

**NEW YORK CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**  
**DIVERSITY AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PLAN**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2022**

**I. Introductory, Commitment and Accountability Statement by the Agency Head**

On behalf of the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS), I hereby declare my commitment as the Agency Head to support and enforce the rights and protections afforded by the New York City EEO Policy, the City and State Human Rights Law, and all other relevant laws, for all employees, applicants for employment, external contractors, consultants, and agency partners, and members of the public served by our Agency.

I will strive to achieve the greatest possible diversity among our workforce, to create an inclusive culture of openness, tolerance, and cooperation in our workplaces, to promote equity in all its aspects, and to examine and eliminate the structural obstacles to equal treatment in the recruitment, selection, development, advancement, and retention of our diverse workforce reflective of our City's population.

I will involve my entire leadership team in our efforts to enhance and promote the values of equity, inclusion and respect for all. All executives, managers and supervisors in our agency will be responsible for ensuring a safe, equitable and inclusive work environment for all our employees, and for delivering equitable, fair and effective services to the public we serve.

I will hold the top leadership of our agency, as well as the EEO Officer, all EEO professionals, human resources professionals, legal professionals, managers and supervisors accountable for ensuring that the agency does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment. We shall support the diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at the agency by observing EEO mandates and working with dedication to attain agency goals in this area. All agency staff must be compliant with the City's EEO Policy and the implementation of this Diversity and EEO Plan.

I will involve the EEO Officer in critical human resources decisions, including recruitment and selection strategies, workforce projections, succession planning, promotion of training/career development opportunities, and strategic planning.

We will report to DCAS on the steps undertaken to comply with all legal mandates and the provisions of the various Executive Orders and laws prohibiting employment discrimination in New York City, and on the progress in implementing this Plan.

The Agency Principal EEO Officer, Craig Thornton, and the EEO Officers who provide support with EEO activities will serve as the primary resource for managers and supervisors by providing best practices and direction in addressing EEO issues. Their contact information will be prominently available to all employees.

During this Fiscal Year 2022, I will announce this Commitment Statement to our employees, to affirm the principles of diversity, inclusion, and equal employment opportunity, and to communicate our dedication to equity and all values that drive us toward this goal.

This statement is the same as last year.

**II. Recognition and Accomplishments**

Describe below key initiatives and accomplishments that your agency undertook last fiscal year (2021) to advance Equal Employment Opportunity, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; for example, completing training goals, introducing new equity programs, or launching employee resource groups. Use the Additional Comments section to list more than five items.

In the past year, our agency accomplished the following as part of our commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

1. NYCERS' EEO Officers have been to various EEO trainings including Sexual Harassment Prevention trainings to stay current with new developments in the field.
2. NYCERS recognizes the importance of supporting and celebrating employees with appreciation events such as: Virtual Moment of Silence in honor of Juneteenth, virtual get together for employees during the pandemic, Employee Recognition Service Awards, Town Hall Annual Values Awards.
3. The Agency acknowledges heritage or affinity months via Agency head messages.

The agency recognizes employees, supervisors, managers, and agency units demonstrating superior accomplishment in diversity, equity, and equal employment opportunity through the following:

- Diversity & EEO Awards\*
- Diversity and EEO Appreciation Events\*
- Public Notices
- Positive Comments in Performance Appraisals
- Other: Values Awards- one of our Values is Respect: We embrace diversity and recognize that our differences strengthen us. Eighteen employees were recognized with Values awards.

*\* Please specify under "Additional Comments"*

- The agency will continue to recognize employees, supervisors, managers, and agency units demonstrating superior accomplishment in diversity and equal employment opportunity in FY 2022.

*Additional Comments:*

**III. Workforce Review and Analysis**

**Please provide the total agency headcount as of 6/30/2021**

**Total Headcount: 477**

**Please provide the number of employees whose Race/Eth and/or Gender is 'Unknown'**

**Race/Ethnicity:     0          Gender:            Both R/E and Gender:   0**

**(These figures are available on the total line for your agency in the EBEP210 CEEDS report)**

1. Describe steps taken to encourage all employees at your agency to update self-ID information regarding race/ethnicity, gender, and veteran status through either NYCAPS Employee Self Service (ESS) or other means.

In FY 2022, the agency will remind and encourage its employees to update self-ID information regarding race/ethnicity, gender, and veteran status through any of the following means:

- NYCAPS Employee Self Service (by email; strongly recommended every year)
- Agency's intranet site
- Newsletters and internal Agency Publications
- On-boarding of new employees
- Employees unable to complete the self-identification form using ESS will be provided an opportunity to submit paper form to the EEO Office.
- In FY 2022, the agency will inform and remind employees of the option to add preferred name in ESS.

*Additional Comments:*

2. Describe the review process of the quarterly CEEDS reports on workforce composition, utilization, and new hires and promotions data presented in your quarterly agency workforce dashboard and/or internal workforce reporting. Describe how your agency's EEO Officer, Personnel Officer and Agency Head work together to review demographic trends. These reports must be reviewed regularly with the Agency Head.

**NOTE:** If necessary, the agency can reach out to DCAS OCEI for guidance on interpreting their underutilization reports. However, it is the agency's responsibility to use that data to inform the formulation of its recruitment plans and efforts to reduce/eliminate underutilization.

