

CONNECTICUT
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CAPITOL OFFICE

2024 JUL 12 A 9:21

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

NED LAMONT

EXECUTIVE ORDER 24-2

ACHIEVING EQUITY IN CONNECTICUT STATE GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS, State government should be representative of the populations it serves and ensure that people from different racial, ethnic, gender, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds have a voice in the decision-making process and ensure that policies and practices of state government address the needs and concerns of all citizens; and

WHEREAS, by creating a fair, equitable and inclusive environment, State government can address historical and ongoing disparities and promote social justice; and

WHEREAS, the State recognizes that racism is a public health crisis, and that race-based inequities continue to adversely impact life expectancy and outcomes of the State's population; and

WHEREAS, State government is accountable to the public and need to maintain trust and confidence by demonstrating its commitment to fairness, inclusivity and social progress; and

WHEREAS, by valuing and leveraging the talents and contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds, State government can create a more vibrant and competitive economy; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of government to actively seek out and engage with individuals and opinions beyond those who typically have access and opportunity, recognizing that such inclusivity is essential in creating a stronger workforce and crafting more effective and representative public policies; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Connecticut is committed to advancing government policies that can promote equity within society including dismantling the historical and systematic disparities faced by underserved communities in education, health care, criminal justice, employment and economic opportunities, housing and community development, and childcare; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Connecticut, do hereby ORDER AND DIRECT:

1. The Office of Equity and Opportunity is hereby created within the Office of the Governor. The Governor shall hire a Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer to lead the Office of Equity and Opportunity.
2. The Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer shall lead the State's efforts to ensure that the State of Connecticut is a leader in equity and inclusion with the goals of eliminating institutional and systemic barriers for the people of Connecticut and creating opportunity and access for all of those it serves and employs.

3. The Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer shall:
 - a. Serve as the coordinator of the State's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy.
 - b. Support equity-oriented efforts throughout the State to ensure services and resources are available and accessible to all in Connecticut.
 - c. Conduct comprehensive assessments of current and proposed policies and practices of State agencies to identify areas where disparities exist, and where underserved communities may face barriers to accessing services.
 - d. Develop a formal process for the development and implementation of agency equity plans.
 - e. Coordinate the publication of agency equity plans on a centralized and easily accessible website.
 - f. Develop equity-oriented systems, policies, and procedures that operationalize diversity, equity, inclusion and support sustainable practices within State agencies.
 - g. Identify diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings opportunities for all State employees.
 - h. Develop Statewide diversity, equity, and inclusion benchmarks and measures of progress.
 - i. Oversee and provide guidance to State agencies on how to engage and incorporate the perspectives of underserved communities.
 - j. Partner with State agencies to ensure communications with residents are culturally and linguistically appropriate and accessible.
 - k. Integrate equity considerations into the budget process and assess the impact of budget decisions.
 - l. Provide strategies to promote equitable contracting and purchasing practices.
4. All State employees shall participate in trainings focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer shall direct the manner and frequency in which State employees shall undertake this training.
5. All State agencies will develop an agency equity plan with assistance from the Office of Equity and Opportunity and the Chief Equity and Opportunity Officer. The Chief Equity Officer shall direct the manner and frequency in which State agencies will publish their agency equity plans.
6. Each Agency Equity Plan shall:
 - a. Set forth criteria for conducting comprehensive assessments of current policies, practices and programs that includes the collection and analysis of data on employee representation, service delivery, program impact and demographic trends within the State's population.
 - b. Establish clear, measurable goals, strategies, and objectives for advancing equity within the agency.
 - c. Incorporate specific goals as directed by the Office of Equity and Opportunity.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 12th day of July 2024.

Ned Lamont

Ned Lamont
Governor

By His Excellency's Command

Stephanie Thomas

Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State

