

Baltimore County Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Annual Report 2023



Baltimore County, Maryland

Annual Report: Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 2023

John A. Olszewski, Jr.
County Executive

Stacy L. Rodgers
County Administrative Officer

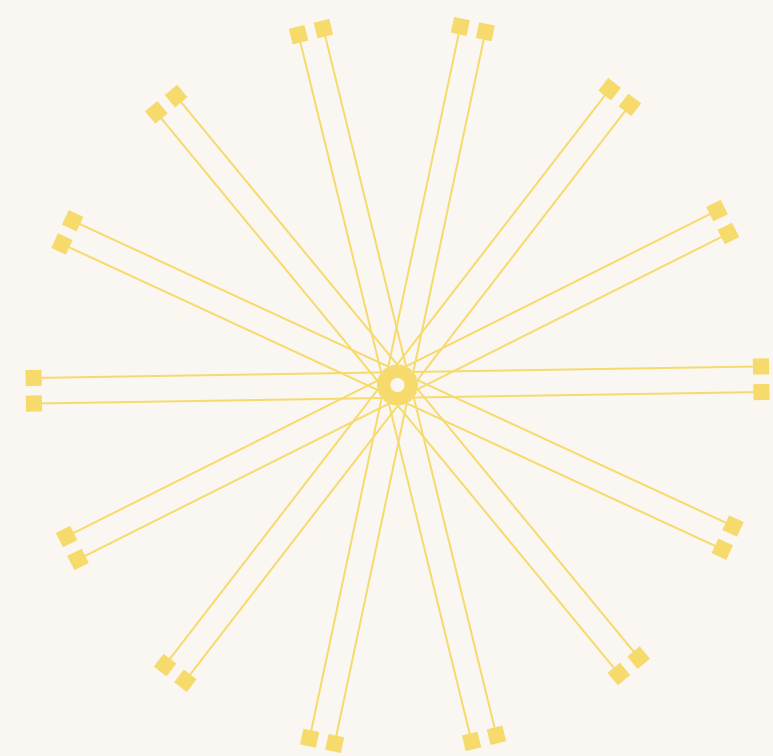
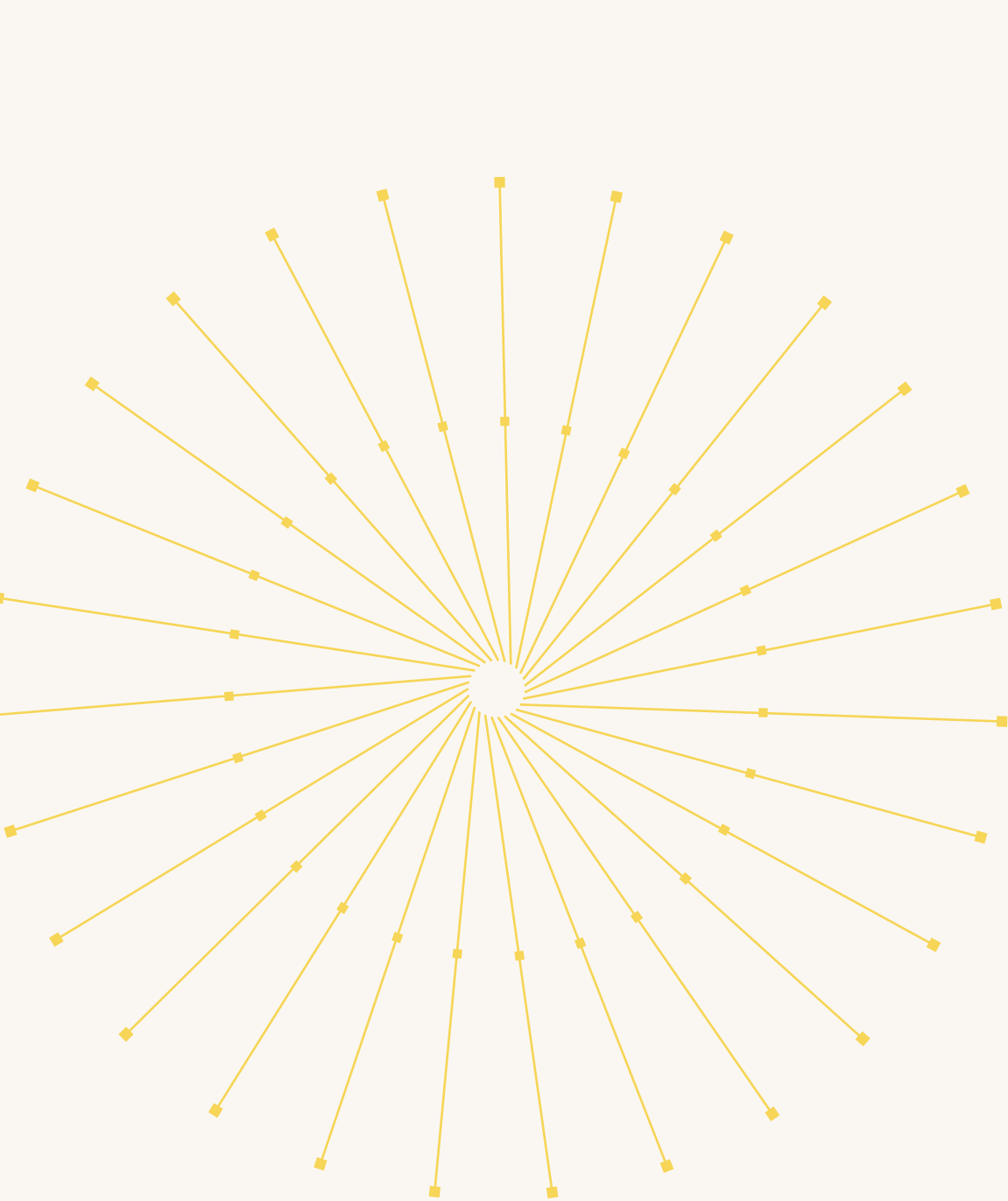
Sevetra Peoples-Brown
Chief Officer, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Executive Director, Human Relations Commission

Baltimore County Council
Julian E. Jones, Jr., Fourth District
Council Chair

Pat Young, First District
Izzy Patoka, Second District
Wade Kach, Third District
David Marks, Fifth District
Mike Ertel, Sixth District
Todd Crandell, Seventh District

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Date of Submission:
December 31, 2023





Honorable John A. Olszewski, Jr.
 Honorable Julian E. Jones, Jr.
 Honorable Pat Young
 Honorable Izzy Patoka
 Honorable Wade Kach
 Honorable David Marks
 Honorable Mike Ertel
 Honorable Todd K. Crandell

December 31, 2023

Dear County Executive, Council Chairman, and Councilmen:

I am pleased to present the December 2023 Annual Report for the Baltimore County Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Per Bill 32-23 § 3-2-808, “The Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion shall issue an Annual Report to the County Executive and County Council of the Division’s activities, accomplishments, and outcomes no later than December 31 of each year.”

For 60 years, there have been significant milestones related to the promotion and sustainability of diversity, equity and inclusionary efforts throughout Baltimore County. This includes the establishment of the Human Relations Commission in 1963 and the Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) program in 1983, both pillars to the County’s DEI commitment. Under the Olszewski Administration, the County has achieved significant growth in its equitable decision-making practices. Examples include the passing of the 2019 Housing Opportunity Made Equal (HOME) Act; creating and codification of the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; and commitment to dedicate 30% of discretionary funding by FY 2026 to support MWBE’s. These demonstrate the County’s commitment and prioritization of DEI.

