

Draft dated 7/13/2021
RESOLUTION NUMBER _____

A resolution of the Board of County Commissioners establishing Missoula County's commitment to a Just, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive (JEDI) Missoula County.

WHEREAS Missoula County is located on the ancestral land of the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreille people, as well as other tribal nations, who were forced from the Missoula valley by white settlers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Missoula is a 2021 Action Cohort of the National League of Cities, Cities of Opportunity, Turning Crisis into Pathways to Equity and Resiliency, and Missoula County is a partner; and

WHEREAS, a local cohort comprised of leaders from the City of Missoula; Missoula County; Missoula City-County Health Department; All Nations Health Center; Missoula County Public Schools; and the University of Montana are engaging in work to identify challenges, successes, and how we do equity work better together by aligning efforts with each other and the many residents and trusted partners across Missoula already engaged in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work; and

WHEREAS, the right to live in security, peace, and dignity has been recognized by the United Nations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including securing housing as a fundamental human right; and

WHEREAS Missoula County's non-discrimination policy prohibits discriminatory practices in the areas of employment, public accommodations, and housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, sex, age, marital or familial status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County, through our Invest Health and many other initiatives, align with the National League of Cities, Cities of Opportunity cohort and our local partners in committing to the health, social, and economic well-being of all residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Missoula and Missoula County strive to ensure equal opportunities for all people, particularly diverse populations that are often marginalized, by making changes to County policy and applying public funds and resources through a lens of equity; and

WHEREAS Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color make up almost eight percent of the population in Missoula, and are disproportionately represented in several income groupings at the 80% AMI level or below. (City of Missoula, Montana 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan for HUD Funded Programs for Federal Fiscal Years 2019-2023NA-15 Disproportionately Greater Need: Housing Problems – 91.205 (b) (2)); and

WHEREAS Indigenous residents are disproportionately affected by health disparities including but not limited to chronic respiratory illnesses, substance misuse, depression, anxiety, suicide, obesity, diabetes, and a variety of other social determinants of health such as poverty and lack of health insurance that serve as barriers to accessing quality health services and ultimately contribute to poor health outcomes (Russette, H. January 5, 2016). 2015 Health Equity Report: Missoula City-County Health Department, p. 3-13. Accessed July 6, 2021 from <https://www.missoulacounty.us/home/showdocument?id=11166>); and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners created and filled the position of Equity Coordinator to engage in the important work of collaborating with County leadership and community stakeholders to establish equity as a shared value across the organization and community to further advance the County's commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and

WHEREAS, diversity, equity, and inclusion are strategies employed by other vibrant communities to ensure everyone has fair and just access to the resources they need for health, social, and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, an equity approach ensures that all residents have the opportunity to grow, contribute, and develop to their fullest potential; and

WHEREAS, Missoula County can better position itself to achieve its Priority Goals by implementing proven equity practices and policies to address significant inequity in health outcomes and other disparities that decrease the quality of life for many low-income communities which are disproportionately represented by marginalized populations including people of color, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQIA+ and 2S), persons with disabilities, aging adults, and where these identities intersect.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners is committed to a Just, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive (JEDI) Missoula County, including initiatives, efforts, strategies, and partnerships:

1. Which advance and create a Just, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive (JEDI) Missoula, free of systemic and structural inequalities--where our community is connected and honors our individualities. A healthy and vibrant community where we are welcomed and valued and our physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs are met. (See Exhibit A for shared definitions for JEDI)
2. That align and support the efforts of the National League of Cities, Cities of Opportunity cohort.
3. To facilitate and support the efforts of our many trusted partners.
4. To work collaboratively with our local JEDI cohort to create a shared roadmap to equity, recognizing that together we can be better.
5. To provide county-lead efforts to create a JEDI Advisory Board and by supporting the JEDI workgroup.
6. To call upon all residents to engage in this critically important work.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Missoula County prioritizes advancing efforts, based on information learned to date, by upon elected officials and departments heads to develop a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan. The Plan will include:

- Strategies for reviewing and revising our policies, procedures, initiatives, and public engagement plans to better reflect justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion to ensure equitable delivery of Missoula County services.
- Procuring JEDI consultants to expedite efforts and ensure Missoula County more closely resembles the communities it represents by fostering justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion on our neighborhood councils, numerous boards and commissions, and in our hiring practices.
- Identify and establish tools for measuring progress including creating a JEDI training and follow-up assessment to measure JEDI knowledge for County leadership, employees, commissions, boards, community councils, and the Board of County Commissioners.
- Establish community engagement tools including a JEDI Advisory Board and community convening to advance efforts, engage and connect community with resources, and align our JEDI efforts with community partners' efforts.
- That this work begins in earnest upon adoption of the FY22 budget.

Insert County signature block

Exhibit A

JEDI Definitions: National League of Cities, Cities of Opportunity cohort

and City-County Equity Workgroup

Justice: Justice: Dismantling barriers to resources and opportunities in society so that all individuals & communities can live a full & dignified life. These barriers are essentially the “isms” in society: racism, classism, sexism, etc. –*Public Lands Alliance*

Equity: Equity is the full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources so that all people achieve their full potential and thrive. –*Developed by King County*

Diversity: Being composed of a demographic mix of an intentional collection of people, taking into account elements of difference across national origins, languages, ethnicities, races, skin colors, cultures, generations, religions, spiritualities, socio-economic backgrounds, gender identities and sexual orientations, as well as different skills, abilities, customs, values, behavioral styles, beliefs, and where these identities intersect. –*Adapted from D5 Coalition and Michigan Nonprofit Association/NEW Center’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Toolkit*

Inclusion: The full engagement of individuals sharing power at all levels of an organization. All members are valued, respected, and supported. The act of inclusion is reflected in an organization’s culture, practices and relationships that support a diverse workforce and is an intentional demonstration that counters the historical exclusion of underrepresented communities. Inclusive organizations ensure equal and full participation in decision-making processes by considering all views. While a truly “inclusive” group is necessarily diverse, a “diverse” group may or may not be “inclusive. –*D5 Coalition and Michigan Nonprofit Association/NEW Center’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolkit*

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