



King County Metro

# EEO Program Report

## 2023 Update

March 8, 2023



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This document is available in alternate and accessible formats upon request by contacting the EEO Office:

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# Introduction from Metro's EEO Officer

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On behalf of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office for King County Metro, I am pleased to present this 2023 update to our [2022 EEO Program Report](#), marking the first time Metro has published a report on its EEO programming outside of normal four year reporting cycles. The decision to make this an annual report was made as part of our commitment to employees in building transparent and accountable structures that work for them.

The purpose of this update report is to provide employees and customers a transparent look into how Metro is measuring up to its values in creating a workplace where everyone can thrive. It highlights several important actions Metro is taking to advance those values.

Of critical interest is an investigative report the EEO Office commissioned to study discrimination and gender inequity in Metro's Vehicle Maintenance (VM) division. The findings are a stark reminder that sexism is real, misogyny and patriarchy are real, and Metro's workforce is not exempt from the harms caused by these systemically ingrained maladies. The findings are a call to action.

Thank you to the many frontline workers and operators who reached out to me this last year to provide feedback and engaged with our Office; especially the women of VM that participated in the investigation. I would also like to thank our partners in Employee Services (particularly the teams in Metro Human Resources and Transit Employee Labor Relations), Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EIB), and of course, the staff in the EEO Office for their dedication and work in advancing civil rights and equity for our employees.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that this update relies heavily on a woman-man binary in data reporting and does not adequately account for the lived experiences of our transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming colleagues. This is due to our current limitations of how the federal government and County have traditionally collected demographic information. As the EEO Office grows, we will look for resourcing, strategies, and partnerships to improve the way we report on gender equity.

If you have questions about this report or have suggestions on how we can improve it, please contact the EEO Office at [MetroEEO@kingcounty.gov](mailto:MetroEEO@kingcounty.gov) or (206) 477-9454.

In Solidarity,



Chris Bhang  
King County Metro EEO Officer

# EEO Office – Mission, Vision, and Values

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## Mission

To protect Civil Rights and advance equity for all King County Metro employees.

## Vision

A Metro free of discrimination where everyone can professionally grow and thrive, regardless of who they are and the identities they hold. The Metro EEO Office will do its part to keep our region moving by providing Metro employees and leadership trustworthy information and data to drive equitable employment decisions and policies.

## Values

**Equity.** We name and acknowledge that racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, and xenophobia are real, systemic maladies that are rooted in our nation's long history and practices of legal segregation, discrimination, and colonization. The knowledge of the past and present effects on the workplace informs our future work.

**Expertise in Civil Rights Law.** We celebrate that Civil Rights laws are monumental achievements of our society, fought for by countless leaders and martyrs of justice, including our County's namesake, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We honor their memories with sophisticated expertise in the equal and unbiased application of these laws.

**Compassion.** We listen to the voices and stories of those affected by discrimination with empathy and compassion, regardless of the merits of their allegations. And as a neutral party to these matters, we similarly will treat those alleged to have violated policy or law with equal respect and compassion, knowing that investigations can be a difficult process to experience, and never assuming wrongdoing or intent.

**Transparency.** We practice transparency in our processes, knowing that true transparency leads to accountability. We will strive to ensure that the Metro workforce knows about our policies and procedures in investigations, compliance with federal law, and Metro's EEO Plan. We invite engagement and critique that leads to positive change and innovation.

**Cooperation.** We acknowledge that we are part of a larger structure, where partnership with other departments, leadership, and employees is crucial to translating the information and data we provide into meaningful action. While the Office shall operate as independently as possible and free from outside influence, we value the expertise and cooperation of the many talented professionals throughout King County in doing what is just and equitable.

## Message from Bonnie Davis-Losey

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Hello. My name is Bonnie Davis-Losey. For those that don't know me, I am currently a Vehicle Maintenance Chief at North Base. I joined Metro back in 1998 as a mechanic—and I've seen a lot. A lot of good, but a lot of bad. As a woman, being here as long as I have, I've seen and experienced things that you only see on TV these days. It has been difficult to say the least, but Metro is a place I care about deeply and I care about the women who work here. We do good work. We have amazing teams that are really outstanding mechanics and problems solvers. And at the end of the day, we go home with a good pay and benefits so we can take care of ourselves and our families.