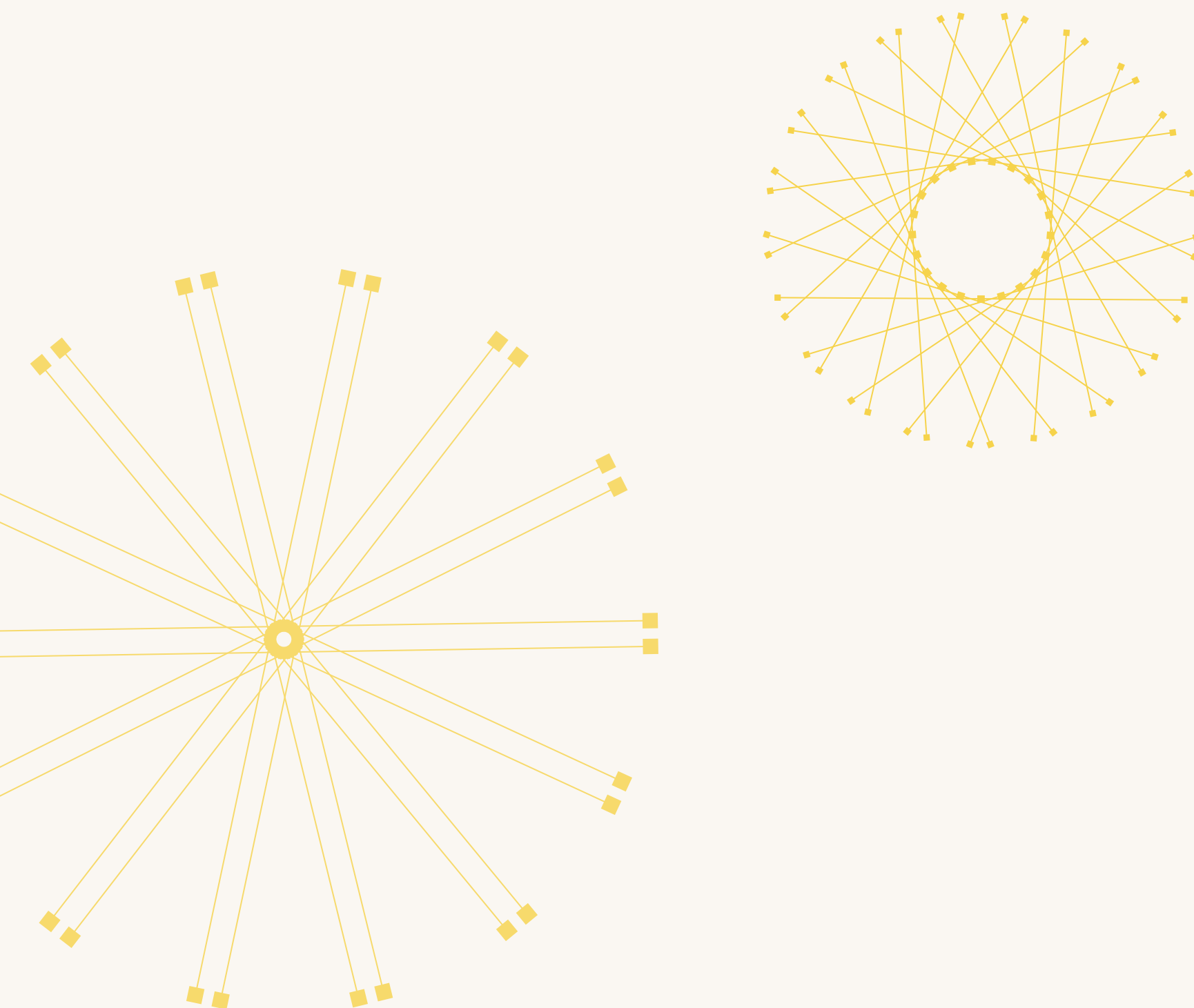
An outline of the various enterprise-wide initiatives, along with the Human Relations and MWBE programmatic milestones are the focus of the DEI work included throughout the report. The period of performance related to these areas is July 1, 2022, through November 30, 2023. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to share.

Sincerely,

Sevetra Peoples-Brown

Sevetra Peoples-Brown

Executive Director, Human Relations Commission
 Chief of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Division





“Our diversity is our strength in Baltimore County. We will continue to strive for more inclusionary practices and policies so that every resident enjoys a high quality of life.”

County Executive John A. Olszewski, Jr.



Baltimore County's Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

“Baltimore County government shall advance fair policies and practices by making decisions, providing opportunities and allocating resources and services through a **diversity, inclusion and equity lens** that ensures **engagement, growth and prosperity** for all county employees, residents, visitors and stakeholders.”

Source: [Executive Order 2019-002 Establishing the Creation of an Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

The purpose of the **Baltimore County Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** is to lead, assist, and work with Departments in addressing barriers to accessing resources throughout the County and within County government.

The **Division of DEI** works to enhance and promote access to resources and services that improve quality of life, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or identity, country of origin, religion, or physical and mental abilities. The Division responsible for the management and oversight of the County's:

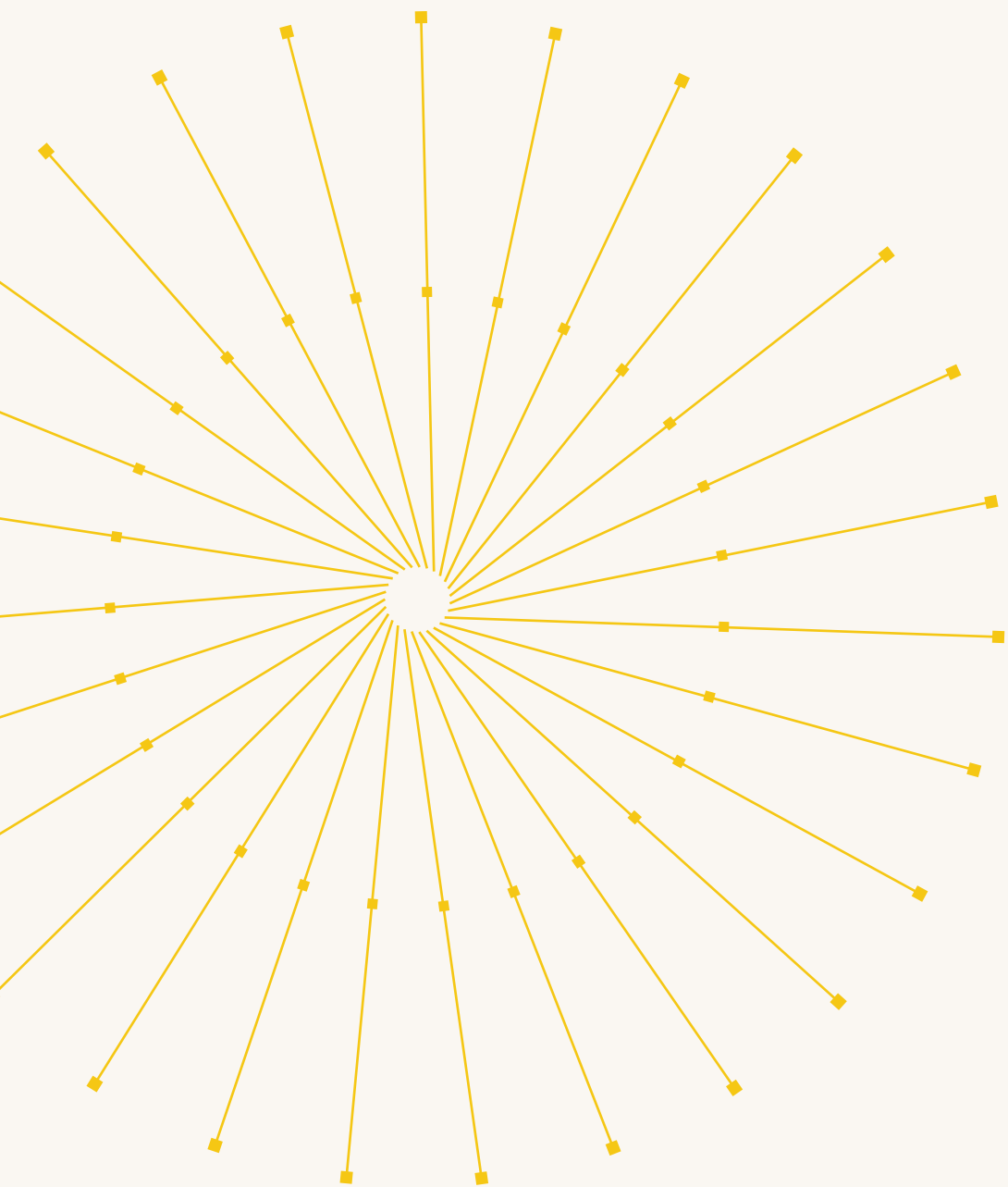
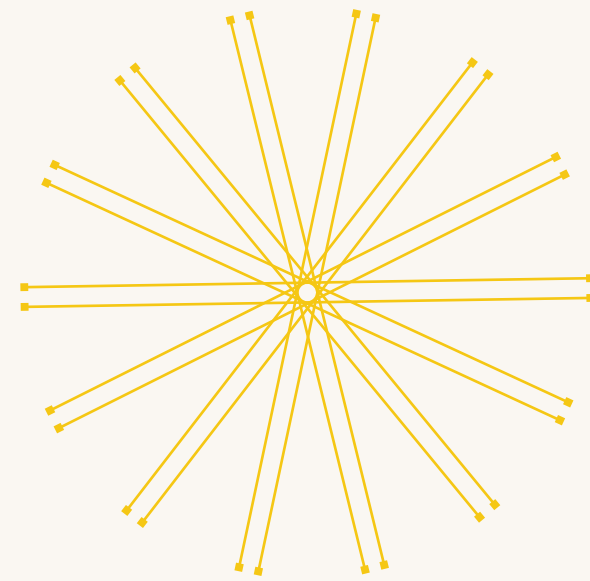
- **Human Relations Program** includes the Human Relations Commission (HRC) that enforces the County's antidiscrimination law and Article 29 of the Baltimore County Code.
- **Title VI Compliance**, as outlined in the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This responsibility was added to the Division in 2023, and the Division is currently establishing a centralized business process and oversight mechanism for the County in this area.
- **Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise Program (MWBE)** works to increase and promote minority and women-owned business participation throughout County procured agreements (contract and grant agreements).

