



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-01

AFFIRMING WASHINGTON STATE BUSINESS RESOURCE GROUPS

WHEREAS, Washington is committed to developing and maintaining a high-performing public workforce that reflects and represents Washingtonians.

WHEREAS, the diversity of people and cultures is a critical component of who we are as a state. State employees deserve respectful, supportive, and inclusive workplaces. Our diverse perspectives stimulate innovation and help us address complex issues.

WHEREAS, BRGs are cross-agency, employee-led groups that undertake initiatives, with the support of the Office of Financial Management, to improve enterprise business outcomes, increase employee engagement, amplify employee voice, and support infrastructure to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

WHEREAS, Washington State remains committed to supporting the statewide business resource groups (BRGs) that provide business advice, outreach, professional development, policy guidance and expert insight into the communities they represent.

WHEREAS, BRGs are integral partners of the state of Washington in its work to provide the best possible services to all Washingtonians.

WHEREAS, a diverse, engaged state workforce fosters innovation and is necessary for the effective operation of the executive branch and the state of Washington.

WHEREAS, equity and inclusion are guiding principles and core values for every state workplace, program, activity, service and decision.

WHEREAS, the state of Washington is committed to ensuring universal access to participation in a BRG, removing systemic barriers, advancing diversity, and building a culture of inclusion, belonging, and respect.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, reaffirm my support to current and future BRGs and recognize the need for greater representation of employee experience from Washington's diverse communities at all levels of state government; and, I expect state agencies to support the statewide BRGs. By virtue of the power vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the state of Washington I hereby order and direct as follows:

1. Office of Financial Management

The Office of Financial Management shall oversee the development and implementation of policies, strategies, and services to ensure successful implementation of this Order.

OFM shall:

- Act as the authority for the approval and support of the operation of new or current statewide BRGs, including approval of initial and updated charters and bylaws.
- Collaborate with the Office of Equity and BRGs to establish guidelines and policies addressing requirements, metrics and goals of BRGs.
- Provide technical and resource support and guidance to BRGs to ensure consistency in the development, effective implementation, and progress toward set goals.
- Ensure that BRGs are coordinating with impacted agency diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) councils or leadership in planning actions at the agency level.
- Work with BRGs to ensure meetings, publications, websites, trainings, events, and safety planning are accessible for people with disabilities.
- Act as the liaison between BRGs, state agencies and the Governor's Office to elevate requests, concerns, or issues affecting the business needs of the communities these BRGs represent.
- Collaborate on final drafts of recommendations and best practices and distribute them to state agencies.
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration between BRGs.
- Provide fiscal and administrative oversight and support for BRGs, including accepting and accounting for any funds on behalf of the entities, contracting and making any expenditures on behalf of the entities, in accordance with OFM's authority and BRG funding policies.
- Collaborate with and provide support to executive sponsors of the BRGs.

2. **State Agencies**

Each executive cabinet or small cabinet agency shall provide appropriate and reasonable resources to BRGs so that the groups may carry out the purposes of this Order. This includes reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities to attend meetings and events during work time, and as necessary and available, office supplies, distribution capabilities, meeting spaces and facilities, reasonable storage space for promotional materials, and teleconferencing technologies for the BRGs' work.

Participation in BRGs is open to all current state employees. To ensure effective and efficient operations of all BRGs and to provide the best possible work environment, agencies will inform new employees about BRGs, and shall discuss work expectations and reasonable access for those who are interested in participating. Participation in BRGs is work-related and agencies should support reasonable requests from employees to participate. Agencies are encouraged to be proactively inclusive by planning, approving and providing reasonable accommodations for their employees with disabilities to participate in BRGs.

3. **Business Resource Groups**

In consultation with OFM, BRGs shall establish a mission, vision, goals, charter and bylaws to contribute to statewide business strategies. While each BRG mission defines the overarching purpose for which that BRG was established, their goals must clearly align with the state of Washington's policy priorities of increasing equity, reducing the disparities that lead to worse outcomes for diverse groups within and beyond the workforce, and becoming an anti-racist employer.

