compliance rate	Executive Team and DEIA Coordinator
e. Ensure comprehensive and robust communications across multiple platforms, venues, and channels	i. Develop plans to leverage social media, newsletters, text, community radio, print and online publications, in-person events, and other channels	90% of constituents and partners report that communications are effective and reach broad audiences	Strategic Communications Director, ASA Director, AVS Director