The Division of DEI also supports the various Departments and Offices throughout the County's general government to establish and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusionary practices, protocols, and policies.

Since the County's DEI operation was established in 2019, it has grown to a staff of 12 and now manage a budget of over \$1 million. In 2023 the DEI operation was designated by County law as a Division within Office of Human Resources. The Division has established baseline data to track metrics related to key performance areas, built and strengthened relationships with community partners, and provided trainings that promote and support diversity and inclusion throughout the County workforce. In this, the Division's annual report, baseline data is shared for key performance indicators that will be tracked in future reports.



The Division's Responsibilities



- **Building** bridges between communities and the government throughout the County.
- **Completing** compliance monitoring of procured agreements that have goals established to ensure fair and equitable representation of MBEs and WBEs that participate in awarded procured agreements.
- **Employing** best practices to ensure that County government reflects a diverse workforce and is an inclusive workplace.
- **Enforcing** Article 29, which governs the Human Relations Commission.
- **Ensuring** the application of an equity lens in decisions across County government, including hiring, contracting, and purchasing.
- **Establishing** and managing a centralized business process to provide oversight of Title VI Compliance as it is outlined in the 1964 Civil Rights Act's Federal provisions.
- **Fostering** community trust in government, particularly with public safety departments, through a multi-cultural Advisory Board.
- **Reviewing** solicitations valued at \$25,000 or higher to establish goals for the participation of MBEs and WBEs.
- **Utilizing** data to assess resource and access needs of traditionally underserved communities, to engage communities about unmet needs, and in data-driven special projects to show progress and foster buy-in.

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Division of DEI
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“It is time to accelerate our collective efforts to move toward a better Baltimore County. It’s about the resilience of our communities and the kind of transformational resurgence we demonstrate when facing challenges and solving problems together.”

County Administrative Officer Stacy L. Rodgers

Baltimore County at a Glance

Residents 854,535

the **3rd** largest population in Maryland
14% of Maryland's 6,164,660 residents live in Baltimore County

Baltimore County Data | *Statewide Data*

Age

<5 years 5.6% | 5.7%

<18 years 21.5% | 21.8%

18–64 years 54.4% | 55.6%

65+ years 18.5% | 16.9%

Female 52.4% | 51.3%

Race & Origin

Non-Hispanic White 53.1% | 48.3%

Non-Hispanic Black 31.9% | 31.7%

Non-Hispanic American Indian .5% | .7%

Non-Hispanic Asian/

Pacific Islander 6.7% | 7.2%

Hispanic 6.6% | 11.5%

Two or more races 2.9% | 3.2%

Socioeconomic

Median household income* \$81,846 | \$91,431

12-month per capita income* \$43,290 | \$45,915

Residents under 65 years of age without health insurance 6.4% | 7.1%

Residents living below the federal poverty line 9.8% | 9.6%

Households falling under the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) threshold, according to the United Way (2021) 29% | 28%

59% of the 115,000 Marylanders who hold housing vouchers are employed

25,000 Baltimore County families on the waiting list for housing vouchers (2020)

*in 2021 dollars, 2017–2021

Business Landscape

20,243 total employer establishments (2020)

73,494 total nonemployer establishments (2021)

Of the **16,103** employer firms in 2017:

- **10,172** men-owned / **3,123** women-owned
- **3,018** minority-owned / **11,538** non-minority-owned
- **1,056** veteran-owned / **13,329** non-veteran owned

Other

Veterans 42,558 (2017-2021) | 352,738

(14% of Maryland's veterans live in Baltimore County)

Foreign-born 12.3% | 15.4%

Residents over age 5 who speak a language other than English at home* 14.9% | 19.5%

Under age 65 with a disability* 8% | 7.7%

*2017–2021

County Government

9,551 employees in county workforce

Why Invest in DEI?

47% of Baltimore County residents are minorities

25% of the Baltimore County population is age 60+

48% of Generation Z nationally (born between 1997–2012) are racially or ethnically diverse, and Millennials (born between 1981–1996) are 19% more diverse than Baby Boomers (born between 1955–1964)

2030 when net international migration may exceed U.S. births in driving population growth

2045 when groups formerly seen as “minorities” may reach majority status in the U.S.

2060 1 in 3 Americans will be non-White

Diverse teams make better decisions up to **87%** of the time, according to a 2017 *Forbes* study

67% of job seekers consider workplace diversity as a key factor when considering employment opportunities (Glassdoor)

20% improvement in innovation observed in teams that include a diversity of thoughts, values, and personalities (Deloitte)

89% want their company to be inclusive of individuals with intellectual disabilities (Skillsoft)

44% of women respondents decided against accepting a job because they believed the organization wasn't inclusive (McKinsey)

Why Invest in DEI?

“The benefits of investing in DEI include but are not limited to:

- Better results
- Improved workplace environment
- Enhanced customer relations & service
- It’s the right thing to do”

Leadership Baltimore County

“Leadership Baltimore County (LBC) is a firm supporter of the importance, and benefits of [diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB)] work in all that we do within our organization, and externally in the society in which we exist. ... Without a structure, accountability, and clear strategies to implement DEIB best practices, it simply won’t happen. As a result, we are less effective as a society.

“We believe that the public sector garners the benefits of an effective DEIB function in the same way that the private sector does. These benefits include, but are not limited to: better results, improved workplace environment, enhanced customer relations & service, and it’s the right thing to do.

“We care deeply for our community and work hard to improve conditions for all our citizens through educating leaders about the challenges and opportunities facing Baltimore County and then inspiring them to take on volunteer leadership positions.”

Amanda Zinn, President & CEO
Leadership Baltimore County



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Baltimore County: A Timeline

The purpose of the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is to advance and advise on fair policies and practices by:

- Making decisions, providing opportunities, and allocating resources and services through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens
- Ensuring engagement, growth, and prosperity for all County employees, residents, visitors, and stakeholders

Source: [Baltimore County Bill 32-23 establishing a Division of DEI in County's Office of Human Resources](#)



DEI in Baltimore County: A Timeline

The Baltimore County **Human Relations Commission (HRC)** is established.

