

# City of Chicago RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN

Under the City of Chicago's Municipal Code (Ch. 2-4-100), all City of Chicago departments must create and maintain Racial Equity Action Plans (REAPs) "to articulate and guide strategy aimed at advancing equity and making it a permanent pillar in all departmental workstreams." Progress on all REAPs are accounted for annually as a part of the City of Chicago's budget process. This document outlines the components of the REAP and ensures that all strategies are aligned to Chicago's citywide vision: ***All people and all communities have power, are free from oppression, and are strengthened by equitable access to resources, environments, and opportunities that promote optimal health and well-being. (HC2025)***



## THE CITY OF CHICAGO'S DEFINITION OF EQUITY

Equity is both an outcome and a process:

As an **outcome** equity results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive. Acknowledging the present and historical inequality that persist in our society, equity is a future state we strive to create where identity and social status no longer predestine life outcomes.

As a **process**, equity requires a new way of doing business: one that

- (1) Prioritizes access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need.
- (2) Methodically evaluates benefits and burdens produced by seemingly neutral systems and practices.
- (3) Engages those most impacted by the problems we seek to address as experts in their own experiences, strategists in co-creating solutions, and evaluators of success.

Further, our focus is on evaluating our own strategies, interventions and resources in a way that prioritizes those who are most negatively impacted by current policies, procedures & practices.

**Racial equity** focuses on the social construction of race and how it has been used (historically and presently) to unjustly distribute opportunity and resources based on a person's skin color, heritage, ethnicity, and/or national origin. Advancing racial equity requires an analysis of systemic racism inclusive of the ways harm is created at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels. It also requires a commitment to dismantling systems that perpetuate racialized outcomes and rebuild systems that produce systemic inclusion.



The coordination of the development and implementation of City of Chicago REAPs is led by the Office of Equity and Racial Justice. For more information about REAPs and/or the work of the office visit [www.chicago.gov/equity](http://www.chicago.gov/equity).



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## 1. WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

### Citywide Desired Result:

The City of Chicago's workforce reflects the demographics of the City, and all employees are connected to training and advancement opportunities.

### Community Indicators:

- City of Chicago workforce demographics disaggregated by race, gender, and age
- CDA workforce demographics disaggregated by race, gender, and age
- Management/non-management disaggregated by race and gender
- Number of Chicago's residents employed by CDA's construction contractors, professional services contractors, certified service providers, concessionaires, stakeholders (airlines, federal partners, etc.) disaggregated by race and gender.

### Define the Problem

*Identify the problem creating barriers to advancing the citywide desired result.*

*Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue? Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.*

CDA desires to have a workforce that reflects the diversity of the City; however, there are several groups that are currently underrepresented in CDA's workforce, as shown on the City's equity dashboard ([cityofchicago.org/equitydashboard](http://cityofchicago.org/equitydashboard)). Women make up approximately 27% of CDA's workforce while representing more than half of the workforce in the City. Hispanics comprise just 23% of the workforce despite making up 29% of the available City workforce. Asians make up only 3% of CDA's workforce, less than half of their percentage in the general population. Finally, CDA disproportionately employs workers 45 years of age and older while not employing enough workers under the age of 35.

### Identify Root Cause(s)

*What is contributing to the problem?*

*How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?*

The airports have numerous job opportunities requiring varying levels of education and/or qualifications, but due to systemic and structural racism in our federal and local hiring practices, there are many barriers for low-income individuals, particularly those of color, pursuing employment with the City. The most marginalized people on these issues are those living in low-income areas with limited access to the technology and transportation necessary to pursue job opportunities at the airports. Further, the Digital Divide results in communities with limited access to information about employment opportunities with CDA and individuals who may not have the digital tools to apply for open positions. Not to mention, employment opportunities are generally shared in English, making it challenging for individuals whose primary language is not English. Also, there are limited transit options to get to the airports. The Blue Line serves ORD, while only the Orange Line serves MDW, resulting in large portions of the City having difficulty commuting to the airports. We need to enhance our outreach programs, particularly to neighborhoods with high unemployment, lower incomes, and less commercial activity, as these communities have been most marginalized with respect to employment at the airports.

In addition, there are also federal restrictions that may preclude job seekers from employment opportunities at the airports, such as past criminal history, so we will aim to work with existing agencies that assist returning citizens in clearing their records.