That's why I reported my experience to the EEO Office. Metro is a good place, but it has work to do, and I want to make sure that no one else, and no woman, has to go through what I did: being on the outside of old boy clubs, being talked about behind my back, and not being recognized for my full potential because of my sex. I've been passed up for opportunities, blacklisted, and have seen friends and colleagues driven out because of bullying and harassment.

I reported back in 2020, and nearly three years later we have this report. It took too long to get to this point, but I'm glad that we're here. Even though the investigation and report didn't make all the findings and recommendations I would have liked, it creates a framework for continuous improvement that I think all of us with experience in transit can appreciate and get behind. I may be long retired before the benefits of this work really become a reality, but I'm grateful to have played a part.

Bonnie Davis Losey

Vehicle Maintenance Chief, North Base

# Vehicle Maintenance Gender Equity Investigation

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## About Vehicle Maintenance

Vehicle Maintenance (VM) is one of Metro's largest divisions, employing approximately 850 employees, operating three shifts per day, seven days a week. VM supports Transit Operation's daily requirements for 11,374 trips per week on 190 routes departing from seven transit bases. Its mission is to provide customers safe, dependable, clean transportation in a timely, cost effective, environmentally sensitive manner, with a work force that values teamwork, communication, diversity, equity, and social justice.

VM plays a critical role in Metro's operations and providing services to our customers. VM maintains the safety systems, mechanical systems, and physical conditions of over 1500 buses and 500 other vehicles. VM has also performed other innovative feats including, the design and installation of the [Operator Safety Partition](#), design and creation of the [Lactation Van](#), and the retrofitting of coaches to support the [next generation Orca cards](#).

## Investigation Background

In April 2020, the EEO Office received a complaint of gender discrimination at VM. The complainant also raised several systemic issues relating to the mistreatment of women within the division dating back to 1998. Later in 2020, the EEO Office received other complaints regarding gender equity in the recruitment processes at VM.

In response, in February 2022 after a competitive request for proposal process, the EEO Office retained the services of D Diamond Consulting to conduct a wide-ranging investigation into the systemic issues raised in the complaints. The scope of the investigation included the documentation of relevant historical practices, policies, and trends from 2010 to 2021 regarding: (1) gender/sex discrimination in recruitment; (2) gender/sex discrimination in professional development; and (3) overall hostile work environment.

In November 2022, D Diamond finished their investigation and submitted a report of their findings to the EEO Office. The EEO Office has shared these findings with Metro's Coordination Team and appropriate leadership, including the General Manager and VM Division Directors. Multiple Metro departments and staff have contributed to the development of the cooperative strategies outlines in this report.

## Summary of the Findings

### Methodology and Fear of Retaliation

D Diamond Consulting heavily emphasized qualitative data in their report and centered the voices of those most affected: the women of VM. All women VM employees, across all shifts and bases, were invited to participate in a confidential interview process. Participation was entirely optional. 43 of the 71 invited employees agreed to be interviewed. 17 current male employees also opted in to participate in the interviews. Eight former VM employees, including six women, came forward with information to share directly with the investigators.

Many witnesses said they were concerned that they would be retaliated against for providing input. Some chose not to be interviewed at all for fear of retaliation. Those who did agree to be interviewed were assured that the report would be written without attribution to individual witnesses. D Diamond Consulting also took steps to code their work so individuals could not be identified.

### **Qualitative Analysis and Quotes**

Witness interviews paint a stark reality for women working at VM. While positive comments regarding improvements to working conditions from women were received, the majority of the feedback provided were negative. Nearly twenty pages of the report are filled with quotes from the interviewees covering topics of general workplace environment, the recruitment process, professional development, discipline and grievances, issues with senior leaders, and intersectional experiences with sexual orientation, race, and nepotism. The following is a small but representative sample of the experiences shared with the investigators.