County Executive Donald P. Hutchinson extends the County’s MWBE goals to the purchase of goods and services, **committing to spend \$750,000 with MWBEs** annually on the purchase of equipment, supplies, or services.

County Executive Smith increases the **MWBE goal to 15%** on all procurements, including construction, architecture and engineering, goods and services, consultant contracts, and other professional services agreements.

1963

1983

1984

2004

2009

2018

Baltimore County enacts its first **Minority and Women’s Business Enterprise (MWBE)** program, six years in advance of the 1989 Supreme Court decision describing standards for local and state governments’ race- and gender-conscious remedial measures.

County Executive James T. Smith clarifies the definition of “minority business owners” and establishes a **minimum MWBE goal of 12% on all County contracts**, as well as **creating a Minority and Women Business Enterprise Office and a Minority Business Enterprise Commission**.

Baltimore County commissions its first **Disparity Study** to determine if data supports race and gender contracting remedies by assessing the county’s use of MWBEs on contracts.

DEI in Baltimore County: A Timeline

County Executive Johnny Olszewski establishes an **Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** within the Office of the County Executive by Executive Order of 2019-002. The executive order also establishes the **Baltimore County DEI Employee Advisory Council** to engage in and respond to issues, concerns, and needs of County employees related to DEI across government; and the **Baltimore County DEI Community Advisory Council** to engage in and respond to issues, concerns, and needs of County residents related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

To advance the goal of creating an equitable workplace, County employees are granted two **DEI Days** per calendar year for use on culturally significant holidays and observances.

The County's first Immigrant Affairs Coordinator position was created.

Juneteenth is declared a County holiday.

Baltimore County Bill 32-23 codifies the **Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** in the County Code within the County's Office of Human Resources and adds a Youth Member to the Human Relations Commission.



Baltimore County Bill 49-19 passes the Housing Opportunity Made Equal (HOME) Act, prohibiting discrimination against a person in the rental, sale, listing, representation, or soliciting of housing based on source of income.

The Maryland Legislature passes the **Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) Act (HB 231/SB 530)**, prohibiting landlords from discriminating against those who use Housing Choice Vouchers by adding "source of income" to the classes protected by current Maryland fair housing law.

Baltimore County awarded \$160,706,923 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its negative impacts on communities, residents, and businesses.

Executive Order 2022-005 increases the County's goal for expenditures with **MWBEs to 23% per fiscal year, with an increase to 30% per year in fiscal year 2026.**

Baltimore County Bill 70-23 amended Article 29 allowing civil penalties to be imposed up to \$5,000 for employment or public accommodation discrimination.

Baltimore County New Americans Task Force formed

Why Invest in DEI?

“We appreciate all that the Division of DEI has done to help us understand the processes and practices of the County in regard to this important work.”

Maryland Lynching Memorial Project

“The Baltimore County Lynching Memorial Project (BaltCo LMP) works to honor victims of racial terror lynching in Baltimore County and to confront the legacy of racial injustice experienced by the Black community.... BaltCo LMP recognizes that the injuries racism inflicts cannot be healed until [they are] confronted, that is: there must be truth before there can be reconciliation.

“The BaltCo LMP is one of 14 county coalitions in the state of Maryland that works in collaboration with the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, a 501(c)(3) organization.... The Maryland Lynching Memorial Project works to advance the cause of reconciliation in our state by documenting the history of racial terror lynchings, advocating for public acknowledgement of these murders, and working to honor and dignify the lives of the victims.

“The important partnership with the Division of DEI creates opportunities to work towards an understanding of the history of our county for all ages. We appreciate all that the Division of DEI has done to help us understand the processes and practices of the County in regard to this important work.”

Amy Millin, David Trucello,
Nancy R. Goldring, Will Schwarz
Baltimore County Lynching Memorial Project
Maryland Lynching Memorial Project

MARYLAND
LYNCHING
MEMORIAL PROJECT

Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes

The Division of DEI is a County-wide resource and partner to both government and non-government stakeholders. In this capacity, the Division has a range of responsibilities including the oversight of several programs and activities that support governmental and community-driven initiatives.

The Division is responsible for receiving, investigating, and mediating complaints associated with civil and human rights violations as they are defined in Article 29 of the Baltimore County Code, and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

These legal authorities govern the following programs of the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Article 29 of County Code, Human Relations Commission
- Title VI of 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VI Compliance Program
- Executive Order 2022 – 005, Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program

Human Relations Program

Human Relations Commission (HRC)

The DEI Division's Chief also serves as the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission, a 15-member community-led board of directors who are appointed by the County Executive. Seven of the 15 member seats are representatives from each of the County's seven Councilmanic districts.

The HRC works to uphold human and civil liberties of County residents by providing proactive education and outreach activities to enhance human relations, and forms partnerships with agencies and organizations to promote equal opportunity to the county's citizens and those conducting business in Baltimore County.

The mission of the Baltimore County Human Relations Commission is to eliminate discrimination through enforcement of its anti-discrimination civil/ human rights law (Article 29 of the Baltimore County Code), which prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and finance. The vision of the Commission is to continue to enhance its human relations/ civil rights resource agency where stakeholders will fully utilize the services provided.

Human Relations Commission (HRC) Highlights

60 years in operation
Established in 1963
15 Commissioners
47 HRC inquiries fielded

Discrimination Areas Covered:

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Finance
- Public accommodation

FY2023 Cases Closed:

- 6 Employment
- 10 Housing
- 8 Public Accommodations

Recent Legislation:

- In 2023, legislation expanded the HRC to include a youth member (up to 3 youth members may serve, aged 16–18) and to limit Commissioner to two consecutive terms.
- In 2023, the HRC successfully advanced an amendment to Article 29 allowing civil penalties to be imposed up to \$5,000 for employment or public accommodation discrimination.

Human Relations Program

Title VI Compliance

The Title VI compliance program supports the Division's responsibility to carry out Section 3-2-804 of the County code, supporting Baltimore County Government in measuring and assessing fair treatment by monitoring, tracking, and verifying countywide management and compliance with Title VI. *"Per Title VI, no recipient of federal funding may deny on the premise of education, employment, housing, or any public service and accommodation because of a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, or familial status."*

As a recipient of federal funding, Baltimore County Government is required to adhere to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any procured agreement (contracts, grants, and intergovernmental agreements), program, or activity that receives federal funding. Beginning FY 2023, the Division assumed responsibility for oversight of compliance with Title VI.

The provisions outlined within Title VI require efforts to promote nondiscrimination specifically in three areas, which will guide the development of the County's Title VI program moving forward:

Accessibility: including, but not limited to the provision of translation and interpretation services for those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and those covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Persons with limited English proficiency must be afforded a meaningful opportunity to participate in programs, activities, and contracts that receive federal funds. Agency policies and procedures may not deny or have the effect of denying persons with LEP, equal access to federally funded programs, activities or contracts for which such persons qualify.

Environmental Justice: including but not limited to ensuring that all programs, activities, and contracts that affect human health or the environment do not directly use criteria, methods, or procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Persons receiving federal funds under any contract, program or activity should consider disproportionate risks or environmental hazards, and should not be denied an equal opportunity for meaningful involvement, as provided by law, in governmental decision making relating to the distribution of environmental benefits or burdens.

