



THE DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

ACTION PLAN / 2016-2017

GOAL 1

INCREASE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy 1: Improve the resources we make available

Actions:

- 1 Conduct an assessment of all of our website pages/content, determine where improvement is needed, develop priorities and timelines for making changes
- 2 Complete a project to review and redesign all of our outreach materials to make them as accurate and user friendly as possible
- 3 Develop a new set of FAQs based on the inquiries we receive most frequently and post them on our website
- 4 Launch a media and social media strategy that capitalizes on opportunities to provide content and public service announcements to television and radio outlets and makes effective use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms

Strategy 2: Better target education and outreach efforts

Actions:

- 1 Create a tool to track our outreach activities Department-wide to see which communities we are reaching with what information, and where we need to focus more efforts
- 2 Create a tool to track the kinds of inquiries we receive through our call center so we can better explain our function and provide referral information for the most common inquiries out of our jurisdiction
- 3 Analyze the kinds of discrimination that are occurring and the need for additional information among various populations and industries
- 4 Develop a multi-year Strategic Outreach Plan
- 5 Enclose educational materials with the letters and notices we send to complainants and respondents
- 6 Organize a Fair Housing Month event
- 7 Develop educational materials (fact sheets, newspaper articles, FAQs, etc.) for business owners on current "hot" topics

Strategy 3: Improve outreach to people with limited English proficiency

Actions:

- 1 Use HUD Education and Outreach funds to develop culturally sensitive outreach materials and translate additional outreach materials into multiple languages
- 2 Evaluate the entire suite of DFEH outreach materials to determine which materials should be translated into which languages and make it happen

Strategy 4: Improve outreach and access for people with disabilities

Actions:

- 1 Conduct an assessment of what needs to be done to ensure our website is fully accessible for people with disabilities and implement needed changes
- 2 Analyze the need for additional outreach activities and materials targeted at people with disabilities and incorporate those needs into a multi-year Strategic Outreach Plan
- 3 Make changes to our facilities to the extent we can, to improve access and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Strategy 5: Aim for the greatest impact from every dollar we spend

Actions:

- 1 Develop a library of materials to be used for speaking engagements and training, so that we don't have to reinvent the wheel each time
- 2 Develop a speakers bureau for the Department and provide a list of staff with specific expertise and interest in making presentation
- 3 Conduct research on the most effective means of outreach in various communities based on the experiences of other groups/organizations and any studies and use this information in developing a multi-year Strategic Outreach Plan
- 4 Partner with federal and other state government departments and others to leverage our outreach efforts:
 - Continue joint outreach efforts with EEOC and HUD
 - CalVet and EDD on military and veterans status
 - EDD for new businesses and people registering for unemployment benefits
 - The Department of Rehabilitation on outreach to persons with disabilities
 - Other state enforcement entities
 - Community organizations and schools

GOAL 2

PREVENT AND COMBAT DISCRIMINATION AND HATE VIOLENCE THROUGH PROACTIVE AND STRATEGIC EFFORTS

Strategy 1: Pursue cases and strategies that will have the greatest impact

Actions:

- 1 Put a mechanism in place to proactively pursue cases for investigation and litigation based on statistical and other information suggesting a high likelihood that discrimination is taking place, including discrimination based on the disparate impact theory
- 2 Identify patterns of discrimination within various industries, jobs, regions, etc. and undertake at least one targeted enforcement effort to address an area(s) of concern
- 3 Engage the federal Department of Justice to train our staff; publicize our community conciliation function and affirmatively reach out to communities/groups/individuals that might benefit from this service

Strategy 2: Help to foster best practices within California State Government

Actions:

- 1 Work with CalHR and the Department of General Services to determine how to incorporate best practices related to civil rights into relevant statewide forms and processes
- 2 Reach out to the directors of all state departments to build greater understanding of our role and authority related to preventing and combating discrimination within state government
- 3 Develop an annual training plan with offerings that address the most critical needs of other state departments
- 4 Identify forums that bring state entities together to discuss civil rights issues and determine the level of DFEH involvement that would best address knowledge gaps and needs for guidance
- 5 Explore opportunities to work with SPB, CalHR and DGS to incorporate more information into statewide guidance documents (e.g. Personnel Management Letters, State Administrative Manual)

Strategy 3: Model the way for best practices in civil rights

Actions:

- 1 Conduct an assessment of what needs to be done to ensure our website is fully accessible for people with disabilities and implement needed changes
- 2 Re-establish a Disability Advisory Committee and take steps to improve disability access in our offices
- 3 Evaluate internal programs in the areas of reasonable accommodation and contracting against best practices, make any needed changes and provide model policies, processes and templates on our website and in our training

Strategy 4: Integrate efforts across all parts of the department through improved information sharing and collaboration

Actions:

- 1 Implement a process for documenting and sharing legal interpretations and developments
- 2 Organize cross-divisional meetings focused on topics of mutual interest
- 3 Update the Legal Discovery Handbook as a tool for investigators to use in consultation with Legal Division

Strategy 5: Leverage our efforts through partnerships

Actions:

- 1 Reach out to local entities such as Human Rights Commissions and housing agencies to explore opportunities for collaboration and information sharing
- 2 Reach out to civil rights enforcement entities in other states to determine the value of creating an ongoing forum to share information and potentially engage in joint efforts
- 3 Continue our partnership with EEOC and HUD and explore the potential impact of working with a broader array of federal entities and tribal governments, including the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and IHS