*"KC VM is three decades behind in terms of attitudes toward women. The male employees are not welcoming and constantly talk s\*\*\* about the women."*

*"I found it shocking and disturbing that ... there was so little diversity in VM. The old guard are set in their ways to keep women from moving forward."*

*"He [a male coworker] would tell dirty jokes until he provoked a reaction. He would say disgusting, inappropriate things like, 'It's hot. You should take off your sweater to show more skin.'"*

*"VM is not a welcoming environment for women . . . I would not encourage women to suffer what I have working here."*

*"I always felt I had a target on my back and was being minutely observed. Any little, tiny thing always turned into a big deal if you were a woman."*

*"Men did not like me. I received notes like, 'just quit b\*\*\*\*, go back to driving or have some babies.'"*

*"The VM old-boys' management club hires, offers opportunities, and promotes other men and tries to run off any women who are not submissive. When men speak up, they are leaders; when women speak up, they are confrontational."*

*"A woman having an opinion and being outspoken about it is treated as the biggest crime in VM."*

*"The stronger, more assertive, more opinionated, strong-willed a female VM employee is, the less she is respected."*

*"Women are afraid to speak up and file complaints for fear of retaliation."*

*"I was hired in 1997 and have seen firsthand that female employees have not had the same opportunities and treatment in this male-dominated workplace."*



*"I do not trust the Human Resources recruitment process. The people who get selected are the ones who have buddies on the interview panel."*

*"In my evaluations, I was told to be less emotional and more nurturing. The expectation is that I will be a subservient woman, as opposed to an outspoken, confident advocate. Men who are bold and push-bully their way forward are considered good leaders. Women still have to ask permission to be in the room."*

*"When I told another employee about being harassed at work, he told me to stop talking about what happened. He said stop reporting things you see or hear. My coworker was concerned that people would think I was a snitch and was trying to protect me."*

*"Management does not take discrimination or harassment complaints seriously and will gaslight people by saying, 'Oh that's just how he is. He's old-fashioned. He didn't mean anything by it.'"*

*From a male interviewee: "One of the female Chief was overly gay and had a bunch of Pride literature in her shared office, while I was not allowed to post a pin-up of the Snap-On girl in a bathing suit inside my locker."*

*"Every time I was promoted, I heard people grumbling that I was only given the job as a diversity hire. I never heard any criticism about my performance, just the race issue."*

*"There is an atmosphere of toxic masculinity, expressed as racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia."*

*"As a woman of color and an immigrant, I do not feel heard. When I reported concerns about an unsafe work environment, I was ignored."*

### Data Analysis

The number of women in VM has remained stagnant at around 10% from 2012-2020. The following is a summary of the percentage of total female VM employees to percentages of female turnover, female hires, and female promotions for the period 2012-2020. 2020 marked an exceptionally high year for female turnover at 16.1% and low promotions at 2.7%; although VM hired 23.2% women that same year.

| YEAR | Total Female Employees | Total Female Turnover | Total Female Hires | Total Female Promotions |
|------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 2012 | 10.04%                 | 6.00%                 | 10.80%             | 10.00%                  |
| 2013 | 10.00%                 | 7.50%                 | 17.90%             | 21.40%                  |
| 2014 | 9.89%                  | 9.00%                 | 13.30%             | 10.00%                  |
| 2015 | 8.95%                  | 11.70%                | 3.80%              | 5.90%                   |
| 2016 | 8.17%                  | 8.70%                 | 4.00%              | 4.80%                   |
| 2017 | 8.56%                  | 8.20%                 | 18.20%             | 5.30%                   |
| 2018 | 8.76%                  | 4.70%                 | 13.50%             | 16.70%                  |
| 2019 | 8.45%                  | 6.30%                 | 14.50%             | 16.20%                  |
| 2020 | 9.27%                  | 16.10%                | 23.20%             | 2.70%                   |