Equal Employment Opportunity: including but not limited to ensuring that persons receiving federal funds under any contract, program, or activity do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin in all aspects of an employment relationship, including hiring, discharge, compensation, assignments, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

Human Relations Program

Activities, Accomplishments & Outcomes

Participation in County- and State-wide DEI Coalitions and Advisory Groups

- **The Baltimore County New Americans Tasks Force** was formed in June of 2023 to organize focus groups in each councilmanic district; facilitate a community survey in the County’s five most commonly spoken languages; identify and analyze barriers facing immigrants and their efforts and make recommendations to address those barriers. The Baltimore County New Americans Task Force will submit a report to the County Executive and the County Council by March 31, 2024. [New Americans in Baltimore County Stats](#)
- **The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE).**
The Division of DEI serves in a chairperson role in this alliance of public and private civil and human rights agencies, law enforcement, advocacy, religious, and educational organizations in the state of Maryland and the Washington, D.C., area.
- **Maryland Association of Human Relations/Rights Agencies (MAHRRRA).** DEI serves as treasurer of MAHRRRA, a clearinghouse for sharing civil and human relations/rights and equal employment opportunity data among state, local, and national human rights commissions and organizations.
- **Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention.** DEI serves as a Commissioner of this body, formed in 2023 with the passage of [HB 1066](#) to offer Marylanders a permanent, long-term mechanism to address hate crimes at the state level.
- **The State-wide Civil Rights Advisory Council.** Both Baltimore County DEI and the Human Relations Commission are members of this Council, which brings together representatives of community-based organizations, public sector and private sector entities, and higher education institutions to provide information and feedback to the Office of the Attorney General on a broad range of civil rights issues.



Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program

Minority and Women's Business Enterprise (MWBE)

The County's Minority and Women's Business Enterprise (MWBE) program was established to increase MBE and WBE participation in Baltimore County contracts. The County's current overall goal is 23% of the procurements awarded to/performed by MBE and WBE firms. This goal will increase to 30% in fiscal year 2026.

The DEI Division informs goals that support this County-wide program by reviewing all requests for proposals valued at a minimum of \$25,000 to establish guidelines for the participation of minority and women's business enterprises in all County contracts. The program also provides trainings to ensure subcontractors are represented, performs compliance monitoring to verify that MWBE subcontractors are fairly represented, and conducts ongoing outreach and engagement, as well as mediation and resolution related to MWBE involved contract disputes.

MWBE Highlights, FY2023 (July 1 – June 30)

- 105 Contracts Reviewed (Fiscal)
- Average MWBE goal set at 23%
- 117 Vendor Inquiries (Fiscal)
- 58 Pre-Bid/Proposal Meetings (Fiscal)
- 15 Post Constructions/Pre-Start Meetings
- 118 MBE Plan Pre-Award Reviews
- 87 MBE Plan Post Award Reviews Per Task

County Goals for Minimum Expenditure with MWBEs

1983	10% on County contracts
2004	12% on all County contracts
2009	15% on all County procurements, including construction, architecture and engineering, goods and services, consultant contracts, and other professional services agreements
2022	23% of all discretionary dollars of County procurement
2026	30% of all discretionary dollars of County procurement (<i>projection</i>)

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program

Disparity Study

A Disparity Study determines whether a government entity, either in the past or currently, engages in exclusionary practices in the solicitation and award of contracts to minority, and women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises (MWDBEs).

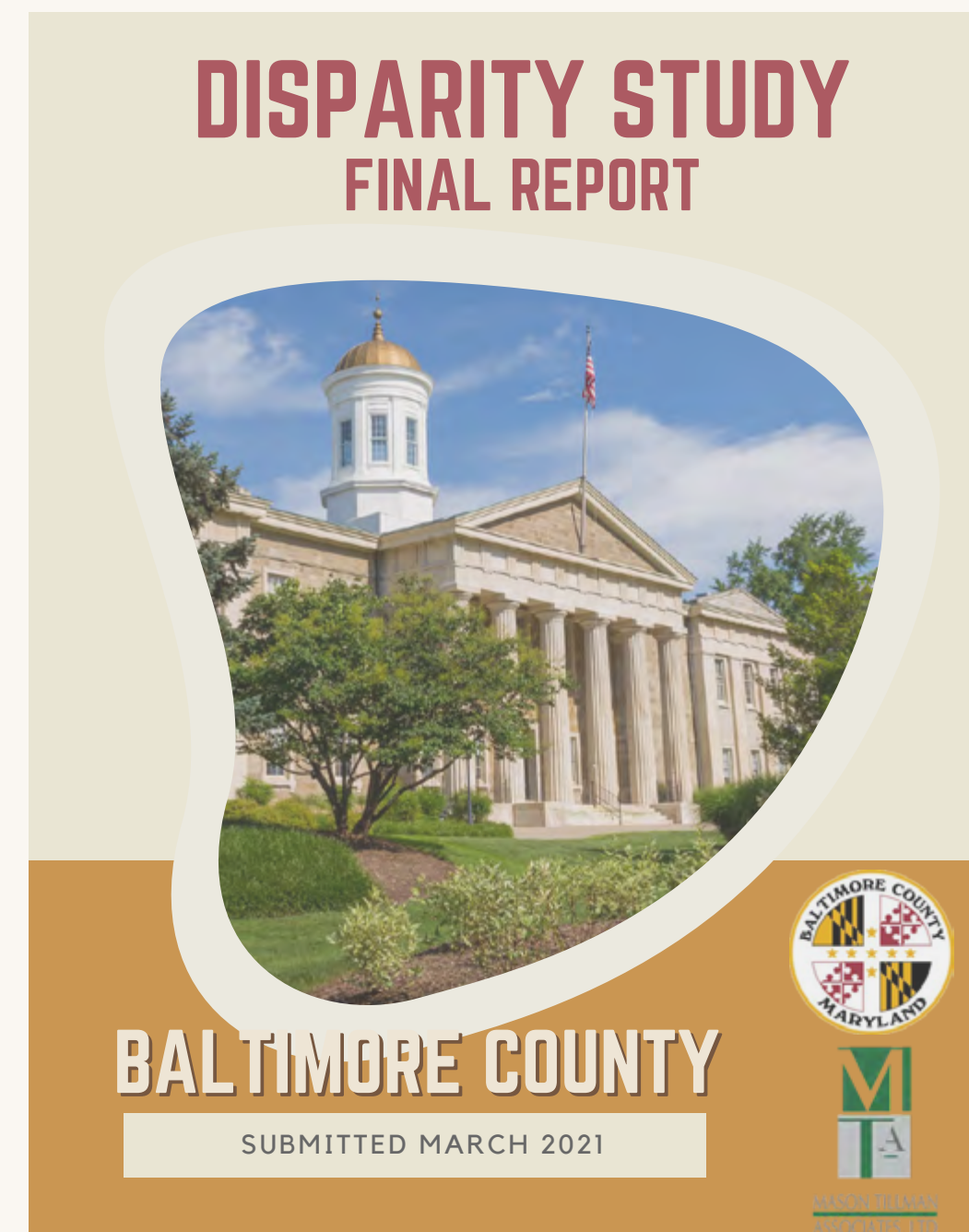
The March 2021 Disparity Study Report identified several opportunities for Baltimore County to enhance and improve upon its performance in this area, with impact on compliance, staffing, and business operations.

