

**MOTION 2020-19:
A MOTION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION**

To direct the Executive Director to examine Port operations and policies for sources of racial bias and discrimination and to develop programs and policies eliminating inequity in all aspects of the organization.

**PROPOSED
OCTOBER 13, 2020**

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Port of Seattle is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce, and job creation in an equitable, accountable, and environmentally responsible manner. The Port of Seattle’s Century Agenda reaffirms our commitment to creating opportunities and economic prosperity for all in the region by calling for the Port to be a model for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The Port of Seattle Commission demonstrated its commitment to non-discrimination with the passage of Motion 2018-06, which called for the Port to develop and implement an equity pilot program in 2018 that would support the development of a portwide equity policy directive. With that guidance, the Port established the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI) in 2019. OEDI’s mission is to build capacity across the organization to address institutional oppression and to transform Port policies, practices, and processes. In 2020, to support this effort, OEDI presented their 2019-2020 strategic plan and the Commission established the Equity and Workforce Development (EWFD) Standing Committee.

The Port has made progress and taken important steps to become a more equitable organization and recognizes its shared responsibility and commitment to the fight against racism and discrimination in our society. However, in recent months we have been reminded again about the difficult reality of the deep roots of racism in our culture. The tragic deaths of our black brothers and sisters around the country have demonstrated that we need to recommit with a sense of urgency moving forward our racial equity work and to center the need to uproot anti-black racism. The Port will continue to urgently reflect on and tackle structural racism and discrimination faced by our employees and communities.

The Port’s commitment to non-discrimination and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) must be supported by aligned policies and procedures throughout the institution. This motion takes additional steps beyond what the OEDI Strategic Plan has set out to achieve by directing the Port to align those policies and procedures which will result in the development of a comprehensive policy. This will establish the Port, locally and nationally, as a leader in this work, illustrating our commitment to act, learn, and progress as an organization that values and centers EDI, accountability, and transparency.

45 TEXT OF THE MOTION

46 The Port of Seattle Executive Director and the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion have
47 responded to the recent national uprisings in a very intentional and impactful way that enabled
48 portwide unity, healing and positive institutional change. This motion is intended to support that
49 work while elevating the work for greater transparency, public accountability, and ensuring
50 Commission engagement and oversight.

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52 To support this work, starting January 2021 the Executive Director, or designee, shall, conduct
53 the following actions:

- 54
- 55 1. Support the efforts of the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to convene our
56 employees and offer learnings and deeper analysis of anti-black racism.
 - 57 a. Support and uplift the Black Lives Matter call to action and engage employees in this
58 work.
 - 59 2. Require racial equity and unconscious bias training for Commissioners, the Executive
60 Director, the Executive Leadership Team, supervisors, managers, and employees.
 - 61 a. Create curriculum for trainings, tailoring as needed based on different audiences.
 - 62 b. Report to the Commission on staff participation, feedback, and learnings from
63 trainings in October 2021.
 - 64 3. Establish an internal Change Team with representatives from each division and
65 department within the Port to assess the current state of equity, diversity, and inclusion
66 for all teams.
 - 67 a. Define the assessment through portwide engagement. The assessment will be
68 conducted by the Change Team, who are internal stakeholders that represent each
69 division at the Port, as well as representatives from the Development and Diversity
70 Council and employee resource groups (ERG).
 - 71 b. Assessment as a baseline. The assessment shall be the basis for a landscape equity
72 analysis of each division. That analysis would provide a quantitative and qualitative
73 baseline for Key Performance Indicators and equity metrics that each team will focus
74 on for the year ahead.
 - 75 c. The assessment shall be completed by October 30, 2021.
 - 76 d. Beginning January 2022, each department or division will submit an annual report to
77 OEDI who will then provide a consolidated report to the Commission on progress
78 made toward equity goals on an annual basis.
 - 79 4. In addition to the portwide assessment conducted by the Change Team, OEDI will
80 consider the policies and issues that have been identified by Port employees as the most
81 challenging barriers to fairly accessing resources and opportunities at the Port.
 - 82 a. The assessment shall include a review of: (1) employee development, promotion and
83 compensation; (2) recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of black, indigenous,
84 and people of color (BIPOC) portwide; (3) policies and practices impacting BIPOC
85 contractors and WMBEs, with a particular focus on firms owned by black descendants
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89 of slaves; (4) contracting and procurement policies and practices impacting
90 community organizations’ and contractors’ access to Port resources; and (5) other
91 areas identified through OEDI employee engagement.

92 b. The assessment shall recommend a set of strategies and measurable outcomes that
93 will address identified barriers.

