The Racial Equity Toolkit:

To Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs and Budget Issues

In 2008, the Seattle Office for Civil Rights had a vision to eliminate racial inequity in the community. Race and Social Justice (RSJ) team members recognized that achieving their vision required ending individual racism, institutional racism and structural racism. In response, RSJ team members developed a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity. RSJ team members developed the Racial Equity Toolkit, a tool that interrupts and guards against implicit bias and institutional and structural racism.

The Toolkit described below is an extension of the Toolkit developed in 2008 by the City of Seattle RSJ team members.

When Do I Use This Toolkit?

Use the Toolkit at the INCEPTION of a policy, program, budget decision, etc. By applying the Toolkit at the earliest opportunity, allows for policy alignment with departmental racial equity goals and desired outcomes.
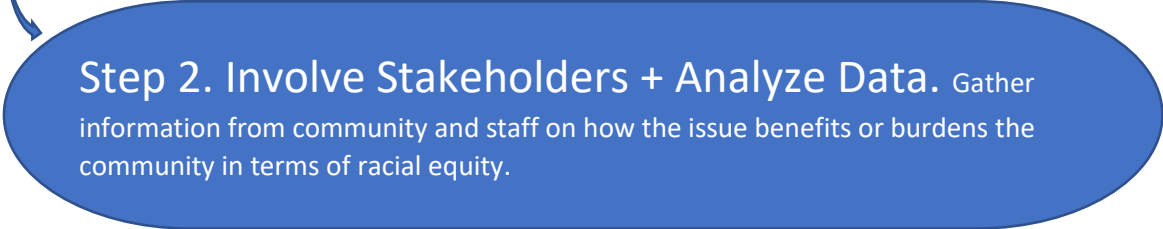
How Do I Use This Toolkit?

For best outcomes, if using a Toolkit for the first time, seek assistance from someone with actual experience. Be inclusive. This process and analysis should be completed by people with different racial and lived perspectives. Most importantly, seek to include diverse stakeholders, including those most impacted by the proposed policies and/or issues.

Step by Step. The Racial Equity Analysis is made up of six steps from beginning to completion.

Step 1. Set Desired Outcomes. Leadership communicates key community Outcomes for racial equity to guide analysis.

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders + Analyze Data. Gather information from community and staff on how the issue benefits or burdens the community in terms of racial equity.

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden. Analyze issue for impacts and alignment with racial equity outcomes.

Step 4. Develop Strategies to Maximize Benefits or Minimize Harm.

Step 5. Evaluate. Be Accountable. Raise Racial Awareness. Track impacts on communities of color overtime. Continue to communicate with and involve stakeholders. Document unresolved issues.

Step 6. Report Back. Develop a communications and engagement plan to share information learned from analysis, strategies/recommendations developed and results of implementation over time.

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: _____

Description: _____

Department: _____ Contact: _____

☐Policy ☐Initiative ☐Program ☐Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a.   What does your team define as the most important racially equitable community outcome(s) related to this issue? (Response should be contemplated by entire team and with some stakeholder involvement).

1b.   What racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact?

☐Education   ☐Criminal Justice   ☐Housing/Homelessness

☐Community Development   ☐Jobs   ☐Health

☐Environment   ☐Income inequality   ☐Other _____

1c.   Are there impacts to specific communities, populations, groups?

        Please describe: _____

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders. Analyze Data

2a.   Are there impacts on geographic areas? ☐Yes ☐No

        List all the regions that apply

2b.   What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue? (what stakeholder and data resources are available to you?)

2c.   How have you involved community members and stakeholders? (See page 5 for questions to ask community/staff at this point in the process to ensure their concerns and expertise are part of analysis.)

2d.   What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people's lives and should be taken into consideration?

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

2e.   What are the root causes or factors creating these racial inequities? (Examples, Bias in process; lack of access or barriers; lack of racially inclusive engagement.)

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data: How will the policy, initiative, program or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity? What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1?

Step 4. Develop Strategies or Recommendations to Maximize Benefits and Minimize Harm.

How will you address the impacts (including unintended consequences) on racial equity? What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in 2e? How will you (team, department, jurisdiction) partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program Strategies? _____

Policy Strategies? _____

Partnership Strategies? _____

Step 5. Evaluate. Be Accountable. Raise Racial Awareness.

5a.   How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation on ensure internal and public accountability. How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

5b.   What remains unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make changes?

Step 6. Report Back.

Develop a communications and engagement plan to share information learned from analysis, strategies/recommendations developed and results of implementation over time.

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Creating Effective Community Outcomes

An outcome is the result that you seek to achieve through your actions.

Racially equitable community outcomes = the specific result you seek to reduce/eliminate racial inequity and that advances racial equity in the community.

When creating racial equity outcomes consider:

- What are the greatest opportunities for creating change in the next year? In the next three years?
- What strengths do you have or what resources are available to you to advance your equity efforts?
- What challenges, if met, will help move the team/department closer to attaining the racial equity goals?

Examples of community outcomes that increase racial equity:

OUTCOME	OPPORTUNITY AREA
Increase transit and pedestrian mobility options in communities of color.	Transportation equity, Community development
Decrease racial disparity in the unemployment rate.	Employment, Income inequality
Ensure greater access to technology by communities of color.	Community development, Education, employment
Improve access to community center programs for immigrants, refugees and communities of color.	Health, community development
The racial diversity of [region] is reflected in the [region's] in workforce across positions.	Employment, income inequality
Eliminate the over-representation of Black people experiencing homelessness	Health, criminal justice, housing, employment
Decrease racial disparity in high school graduation rates	Education

Identifying Stakeholders + Listening to Communities of Color

Identify Stakeholders

Find out who are the stakeholders most affected by, concerned with, or have experience relating to the policy, program or initiative? Identify racial demographics of the region or those impacted by the issue.

Once you have identified your stakeholders . . .

- **Involve them in the issue.** Describe how historically underrepresented community stakeholders can take a leadership role in this policy, program initiative or budget issue.
- **Listen to the community.** Ask:
  - **What do we need to know about this issue?** How will the policy, program, initiative or budget issue burden or benefit the community? (concerns, facts, potential impacts).
  - **What factors produce or perpetuate racial inequity related to this issue?**

Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

      ○   What are ways to minimize any negative impacts (harm to communities of color, increased racial disparities, etc.) that may result? What opportunities exist for increasing racial equity.

> Tip: Gather Community Input Through . .
>
> - Community meetings
> - Focus Groups
> - Consulting with City/State Commissions and advisory boards
> - Consulting with department equity leaders

Examples of what this step looks like in practice:

- When examining the over-representation of Black people experiencing homelessness, hold community meetings and focus groups in areas of high rates of Black people experiencing homelessness as well as service providers assigned to those locations.

- When studying the racial disparities related to youth incarceration, identify and interview/hold focus groups people most impacted by the juvenile criminal justice system (formerly incarcerated youth, parents, probation officers, juvenile court judges, youth detention facility staff, etc).

- When considering how to create an equitable governmental granting process, seek input from smaller organizations, organizations led by people of color, organizations that serve people of color, refugees and immigrants.