**Define the Opportunity**

**Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide desired result.**

**Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue. Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.**

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) sees several opportunities to advance the citywide desired result:

- 1) Improve information sharing by creating an Airport Employment Book, which will state the jobs performed at the airports, the minimum qualifications needed to pursue those jobs, and the career paths that open for individuals employed in those positions, and by providing knowledge regarding affordable transportation;
- 2) Participate in targeted community outreach with Chicagoans most impacted by high unemployment, lower incomes, and limited access to information and transportation;
- 3) Partnering with City departments and assist agencies to extend the availability and use of technology to the communities most in need to help with the job search and application process;
- 4) Work with existing agencies assisting returning citizens in clearing their records.

<p><b>Department Strategy:</b> <i>What are the department's overarching strategies for this priority area?</i></p> <p><b>Actions</b> <i>What steps will the department take to advance this strategy?</i></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b> <i>By when will the department achieve this?</i></p>	<p><b>Performance Measures</b> <i>How will the department know if it achieved its goal? Identify metrics that indicate success. (e.g. staff composition and # of organizations served)</i></p>	<p><b>Implementation Plan</b> <i>What specific steps will the department take to carry out each action? Identify necessary stakeholders to advance this action e.g., internal department divisions/bureaus, other government agencies, community organizations, etc.</i></p>	<p><b>Status</b> <i>Departments will report on the status of each action annually at budget time.</i></p>
<p><b>STRATEGY 1: Improve knowledge and information sharing about CDA job opportunities and affordable transportation to assist communities with limited access to the technology and transportation necessary to pursue job opportunities at the airports</b></p>				
<p>Action 1: Create an "Airport Employment Guide" which will state the jobs performed at the airports, the minimum qualifications needed to pursue those jobs, and the career paths that open for individuals employed in those positions</p>	<p>Q4-2023</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In 2023 CDA will create the Guidebook in at least five languages in addition to English: Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Polish, and Spanish.</li> <li>2. CDA will distribute at least 300 Guidebooks in 2023 to elected officials, community-based organizations, and other interested parties.</li> <li>3. CDA will post the Guidebook on its website in English and the other five languages mentioned above.</li> </ol>	<p>CDA plans to create a Guidebook detailing the classifications of jobs at the airports. The Guidebook will provide pertinent information about the job opportunities for our stakeholders and partners. While creating the Guidebook, the Department will analyze its own job descriptions to ensure there are no unnecessary requirements preventing individuals from applying. The Guidebook will be translated into five different languages for accessibility and available on CDA's website, with hard copies provided on request.</p>	

<p>Action 2: Leverage multiple technology platforms to publicize job opportunities with CDA.</p>	<p>Q2-2023</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A goal of at least 100 hits on My Chi My Future in 2023.</li> <li>2. Creation of a new standalone video in 2023.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CDA will post all airport job opportunities on the My CHI My Future app.</li> <li>2. CDA will create an introduction to Aviation video showcasing current, proud Chicago airport workers to be featured in digital marketing and shown to potential job applicants.</li> <li>3. CDA will use other means of marketing for potential job seekers, including using digital billboards in Chicago.</li> </ol>	
<p>Action 3: Conduct enhanced community outreach.</p>	<p>Q4-2023</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with every aldermen in 2023.</li> <li>2. Connect with at least twenty workforce organizations and local professional networks in 2023.</li> <li>3. Attendance of at least 300 job seekers at the Airport Expos.</li> <li>4. Have at least sixty exhibitors at the Airport Expo.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue building relationships with elected officials, especially aldermen.</li> <li>2. Work with workforce development agencies to reach trained job seekers. We will focus on umbrella organizations like the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership and assist agencies. Also will outreach to organizations targeting underrepresented populations, like the Chinese Mutual Aid Association and SER Central States Chicago.</li> <li>3. Host an Airport Expo for job seekers at the Airports with CDA and concessionaires, airlines, contractors, consultants, and other airport employers.</li> <li>4. Continue to work with existing agencies assisting returning citizens in clearing their records.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>STRATEGY 2: Partner with Mass Transit to Reduce Transportation Barriers</b></p>				
<p>Action 1: Further cultivate relationships with CTA, Metra, and PACE.</p>	<p>Q4-2023</p>	<p>By the end of the year, increase the new of badged employees enrolled in the CTA's discount commuting programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue collaborating with local mass transit such as CTA, Metra, and Pace to improve airport access.</li> <li>2. Continue working with local mass transit to develop additional programs to reduce commuting costs for badged employees.</li> <li>3. Publicize commuting discounts available to badged employees.</li> </ol>	

