

1 SENATE BILL 356

2 **57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO STATE PERSONNEL; ENACTING THE DIVERSITY ACT;
12 CREATING THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER WITHIN THE STATE PERSONNEL
13 OFFICE; CREATING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LIAISONS WITHIN STATE
14 AGENCIES; CREATING THE WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
15 COUNCIL; PROVIDING DUTIES; REQUIRING STATE AGENCIES TO DEVELOP
16 AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO IDENTIFY, ASSESS AND DECREASE
17 INSTITUTIONAL RACISM; PROVIDING CRITERIA BY WHICH STATE
18 AGENCIES SHALL IMPLEMENT SUCH POLICIES; REQUIRING AN ANNUAL
19 REPORT; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

22 SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] SHORT TITLE.--This act may be
23 cited as the "Diversity Act".

24 SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] DEFINITIONS.--As used in the
25 Diversity Act:

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1 A. "accessibility" means the degree to which a
2 product, device, service, environment or facility is usable by
3 as many people as possible, including people that belong to a
4 protected class;

5 B. "council" means the workforce diversity and
6 inclusion council;

7 C. "director" means the director of the state
8 personnel office;

9 D. "diversity" means the practice of including or
10 involving people from a range of different racial or ethnic
11 backgrounds and may also include persons of every background,
12 gender, race, sexual orientation, age and disability;

13 E. "equality" means the equivalent treatment of and
14 opportunity for members of different groups within society
15 regardless of individual distinctions of race, ethnicity,
16 gender, age, social class, sexual orientation or other
17 characteristics or circumstances;

18 F. "equity" means the consistent and systematic
19 fair, just and impartial treatment of all people, including
20 people who belong to underserved communities;

21 G. "gender identity" means the gender-related
22 identity, appearance, mannerisms or other gender-related
23 characteristics of a person, regardless of the person's
24 designated sex at birth;

25 H. "inclusion" means the process of creating a

1 working culture and environment that recognizes, appreciates
2 and effectively utilizes the talents, skills and perspectives
3 of every state employee; uses state employee skills to achieve
4 a state agency's objectives and mission; connects each state
5 employee to the organization; and encourages collaboration,
6 flexibility and fairness in the workplace;

7 I. "inequities" means disparities in physical
8 health, mental health, economic opportunities, education or
9 social factors;

10 J. "institutional racism" means actions that result
11 in differential access to the goods, services and opportunities
12 of society due to the existence of institutional programs,
13 policies and practices that intentionally or unintentionally
14 place certain racial and ethnic groups at a disadvantage in
15 relation to other groups;

16 K. "office" means the state personnel office;

17 L. "protected class" means a group of people with a
18 common characteristic who are legally protected from employment
19 discrimination on the basis of that characteristic; such
20 characteristics may include a person's race; color; religion;
21 sex, which may include pregnancy, transgender status and sexual
22 orientation; national origin; age, being forty years of age or
23 older; disability; or genetic information;

24 M. "state agency" means any state agency, office,
25 department, board, commission or authority under the executive

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1 branch of the state;

2 N. "state employees" means all classified personnel
3 pursuant to the Personnel Act;

4 O. "underserved communities" means populations, as
5 well as geographic communities, who share a particular
6 characteristic and have been systematically denied a full
7 opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social and
8 civic life; such communities may include Black, Latino, Native
9 American, Asian American and Pacific Islander and other persons
10 of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay,
11 bisexual, transgender and queer persons; persons with
12 disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons who
13 have otherwise been adversely affected by persistent poverty or
14 inequality; and

15 P. "workforce diversity" means the process of
16 recruiting from a diverse, qualified group of potential
17 applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all
18 segments of American society.

19 SECTION 3. [NEW MATERIAL] CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER--
20 CREATED--DUTIES.--

21 A. The position of "chief diversity officer" is
22 created as a classified position within the office. The chief
23 diversity officer shall be hired by and serve at the pleasure
24 of the director.

25 B. The chief diversity officer shall have a

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1 background and education in management or business and
2 experience with diversity and inclusion.

