

SFDPH Office of Health Equity Affinity Group Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define procedures for the formation and operations of SFDPH Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs). EAGs are recognized, voluntary, employee-led groups that are designed to foster community and inclusivity among and across the department. EAGs are a way to share thoughts and experiences, strategize proactive and innovative ways to highlight and foster diversity, equity, and inclusion, and create opportunities for staff to connect and get to know one another. EAGs also promote personal and professional growth in many ways through (1) peer support and information to overcome barriers to engagement and advancement, (2) cultural recognition that ensures employees feel welcomed and can bring their full selves to their work, (3) information sharing that helps their members use available resources, and (4) assistance with communicating employee needs to department leadership. Additionally, these groups may give staff the opportunity to advocate for the needs of their communities, adding meaning and relevance to their work. These functions align with the equity values and strategies at SFDPH and therefore the Office of Health Equity helps to organize and support these groups.

EAG FORMATION AND RECOGNITION

A. Groups are organized by employees who support the goals of the EAG and wish to participate in its activities.

B. The Chief Health Equity Officer, or their designee, oversees both the initial and annual recognition processes of EAGs. Prospective groups must return an application to OHE, cosigned by a minimum of 10 members. This will serve as the group charter.

C. EAG charter approval will be based on an assessment of:

The stated mission and values which must have a clear and direct connection to the mission of the Department of Public Health and the advancement of workforce or health equity.

D. The application must state one or more protected classes of focus or concern.

E. The application must also affirm the understanding that membership is open to all staff and that the EAG must offer full inclusion to all EAG members.

F. All requests will be considered on an individual basis and will be submitted to the Director of Health by the Chief Health Equity Officer. The Chief Health Equity Officer will include a recommendation for approval or denial in consultation with the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee.

G. The Chief Health Equity Officer, or their designee, will publish each approved EAG's name, mission, and contact information on OHE's website. The published information will include a link to an application for membership which will be open to all staff.

EAG ACTIVITIES

A. The charter of the EAG should identify a specific group of focus; all meetings must be open to any DPH employee who wishes to attend.

B. EAG activities are defined by the members, but may include the following:

- Contributing to employees' professional development.
- Identifying workforce engagement barriers and solutions.
- Hosting events that give members and employees the opportunity for networking, career development, stress management, or health promotion.
- Sponsoring events, seminars, and conferences on topics relevant to their group(s) of focus.
- Recognizing cultural, educational, and other special events.

C. EAGs must comply with City and County of San Francisco and SFDPH policies and procedures.

- Groups are forbidden from engaging in political activity, though nothing in this policy is intended to prevent individual employees from participating in protected political expression or other activities.
- Group discussions and activities must conform to DPH rules for workplace conduct, including the City's policy regarding the treatment of coworkers and members of the public.
- Groups may not charge membership dues.

D. Recognized EAGs may use SFDPH communication systems (interoffice mail, email, telephone, etc.) to conduct EAG business e.g., to notify members of meetings, events, meeting actions, or minutes.

E. Recognized EAGs may use SFDPH facilities for their meetings/events with pre-approved permission of the manager charged with use of the space.

F. EAG members may attend events held during work hours if given permission by their manager or supervisor and attendance does not interfere with the work of their unit.

G. EAGs must not make proposals to management to change any terms and/or conditions of employment. EAGs may provide information related to issues of concern.

H. Members of EAGs do not represent or speak for SFDPH or San Francisco City and County. They also do they represent policies or positions of the San Francisco City and County.

ANNUAL REVIEW AND RE-CERTIFICATION

I. OHE will conduct an annual review of all EAGs and their activities to ensure the following:

- Membership continues to be open to all employees.
- Goals and objectives continue to align with the department’s mission and values.
- The group had at least one meeting or activity in the past year that advanced equity for their group of focus or all marginalized groups at SFDPH.

J. The Office of Health Equity will coordinate a voluntary annual meeting of EAG members in order to share best practices and strategies for staff development used by DPH EAG’s and outside groups

SFDPH EMPLOYEE AFFINITY GROUP CERTIFICATION REQUEST

Group of focus: (e.g. a gender, racial group(s), etc.)

Name of the group (to be posted):

Stated purpose of the group (1 sentence, to be posted):

Employee contact for the group (name and email):

Initial employee members (must include at least 10 DPH staff, permanent or temporary):

Email applications to: equity@sfdph.org by COB October 22, 2022