- The agency conducts regular reviews of the CEEDS workforce reports and the summary dashboard sent to the EEO Officer by DCAS' Office of Citywide Equity and Inclusion (OCEI) to provide demographic data and trends. The review includes an analysis of workforce composition by job title, job group, race/ethnicity and gender for all employees; new hires, promotions and separation data; and utilization analysis.

Reviewed with	Frequency
Agency Head	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
General Counsel	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Other (___ specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

- The agency review entails a discussion concerning perceived workplace barriers for job groups that may surface in underutilization reports and for factors that may be creating these barriers (e.g., hiring patterns in specific job titles).
- The agency reaches out to DCAS to serve as a resource in identifying strategies and best practices to address barriers to entry as well as to receive guidance concerning the interpretation of underutilization reports.

*Additional Comments:*

**IV. EEO, Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Initiatives for FY 2022**

1. Proactive Strategies to Enhance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and EEO in areas of Workforce, Workplace, and Community.

State below the central goals of your strategy for FY 2022 focused on promoting equity, increasing diversity, assuring equal employment opportunity, and enhancing the value of inclusion at your agency. Categorize your goals according to the strategic area targeted. Workforce goals are directed at the composition of your workforce, recruitment, retention, promotion, and professional development. Workplace goals have to do with inclusion, workplace culture, and employee activities. Community goals are directed at the external environment of your agency: the public and entities served by the agency. Describe special initiatives to enhance equity and focus on race relations in item 4.

1. **Workforce:** NYCERS will endeavor to expand its recruitment sources in order to attract well-qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds. NYCERS now advertises employment opportunities in El Diario and advertises certain positions on the website Monster.com (which includes postings on diversity websites as part of Monster Diversity).

2. **Workplace:** NYCERS will increase efforts to have staff trained in the EEO policy, including increased training for managers and supervisors regarding their responsibilities as leaders in diversity and inclusion.

3. **Community:** NYCERS will continue to expand its EEO-related outreach to ensure that all current employees and new employees are educated regarding their rights and responsibilities under the EEO Policy. Further, the agency renewed a contract for temporary employment with a MBWE owned employment agency.

**4. Equity and Race Relations Initiatives:**

2. Describe the ongoing and new programs, actions, and initiatives planned for FY 2022, which are aimed toward enhancement and expansion of the three foundations of Diversity and EEO strategy: **WORKFORCE**, **WORKPLACE**, and **COMMUNITY**.

**A. WORKFORCE:**

In addition to the strategic goals above, please indicate here specific actions and initiatives planned with respect to Workforce.

**NOTE:** Please address the specific recruitment, selection and promotion strategies, sources and procedures in Sections V and VI, below.

**The actions listed below require internal agency collaboration and are not limited to the EEO Office.**

The agency will address underutilization in FY 2022 by:

- Expanding internal and external applicant pools to address the underutilization through outreach strategies for broader recruitment.
- Launching outreach efforts to inform and encourage applications for the upcoming civil service examinations.
- Using the quarterly workforce report and dashboard to identify specific job groups where underutilization exists and guide recruitment efforts.
- The agency will implement the following strategies to address the impending retirement of employees and possible loss or gap in talent.
  - Integrate succession planning in the agency activities to develop a pipeline, facilitate a seamless transition and continuity of service, especially for critical managerial positions.
  - Encourage agency employees to take promotional civil service examinations.

The agency will implement the following initiatives to develop and retain employees:

- Identification of Ready Now & High Potential Talent.
- Institute coaching, mentoring and cross training programs.

- Implement initiatives to improve the personal and professional development of employees.
- Conduct assessments to ensure pay and promotions are equitable.

NYCERS Leadership Academy

*Describe specific actions designed to enhance equity:*

*Additional Initiatives, Programs, or Comments:* NYCERS continues to identify best practices to retain employees and promote employee engagement by supporting Employee Resource Groups. NYCERS continues to support the Quality of Work Life Committee (QWL), which is staffed by NYCERS employees at all levels and host events that promote employee recognition and engagement. The QWL committee hosted our annual employee recognition awards in October 2020, which recognizes employees for their significant length of employment and commitment to NYCERS. Additionally, during the pandemic, we formed an Employee Experience Committee to find ways we can better engage our valued staff. In 2020, NYCERS held the first Values Awards, which was extremely well received. The second is planned for the last quarter of 2021.

**B. WORKPLACE:**

**In addition to the strategic goals above, please indicate here specific actions and initiatives planned with respect to Workplace.**

Career Counseling: Advising employees of opportunities for promotion and career development, notification of promotion/transfer opportunities.

The agency will undertake initiatives to create an inclusive work environment that values differences, and to maintain focus on retaining talent across all levels.

Promote employee involvement by supporting Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

List below the names of existing ERGs:

The agency does not have specific ERG's at this time, although it is anticipated that some may be formed as a result of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Initiative that we are undertaking.

Agency will create a Diversity Council to leverage equity and inclusion programs.

Agency Diversity Council is in existence and active.

Agency will sponsor focus groups, Town Halls and learning events on race, equity, and inclusion.

Agency will actively inform employees of their rights and protections under the New York City EEO Policy.

Agency will keep employees informed of the EEO complaint and reasonable accommodation processes and circulate *DCAS EEO Complaint Procedural Guidelines and Reasonable Accommodations Procedural Guidelines*.

Agency will ensure that its workplaces post anti-hate or anti-discrimination posters.