<b>STRATEGY 3: Engagement with Educational Institutions</b>				
Action 1: Expand partnerships with primary educational institutions, including CPS.	Q4-2024	1. Attend at least 25 workshops, job fairs, and other school promotional events in 2023. 2. Have at least 1,000 attendees at these events.	1. Identify and develop relationships with existing pipeline programs. 2. Continue working with contractors and designers regarding new, technical requirements.	
Action 2 - Increase partnership, development, and engagement with Chicago-based secondary schools, including universities, community colleges, and trade schools.	Q4-2023	Visit each of the seven City Colleges monthly to promote job opportunities at the airports.	Schedule workshops, job fairs, and promotional events at universities, community colleges, and trade schools to expose students to employment opportunities.	

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## 2. CONTRACTING

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### Citywide Desired Result:

All Chicagoans benefit from and can participate in economic business with the City of Chicago.

### Community indicators:

**What data can you examine to understand the status of the citywide desired result?**

- Number of certified vendors(in compliance and exceeding in goals) contracted as prime vendors
- Number of certified vendors (in compliance and exceeding in goals) engaged as subs
- Outreach towards businesses with little to no participation at the airports in terms of contracts

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### Define the Problem

**Identify the problem creating barriers to advancing the citywide result.**

**Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue. Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.**

Lack of access to capital and the ability to obtain bonding has led to a disproportionate representation of minority communities in certain industry areas. Communities with high levels of unemployment, low-income levels, and low commercial activity experience greater barriers to entry due to fundamental issues such as access to capital, developing business plans, securing bonding in construction work, length of time it takes to get paid for City work, and the cost of professional support from lawyers and accountants.

Also, certified firms that have yet to work in the airports face barriers to entry such as the lack of knowledge of opportunities, the significant risks posed by construction on the airfields, the cost of insurance to cover those risks, and the reliance of prime contractors on subcontractors that have already demonstrated their ability to perform at the airport. One result of these barriers is that demand for MBE/WBE services in construction is exceeding supply.

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### Identify Root Cause(s)

**What is contributing to the problem?**

**How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?**

Systemic, structural racism has precluded the sustained, generational development of wealth within minority communities. Minorities have suffered from a lack of access to capital and the ability to obtain bonding precisely because white-owned institutions have refused to extend credit on reasonable terms. Systemic issues in the construction contracting community have favored non-minority vendors, making it difficult for minority-owned firms to be engaged or grow to the point where they are able to perform as prime contractors. As a result, as noted above, the demand for MBE/WBE firms to meet participation goals in construction projects is currently exceeding supply.

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### Define the Opportunity

**Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide desired result.**

**Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue. Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.**

There is an unprecedented amount of state and federal money for work at the airport. This creates an opportunity to bring in new MBEs, WBEs, and DBEs, and increase the amount of work assigned to underrepresented providers.

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<b>Department Strategy</b> <i>What are the department's overarching strategies for this priority area?</i>  <b>Actions</b> <i>What steps will the department take to advance this strategy?</i>	<b>Timeline</b> <i>By when will the department achieve this goal?</i>	<b>Performance Measures</b> <i>How will the department know if it achieved its goal? Identify metrics that indicate success. (e.g. staff composition and # of organizations served)</i>	<b>Implementation Plan</b> <i>What specific steps will the department take to carry out each action? Identify necessary stakeholders to advance this action e.g. internal department divisions/bureaus, other government agencies, community organizations, etc.</i>	<b>Status</b> <i>Departments will report on the status of each action annually at budget time.</i>
<b>Strategy 1 - Increase knowledge of opportunities for M/WBE participation in CDA contracts</b>				
Action 1. CDA will review NAICS code's ethnicity participation to increase outreach to underrepresented ethnicities and firms that have not previously worked at the airports.	Q4-2023	1. Identify at least twenty NAICS codes that are underrepresented and focus outreach efforts in these areas. 2. Partner with at least 20 new M/W/DBEs with CMARs.	1. Work with DPS to identify M/W/DBEs by trades and NAICS codes. 2. CDA will work with the Construction Managers at Risk (CMARS), Diversity Working Group (DWG), and assist agencies to target outreach for those underrepresented trades and NAICS codes. 3. Partner these businesses with existing CMARs, vendors, concessionaires, and other successful entities at the airports.	
<b>Strategy 2 - Reduce barriers to contracting with CDA</b>				
Action 1. Explore ways to reduce the time it takes M/W/DBEs to get paid for work for the City.	Q2-2024	Continue engaging with Procurement on improving the payment process.	CDA will continue working with Procurement to examine how to expedite the payment process.	
Action 2. Mentors will help M/W/DBEs with challenges that arise once they have a contract.	Q3-2023	Create customer satisfaction surveys of MBEs/WBEs/DBEs and launch a pilot program	Mentors will work with their M/W/DBEs to assist them once they have received CDA work.	
Action 3. Make insurance and bonding less onerous on M/W/DBEs.	Q4-2025	Continue investigating ways to reduce insurance and bonding requirements on M/W/DBEs.	CDA will work with Procurement to determine if insurance and bonding requirements for M/W/DBEs can be reduced or the burden shifted to prime contractors.	