3 C. The chief diversity officer shall:

4 (1) lead the development and implementation of
5 proactive diversity, equality, equity and inclusion initiatives
6 in support of the state's strategic plan to create a culture of
7 diversity, equality, equity and inclusion pursuant to Section 6
8 of the Diversity Act;

9 (2) collaborate with and support other state
10 agencies in assessing potential barriers and developing
11 strategies for state agencies to recruit and retain a diverse
12 workforce;

13 (3) assess state agencies' needs for, and
14 recommend training initiatives on, cultural competency,
15 gender identity differences, disability, accessibility, sexual
16 harassment and other topics designed to increase awareness and
17 support of equity, equality and inclusive values;

18 (4) ensure that all state agencies maintain
19 compliance with all relevant and applicable laws and rules;

20 (5) exercise authority to advise state agency
21 directors with regard to matters for which the chief diversity
22 officer has authority pursuant to this section;

23 (6) have full access to the office's human
24 resource management systems;

25 (7) establish and maintain state-agency-

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1 specific strategic plans that publicly state diversity
2 definitions and goals for the state agency;

3 (8) define a set of strategic metrics that are
4 directly linked to key organizational priorities and goals
5 actively used to implement the strategic plan;

6 (9) establish training regarding diversity
7 dynamics and best practices for effectively leading diverse
8 groups;

9 (10) establish and maintain a strategic plan
10 for outreach to, and recruiting from, underserved communities;

11 (11) conduct regular, rigorous evaluations and
12 assessments of diversity for state agencies; and

13 (12) perform such additional duties and
14 exercise such powers as the director may prescribe.

15 D. On or before December 31 of each year, the chief
16 diversity officer shall:

17 (1) conduct an evaluation of race as self-
18 identified by applicants, candidates and employees subject to
19 the Personnel Act as related to hiring, promotion,
20 retention and pay;

21 (2) develop policies to identify, assess,
22 reduce and prevent inequities due to institutional racism in
23 hiring, promotion and pay for those agencies with positions to
24 which the provisions of the Personnel Act apply;

25 (3) conduct an analysis of state government

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1 employment data sets of race as self-identified by employees to
2 track progress toward ending institutional racism; and

3 (4) develop and provide anti-institutional
4 racism training for all employees subject to the Personnel Act
5 that shall include:

6 (a) a historical perspective on the
7 population of New Mexico, spotlighting the many racial and
8 ethnic subpopulations that live and work in New Mexico and the
9 need for all New Mexicans to be aware of, appreciate and
10 celebrate the cultural differences in the state;

11 (b) strategies to eliminate cultural
12 prejudices and discrimination while strengthening the common
13 threads that bind individuals into one state and one country;

14 (c) strategies to improve engagement
15 with employees, customers or clients from different cultural
16 backgrounds; and

17 (d) strategies to counteract unconscious
18 bias and foster a climate of diversity and inclusion in the
19 state government workplace.

20 SECTION 4. [NEW MATERIAL] DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

21 LIAISONS--WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL--CREATED--
22 DUTIES.--

23 A. Each state agency shall designate a diversity
24 and inclusion liaison, who shall report directly to the head of
25 the agency and collaborate with the chief diversity officer.

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1 B. The chief diversity officer shall convene the
2 "workforce diversity and inclusion council" composed of the
3 diversity and inclusion liaisons from each state agency.

4 C. Each diversity and inclusion liaison shall
5 provide to the chief diversity officer the data and information
6 required pursuant to Section 5 of the Diversity Act.

7 D. Diversity and inclusion liaisons shall work with
8 the chief diversity officer to implement recommendations
9 proposed by state agencies or by the chief diversity officer.

10 E. The diversity and inclusion liaisons shall
11 assist the chief diversity officer in developing and providing
12 anti-institutional racism training for all employees subject to
13 the Personnel Act.

14 F. The chief diversity officer, in collaboration
15 with the diversity and inclusion liaisons, shall ensure that
16 each state agency includes a prominent statement on all job
17 advertisements and annual reviews that:

18 (1) clearly articulates the state's commitment
19 to reducing and preventing institutional racism; and

20 (2) states that all employees are required to
21 participate in anti-institutional-racism training.