A. CURRENT SANCTIONED BUSINESS RESOURCE GROUPS

- 1) **Blacks United in Leadership and Diversity (BUILD)** exists to improve the experiences of current and future black state employees, by increasing representation in leadership positions and giving voice and perspective in policy discussions.
- 2) **Disability Inclusion Network (DIN)** exists to promote universal access and create an environment where people with disabilities can fully participate in all aspects of the workplace. Executive Order 13-02 drove the creation of this group.
- 3) **Latino Leadership Network (LLN)** exists to connect and inspire the Latino state service workforce and leaders, improving the experience of current Latino state employees by increasing professional development opportunities and encouraging the community to become future members of the state service workforce.
- 4) **Rainbow Alliance & Inclusion Network (RAIN)** exists to help the state to create safe and inclusive workplaces for employees and customers who are members of the LGBTQ+ community. The creation of the group supports the requirements outlined in Directive 16-11.
- 5) **Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG)** exists to help integrate the experience, skills, and knowledge that veterans and military spouses bring to the state government workforce. Executive Order 19-01 directed OFM to work with agencies to establish this group.
- 6) **Washington Immigrant Network (WIN)** exists to expand opportunities for immigrants who are current or future state employees while educating the workforce and state agencies of the value of a diverse workforce.

This Order is intended to support the success of all BRGs, including those that have not yet formed. Business resource groups that meet the business goals and policy priorities and become sanctioned after this Order shall be considered included under this order.

B. MISSION

Each BRG shall, related to the communities they represent:

- 1) Advise OFM State HR and state agencies on the development and implementation of human resource policies, plans, and programs that create inclusive work environments, including strategies to hire, retain, and develop state employees.
- 2) Promote state government as an employer of choice that is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its workforce by improving outreach and the level of engagement of current employees.
- 3) Integrate history, cultural experiences, values, and knowledge, promoting a more diverse understanding of unique and multi-faceted cultures of services and

communities, increasing awareness throughout the workforce and promoting reasonable universal access to meetings for all state employees.

- 4) Serve as navigators and mentors for new and current state employees, providing a professional network and opportunities aimed at increasing representation in positions of leadership at all levels of state service.
- 5) Supply agencies with the framework to innovate by removing bureaucratic, isolated, and complex layers of government to address business issues and act as a collective voice around shared interests or concerns.
- 6) Support state agencies and the enterprise by serving as educational resources as they work toward cultures of respect and belonging. BRGs should participate as active stakeholders in creating policies and initiatives to represent diverse communities better and to serve them more effectively.
- 7) Provide accessible meetings, publications, websites, trainings, events, and safety planning for people with disabilities, in compliance with state and federal law.

C. DUTIES

Each BRG shall:

- 1) Establish a charter and bylaws that outline the group's structure, operational processes and scope of activities, to include ongoing reviews.
- 2) Develop explicit goals and annual statewide deliverables that address Washington State DEI business priorities.
- 3) Establish subcommittees such as (1) best practices, (2) recruitment and retention, and/or (3) others as needed to carry out the mission and goals of the group.
- 4) Produce an annual report addressing deliverables achieved by the group and submit it to the OFM State HR by August of each year.
- 5) Meet OFM-established BRG guidelines to maintain sanctioned BRG status.

D. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in BRGs is open to all state employees who are interested in promoting the values, principles, goals and activities of the BRGs. This includes employees who identify with the community and allies. The groups can choose to collaborate with external organizations with shared goals.

E. LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the BRGs, at a minimum, includes:

- Executive sponsor. This is a non-elected position. The executive sponsor is an executive leader in state government with shared interest in the BRG's mission.
- Chair and vice or co-chair (elected by members or appointed per charter provisions).
- Administrative liaison, secretary or other administrative support (elected by members or appointed per charter provisions).
- Additional leadership positions as determined by each BRG.