Baltimore County’s Response to Disparity Study Recommendation	Status
Subcontractor Remedies	
1. Establish minimum subcontracting goals: Achieve an overall goal of 30% to align with the State of Maryland goal of 29%.	Completed December 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO 2022-005 23% to increase to 30% by 2026 PRISM has been configured to begin capturing subgoals by ethnicity
Procedures to Implement MWBE Remedies	
2. Augment program staff: Align the MWBE Program with and report directly to the County’s Chief DEI Officer, and acquire two full-time positions focused on compliance and outreach.	Completed October 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two additional Compliance Officers hired in 2021 Office Administrator hired in 2022 Two Compliance Specialists hired in 2023 DEI Program Manager and DEI Marketing Manager positions filled
3. Obtain documentation of goal attainment at bid opening	Completed December 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Prime that requests a partial or full waiver must submit evidence of a “good faith effort (GFE)” with the bid at the bid due date. Failure to do so the Prime is considered non-responsive.
4. Establish tracking and monitoring standards	Initiated March 2023 - ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established the DEI-MWBE Liaisons; held initial training 3/23/2023 Establishing ongoing meetings to share updates regarding the business process

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program

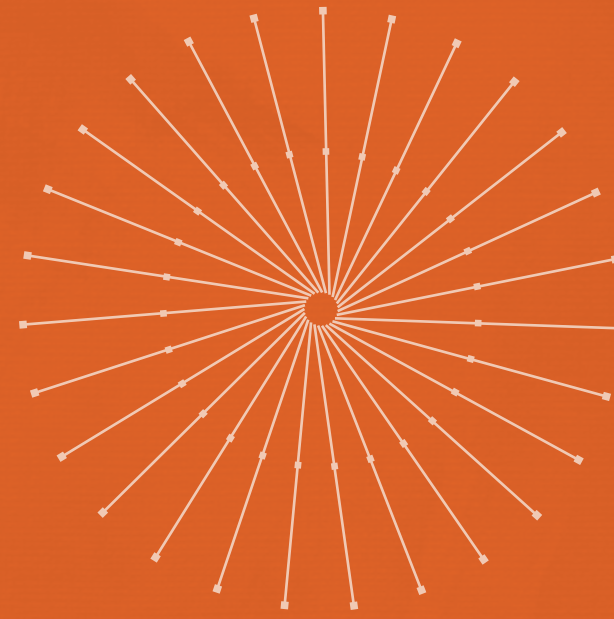
Disparity Study

The DEI MWBE team has reviewed and prepared a work plan to complement the 34 recommendations proposed in the report, and to date we have successfully implemented 8 recommendations.



Baltimore County's Response to Disparity Study Recommendation	Status
5. MWBE quarterly utilization review	<p>Initiated March 2023 - ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established the DEI-MWBE Liaisons; held initial training 3/23/2023 Establishing ongoing meetings to share updates regarding the process
6. Prompt payment provisions	<p>Completed September 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated in the MWBE solicitation language with a 30-day payment period. PRiSM module launched in 2022
7. Penalties for non-compliance	<p>Completed October 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompt Payment reporting is discussed in Pre-bid/Pre-proposal & pre-start/pre-construction meetings Penalty Language updated to say liquidated damages and saved on DEI letterhead.
8. MWBE program manual	<p>In process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once Purchasing/Procurement Manual is completed the MWBE Manual will be incorporated into the procurement process

Why Invest in DEI?



NAACP Baltimore County

Having a DEI function in Baltimore County is important because:

- Community concerns are heard
- It brings the community and partners together
- It helps keep everyone involved in the decision-making process
- It shows an attempt to reduce bias and breaks down barriers
- It raises the visibility of DEI and educates people about what it means

Having a DEI Division in Baltimore County impacts the people NAACP Baltimore County services by giving them:

- A feeling of having a seat at the table
- A reduction in the fear of police
- A feeling of their ideas being valued
- A feeling that we are given the same opportunities as other races
- An opportunity to see our people promoted
- A feeling that low economic people are being assisted and heard
- The opportunity to increase education

Dr. Danita Tolson

President, NAACP Baltimore County



DEI Initiatives In County Government

The Division of DEI supports the various Departments and Offices throughout the County's general government to establish and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusionary practices, protocols, and policies



Activities & Accomplishments

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Review

In 2021, Baltimore County was awarded \$160,706,923 in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help the County respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its negative impacts on communities, residents, and businesses. All ARPA funds are to be allocated by December 31, 2024, with all work completed and funding spent by December 31, 2026. ARPA spending proposals put forth by County Executive Olszewski focus on serving the County's most impacted residents and businesses, and include \$80 million towards economic development efforts, and \$60 million in equity-focused efforts for disadvantaged communities. The Division of DEI plays a key role in ensuring that SLFRF expenditures prioritize equitable outcomes by helping to establish goals for underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups affected by the project; building awareness of the ARPA project and services within the community; and ensuring that there are no barriers for target populations to access these programs and services; and measuring progress towards goals.

DEI Town Hall

In response to the national increase in hate crime events, the Division convened its first county-wide town hall in August 2023 with a focus on Workplace Safety and Mental Health. DEI Town Halls are a platform to share with and receive information from the workforce regarding DEI related issues or topics. The DEI Town Hall focused on discussing and addressing workplace safety, and provided information about resources available to support staff. In addition to the Division of DEI, the Town Hall featured presentations from the Police Department, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM), and the Benefits Division, on the following topics:

- Active Shooter Training: Understanding the procedures and protocols
- Stop the Bleed Training: What to do when someone is injured
- Cultural Competency and Sensitivity: How to respect cultural, social, and physical differences
- Mental and Behavioral Health Resources and Tips: Coping with disappointment and tragedy
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services: How to access and navigate the program

DEI Initiatives In County Government



Activities & Accomplishments

County Government Employee Viewpoint Survey

In October 2023, the Division along with the Office of Human Resources conducted the first County government-wide employee viewpoint survey (EVS). The EVS (modeled after the Federal EVS) is a tool that measures employees' perceptions; an opportunity for the workforce to confidentially/ anonymously express and convey their opinion about their work experience, organization and leaders. The results of the survey are used to modify and create workforce/human resource/DEI policies, identify training needs, and other organizational changes that will favorably influence employee retention, morale, and performance. The 2023 survey offers a baseline snapshot of the cultural climate within County government from the perspective of employees, and will be conducted annually. Of the 9,551 employees 1,714 employees completed the survey. This represents 18% of the workforce.

DEI Employee and Community Councils

These Councils were established as part of Executive Order 2019-002 to advocate for, engage in and respond to issues, concerns and needs of employees and county-residents as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion. As part of the Human Relations Commission strategic planning efforts the operation of the DEI Community Council is currently under review to serve complimentary to the Commission. The operation of the DEI Employee Council is also being reassessed to maximize engagement with designated DEI liaisons, DEI coordinators, and DEI staff throughout the enterprise. These reimagining efforts will further define and enhance these Councils, therefore promoting their efficacy and long-term sustainability.

The Baltimore County Equitable Policing Advisory Group

DEI serves as Chair of this advisory group, which examines policing policies and practices and makes recommendations for ensuring equitable policing in Baltimore County. The Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD) collects and reports data related to traffic stops annually to the Maryland Statistical Analysis Center.



DEI Initiatives In County Government



Baltimore County Enterprise Strategic Plan

2019-2022

Activities & Accomplishments

Implicit Bias Training

Implicit Bias Training has been one of Baltimore County Government's monumental successes in the 2023 calendar year. Both senior leaders and general workforce staff have participated in the training. A combined total of 658 county employees have completed Implicit Bias training, representing 7% of the county workforce. Implicit Bias as defined by the U.S. National Institutes of Health is a "form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally, that nevertheless affects judgements, decisions and behaviors." As a public service provider, it is important that the County's workforce demonstrate fair, equitable, and inclusionary engagement when interacting with clients, customers, and other stakeholders. Implicit Bias training is one of several trainings offered and available through the Division of DEI training catalog. As part of the Division's ongoing strategic engagement work, additional DEI related trainings will be available to County staff and partners, such as members of the various Boards and Commissions.

Workforce Empowerment (Enterprise Strategic Plan - Goal 6)

The Division is also working closely with the Office of Human Resources (OHR) to improve recruitment, retention, and succession planning. The results of the Employee Viewpoint Survey, along with Departmental demographic information including race/ethnicity, gender, and salary, are part of an ongoing initiative to support workforce empowerment. Based on this information, departments are charged with developing mitigation plans to improve disparities within their workforce. Together, the Division of DEI and OHR provide technical assistance to assist departments across County Government with achieving equitable and inclusionary success.

DEI Initiatives In County Government

Activities & Accomplishments



County Investments

The Division of DEI actively participates in each fiscal operating and capital budget development process. A thorough review of proposed funding allocations is completed in collaboration with members of the County Executive’s Senior Staff. The Division also participates in the decision-making and approval process of projects funded by appropriated state and federal funding.

