Working Toward a More Equitable and Inclusive ABQ

Mayor Tim Keller established the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in March 2018 to implement his vision of Albuquerque as a safe, innovative, and inclusive community for all of us. Mayor Keller charged the office with inspiring and equipping all city departments with the knowledge and tools to embrace and implement equity as a guiding principle in all areas of public life.

The Divisions of OEI include: Native American, African American, Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, as well as the Culture Change training division, Race Equity Data specialist and communications.

OEI promotes high impact strategies to change population-level outcomes, focusing on who we hire as a city, who we do business with as a city, where we invest capital dollars, and how we serve all populations of our city, including people who speak languages other than English. OEI works closely with its sister office of Civil Rights, and with the City’s ADA coordinator, both of whom are charged with leading enforcement of civil rights laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Office defines inequities as disparities in health, mental health, economic well being, or other social indicators that are systemic and avoidable, and therefore, are considered unjust and unfair. OEI believes that inequities hold the city back and that closing gaps in economic opportunity and outcomes are key to Albuquerque’s future.

OEI provides leadership, training and technical assistance to departments to build their capacity to be more inclusive and equitable, using tools and data to inform decisions. The staff of the office demonstrate OEI’s values by being engaged in continuous dialogue with communities most impacted by inequity.

Even though the pandemic has hit them hardest, underserved communities in our City have been left to fend for themselves—until now. Immigrants are a vital part of our economy and social fabric, and we are taking direct action to get them the assistance they need.”

—Mayor Tim Keller

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

01 Helped guide our city’s Emergency Response and Recovery to ensure timely information in languages people understand. Directed resources to the most vulnerable in our community who have the hardest time surviving the pandemic and its economic consequences.
People in Albuquerque of all backgrounds are our greatest asset and have what they need to thrive. To inspire and equip city government to make Albuquerque a national role model of racial equity and social justice.

**The goals of the Office of Equity and Inclusion are to:**
- Develop a city workforce that is representative at all levels of the demographics of the city.
- Increase local purchasing and doing business with companies owned by people of color.
- Invest in areas of the city that have been under invested.
- Ensure that the city delivers city services in an equitable and inclusive manner.

**CITY POLICIES THAT FOCUS ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION**
- R-20-75 Strengthening the City’s Commitment to Racial Equity and Social Justice
- R-20-85 Adding a Racial Equity Criterion to the City's Capital Improvement Process
- Amended Human Rights Ordinance, adding hair/grooming protections to the ordinance
- R-18-7 Strengthening the City's Immigrant Friendly City Status
- O-18-45 Establishing the Commission on American Indian/Alaska Native Affairs

Racial discrimination doesn't end with the color of someone’s skin. We’ve seen people in our community discriminated against because of their hair. Hair and cultural headdresses are tightly linked to the proud histories and cultures of people of color. We should celebrate people’s hairstyles, not discriminate against them. The CROWN Act Ordinance will further strengthen our city's discrimination laws and we proudly champion this bill.

—Torri Jacobus, Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Managing Assistant City Attorney