



# NEW HANOVER COUNTY

## COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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### Administrative Memorandum

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<b>Approved By:</b>	Chris Coudriet, County Manager

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

#### I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Building on the Board of Commissioners' call for change in social and racial injustice, expectation of equity in our actions and recommendations, and mission and vision for our organization that ensures stewardship and diversity for generations to come, we have determined that we need to make an obvious, real, and resourced commitment to diversity and equity. This commitment needs to inform all that we do as a public staff – internal and external to the organization. It needs to inform policy, budget, and program recommendations brought to the Board for its consideration.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

**Diversity** - Individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersectionality, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations).

**Equity** – The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participation in employment, professional development, advancement, and succession opportunities that are capable of closing any attainment gap in professional success or public service.

**Inclusion** – The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diverse staff and candidates in recruitment, hiring, professional development, and all additional ways that the organization would engage with these individuals – in ways that increase awareness, visibility, content knowledge, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and government.

#### III. POLICY

New Hanover County seeks to work collaboratively across the enterprise and community as a catalyst for change among underrepresented groups to ensure diversity and equity in all areas of county government. Our intent is to ensure access, equity and inclusion in New Hanover County's services, policies and procedures.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATIONS/INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED**

This administrative memorandum applies to all New Hanover County departments and agencies.

#### **V. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Effective June 8, 2020, New Hanover County is establishing the Office of Diversity and Equity which will seek to promote an inclusive and fair work environment, building a workplace culture and local community in which employees and residents are respected, valued and understood for their own identity. This office will be responsible for data-driven recommendations that identify and implement objectives and measures related to diversity and equity.

In order to implement and support the new office and to provide for an effective and orderly transition, the following processes are in effect:

1. LEADERSHIP:
  - a. A Chief Diversity and Equity Officer will be selected by and report directly to the County Manager and serve on the executive leadership team.
  - b. The Chief Diversity and Equity Officer will work collaboratively with staff members, department heads, executive leadership, the Board of County Commissioners, and the community to present data-driven recommendations on initiatives that advance diversity and equity in New Hanover County.
2. STRATEGIC PLANNING:
  - a. A diversity and equity strategic plan will be created to support the New Hanover County strategic plan and achieve diversity and equity goals in three primary focus areas: training and education, internal operations, and community outreach.
  - b. The diversity and equity strategic plan will adopt targets with key measures on advancing diversity and equity throughout the enterprise and the community.
3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH
  - a. The Office will coordinate meetings and events of the Community Relations Advisory Committee; Commission on African American History, Heritage and Culture; the Commission for Women; and any other related board or committee established by New Hanover County.
  - b. The Office will partner with the private sector, non-profit and faith-based organizations, community leaders and academic institutions to discuss issues pertaining to diversity, equity and inclusion and identify strategies to address them.

#### **VI. INTERNAL PROCESSES**

The Office will counsel, provide recommendations, and assist the County Manager in the evaluation of policy decisions, budgeting, programs and services with an equity perspective to determine how best to achieve equitable outcomes and fair access to opportunity for all.

#### **VII. POLICY EVALUATION**

Diversity and equity desired outcomes and key measures will be developed, and an annual report will be published following the end of each fiscal year illustrating the status of our diversity and equity goals.