**Table 1.** Percentage of female employees, turnover rate, hiring rate, and promotion rate in VM from 2012-2020.

The investigators requested significant volumes of data and information regarding recruitments, candidate data, discipline, guidance on scoring processes, and documentation for other HR-related practices. Investigators noted that the Department of Human Resources was unable to provide many of the requested document and information, and much of the data were provided in “data dumps.” The investigators found that:

“[R]aw data within these dumps included data harvested utilizing inconsistent collection methodology, selective collection, and significant duplication of data fields. The investigators asked for but were denied access to NeoGov to pull reports and data related to the systemic allegations directly . . . The investigators considered attempting to create reports from the raw data provided. However, the investigators could not in good conscience spend additional time this way, given the lack of confidence in the quality of the raw data and prohibitive expense to taxpayers.”

### **Conclusions and Findings**

The investigators drew several conclusions and findings from their investigation and experience gathering data including:

- There is no consistent data or data-collection to evaluate VM or Metro efforts to foster a diverse workforce or monitor their Equality and Social Justice initiatives. Administrative roadblocks and gatekeeping by King County Department of Human Resources (DHR) make it difficult or impossible for the EEO Office to access information and databases that are essential for the investigation of complaints and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)’s Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) reporting.
- There is no consistent process for recruiting, hiring, promoting, or providing professional development opportunities, which creates distrust and cynicism with employees. Ambiguous recruitment qualifications subject successful women and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) candidates to being stereotyped as the “diversity hire,” “unqualified,” and “undeserving” of their promotions, thus creating an atmosphere of constantly having to prove themselves in the workplace.
- Business practices have failed women and BIPOC, failed to diversify workforce, and failed to foster an inclusive environment for women and/or BIPOC employees.
- While VM is seeking to “diversify” their workforce, the work culture is not conducive to supporting and retaining a diverse workforce. Women and BIPOC employees are expected to assimilate into the work culture, keep their heads down, and/or “go along to get along” to be successful and navigate the work environment.
- Male-dominated management blames women for not being in the hiring/promotion pipeline (e.g., the work is dirty, heavy lifting, “not romantic,” etc.), while not addressing systemic barriers and an unwelcoming, harsh work culture for marginalized and racialized employees.
- Leadership lacks accountability for fostering an inclusive, equitable work culture and does not hold their direct reports and other employees, within their span of control responsible, for a lack of progress.

- Senior leadership has not recognized or addressed the intersectionality of sexual orientation, race, and nepotism with systemic issues that negatively impact women in the VM workplace.

### **Recommendations**

Based on their findings, the investigators provided several recommendations for Metro and VM, including:

- Building a recruitment pipeline that also includes women and BIPOC candidates that are not performative. VM must intentionally build an inclusive and diverse pipeline.
- Examining and making adjustments to training and qualifications for employment and advancement opportunities, particularly for Utility Service Workers and Equipment Service Workers in the Mechanic Apprenticeship program.
- Explore non-traditional recruitment paths such as area high school career fairs and leveraging the new Free Youth Transit Pass program to invite youth to consider trades as a career path and Metro as an employer. Follow up and invite youth to information sessions to learn more about VM employment opportunities.
- Create goals related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategy, monitor results, and hold the management team accountable.
- Create support network and/or reciprocal mentorship programs for women and BIPOC employees.
- Foster closer collaboration between DHR and Metro's EEO Office in sharing employment data and information.
- Stop studying the situation and take action. Much research and time has already been spent on understanding the problem and developing solutions well before this report was initiated.

# Parallel Findings from the EEO Office

The EEO Office agrees with many of the findings of the investigators from D Diamond Consulting and has come to similar findings through its EEO Program Report, EEO Survey, and participation in DHR's 2022 EEO/AA Plan. These separate reports reinforce the general findings of the VM investigation that women are underrepresented in the work force (particularly in the trades), that fear of retaliation is high, and confidence in change or that leadership will act is low.

## Metro's 2022 EEO Program Report

In Metro's 2022 EEO Program Report, the EEO Office documented the underutilization of women in its workforce. Utilization is the measurement of a workforce's current demographics compared to what is available for a region and industry. Underutilization is an indicator that conditions exist that are potentially discriminatory or hostile to certain demographic groups in certain job classes, and that steps should be made to see improvements in utilization.