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## 3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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### Citywide Desired Result:

All Chicagoans have a meaningful opportunity to influence City of Chicago programs, policies, and initiatives.

### Community indicators:

**What data can you examine to understand the status of the citywide desired result?**

Neighborhoods represented in CDA's workforce

Community engagements and participation by zip codes

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### Define the Problem

**Identify the problem creating barriers to advancing the citywide result.**

**Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue. Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.**

Residents of low-income communities are less likely to hear CDA's messaging about employment opportunities through traditional outlets. This is especially true for neighborhoods further from the airports and neighborhoods with large minority populations.

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### Identify Root Cause(s)

**What is contributing to the problem?**

**How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?**

Residents of low-income communities are less likely to hear CDA's messaging through traditional outlets due to systemic issues that resulted in the Digital Divide and large populations segregated from the rest of the City.

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### Define the Opportunity

**Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide goal.**

**Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue. Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on.**

CDA sees an opportunity to conduct strategic outreach with elected officials, assist agencies, and community organizations to strengthen relationships, resources, and opportunities in communities of color on the West and South sides. CDA will work more closely with leaders in lower-income communities to get the word out when CDA attends programs at schools, churches, and other community venues. We will bring partners, like Hire360 Chicago, that are equipped with the resources necessary to prepare individuals for entering the workforce and provide specific information about the skills needed for entry-level work in the aviation industry. CDA will also identify staff available to respond to inquiries and provide direction to individuals as they seek to enter and proceed through the pipeline we aim to build.

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<b>Strategy 1. Develop Aviation Education Curriculum for school use to increase awareness of careers in the aviation industry and grow interest in working with CDA</b>				
Action 1 Develop an Aviation 101 Curriculum for use in CPS and City Colleges.	Q4 2023	Increase marketing of Aviation 101 so that it is used in more classes at CPS and the City Colleges.	CDA will continue refining Aviation 101 and promoting the curriculum to enhance its partnership with CPS and the City Colleges.	
Action 2 Reduce transportation barriers by utilizing the Aviation Community Van to inform the community about opportunities to work with the airports.	Q4 2022	Increased outreach from community partners requesting the availability of the community van.	CDA has hosted 71 community events, including symposiums, webinars, and learning sessions, to educate the community about opportunities to work with the airports.	
Action 3 Host Expos & Job Fairs to connect small businesses, contractors, and other partners to career opportunities with airports	Q4-2022	Increased hiring will be verified by using data from airport ID badging	CDA hosted and partnered with community organizations connecting them to career opportunities from with small businesses, contractors, airlines, regulators, and cargo carriers.	

Strategy 2. Increase Community Outreach with Chicagoans most impacted by high unemployment, lower incomes, and limited access to information and transportation				
Action 1 - Conduct greater outreach to community-based organizations.	Q4-2023	1. Meet with a minimum of 25 community-based organizations in 2023.	Continue outreaching with community-based organizations such as churches, community-based organizations, and block clubs.	
Action 2 - Increase Interaction with underserved communities.	Q4 2023	The CDA Communications Van will attend at least twelve community events in 2013.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CDA will have meetings with community-based organizations to increase engagement, especially those in the target communities.</li> <li>2. CDA will use the Aviation Communications Van when appropriate.</li> <li>3. CDA will conduct greater outreach to Diversity Group members.</li> </ol>	