

# **County of San Luis Obispo**

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Plan for 2024 – 2027**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo recognizes that an essential component of excellence in County government is the diversity of the community and its reflection in the County workforce. As a result of the County's long-standing commitment to equal employment opportunity, the County of San Luis Obispo is proud of its accomplishments in support of a diverse workforce.

This Equal Employment Opportunity Plan supports the County's efforts to maintain a balanced workforce that responds to the citizens of San Luis Obispo County in an effective, culturally sensitive manner. Through adoption of this policy and plan, the Board of Supervisors affirms its commitment to providing the County of San Luis Obispo with a diverse, results-oriented workforce, selected based on merit, and free of discrimination and harassment. This policy may be modified by the Human Resources Director as needed to comply with changes in state or federal law, or for administrative reasons.

### **II. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

The County maintains and promotes a policy of equal employment opportunity. The County is committed to maintaining a work environment that is merit-based, and free from discrimination. Discrimination is the unequal treatment of individuals with respect to the terms and conditions of their employment, based on their membership in a protected category. The Board of Supervisors, its managers, employees, agents, and volunteers will not discriminate against any applicant for employment, employee, contractor, subcontractor, vendor, volunteer, intern or client because of age, ethnicity, creed, marital status, medical condition (cancer or genetic characteristics), national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, political affiliation or belief, race, color, religion, sex/gender (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender, gender expression or identity, status as a victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking, genetic information, military or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

This policy shall apply to all employment actions including, but not limited to: recruitment, testing, hiring, training opportunities, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, discipline, termination, salary and benefits, and participation or appointment to all County boards and commissions. All employment decisions shall be made on the basis of individual

qualifications, bona fide occupational qualifications for the job in question, and the feasibility of any necessary job accommodations.

The employment goal of the County is to develop an employee population that is representative of the general population of San Luis Obispo County. The County will take positive measures toward eliminating artificial barriers to employment and achieving equal opportunity through its continued implementation and coordination of the County's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan, and through its review and evaluation of hiring, promotional and employment policies and procedures.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

To assure support and success of this Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and to meet the established objectives, the following responsibilities have been assigned:

- A. The Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors actively supports equal employment opportunity through:
  - Adopting policies that ensure merit-based employment practices;
  - Direction that those policies be supported and enforced;
  - Budgetary assistance to County departments;
  - Requiring periodic review of equal employment opportunity practices and procedures.
- B. The County Administrative Officer: The County Administrative Officer has responsibility to ensure that the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan is implemented pursuant to the Board of Supervisors' direction.
- C. The Human Resources Director: The Human Resources Director acts as the County Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, implementing and administering the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and Civil Service System, as well as enforcing County Ordinances and policies in support of equal employment opportunity.
- D. The Department Heads: The Department Heads will support and comply with the objectives of the County's Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and are responsible for achieving progress toward the goals and objectives of the Plan in their departments. Specifically, the Department Head will:
  - Participate with the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator or designee in identifying problem areas and developing plans for improvement;
  - Ensure that all employment decisions, including interviews, offers of employment and compensation commitments, assignment, training and evaluation, and employee relations are consistent with the County's human resources practices.

- E. **Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator:** The Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator shall be appointed by the Human Resources Director and shall manage the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan by:
- Updating the County Equal Employment Opportunity Plan under the direction of the Human Resources Director;
  - Assisting management and Department Heads in identifying areas of underrepresentation and planning for improvement;
  - Acting as resource person in the area of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action programs and serving as liaison with departments, enforcement agencies, employee unions, and other stakeholders as appropriate;
  - Tracking reports of discrimination and harassment within County employment;
  - As necessary, preparing reports and making presentations to County management, employees, and community groups.
- F. **Managers and Supervisors:** County managers and supervisors are responsible for supporting the principles of equal employment opportunity by:
- Ensuring that all staff understand and work within federal and state laws, as well as County policies and procedures, dealing with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action;
  - Initiating steps to foster and maintain a work climate that is free from discrimination or harassment.
- G. **County Employees:** County employees are responsible for supporting and maintaining a work climate that is free from any form of discrimination or harassment.

#### **IV. COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES**

Employees and applicants are encouraged to attempt resolution of complaints as quickly as possible at the lowest and least formal level. If resolution at a lower level is not practicable, an employee or applicant may report an incident to the EEO Coordinator. The most important consideration should be resolution of the issue in a prompt and fair manner. No employee or applicant shall be subjected to intimidation, coercion, or retaliation of any kind as a result of filing a complaint or as a result of being a witness in an investigation.

A. The County recognizes three (3) internal reporting procedures:

1. **Resolution within the Department**

An employee is encouraged to discuss the issue with their immediate supervisor. If the issue is not resolved, or the behavior of the employee's supervisor is an issue, the employee is encouraged to pursue resolution through discussion with the next higher level manager, up to the Department Director.