LGBTQIA+ Community Affairs Initiatives with Baltimore County Police Department

The Division of DEI works closely with the Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD) to promote diversity, equity and inclusionary efforts. The collaborative work between the BCoPD and the Division is ever progressing. We continue to work together to address community and police relations. Examples of the collaborative efforts include:

- Advocacy for Victim’s Right
- Promotion of the LGBTQIA+ “Safe Space” Business Program (81 Baltimore County Businesses registered)
- Providing DEI Training to all in-coming Cadets
- Tracking Hate Bias Incidents and Crimes via a monthly report



DEI Initiatives In County Government

Activities & Accomplishments

DEI External Outreach and Engagement

July 1, 2022 to
November 30, 2023

September 2022

- Convened a session on managing Stress during election season for the Maryland Association of Elected Officials
- Hosted dignitaries from Iraq in partnership with the World Trade Center and Towson University.
- Participated in the 26th African American Festival in Central Towson

January 2023

- Participated in Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, Baltimore County Lynching Memorial Project's, 4th Annual Community Forum

April 2023

- Co-hosted in partnership with the Baltimore County Police Department and NAACP Baltimore County Chapter, Gun Buy Back Event

May 2023

- Participated in DEI panel discussion for the Maryland Association of Elected Officials Conference

June 2023

- Participated in the Baltimore County Immigration Summit, Diverse Community and Workforce panel held at Towson University
- Participated in the Department of Recreation and Parks' PRIDE Festival, in support of the LGBTQIA+ Community

July 2023

- Attended the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, Baltimore County Remembrance Ceremony and Soil Collection for Howard Cooper

August 2023

- Convened and led discussion with DEI Officers and Liaisons meeting at Maryland Association of Counties (MACO)
- Participated in Bridging the Gap panel discussion at MACO

September 2023

- Participated in the 27th African American Festival in Central Towson
- Convened a workshop at the Community Leadership Summit serving 230 participants

October 2023

- Participated in Annual Meet and Primes Event

November 2023

- Participated in Tweens and Teens Youth Summit
- Participated in the County Executive's Interfaith Advisory Board Meeting on Hate Bias and Hate Crimes

DEI Initiatives In County Government

Activities & Accomplishments

DEI Trainings and Convenings

July 1, 2022 to
November 30, 2023

Monthly (ongoing)

- New Employee Orientation

July 2022

- Conducted training on LGBTQIA+ Ally Awareness – *15 participants*

August 2022

- Conducted training on Cultural Competence & Sensitivity Awareness (Enterprise) – *141 participants*

October 2022

- Conducted training on LGBTQIA+ Ally Awareness – *78 participants*

February 2023

- Conducted training on LGBTQIA+ Ally Awareness – *21 participants*

March 2023

- Conducted training on Cultural Competence & Humility Awareness I – *33 participants*
- Conducted training on Cultural Competence & Bias Awareness II – *31 participants*
- Convened Implicit Bias Training for Senior Leadership Team – *130 senior leaders trained*

May 2023

- Conducted training on Cultural Competence & Bias Awareness II – *113 participants*

June 2023

- Conducted training on Cultural Competency and Sensitivity – *94 participants*
- Conducted training on Juneteenth Awareness and Overview – *148 participants*
- Conducted training on LGBTQIA+ Ally Awareness – *77 participants*

September 2023

- Convened DEI Town Hall on Workplace Safety and Mental Health – *226 staff participants*

October 2023

- Convened Implicit Bias Training for County Staff – *528 staff trained*
- Convened 60th Anniversary of Human Relations Commission

DEI Training Impact

9,551

employees in county workforce

1,635

County employees participated in Division of DEI Trainings in FY2023

50+

LGBTQIA+ “I am an Ally” Declaration Certificates Issued

Testimonial Highlights

“I’ve worked for the County for 20+ years, and this was hands-down the best presented training I’ve received as a County employee.”

Implicit Bias Training, October 2023

“I learned not only some new information about implicit bias, but learned it in a way that I feel I can use it to help support my team and the work that we do.”

Implicit Bias Training, October 2023

“These were all exceptional trainings in which I learned more than I realized.”

DEI Juneteenth Seminar, LGBTQIA+ Ally Awareness and Cultural Competency Trainings, June 2023

“I appreciate training like this. It helps me to be focused on myself and my actions. Helps...to remind me that I am not alone with the things that I face and...to remember that everyone needs help and guidance at times.”

DEI Town Hall, August 2023

“I would like to see a collaboration with other agencies’ to provide skills that incorporate DEI. For example, how to create more equitable practices in HR recruitment.”

DEI Cultural Competency Training, June 2023

“I wish it was mandatory for all Americans to attend this specific Implicit Bias Training. It revitalized my own commitment to be a thermostat.”

Implicit Bias Training, October 2023

“As we are serving...more diverse communities, it would be beneficial to have cultural sensitivity & awareness training around various cultures. This would be helpful in identifying what may or may not be appropriate when, for example, visiting a client from a specific culture.”

DEI Cultural Competency Training, June 2023

DEI Initiatives In County Government

Activities & Accomplishments

Equitable Decision-Making

The Division supports equitable decision-making across all operations of County government in six key areas outlined in the Strategic Plan:

- Ensuring greater economic viability and opportunity for underrepresented populations, communities, and businesses
- Providing sufficient public facilities, programs, and opportunities to protect and enhance both physical and behavioral health within the county
- Ensuring the criminal justice continuum advances equitable policies, practices, and services
- Examining and strengthening program equity and inclusive practices in recreation and parks;
- Supporting existing businesses, fostering private sector innovation, and promoting the county’s economic and cultural assets
- Identifying and implementing best practices for advancing diversity and inclusion within county government and with external stakeholders

Equitable Decision-Making Highlights

Baltimore County’s 2023 Strategic Planning Goals for Equitable Decision-making	DEI Activities & Accomplishments
<p>Strategy 1 – Ensure greater economic viability and opportunity amongst traditionally underrepresented populations, communities, and businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passed and implemented the Home Act (Bill 49-19) • Completed the County’s Minority an Women Business Enterprise Disparity Study • Strengthened efforts to provide education, outreach, and networking opportunities to small and MBE / WBE business (via. prime and subcontractor networking events, business development seminars, certification workshops, etc.)
<p>Strategy 2 – Provide sufficient public facilities, programs and opportunities to protect and enhance both physical and behavioral health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened relationships with seniors and faith-based leaders through targeted outreach • Implemented bi-annual Citizens Police Academy • Collaborated with Recreation & Parks to plan the expansion of the “GREAT” program in the Recreation Activity Centers (RAC) (formerly Police Athletic League (PAL) Centers)