In FY 2021, the agency conducted the following survey(s) to improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of people in underrepresented groups:

Engagement /Job Satisfaction/ Employee Morale Survey(s)

Workplace Insight Survey for Exiting (WISE) Managers

Exit interview or surveys developed by the agency

Other (specify): Values Survey, Organizational Change Survey, Return to NYCERS Survey

The agency will adopt in FY 2022 the following initiatives based on the analysis of the results of these survey(s):

1. Cross Training within units to ensure that staff has the opportunity to develop professionally and remain challenged.

2. Strategic workforce program to create opportunities that would retain talented employees.

The HR Division and Organizational Development and Training Division at NYCERS have been working on many fronts for the past few years to implement strategic workforce development. This program includes many elements such as (but not limited to): tracking and analysis of employment data (to determine why employees separate from the agency, where we get new employees from, and where we are successfully



promoting from within); implementing a training protocol to provide easier access for training and development of staff; improving the performance evaluation process to allow staff to set goals, share proudest moments, and facilitate conversations with employees and supervisors about performance to enable employees to get better feedback; working on a succession planning program at the agency.

*Describe specific actions designed to enhance equity and initiatives to address race relations in the agency:*

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Initiative** - NYCERS is initiating a new organization-wide effort to provide support to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and equitably, including identifying issues of racism, sexism or other inequities that may exist in the agency and assisting in finding creative solutions to address and correct these issues, as well as identifying practices that contribute to a diverse, inclusive and equitable environment.

We are proud of the diversity of our organization, but want to do more. Our goal is to create an environment where everyone—no matter their background—can succeed, feel a sense of belonging, and learn from one another. We know that diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging improve employee experience, helps us understand and serve our customers better, and makes us a stronger organization. With the strong support of our Executive Director and leadership team and the passion, commitment and dedication of our employees, we strive to be a leader in the retirement benefit administration industry where our culture represents our values.

NYCERS recognizes that a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is crucial to our success. When we bring all values and perspectives to the table and give everyone a voice, we foster an inclusive environment for our employees, which empowers us to be more innovative for our customers.

***Additional Initiatives, Programs, or Comments:***

Last year, NYCERS piloted a NYCERS Leadership Academy with 4 participants. The purpose of the NYCERS Leadership Academy is to develop leaders that have the knowledge and skills to:

- ✓ Lead teams to **excellence**
- ✓ Create a culture of **continuous improvement**
- ✓ Create an environment of **respect**
- ✓ **Communicate & collaborate** effectively with employees of all levels and our clients and business partners

- ✓ Demonstrate **integrity** by being open to the opinions of others and acknowledging mistakes and making adjustments based on lessons learned

The Leadership Academy was deemed to be successful as evidenced by participant feedback and the feedback of participant supervisors. The graduation ceremony was extremely heartwarming and impactful as participants shared what they learned and are using from the program and how it has impacted them both professionally and personally.

The Leadership Academy is being offered again this year with 4 participants.

The Academy also stresses NYCERS Values:

**EXCELLENCE:**

- We provide outstanding (e.g. accurate, timely and consistent) service to all our clients
- We are knowledgeable, courteous, patient, impartial and empathetic
- We take pride in our work, are accountable and strive for continuous improvement
- We provide employees with the knowledge and skills to be successful
- We seek innovative solutions that will enhance services for our clients and employees

**RESPECT:**

- We treat our clients and each other with respect and consideration
- We strike a balance between productivity, professional development and quality of work life
- We apply the same standards with equal opportunity for input and professional development
- We embrace diversity and recognize that our differences strengthen us

**COLLABORATION:**

- We encourage and value everyone's opinion
- We keep each other informed
- We involve employees in the changes that impact their work
- We initiate, encourage and support teamwork across units and divisions
- We share our knowledge and ideas with each other
- We have clear and effective communication, both internally and externally

**INTEGRITY:**

- We hold ourselves to high standards of ethics: we are truthful and keep our commitments
- We openly and willingly acknowledge mistakes and learn from them
- We are open to changing our opinions

**New York Leadership Center Program (LNY Coro)** - NYCERS sponsored eight employees to participate in the New York Leadership Center Program (LNY Coro). Four employees have graduated from the program and four are starting the next cohort. LNY participants develop the skills to get things done in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment. LNY presents participants—professionals who are deeply immersed in the city's social, political, and economic issues—with challenges designed to push them to explore all aspects of an issue and navigate varying stakeholder interests. The program uses intellectual resilience and inquiry-based leadership training methods practiced by business executives and leading nonprofits. The curricula are most appropriate for professionals in a multi-stakeholder, senior leadership role who are leading change on behalf of their organizations. LNY Coro is committed to building cohorts that reflect the demographics of New York City and in strengthening traditionally underrepresented groups in leadership roles.

NYCERS includes the following EEO information in all managerial competencies, which are completed or updated when a new manager starts at NYCERS.

- EEO Compliance--Manager ensures staff is performing appropriate tasks within their titles.
- Manager ensures staff is effectively and efficiently utilized in their current positions to ensure optimal service delivery and that work accomplishments are met.
- Manager maintains a work environment free of discrimination and harassment by reinforcing policies in staff meetings, memos, and personal actions.

Additionally, NYCERS includes the following EEO information in all supervisor tasks and standards, which are completed or updated when a new supervisor starts at NYCERS.

- EEO Compliance--Ensures staff is performing appropriate tasks within their titles. Ensures staff is effectively and efficiently utilized in their current positions.
- Maintains a work environment free of discrimination by reinforcing policies in staff meetings.