The EEO breaks down workforces into eight categories. Most of VM's employees are categorized in the Skilled Craft and Service Maintenance EEO categories (Categories 7 and 8, respectively). Currently, in the Service Maintenance, women make up 22.2% of Service Maintenance workers, but only 1% of the skilled Craft category. Over the last ten years, women have consistently made up approximately 10% of VM's total workforce.

In 2021, Metro underutilized women in its workforce for both the Skilled Craft and Service Maintenance EEO Categories, marking the fifth consecutive year of steady underutilization (see Table 2, below). These percentages translate to Metro having to hire 58 women in the Skilled Craft Workers category and 167 women in the Service Maintenance category to achieve parity.

| EEO Category   | 2017   | Current Workforce Analysis |        |        |        |
|----------------|--------|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                |        | 2018                       | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   |
| 1 - Minorities |        | -19.2%                     | -14.1% | 1.6%   | -3.9%  |
| 3 - Women      | -2.1%  | -5.1%                      | -5.9%  | -17.1% | -17.7% |
| 3 - Minorities | -31.2% | -28.8%                     | -29.9% | -30.7% | -20.9% |
| 4 - Women      | -23.4% | -56.8%                     | -56.8% | N/A    | N/A    |
| 6 - Women      | -0.7%  | -1.0%                      | -1.2%  | 0.6%   | -0.6%  |
| 7 - Women      | -4.2%  | -5.4%                      | -6.8%  | -8.0%  | -7.0%  |
| 8 - Women      | -5.7%  | -5.5%                      | -5.8%  | -5.1%  | -5.6%  |

**Table 2.** Underutilization rates for women and minorities by EEO category for Metro, 2017-2021.

It should be noted that the underutilization of women in the workforce, particularly in the trades, is not unique to Metro. For example, in their last EEO Program Report, LA Metro published that they also had an underutilization of women in six of the eight EEO categories for women with underutilization rates of 14.8% for Technicians, 65.8% for Skilled Workers, and 26.6% for Service maintenance.

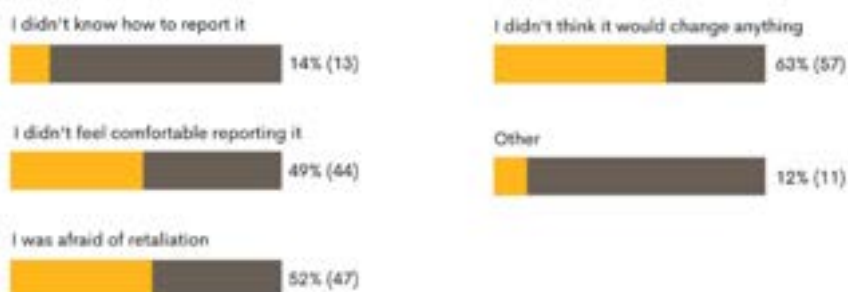
## EEO Survey

In partnership with Employee Services (ES), Metro conducted its second annual EEO Discrimination, Harassment, and Workplace Retaliation Survey in October 2022. The objective of the annual survey is to help Metro improve our reporting methods and how we address these experiences in the workplace. The data from the survey helps the EEO Office understand how to improve workplace experiences for employees, informs workplace safety, illustrates the progress we've made, and highlights opportunities for Metro to continue improving. The findings of the Survey aligned with the findings of D Diamond Consulting.

Compared to 2021, more survey respondents (61%) said they knew how to report incidents of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. However, there were still many (39%) respondents who said they were not sure or didn't know who to report to.

Most survey respondents said they would feel most comfortable reporting incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to their supervisor or manager, the EEO Office, or Metro HR/Employee Services. 20% of survey respondents said they would not feel comfortable reporting at all.

### Why didn't you report your experience?



**Table 3.** Reasons why Metro employees did not report experiences of discrimination or retaliation from the 2022 EEO Survey.