22 G. The council shall convene regularly and may
23 establish subcommittees as appropriate.

24 SECTION 5. [NEW MATERIAL] ANNUAL REPORT--REPORT
25 CONTENTS--PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF REPORT.--

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1 A. No later than July 1 of each year, each state
2 agency shall submit a report to the office on the activities of
3 the state agency pursuant to the Diversity Act. The report
4 shall include:

5 (1) demographic data on each element of the
6 state agency's workforce that is disaggregated by rank and
7 grade or grade-equivalent, with respect to the following
8 groups:

9 (a) applicants for each position within
10 the state agency;

11 (b) applicants hired to the state
12 agency;

13 (c) state employees promoted within the
14 state agency;

15 (d) members of any external advisory
16 committee or board who are subject to appointment by people in
17 senior positions at the state agency;

18 (e) state employees participating in
19 professional development programs; and

20 (f) state employees participating in
21 mentorship or retention programs;

22 (2) aggregate demographic statistics for all
23 employees, including race for those employees who self-
24 identify;

25 (3) an assessment of the state agency's

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1 compliance with relevant elements identified by the United
2 States equal employment opportunity commission;

3 (4) an assessment of the state agency's anti-
4 institutional racism policies in hiring, promotion, retention,
5 pay equity, community engagement and workplace participation;

6 (5) the steps in the state agency's hiring and
7 promotion processes that incorporate the values of diversity,
8 equity and inclusion;

9 (6) data on the promotion outcomes of women
10 and racial or ethnic minorities;

11 (7) demographic data, disaggregated by rank
12 and grade or grade-equivalent, of contractors and
13 subcontractors, as well as the nongovernmental and civil
14 society organizations that win bids or obtain contracts and
15 grants and serve as subcontractors to the state agency;

16 (8) a description of the state agency's
17 efforts to propagate rules of fairness, impartiality and
18 inclusion;

19 (9) a description of the state agency's
20 efforts to enforce anti-harassment and anti-discrimination
21 policies;

22 (10) the state agency's acknowledgment of its
23 obligation to refrain from unlawful discrimination in any phase
24 of the employment process, including recruitment, hiring,
25 evaluation, assignments, promotion, retention and training;

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1 (11) the state agency's intentions to prevent
2 retaliation for state employees participating in employment-
3 related activities protected by state or federal law;

4 (12) an assessment of the state agency's
5 delivery of reasonable accommodations for state employees with
6 disabilities; and

7 (13) recommendations using data-driven
8 approaches toward advancing solutions for problems identified
9 and proactive measures addressing diversity, equity and
10 inclusion in the workforce.

11 B. The chief diversity officer shall compile the
12 state agency data collected pursuant to Subsection A of this
13 section into an annual report and submit the report no later
14 than October 1 of each year to the governor, the appropriate
15 interim legislative committee dealing with courts, corrections
16 and justice issues, the legislative finance committee and the
17 legislature to address diversity, inclusion and institutional
18 racism as a part of the annual fiscal budget or request for
19 proposals submission for each state agency.

20 C. The chief diversity officer shall:

21 (1) ensure that the data included within the
22 annual report is in a machine-readable format that is
23 downloadable, searchable and sortable; and

24 (2) publish the annual report on the office's
25 website.

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1 D. A copy of the report shall be maintained in the
2 legislative council service library, the state library and the
3 state records center and archives.

4 SECTION 6. [NEW MATERIAL] DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
5 STRATEGIC PLANS.--

6 A. The head of each state agency shall develop and
7 maintain a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion
8 strategic plan in coordination with the chief diversity officer
9 and the diversity and inclusion liaison for that agency and the
10 council.

11 B. The diversity, equity and inclusion strategic
12 plan shall:

13 (1) integrate the diversity, equity and
14 inclusion goals into the mission, operations, programs and
15 infrastructure of the state agency to enhance equitable
16 opportunities for the populations served by the agency and to
17 foster an increasingly diverse, equitable and inclusive
18 workplace environment; and

19 (2) outline the:

20 (a) proactive measures toward addressing
21 equal employment opportunities pursuant to federal and state
22 law;

23 (b) intentions of fostering pay equity
24 pursuant to federal and state law;

25 (c) practices to promote diversity,

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1 equity and inclusion in hiring, promotion, retention,
2 succession planning and leadership opportunities; and

3 (d) practices of employee engagement and
4 inclusivity in the workforce.

5 C. The head of each state agency shall coordinate
6 with the chief diversity officer to effectively support ongoing
7 progress and accountability to achieve diversity, equity and
8 inclusion goals.

9 SECTION 7. APPROPRIATION.--Two hundred fifty thousand
10 dollars (\$250,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
11 state personnel office for expenditure in fiscal year 2026 to
12 carry out the provisions of the Diversity Act. Any unexpended
13 or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year
14 2026 shall revert to the general fund.

15 SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the
16 provisions of this act is July 1, 2025.