GOAL 3

PROVIDE EXCELLENT SERVICE TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND ENTITIES WHO INTERACT WITH US

Strategy 1: Ensure our services are user-friendly, accessible and consistent across all platforms

Actions:

- 1 Complete changes to our pre-complaint inquiry forms and screening questions to make them consistent and more helpful
- 2 Solicit input from stakeholders on how to best construct the external interfaces of our new Case Filing and Management System
- 3 Complete a project to assess our obligations under the law and our regulations, and make sure our forms, literature, website and internal practices are consistent with that assessment
- 4 Provide additional customer service training to staff who interact with the public, including how to address the unique needs of various populations we serve such as persons with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency

Strategy 2: Decrease complexity and improve timeliness of services by streamlining processes

Actions:

- 1 Evaluate the success of a project piloting changes in our intake processes, including impact on decreasing the amount of time it takes an investigator to contact a complainant and complete the complaint filing process; determine whether to roll it out statewide
- 2 Review and revise our procedural regulations
- 3 Explore processes and systems used by federal partners and others to assess their viability and potential to simplify the experiences of those who interact with multiple entities

Strategy 3: Improve the services we provide to persons with disabilities

Actions:

- 1 Conduct an assessment of what needs to be done to ensure our website is fully accessible for people with disabilities and implement needed changes
- 2 Engage disability rights organizations in establishing the requirements for our new Case Management and Filing System
- 3 Conduct an assessment of our call center operations to ensure they meet the needs of persons with disabilities, including the structure of our Interactive Voice Response System and technologies used to assist callers who are hard of hearing

Strategy 4: Improve our ability to serve people with limited English proficiency

Actions:

- 1 Incorporate translation tools into the redesign of our website
- 2 Assess all of our forms and letter templates to determine the need to make more of them available in multiple languages and make needed changes
- 3 Assess whether DFEH is meeting all of the requirements of the Dymally-Alatorre Language Services Act and develop a plan to address any deficiencies
- 4 Evaluate the processes we use to identify the need for and procure translation services from the time someone initially contacts us through the ultimate outcome of their case and make any changes needed to ensure easy and timely access to services

GOAL 4

ENSURE THAT OUR INTERNAL PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY MEET OUR BUSINESS NEEDS

Strategy 1: Improve how we gather and manage information

Actions:

- 1 Implement new Case Filing and Management Systems
- 2 Create department-wide naming conventions
- 3 Complete data retention/information management plan

Strategy 2: Ensure that all of our policies and procedures are up-to-date and well-documented

Actions:

- 1 Complete a project to update all of the directives in Enforcement Division
- 2 Provide better documentation and tools for onboarding new employees and separating employees from the department
- 3 Create/update additional administrative policies, including upward mobility, training/staff development, attendance and work schedule and workplace violence and bullying prevention
- 4 Solicit input from staff on the need to update or better document additional policies and procedures
- 5 Document all IT processes and procedures

Strategy 3: Be prepared to respond to events outside the status quo

Actions:

- 1 Complete the department's Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan
- 2 Conduct emergency drills and provide training to DFEH employees statewide
- 3 Update procedures to be used by employees when they are threatened or when someone threatens to harm themselves or a third party; also for suspicious or threatening packages

Strategy 4: Develop standards and tools for measuring our performance

Actions:

- 1 Develop departmental performance measures
- 2 Develop internal service level agreements that define expectations for services provided to the rest of the Department by the Administration and Information Technology Divisions

GOAL 5

GIVE OUR EMPLOYEES THE INFORMATION, TOOLS AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO THRIVE

Strategy 1: Improve our ability to communicate clear expectations, provide actionable feedback and recognize excellence

Actions:

- 1 Complete project to develop quantitative and qualitative performance standards for investigators
- 2 Develop and implement an employee recognition program for the department
- 3 Get completely up-to-date on providing Individual Development Plans to all staff
- 4 Provide additional training to managers and supervisors on communication and coaching

Strategy 2: Be more systematic in identifying and meeting training needs

Actions:

- 1 Update the department's training policy
- 2 Put mechanisms in place to assess training needs for each staff person and track progress in meeting those needs
- 3 Establish a training unit for the Enforcement Division and develop the first in a series of annual training plans for the division

Strategy 3: Update and improve the tools and resources provided to staff

Actions:

- 1 Continue to build the Legal Division's brief bank to provide an easily navigable library for attorneys and others to access briefs, pleadings and research memoranda
- 2 Update the investigations manual, supervisor's manual and clerical manual in the Enforcement Division
- 3 Complete a project to update all of the forms and templates used within the Enforcement Division

Strategy 4: Improve communication at all levels

Actions:

- 1 Complete the reorganization and build-out of DFEH Connect (intranet) including better organization of policies and procedures and addition of divisional content
- 2 Put protocols in place for how information is shared within each division including frequency of staff meetings
- 3 Develop an agenda template that includes a discussion of communication needs at the conclusion of every meeting and ask everyone to use it

Strategy 5: Provide staff with more professional development resources

Actions:

- 1 Develop and implement a mentoring program
- 2 Put an Upward Mobility Program in place
- 3 Create a library of professional development tools on DFEH Connect