Similarly, in the County's Employee Engagement Survey, Metro scored a 33% in Belief in Action, "a measure of the confidence employees has that managers will act on the result of the survey." While the responses cannot be directly correlated, these independent data points acknowledge that employees may not report because they do not believe that leadership will effectively respond to or act to prevent future incidents. Other top reasons why respondents did not report was because of fear of retaliation or they did not feel comfortable.

# Statement on Intersectionality

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Metro and the EEO Office recognizes that structural oppression “isms” we negotiate within our institutions—racism, sexism, classism, ageism, homophobia, heterosexism, transphobia, colonialism, nativism/nationalism, and colonialism—is fueled by institutional and structural power. Therefore, as a Metro community, it is necessary for us to apply an intersectional analysis that acknowledges the reality that sexism intersects with other types of oppressions, namely race and class. Metro is committed to examining the VM findings with a sophistication that accounts the complexity of the interplay between these “isms” and the diverse identities of Metro’s workforce.

This means confronting sexism in a way that strategically recognizes the impact that identities such as race, national origin or immigration status, and disability have in the treatment of women. As Kimberlé Crenshaw explains, “Intersectionality is an analytic sensibility, a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power. Originally articulated on behalf of Black women, the term brought to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members but often fail to represent them.” While the VM findings and this report prioritize improving the employment outcomes for women, Metro is committed to carrying out this work with an intersectional lens that accounts for the intersecting experience of women, particularly BIPOC women, who shoulder the double burden of racism and sexism.

# Action Steps to Advance Gender Equity

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## Business Transformation in Recruitment

The VM investigation and other reports made to the EEO reveal the need for a more transparent and standard recruitment process that Metro employees can trust. As demonstrated by many of the comments and attitudes in the report, there is the feeling that VM and Metro still reflect some characteristics of an “old boys’ club” and that it is justifiably difficult for women to trust the current recruitment and advancement processes in place.

Metro Human Resources has secured resourcing for business transformation in recruitment. This work will help King County Metro improve equity outcomes for women in the trades and all employees by making changes to their recruitment processes and policies to create a more inclusive and equitable environment. Here are some ways in which this will be achieved:

- **Standardizing recruitment processes:** By utilizing standardized recruitment processes and tools, Metro will be able to provide candidates with a reliably consistent, fair, and equitable hiring experience. This will be achieved by building standardized recruitment plans within the system of record and utilizing standardized templates and procedures for onboarding, probation, and recruitment implementation.
- **Diversifying the talent pool:** By expanding the pool of candidates from underrepresented groups, organizations can increase the diversity of their workforce. This will be achieved by actively seeking out and engaging with candidates from diverse backgrounds, including through increasing targeted outreach and partnerships with organizations that support underrepresented communities.
- **Reducing bias in the hiring process:** Bias can impact the recruitment process at every stage, from job postings to selection and offers. By implementing measures to reduce bias, such as structured interviews, more diverse hiring panels, standardized panel briefings, and training for recruiters and hiring managers, Metro can ensure that candidates are evaluated fairly and equitably.
- **Building accurate recruitment data:** Getting clean data into the system of record with standardized recruitment processes will allow Metro to create accurate recruitment metrics for leadership and provide accurate data analysis for potential grievances or employee concerns as they arise. It will also allow us to become proactive in our approach to identifying and removing barriers within processes that create inequity within the process.
- Finally, Metro HR is also developing a department-wide standard operating procedures for how to address and prevent issues of nepotism and other actual or perceived conflicts of interest. These Metro-specific procedures will build from King County’s [Code of Ethics](#) and [DHR’s Employment Conflict of Interest policy](#). This work will result in draft policies and procedures and recommendations presented to Metro ES Division Director, HR Manager, and the Organizational Health and Development (OHD) Manager by Q3 2023.

Except for developing the standard operating procedure for nepotism and conflicts, this project will be rolled out in three phases with each phase planned to last approximately 6 months. By making these

changes and committing to ongoing improvement, Metro is aligned and working to create a more equitable and inclusive workplace for all employees, which will have a positive impact on Equity and Social Justice, and overall business performance.