### C. COMMUNITY:

In addition to the strategic goals above, please indicate here specific actions and initiatives planned with respect to Community.

In FY 2022, the agency will:

- Continue or plan to promote diversity and EEO community outreach in providing government services.
- Promote participation with minority and women owned business enterprises (MWBES).
- Conduct a customer satisfaction survey. NYCERS provides two customer service surveys on an ongoing basis. Callers are given the opportunity to provide their feedback, and members who come on site also complete a survey. This allows NYCERS to improve services, give members a voice, transparency and highlight employees who provided exemplary service.

Customers were satisfied with the safety protocols that NYCERS put into place when we reopened our facility for scheduled appointments. Customers asked for more appointments, and more appointments were released. Customers are very satisfied with the consultations that they receive. Customers indicated that they are not satisfied with the difficulty getting through to the Call Center. NYCERS implemented the first phase of a Call Center as a Service project this year, which doubled the number of calls that can be answered. Call Center service will be further improved in

the first half of 2022, when the second phase of the project is implemented – an interactive voice response system. This will enable customers who are interested in self-service to do so, while freeing up call center agents for customers who need more individualized attention.

- Identify best practices for establishing a brand of inclusive customer service.
- Undertake initiatives to improve community relations, community awareness, and to engage communities being served in recruitment efforts, service development and delivery.
- Expand language services for the public.

*Describe specific actions designed to enhance equity:*

**ACCESSIBILITY**

- Updated NYCERS letter template to improve accessibility/readability:
  - Incorporated Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) font guidelines - sans serif font, at least 12 point
  - Simplified language
- Recording workforce events (Town Hall, Employee Recognition, etc.) and making the replay available afterwards to employees who may not have the opportunity to attend.
- NYCERS has obtained the services of Language Line Solutions to provide interpreting services for NYCERS members.

**Additional Initiatives, Programs or Comments:**

- Established a DEIB Steering Committee (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) - Twenty-one employees have volunteered to participate.
- Celebrate Diversity in Monday Messages and raise awareness about cultural/heritage celebrations
- Sent EEO Messages in response to attacks against Asian Americans and Jewish Americans

Provide numerous channels for employees to provide feedback – Anonymous Ask Melanie, Values Survey, Legacy Replacement Project Organizational Readiness Survey, Change Champion programs, Agency Chief Restart Officer email.

**V. Recruitment**

**A. Recruitment Efforts**

1. Summary of Recruitment Efforts – Include steps that will be taken to give notice to all employees of discretionary job postings within the agency as well as proactive efforts/strategies planned to market positions externally.

The agency will implement the following recruitment strategies and initiatives in FY 2022:

- Review policies, procedures, and practices related to targeted outreach and recruitment.
- Utilize Inclusive Recruitment Guide Issued by the Office of Citywide Equity and Inclusion to develop strategic recruitment plans.
- Review underutilization in job groups to inform recruitment efforts.
- Identify resources to bolster efforts aimed at increasing the effectiveness of diversity recruitment.
- Put in place an operating, up-to-date, accessible website, mobile application and social media presence related to EEO protection and rights.
  - Currently in operation.
- Assess agency job postings to ensure new diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity employer messaging is included.
- Share job vacancy notices with the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities at [nycatwork@mopd.nyc.gov](mailto:nycatwork@mopd.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2830 and ACCES VR by sending the job vacancy notices to Maureen Anderson at [Maureen.Anderson@nysed.gov](mailto:Maureen.Anderson@nysed.gov) (212) 630-2329 so they can share it with their clients.
- Reach out to the DCAS Office of Citywide Recruitment (OCR) as a resource at [citywiderecruitment@dcas.nyc.gov](mailto:citywiderecruitment@dcas.nyc.gov)
- If your agency is an eHire agency, post vacancies on NYC Careers.
- Ensure that agency personnel involved in both the discretionary and the civil service hiring process have received:
  - Structured Interviewing training
  - Unconscious Bias training
  - Everybody Matters EEO and Diversity and Inclusion Training
- Assess recruitment efforts to determine whether such efforts adversely impact any particular group.

*Additional Strategies, Initiatives and Comments:*

Utilize Inclusive Recruitment Guide Issued by the Office of Citywide Equity and Inclusion to develop strategic recruitment plans.

Our hiring process utilizes structured interviewing, including standardized interview questions and having more than one person on the hiring panel. Additionally, when a supervisor or manager is involved in a recruitment, he or she receives information from HR regarding the interview process and structured interviewing.

NYCERS' EEO Officers have attended both the structured interview and unconscious bias trainings offered by DCAS and going forward supervisors and managers who are involved in the hiring process will be encouraged to attend these trainings.

**B. Recruitment Sources**

Diverse Recruitment Source(s)	What sort of return do you expect to see from the effort? Indicate if this source yielded diverse applicant pools.
1. El Diario	1. <input type="checkbox"/> Previous hires from this source
2. Monster.com (including Monster Diversity)	2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Previous hires from this source
3. Indeed.com	3. <input type="checkbox"/> Previous hires from this source
4.	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Previous hires from this source
5.	5. <input type="checkbox"/> Previous hires from this source

**C. Internships/Fellowships**

Indicate the type of internship/fellowship opportunities available at your agency. Please provide the number of student interns/fellows employed in FY 2021 and their demographic profiles, based on self-ID data. Indicate your plans to provide internship/fellowship opportunities in FY 2022.