94 c. The assessment shall be completed by October 30, 2021.

95 d. The EWFD Committee shall use the assessments conducted by the Change Team and
96 OEDI to inform the development of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy Directive
97 per Motion 2018-06.

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99 5. Create a Community Advisory Board to ensure the Port is accountable to the public in the
100 integration of equity principles into the Port’s work. The Community Advisory Board shall,
101 among other clear deliverables to be developed by OEDI:

102 a. Using the Equity Index, work with OEDI to inform the use of Port resources and
103 investments.

104 b. Inform the assessment process and provide policy recommendations to the Port on
105 addressing inequities.

106 c. Advise Port leadership (Port Commission and Leadership) on implementation of
107 internal and external Port equity efforts.

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110 **STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION**

111 Systemic oppression and institutionalized racism have existed in our country since its founding.
112 Events on a national level propelled by the outrage of the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis
113 police – one of the most recent murders in a long history of unjust taking of black lives in our
114 country – and locally actions taken against those protesting against racism and inequality have
115 highlighted the long ignored structural bias and institutional discrimination that is present but
116 not visible to all in our institution. Throughout American history, black, indigenous, people of
117 color and immigrants have led the struggle for equity and social justice. From voting rights to civil
118 rights to LGBTQ rights, BIPOC and immigrant communities have fought for generations to
119 strengthen our nation and perfect our democracy. This moment builds upon the immeasurable
120 sacrifice and contributions of those communities while recognizing that we all benefit from the
121 eradication of social injustice.

122

123 Bias and oppression are embedded in our society, systems, and our organization. By failing to
124 acknowledge inequities, we play a role in perpetuating them. We can and must do better. It is
125 time for the Port of Seattle to look introspectively and do its part in tackling these systemic
126 inequities. To achieve equitable outcomes for all our communities, we must be accountable for
127 equitable policies that ensure racial, social, environmental, and economic justice are achieved in
128 principles, strategies, practices, and projects. One of the most important steps in becoming a
129 more equitable organization is to provide more opportunities and possibilities for communities
130 to provide input into programmatic, policy, and investment decisions.

131

132 OEDI created an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategic plan that includes a robust combination
133 of long-term, short-term, transactional, and transformational strategies. To create this plan, OEDI
134 held a series of six roundtable discussions in 2019 and 2020 with representatives from over 65
135 organizations. OEDI captured input from more than 800 Port staff.

136

137 The Port of Seattle Executive Director and the OEDI have begun to implement the
138 recommendations as outlined in the EDI 2019-2020 Strategic Plan by employing a framework
139 developed by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) – Normalize, Organize, and
140 Operationalize:

- 141 1. Normalize: Foster discussions about race and equity at the Port by having leadership,
142 management, and all staff model behavior, hosting learning events, and setting the tone
143 for leadership and employee dialogues.
- 144 2. Organize: Build infrastructure and capacity to implement equity practices by creating
145 policy and completing an equity planning process. This process will include establishing
146 definitions, vision and values and creating staff capacity, and strengthening relationships
147 with community partners.
- 148 3. Operationalize: Develop all the elements that allow equity principles to be fully integrated
149 into day-to-day operations including budgeting with an equity lens, creating
150 accountability mechanisms, and ensuring engagement by both Port staff and the public.

151 This approach has positioned the Port to effectively respond to the recent national uprisings in a
152 very intentional and impactful way that enabled portwide unity, healing and positive institutional
153 change, and underscored the significant progress made toward becoming a more equitable and
154 inclusive organization.

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156 The direction of this motion builds upon the EDI Strategic Plan, the 2018 Equity Motion, and input
157 by Port staff, including the Port’s Development and Diversity Council, Employee Resource
158 Groups, and external stakeholders. Additionally, ERGs, the Development and Diversity Council,
159 and employee caucusing groups have been instrumental in providing input and working to build
160 a culture of inclusion throughout the Port.

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162 This motion acknowledges that the fight against racism and oppression is a horizontal issue and
163 should be taken into account in all areas of our policies and practices. This motion also recalls
164 that all employees and community members must be entitled to protection from these
165 inequities, both as individuals and as a group, including positive measures for the promotion and
166 the full and equal enjoyment of their rights and benefits.

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168 Despite our current economic, health, and racial justice crises, the Port maintains its commitment
169 to identifying and dismantling structural barriers to ensure that historically oppressed
170 communities, particularly communities of color, have access to the resources they need to thrive.
171 Together, we will get through these trying times; and if we center the needs of those most

172 impacted by these crises, we will emerge with a deeper understanding of why our social justice
173 efforts are so critical and with stronger conviction to keep them driving forward.