### **EEO to Support the Women of Metro Empowerment Network (WOMEN)**

In the 2023-24 budget, the EEO Office secured funds to address matters specifically arising from its investigations and reporting. As a result of the findings from the VM investigation and data from the 2022 EEO Program Report, \$30,000 of these funds have been devoted to build capacity for the WOMEN Employee Resource Group (ERG) in their mission to support women at Metro, specifically in the trades.

The EEO Office will work with the WOMEN ERG to develop a request for proposals to bring on an external consultant to help build the capacity of the WOMEN ERG and work to improve employment outcomes for women at Metro, particularly in the trades, with an intersectional and equity analysis. Staff from EIB and ES will also be involved in drafting the solicitation documents to ensure alignment with other Metro initiatives and programming. In building capacity, emphasis will be placed on how to include more women across all shifts, physical locations, regardless of access to technology.

The EEO Office recognizes that many of the ERGs would benefit from this kind of investment and will seek to use this process with the WOMEN ERG to develop a practice of providing resourcing to groups, such as ERGs, as a result of its investigations and reporting.

### **Metro Addressing Gender Equity (MAGE)**

In January 2023, Metro retained Reinsel Consulting and Associates to pilot a project to create a Community Practice, specifically for men, to thinking critically about their part in dismantling sexism and gender bias at Metro. This work does not seek to put the focus on men; rather it as it strives to center women, non-binary, and transgender people's experiences. At the heart of this work, MAGE wishes to foster inclusion, respect, safety, accountability, empathy, and compassion in the workplace.

To guide the work of MAGE, in development is an advisory group of employees historically affected by gender bias to direct the work and communities of practice associated with MAGE. This will include collaboration and alignment with Women of Metro Empowerment Network, planning and resourcing leadership development opportunities centering women, transgender and non-binary employees, including identifying, directing, and implementing strategies, activities, practice that fostering emotionally & psychologically safe workspaces for women, transgender and non-binary employees. This is part of larger KC Metro goals and objectives to be a more welcoming and inclusive organization internally among staff and externally with the community we serve.

This pilot is planned to last through 2023, during which time MAGE will plan and facilitate focus groups, stakeholder interviews, implement town hall-style seminars, and develop a final report and recommendations for ongoing cultural change goals, activities, and strategies for Metro leadership.

### **Joining WTS International**

Metro recently became a member of the Women's Transportation Seminar ([WTS International](#)). WTS International is "dedicated to creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable transportation industry through the global advancement of women." WTS International seeks to break down historic barriers to entry and obstacles to success within the transportation industry. Through its membership with WTS



International, Metro is now connected to thousands of transportation professionals and resources to enhance the leadership skills and advancement of women in their careers.

## Improvements to the EEO Office

In 2023, Metro will see several significant improvements to the EEO Office and how it advances equality under the law and equity for employees. These improvements are designed to increase trust in the EEO investigative process, improve transparency and accountability in reporting, and decrease fears of retaliation associated with reporting discrimination or inappropriate conduct.

- **Standardized Investigative Procedures and Analysis.** The EEO Office recently completed its first Handbook that details the standard procedures and analysis for receiving, investigating, and analyzing reports of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and inappropriate conduct. These standard procedures are designed to help build trust and transparency in the EEO Office's trust and demystify its purpose and role in workplace conflicts. With these procedures in place, all matters reported to the EEO Office will be received, addressed, and analyzed in an open and predictable manner. Employees should not feel in the dark after making a report.

The full Handbook will be available for all employees and prospective employees to read [here](#). Simplified and more user-friendly materials explaining the EEO Office's procedures are currently being drafted and produced and will be complete by Q2 2023.