The agency provided the following internship opportunities in FY 2021:

Type of Internship\Fellowship	Total	Race/Ethnicity *[#s] * Use self-ID data	Gender * [#s] * Use self-ID data
1. Urban Fellows			M __ F__ Non-Binary __ Other __ Unknown __
2. Public Service Corps			M __ F__ Non-Binary __ Other __ Unknown __

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3. Summer College Interns			M __ F__ Non-Binary __ Other __ Unknown __
4. Summer Graduate Interns			M __ F__ Non-Binary __ Other __ Unknown __
5. Other (specify):			M __ F__ Non-Binary __ Other __ Unknown __

\* Self-ID data is obtained by EEO Office from NYCAPS.

The agency will utilize the internship/fellowship programs to improve a pipeline of candidates from underutilized groups for entry-level positions, including in mission-critical occupations.

The agency has hired former interns/fellows.

The agency plans to provide internship/fellowship opportunities in FY 2022.

**Additional Comments:**

The agency has a contract for temporary employment with a MBWE owned temporary employment agency. We currently have five temporary employees. Three additional temporary employees will start October 18, 2021. NYCERS has successfully hired some of the temporary contractors into City positions.

We utilize interns in the Legal division, and we are in the process of hiring a CUNY intern to work in Information Security.

**D. 55-a Program**

Section 55-a of the New York State Civil Service Law allows a qualified person with a certified mental or physical disability to be hired into a competitive civil service position without having to take a civil service examination. The City encourages agencies to use the 55-a program as a tool to build a diverse workforce and create greater access to City employment for qualified candidates with disabilities.

1. Please discuss plans to utilize the 55-a Program to hire and retain qualified individuals with disabilities.



The agency uses the 55-a Program to hire and retain qualified individuals with disabilities in FY2021. Currently, there is (1) 55-a participant, however the agency has solicited qualified applicants and interviewed eight 55-a candidates this past year.

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Agency uses mostly non-competitive titles which are not eligible for the 55-a Program.

Agency does not use the 55-a Program and has no participating employees.

2. Indicate the goals of your 55-a Program Coordinator for FY 2022. Also include your agency plans to do the following: participate in career and job fairs; use internship, work-study, co-op, and other programs to attract a pool of diverse 55-a program applicants; and promote and encourage 55-a program participants to take civil service examinations.

The agency uses the 55-a Program to hire and retain qualified individuals with disabilities and plans to utilize the 55-a Program to hire and retain qualified individuals with disabilities in FY 2022.

Currently, there are   1   [number] 55-a participants.

There are   1   [number] participants who have been in the program less than 2 years.

Last year, a total of        [number] new applications for the program were received and        participants left the program due to [state reasons] \_\_\_\_\_.

If there have been no new participants in the program for less than two years, please indicate initiatives taken to hire new 55-a employees.

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The agency will actively educate hiring managers about the 55-a program and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

Based on the June 7, 2016, 55-a memorandum, issued by DCAS, the agency will carefully evaluate each request by longtime provisional employees for designation under §55-a to serve non-competitively in a competitive title position to ensure that the request is not made solely to avoid the consequences of Civil Service Law §65(3). In addition, the agency will reiterate to provisional staff that 55-a certification should not be used as a substitute for passing a civil service exam. The agency will encourage 55-a participants to take civil service examinations.

The agency plans to participate in career and job fairs and use internship, work-study, co-op, and other programs to attract a pool of diverse 55-a program applicants.

The goals of the 55-a Coordinator for FY 2021 are:

1. Encourage qualified candidates with disabilities to apply.
2. Utilize the 55-A program for entry-level positions in technical, professional, administrative and clerical areas.
3. Fill some of our hard-to-recruit positions with qualified individuals who participate in the program and to diminish or eliminate barriers to equal opportunity.

These goals are the same as last year.

*Additional Goals, Initiatives, and Comments:*

## **VI. Selection (Hiring and Promotion)**

**NOTE: This section must be prepared in consultation with the Agency Personnel Officer.**

### **A. Career Counselors**

For FY 2022, if your agency is fiscally able to hire new employees and/or backfill open positions, please discuss the planned duties of the agency Career Counselor(s) with regard to advising employees of opportunities for promotion as well as overall career development.

In FY 2022, the agency's Career Counselor will perform the following tasks:

- Review policies, procedures, and practices related to hiring (including vacancy announcements, use of certification lists, and the selection process for mission critical occupations).
- Promote employee awareness of opportunities for promotion and transfer within the agency.
- Arrange for agency-wide notification of promotional and transfer opportunities.
- Encourage the use of training and development programs to improve skills, performance and career opportunities.
- Provide information to staff on both internal and external Professional Development training sources.
- Explain the civil service process to staff and what it means to become a permanent civil servant.
- Provide technical assistance in applying for upcoming civil service exams.
- Provide agency staff with citywide vacancy announcements, civil service exams notices and other career development information.
- Assist employees and Job Training Program participants in assessing and planning to develop career paths.
- Provide resources and support for:
  - Targeted job searches
  - Development job search strategies
  - Resume preparation
  - Review of effective interview techniques
  - Review of techniques to promote career growth and deal with change
  - Internship exploration

*Additional Initiatives and Comments:* Dietra Williams, Associate Director of Human Resources, is NYCERS' Career Counselor. Dietra provides career information to staff and created a program called Career Corner, which gives tips on topics such as resume writing and interviewing. These tips have been emailed to all employees and are archived on the Career Corner page of the agency's intranet.