DEI Initiatives In County Government

Activities & Accomplishments

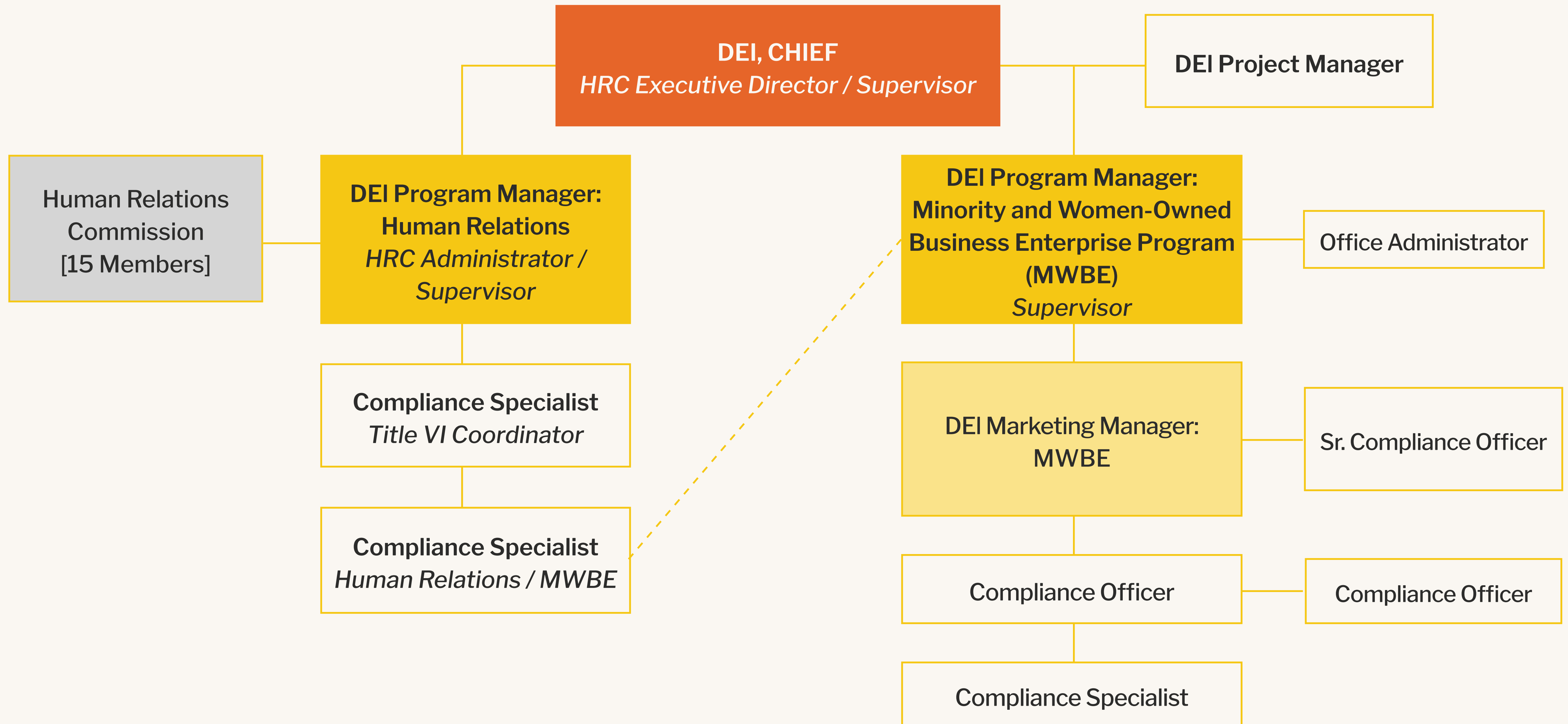


Equitable Decision-Making Highlights

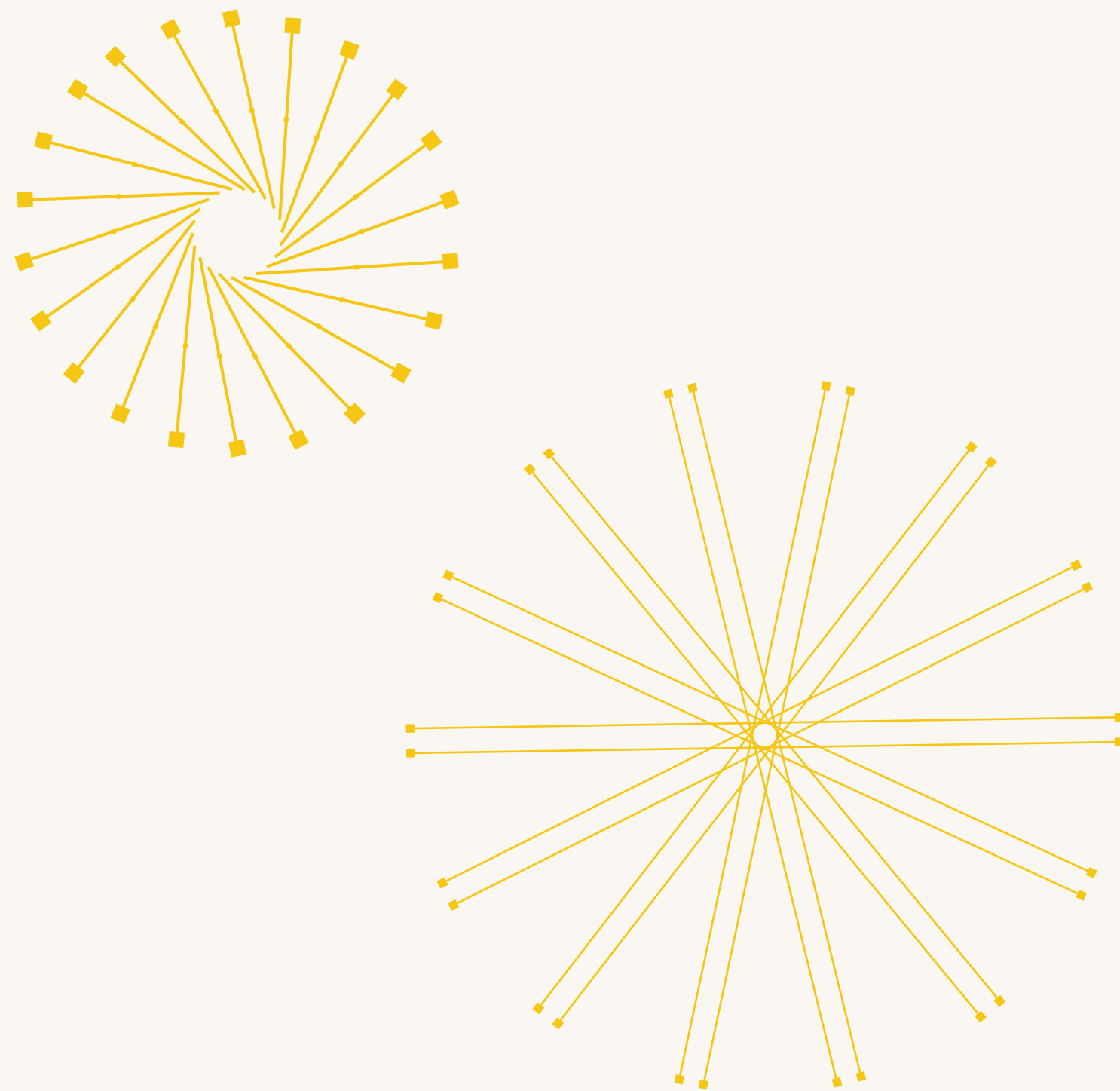
Baltimore County’s 2023 Strategic Planning Goals for Equitable Decision-making	DEI Activities & Accomplishments
<p>Strategy 3 – Ensure the criminal justice continuum advances equitable policies, practices, and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convened the Baltimore County Advisory Group (formerly Workgroup) on Equitable Policing, examining policing policies and practices and making recommendations for ensuring equitable policing
<p>Strategy 4 – Examine and strengthen program equity and inclusive practices in Recreation and Parks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritized capital projects based on greatest need and identified by the public, and provide equitable distribution of scarce funds • Implemented an expanded Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program in RAC centers
<p>Strategy 5 – Support existing businesses, foster private sector innovation, promote the County’s economic and cultural assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established comprehensive agency plans to review the hiring and recruitment practices within the Department of Corrections, Fire Department, Police Department, and 911

DEI Organizational Chart

HRC: Human Relations Commission
MWBE: Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Program



Division of DEI Fiscal Budget & Staffing Trend



“This Administration’s work is rooted in equity, so that all communities, and especially those that have historically been underserved, receive the investments they deserve. In its first budget, the County’s first Chief Officer for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was created. Now, **every decision made in local government includes an equity component** and significant progress has been made on issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

Source: [FY 2023 Adopted Operating and Capital Budget \(baltimorecountymd.gov\)](https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov)

Office of DEI

FY20 – \$0 | 0 staff

FY21 – \$180,080 | 2 staff

FY22 – \$650,537 | 6 staff

FY23 – \$1,044,709 | 10 staff

Division of DEI

FY24 – \$1,199,836 | 12 staff

Baltimore County Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

105 West Chesapeake Ave, Towson, MD 21204