- **The Way We Work Together (TWWWT).** The EEO Office has partnered with the OHD section from ES, who are leading this effort aimed to increase awareness and knowledge how to report workplace discrimination, harassment, and retaliation to the EEO Office and HR Manager in alignment with the Metro's EEO obligations and the County's Nondiscrimination Policy. TWWWT will be a visible campaign complete with graphics, posters, and training modules that bring a needed update and improvement to the current, legal heavy training regimen. The roll out of TWWWT will begin March 2023.
- **Improved Analytics and Regular Reporting.** The EEO Office is currently working with partners in King County Information Technology (KCIT) and the Business Resource Center to improve data presented in the 2022 Program Report. The goal is to create a report dashboard where employment and EEO data can regularly and quickly be generated for study. Many of the improvements were suggested by Metro employee including: disaggregating the data by divisions, inclusions of salary bands, a further breakdown of demographics for the intersection of race and sex, inclusion of discrimination and complaint data, and to make the data generally more digestible and user-friendly. The first iteration of the dashboard is expected to be completed by Q4 2023.

As stated in the introduction, this report, once published every four years, will also be published at least annually at the request of multiple employees and staff. Regular reporting on Metro's employee metrics and programs are meant to improve workplace equity and will increase transparency and accountability.

- **Electronic Case Management System.** Metro received funds in the 2023-24 budget to develop and implement a technology solution for the EEO Office to electronically organize, monitor, and build reports of multiple types of discrimination allegations filed at Metro. This new system will streamline many processes and will be crucial in the publishing of future EEO reports to include accurate data on discrimination complaints and outcomes. A fully implemented system is planned to be operational at the beginning of Q1 2024.

## Measuring Advances Through Data

The preceding action steps represent the urgency needed to address the findings from the VM investigation. The following are some of goals and measurable indicators of success that include both qualitative and quantitative benchmarks. As the EEO Office's data capabilities increase with future iterations of this report, so too should our goals and metrics improve over time. The EEO Office notes data on the efficiency of action steps may not be evident until the steps are fully implemented and given time to have effect, but it is important to recognize and document where the base and starting points are for improvement.

- The underutilization of women will decrease.
- The termination and turnover rates of women will decrease.
- The fear of retaliation as a reason for underreporting discrimination will decrease.
- Knowledge of reporting procedures for discrimination will increase.
- The confidence that Metro leadership will act on reports of discrimination will increase.

# Conclusion & Next Steps

## Remarks from Tamar Zere, Metro EIB Manager

The Vehicle Maintenance Gender Report gives us—in real time—the opportunity to learn from history and hold the weight and complexity of a 10-year look-back on workforce inequities within Vehicle Maintenance. While the report daylights many truths, experiences, and challenges VM staff navigates, it also allows us to unflinchingly face the harsh reality many of our colleagues in operations negotiate.

We also recognize that what was revealed at VM will be true for all our divisions and beyond Metro—that is the reality of “ism”. This is work we *all* must lean into.

This report would not be a reality were it not for two pertinent reasons: 1) commitment from senior leadership to grapple with structural oppression at Metro; and 2) the extraordinary participation of an impacted workforce whose continued engagement is necessary for future reimagining of the culture at VM. As we work towards making our four compacts a reality, this report gives us a roadmap for how we can better hire and retain women and BIPOC workers, how we can better grow and invest in our employees, and how we can create the right conditions for all of us to thrive.

## Next Steps & The Inside Long Game

Just as we practice our Long Game through the virtuous cycle of continuously demonstrating that mobility is human right, investing resources to grow capacity, and measuring outcomes, we now need to look inwards and do the same. This “inside” Long Game invites us to recognize that it is a right for all our employees to have the opportunity to thrive in a workplace free from discrimination, and as we invest in programming and capacity to create those conditions, there must be measurable outcomes that we examine regularly to justify further investment or make adjustment.

As demonstrated by the VM investigation, we can measure the harm caused to women in our organization. We owe it to them to measure and demonstrate that we are making progress. Our work in this space cannot be performative.

One of the EEO Office’s functions is to provide Metro the data on these measurable outcomes through its investigations, survey engagement, and EEO Program Reports.

The next steps, then, are to get comfortable with the uncomfortable data, support the actions summarized in this update, measure if our actions are having the intended effect, adjust, improve, and move forward in the “inside” Long Game.





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