**B. New Hires and Promotions**

Monitoring, review, and assessment of the current new hire and promotional procedures for selection, especially for mid- and high-level discretionary positions.

In FY 2022, the agency will do the following:

- Review, revise and/or develop a protocol for in-title promotions and salary increases.
- Promotion and salary increases protocol in existence.
- Assess the criteria for selecting/promoting persons for mid-level to high-level positions.
- Publicly post announcements for all positions, including senior level positions.
- Actively reach out to networks of underrepresented groups as part of its outreach.
- Reach out to the Mayor’s Office of Appointments for help to identify diverse pools of talent and additional networks for finding qualified candidates.
- Compare the demographics of current employees to the placements.
- Ensure promotion justification is included in all promotion requests.
- Review and analyze the demographics race\ethnicity and gender for those who received the promotion\salary raises to ensure such practices are equitable.
- Review on a regular basis the demographics of those who received promotion and share the information with the Commissioner and Human Resources (by EEO Officer).
- Monitor the results of action plans for any changes in the agency workforce including increases or decreases in applications of qualified applicants and selection rates.

*Additional Comments:*

**C. Selection Process**

Identify the steps that are taken to ensure that selection process is objective and job related.

During FY 2022, the agency will do the following:

- Ensure that hiring managers are trained in structured interviewing techniques to avoid unintentional biases in the hiring process.
- Assess the manner in which candidates are selected for employment, to determine whether there is any adverse impact upon any particular racial, ethnic, disability, or gender group.
- If adverse impact is discovered, determine whether the criteria being utilized are job-related. If the criteria are not job-related, the agency will discontinue using that method.
- Engage in a collaborative effort between EEO, HR and managers where necessary, develop action plans to eliminate identified barriers.
- In conducting job interviews, ensure nondiscriminatory treatment by conducting a structured interview, where the same questions are asked of all applicants for a particular job or category of job and inquiring about matters directly related to the position in question.
- Use a diverse panel of interviewers to conduct the interview.
- EEO Officer is asked to review the interview questions.

*Additional Comments:*

**D. Review of Hiring, Promotion and selection Practices**

For FY 2022, what steps will your agency take to review the positions filled during the year?

- A. Discuss your current practice in utilizing the NYCAPS Applicant Interview Log reports to identify applicants by gender and race/ethnicity.
- The agency will use the NYCAPS Applicant Interview Log Report to track applicant sources and identify the best sources of applicants.
  - The agency does not use the NYCAPS Applicant Interview Log Report.
  - The agency will schedule orientation with NYCAPS Central.
- B. Discuss all planned steps taken to identify barriers to entry for positions and actions under consideration to address such barriers.
- Identify at least two or three people from diverse gender and racial\ethnic backgrounds to review received applications.
  - Ensure hiring panels are composed of staff from diverse backgrounds (e.g., diversity based on experience, gender, age, race and ethnicity).
- C. When identifying groups of subject matter experts to assist the DCAS test development team in creating civil service exams, please describe efforts that will be taken to select a diverse and inclusive group of individuals in the test development process:
- The agency will identify a diverse group of subject matter experts (e.g. race, gender, age, assignments location, etc.) when requested by DCAS.
  - The agency will use objective job-related criteria to identify the subject matter experts who will participate in test development.
  - The agency will make an effort to ensure different staff members are given the opportunity to participate in test development.

*Additional Comments:*

**E. EEO Role in Hiring and Selection Process**

Briefly detail which stages of selection involve your EEO Officer (pre- and post-selection).

In FY 2022, the agency EEO Officer will do the following:

**PRE-SELECTION:**

- Collaborate with the Director of Human Resources to ensure that an updated listing of sources for diverse applicants, including schools and professional organizations, is maintained.
- EEO reviews vacancy postings to ensure elimination of language that has the potential for gender stereotyping and other unlawful discrimination. (It is recommended to use gender-neutral terms and pronouns).
- Actively monitor agency job postings.
- Ensure all job postings include updated EEO Employer statement released in 2021.
- EEO is consulted regarding creation/review of objective criteria for evaluating candidates for hire or promotion and applying those criteria consistently to all candidates.
- In collaboration with the Director of Human Resources, review interview questions to ensure that they are EEO-compliant, job-related, and required by business necessity.
- Advise Human Resources in the development of a comprehensive guide for hiring managers.
- Assist the hiring manager if a reasonable accommodation is requested during the interview.
- Observe interviews, when necessary, especially for underutilized job titles and/or mid- and high-level discretionary positions.
- Advise Human Resources to use candidate evaluation form for uniform assessment and equity.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**POST-SELECTION:**

- Periodically review candidate evaluation forms and conduct a job applicant analysis via the NYCAPS eHire Applicant Interview Log reports to advise Human Resources of any demographic trends and/or EEO concerns based on available self-ID data.

