



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

EXECUTIVE ORDER 24-04

**INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN WASHINGTON
STATE GOVERNMENT**

PREAMBLE

Washington state is committed to fostering a diverse workforce that reflects the richness of all our residents and an inclusive and welcoming work culture that promotes belonging and equal and fair opportunity for all.

WHEREAS, Executive Order 22-02, Achieving Equity in Washington State Government, was signed in January 2021 because state government recognizes and embraces its responsibility to dismantle discrimination and institutional and systemic barriers; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 22-04 was signed in March 2021 to advance a pro-equity anti-racism ecosystem and require real systemic and policy change so that each person in this state has a fair chance to live life to the fullest, regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, sex, veteran or military status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, or the presence of sensory, mental, or physical disability; and

WHEREAS, achieving equity and diversity within our state agency workforce requires a comprehensive approach to recruitment and hiring that identifies and eliminates barriers to employment and institutional discrimination. It also requires every employee to understand how our processes create burdens for some in our community and access for others and that understanding systems barriers is a lifelong journey we are each responsible for; and

WHEREAS, Washington state strives to be a leader in the movement towards equity and justice, and we are committed to demonstrating our progress in measurable ways, starting within our own state agencies which employ more than 50,000 people in service to nearly eight million residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the state of Washington do, effective immediately, hereby order and direct as follows:

To achieve consistent and measurable progress in inclusive employment opportunities throughout Washington State government, executive and small cabinet agencies shall take steps within the scope of each agency's responsibility, including but not limited to these listed below, to accomplish the requirements and goals of this Executive Order.

1. Hiring Standardization

The On-Line Recruiting System (OLRS) was implemented across state agencies in 2010 to streamline the recruitment process and facilitate efficient candidate management. Agencies use the OLRs inconsistently across the enterprise. This results in a lack of enterprise data to understand where people from historically marginalized communities may be experiencing barriers and exclusion in the recruitment process.

Effective March 1, 2025, state agencies will use the OLRs to comply with the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) and Office of Financial Management State Human Resources (OFM SHR) policy, including the appropriate assessment, categorization, and movement of candidates through the recruitment process stages. This includes compliance with recruitment and referral language in accordance with the Washington Administrative Code and collective bargaining agreements.

2. Improving Access to State Employment

State agencies will move towards a competency-based hiring process as a proven best-practice to create objective skills-based hiring. This will reduce bias in candidate selection. State agencies will:

- Remove degrees as the only way to meet a required qualification unless the degree is required by law to perform the essential functions of the job. Instead, agencies must either offer at least one other alternative way to meet that qualification (e.g., years of related experience) or list competency-based requirements. This action is also required by SHB 2216, effective June 2024.
- By July 1, 2025, remove certifications, specific years of required experience, and other biased qualifications (e.g. required English proficiency, driver's licenses, lifting 50lbs., etc.) unless there is an established standard for it by OFM SHR or their agency HR.
- By December 31, 2025, agencies will replace degree and year requirements (unless required by law or as an industry or profession standard) with the skills, abilities, and knowledge (competencies) necessary for performing the role. Applicants must demonstrate how they meet the skills, abilities, or knowledge for the role which may include degree, or work, personal, or lived experience.

By February 1, 2025, the Washington State Office of Equity (EQUITY), DES, OFM SHR and the Statewide DEI Council, will complete a toolkit to assist agencies in advancing equity in hiring, as well as provide guidance on how to incorporate competency-based qualifications in the toolkit.

3. Improving Washington State Government's Equity Competency

To equitably and fairly serve all people in Washington state, every state employee must have an awareness of two principles: people (both individually and as communities) face different obstacles to accessing state services; how we choose to treat people has the power to make it easier or harder for them to be successful.

Effective July 1, 2025, job announcements for employees in executive branch agencies, and the position descriptions they are based on, must contain at least one required equity-minded qualification.

To foster a workforce where all people are served equally and equitably, all state employees must continue their equity competency training. By December 31, 2025, EQUITY, Results WA, DES and OFM SHR, will deploy a statewide equity competency assessment based upon the current [Enterprise DEI Competencies](#), that every Washington state agency must take.

4. Recruitment and Hiring Requirement

Beginning March 1, 2025, every person participating in any part of the recruitment and hiring of new employees shall complete an anti-bias in hiring training. Employees must take the training prior to participating in the hiring and recruitment process. Training is valid for 12 months. After the first year, employees must complete an anti-bias refresher course annually to remain eligible for participation in the state hiring and recruitment process.

By January 1, 2025, DES will publish the required learning objectives of anti-bias in hiring training, and offer both initial and refresher trainings. However, for agencies who develop their own training, DES will manage an approval process.

By March 1, 2025, OFM SHR, EQUITY, and the DEI and Talent Management councils will provide a toolkit for how agencies can improve equity throughout the hiring and recruitment processes.

5. Pay Equity (OFM)

To achieve our goals of equal pay for same or similar work, hiring managers must apply a pay equity lens upon making compensation offers to prospective hires. In addition to following the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act (EPOA), hiring managers should work with their agency HR to review the compensation of their current team members and a compensation offer for any new employee should be given with the understanding of how it relates to other team members with similar skills doing similar work.

By December 1, 2024, OFM SHR in collaboration with EQUITY will provide guidance on how to apply a pay equity lens for compensation offers and current employees in the toolkit referenced in section 2.

6. Reporting Requirements

Below is an overview of reporting requirements for impacted agencies. It is important to note that for all sections, reporting time frames and processes may require adjustment due to the One Washington ERP implementation. Timely notification of any changes will be communicated to reporting agencies.

By December 1, 2024

- DES and OFM SHR will provide Online Recruitment System (OLRS) training and standard definitions for agencies to follow. This process will improve the collection and reporting of statewide data to understand the effectiveness of Washington state's recruitment processes.
- OFM SHR will also track demographic data to identify which specific communities are disparately falling out of each part of the process. This data will help identify and design targeted process improvements.

By March 1, 2025

- Agencies will report to OFM SHR their initial hiring plan, including what actions they will take to transition towards their future competency-based hiring process. OFM SHR will provide information about how to create these plans by February 1, 2025.

By September 30, 2025

- Agencies will report the progress on their pay equity plan, annually, through a reporting process to be determined by SHR.

By October 30, 2025

- Agencies will report the progress on their competency-based hiring plan through a process to be determined by OFM SHR.
- Agencies will report agency compliance, annually, through a reporting process to be determined by DES and OFM SHR.

By April 30, 2026

- OFM SHR will submit an annual report on agency compliance to the governor's office and data will be published on OFM SHR and EQUITY's dashboards.

By October 30, 2026

- Agencies will report annual compliance through a process to be determined by SHR.

By April 30, 2027

- OFM SHR will submit an annual report on agency compliance to the governor's office and data will be published on the OFM SHR and EQUITY dashboards.

I encourage other statewide elected officials, institutions of higher education, agencies of the judiciary, agencies of the Legislature, and boards and commissions to follow all applicable provisions of this Executive Order.

Provisions of this Executive Order are not intended to alter any existing collective bargaining agreements. This Order is not intended to confer and does not confer any

legal right or entitlement and shall not be used as a basis for legal challenges to any rule or any other action or inaction of the governmental entities and employees subject to it.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington, on this 4th day of December, AD, Two Thousand and Twenty-Four, at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Jay Inslee
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State