2. Filing an Administrative Complaint

Any employee or applicant for employment may file a complaint with the County's Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator in the Human Resources Department at: (805) 781-5959

Written complaints should be directed to:

County of San Luis Obispo Human Resources Department  
EEO Coordinator  
1055 Monterey Street, Ste D-250  
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93408

The EEO Coordinator or designee will investigate complaints pursuant to County Policy. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the greatest extent possible, recognizing the rights of the complainant, the accused, and all third party witnesses.

3. Filing a Grievance

An employee may file a grievance pursuant to Civil Service Rule(s) 4.02, 4.03, and 4.05 of the San Luis Obispo County Civil Service Commission.

B. External Agencies

Employees and applicants have the option of filing a complaint with the state or federal equal employment opportunity compliance agencies.

1. California Civil Rights Department  
(800)884-1684  
<https://civildrights.ca.gov/>
2. United States Equal Employment Opportunity  
Commission (800) 669-4000  
[www.EEOC.gov](http://www.EEOC.gov)

## V. 2018 – 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Recruitment and Selection**

- Expanded outreach strategies to increase employment applications from qualified individuals in underrepresented groups. This includes targeted advertising to Hispanic groups, bilingual postings, and networking/advertising with local colleges and universities.

- Utilized NeoGov statistical data to analyze potential adverse impact and assist in selecting pass points that avoid adverse impact.
- Implemented text feature in NeoGov to reach a greater number of qualified candidates and ensure they progress through the recruitment process.
- Conducted extensive outreach efforts to target underrepresented groups; researched and partnered with local community organizations that serve the Hispanic population that allow for job postings, identified contacts and promoted positions to these groups. This includes job boards and weekly radio blasts in Spanish.
- Where possible have eliminated artificial barriers in minimum qualifications to prevent disqualification of those in protected classes who may not have access to various educational opportunities (i.e. accepting experience in lieu of education or offering more training opportunities for growth).
- County of San Luis Obispo Health Agency added a full-time DEI Program Manager whose focus is to create culturally appropriate trainings for Health Agency Behavioral Health staff to enhance service to the public.

### **Training and Diversity**

- Provided annual training on discrimination and sexual harassment to all managers, supervisors and line staff.
- Provided state mandated bi-annual sexual harassment training (AB-1825) for all managers and supervisors.
- Provided ongoing training to HR staff and key departmental Payroll Coordinators on ADA laws and reasonable accommodation assessment.
- Participated in numerous job fairs targeting Veterans and students in an effort to reach underrepresented groups.
- Provided Basic Supervisory Training to County managers and supervisors as well as high potential employees who are interested in advancement.
- Implemented "HR Supervisor Toolkit", which includes a Transition to Supervisor-Roadmap Guide and resources for managers to ensure education regarding equal treatment of employees, compliance with policies, and keys for success.
- Provided training in leadership academies on how to effectively work with employees of various generations to expand understanding of and appreciation for the differences.

- Included DEI elements into academies offered to employees.
- Provided a new online course in NeoGov Learn to assist employees in learning about career pathways and opportunities that may be available to them. This includes instruction on how to develop their own personal development plan.
- Provided training through our EAP Program that features information on specific action steps to show respect and support toward all in the workplace.

### **Career Development and Employee Retention**

- Developed advanced training programs for managers and supervisors on targeted employee issues such as employee performance management, coaching, building high performing teams and conflict resolution.
- Conducted a Countywide employee engagement survey to obtain feedback from employees on their experience working for the County and their level of satisfaction with their jobs and the organization.

## **VI. 2024 – 2027 EEO PLAN GOALS**

### **Recruitment and Selection**

- Human Resources and County departments will continue to work on outreach strategies to increase employment applications from qualified individuals in underrepresented groups. This includes outreach to community organizations to advertise job openings or provide links to our career opportunities on their website.
- Human Resources will present workforce planning data to help departments develop succession planning strategies as the workforce exodus continues over the next several years.
- Human Resources and County departments will continue to broaden partnerships to develop enhanced outreach efforts to attract applicants in underrepresented groups during recruitments.
- Human Resources will develop candidate resources to assist qualified candidates in being successful throughout the recruitment process.
- Human Resources will continue to enhance candidate communication and outreach.

- Human Resources will continue to perform adverse impact analysis during recruitments to review for adverse testing/scoring for identified underutilized groups.

### **Training and Diversity**

- Human Resources will continue development of Supervisor Training modules in support of the County's efforts to fully train all supervisors on quality supervision practices and procedures.
- The Learning and Development Center will continue to offer up to date courses on recognizing and managing unconscious bias, as well Bystander training to expand awareness about discrimination and harassment behaviors and the importance of reporting situations they observe that are not in compliance with County policy.

### **Career Development and Employee Retention**

- When appropriate, County departments will utilize expanded work experience opportunities and special assignments to enhance career development including:
  - Short term "out-of-class" assignments on a developmental basis
  - "Acting" assignments
  - Substitute / Provisional appointments
  - Job assignment rotation
  - Short term projects
  - Committee assignments
  - Training opportunities
  - Coaching and Mentoring projects