- Perform advisory role to Human Resources in the selection process and conduct post-audit review.
- Review hiring package to evaluate that the selection process was conducted in accordance with EEO best practices.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Additional Comments:*

**F. Layoffs**

During periods of layoffs, terminations, and demotions due to legitimate business/operational reasons, what is your protocol for analyzing the impact of such actions based upon gender, race and age? *It is most useful to conduct this analysis prior to finalizing the list of titles that will be impacted. Ensure that the Agency General Counsel and the Law Department are involved in the review.*

- The agency will use the DCAS Layoff Procedure as guidance, should there be any layoffs, terminations and demotions due to legitimate business/operational reasons in FY 2021.
- The agency will analyze the impact of layoffs or terminations on racial, gender, age groups, and people with disabilities.
- Where layoffs or terminations would have a disproportionate impact on any of these groups, the agency will document that the targeted titles or programs were selected based on objective criteria and justified by business necessity.
- The Agency Personnel Officer, EEO Officer and General Counsel will be involved in making layoff or termination decisions. It should be noted that layoffs must be conducted by seniority in compliance with civil service law (for competitive titles) and union contract (for non-competitive and labor class titles).



**VII. Training**

Please refer to **Section IX** to ensure the agency complies with training requirements under local laws and Executive Orders.

Training Topic	Type of Audience (e.g. All Staff, Front-line Employees, Managers, Supervisors, etc.)	Target Number of Participants	Targeted Dates
1. Everybody Matters – EEO and Diversity & Inclusion (e-learning)			
2. Everybody Matters – EEO and Diversity and Inclusion (classroom/live webinar)			
3. Sexual Harassment Prevention (e-learning)	All employees	477	12/1/2021
4. Sexual Harassment Prevention (classroom/live webinar)	---	0	12/1/2021
5. lgbTq – Power of Inclusion (e-learning)	Managers, Supervisors, and Front-line employees  All other employees	477	12/1/2021
6. lgbTq – Power of Inclusion (classroom/live webinar)	Managers, Supervisors, and Front-line employees  All other employees		
7. Disability Etiquette			
8. Structured Interviewing and Unconscious Bias (classroom/live webinar)			
9. Other (specify) Reasonable Accommodations	EEO Officers		2021
10. Other (specify) Investigations	EEO Officers		2021

**VIII. Reasonable Accommodation**

Please indicate the actions your agency will take to ensure that the process of reviewing reasonable accommodation requests is compliant with the EEO Policy as well as the applicable federal, state, and local laws. Additionally, please detail any best practices currently implemented in this area. Lastly, please describe your current appeal protocol.

- Managers, supervisors, human resources personnel and discipline personnel are **required** to report to the EEO Office any reasonable accommodation requests and needs that are received, observed, learned about or suspected, so that the EEO Office may facilitate discussions, research appropriate accommodations, and assist with the resolution of the matter.
- Absent any undue hardship, the agency provides reasonable accommodation for disability, religion, victims of domestic violence, sex offense and stalking, pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition.
- The agency follows the City's Reasonable Accommodation Procedure.
- The agency grants or denies request 30 days after submission or as soon as possible.
- The Agency Head or designee must review and grant or deny the appeal fifteen (15) days after submission of appeal.
- If the review and decision on appeal is not done by the Agency Head.  
Provide the name and title of the designee<sup>1</sup> : \_\_\_\_\_
- The designee reports directly to the Agency Head.
- The agency will input the Reasonable Accommodation activity on the DCAS Citywide Complaint and Reasonable Accommodation (CAD) Database and update the information as needed.
- The agency analyzes the reasonable accommodation data and trends.

<sup>1</sup> EEO Officer and General Counsel should **NOT** be appointed as agency head designee for review of appeals to reasonable accommodation decisions. Refer to the revised guidelines below. Note the conflict of interest; in the event of an external challenge to the denial of a reasonable accommodation, the agency's General Counsel would be tasked with defending the agency against a decision in which that office was a decision maker on appeal.

<http://extranet.dcas.nycnet/eoo/diversityeoo/media/19647/reasonable-accommodation-procedural-guidelines-lc-12116.pdf> (p17).

The agency has posted/will circulate the *Reasonable Accommodations at a Glance* sheet for the workforce.

Briefly describe procedures and speed of resolution, including the protocol for deciding appeals of Reasonable Accommodation decisions. Does the agency analyze statistics with regard to volume, trends, and speed of disposition of EEO complaints and reasonable accommodation requests and appeals?

\_\_\_\_\_ All EEO Complaints and Reasonable Accommodations are entered into the complaint tracking system immediately following the intake interview with the Complainant(s). Updates are entered before the last day of each quarter e.g. 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, and 12/31. An electronic affirmation about each review and entry is sent to DCAS. NYCERS keeps statistics on volume, trends, and speed of disposition of all EEO Complaints, Reasonable Accommodations, and appeals. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IX. Compliance and Implementation of Requirements Under Executive Orders and Local Laws**

**A. Executive Order 16: Training on Transgender Diversity and Inclusion**

Under Executive Order No. 16 of 2016, the agency must provide supervisory and front-line staff training approved by DCAS on transgender diversity and inclusion. Pursuant to Executive Order No. 16, this training must be provided to all newly hired supervisory and managerial employees and line staff whose work tasks involve contact with the public.

- The agency plans to train all new employees within 30 days of start date.
- All the managers, supervisors, and front-line employees were re-trained within the last two years.
- All managers, supervisors, and front-line employees will be re-trained every two years, no later than the third quarter of the Fiscal Year, as indicated in Section VII Training above.
- In addition, all other employees will be trained or re-trained every two years, as indicated in Section VII Training above.
- The agency will ensure that the Transgender Restroom Access notice/poster is posted where required, e.g., on bulletin boards, near restrooms and, in digital form, where other EEO notices and announcements can be found.

*Additional Comments:*

**B. Executive Order 59: Chief Diversity Officer/Chief MWBE Officer**

Under Executive Order No. 59 of 2020, all agencies shall appoint a Chief Diversity Officer/Chief MWBE Officer, with the appropriate experience and knowledge to oversee the agency's MWBE program, to report directly to the agency head. Agency heads shall ensure internal candidates are considered for the Chief Diversity Officer/Chief MWBE Officer.

- The agency appointed a Chief Diversity Officer/ Chief MWBE Officer by August 28, 2020.

Provide the name and title of the Chief MWBE Officer: Badar Malik \_\_\_\_\_

*Additional Comments:*

**C. Local Law 92 (2018): Annual Sexual Harassment Prevention training**

- The agency plans to train all new employees on Sexual Harassment Prevention within 30 days of start date.
- The agency will train all current employees on Sexual Harassment Prevention (Cycle 4 – September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022) as indicated in the Section VII Training above.

*Additional Comments:*

**D. Local Law 97 (2018): Annual Sexual Harassment and Complaint Reporting**

- The agency will input sexual harassment complaint data on the DCAS Citywide Complaint and Reasonable Accommodation (CAD) Database, contemporaneously update the information, and affirm the data in a timely manner when requested by DCAS.
- The agency will input **all types of complaint** data on the DCAS Citywide Complaint and Reasonable Accommodation (CAD) Database, contemporaneously update the information, and affirm the data in a timely manner when requested by DCAS.
- The agency will ensure that sexual harassment complaints are closed within 90 days.
- The agency will ensure that all other complaints are closed within 90 days.

*Additional Comments:*

**E. Local Law 101 (2018): Climate Survey**

The agency, in collaboration with DCAS, conducted a climate survey in FY 2021 and will proceed to do the following in FY 2022:

- Continue to implement initiatives identified in the 2018 Climate Survey Action Plan which was submitted to DCAS and reported to City Council Speaker in 2020.
- Analyze FY 2021 survey data once provided by DCAS.
- Develop an Action Plan to address concerns raised in the FY 2021 Climate Survey and submit it to DCAS by July 31, 2022. *[Further guidance will be provided to agency by DCAS in 2022.]*

*Additional Comments:*

**X. Audits and Corrective Measures:**

Please check the statement(s) that apply to your agency.

- The agency is NOT involved in an audit conducted by NYC EEPC or another governmental agency specific to our EEO practices.
- The agency is currently being audited or preparing responses to an audit conducted by the EEPC or \_\_\_\_\_ [**another governmental agency – please specify**] specific to our EEO practices. **Upon forwarding our responses to the recommendations issued by the EEPC, the agency will submit to OCEI an amendment letter, which shall amend the agency plan for FY 2022 to include and implement EEPC recommendations that will be implemented during the fiscal year.**
- The agency is subject to any other oversight or review by a federal, state or city civil rights agency [please specify \_\_\_\_\_]. **Please attach a copy of the document setting out the oversight parameters and the agency's most recent report to the oversight agency.**
- Within the last two years the agency was involved in an audit conducted by the EEPC or \_\_\_\_\_ [**another governmental agency – please specify**] specific to our EEO practices.
- The agency will continue/be required to implement measures during the year that this plan is in effect (please attach a copy of the audit findings.)
- The agency received a Certificate of Compliance from the auditing agency. **Please attach a copy of the Certificate of Compliance from the auditing agency.**

XI. Agency Head Signature

**NOTE: Agency Head's signature and date should be provided for final submission only after the agency receives approval of the plan by DCAS.**

Melanie Whinnery

Print Name of Agency Head

Melanie Whinnery

Signature of Agency Head

10/25/2021

Date



**APPENDIX**

**Contact Information for Agency EEO Personnel**

Please provide contact information (name, title, e-mail, telephone number and full office address) for the following EEO roles at your agency. If several roles are performed by the same individual enter only the name in further entries. Insert table rows as needed.

	<b>Title/Function</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
1.	<b>Agency Principal EEO Officer</b>	Craig Thornton	cthornton@nycers.org	347 643-3430
2.	<b>Agency EEO Officer</b>	Melinda Brundidge-Watson	mbwatson@nycers.org	347 643-3422
3.	<b>Agency EEO Officer</b>	Rhapsody Carrington	rcarrington@nycers.org	
4.	<b>Agency EEO Officer</b>	Ahmad Zeb	azeb@nycers.org	
5.	<b>Agency Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer</b>			
6.	<b>Agency Diversity &amp; Inclusion Officer [if designated]</b>			
7.	<b>Chief Diversity Officer/Chief MWBE Officer per E.O. 59</b>	Badar Malik	bmalik@nycers.org	347 643-3581
8.	<b>ADA Coordinator</b>	Craig Thornton	cthornton@nycers.org	347 643-3430
9.	<b>Disability Rights Coordinator</b>	Craig Thornton	cthornton@nycers.org	347 643-3430
10.	<b>Disability Services Facilitator</b>	Craig Thornton	cthornton@nycers.org	347 643-3430
11.	<b>55-a Coordinator</b>	Dietra Williams	dwilliams@nycers.org	347 643-3469
12.	<b>Career Counselor(s)</b>	Dietra Williams	dwilliams@nycers.org	347 643-3469
13.	<b>Training Liaison(s)</b>	Ellen Carton	ecarton@nycers.org	347 643-3545

**NYCERS FY 2022 DIVERSITY AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PLAN**

14.	<b>EEO Counselor(s)</b>			
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