
For Information

REPORT TITLE: **Update on the Region of Peel’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee with an update on the Region of Peel’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On March 10, 2020, the Region activated the Regional Emergency Operations Centre to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Its focus has been: Staff Safety, Stakeholder Communications, and Business Continuity. Subsequently, on March 18, 2020, the Region of Peel declared a State of Emergency.
 - Development of the Region’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (D&I Strategy) and supporting activities have been impacted as a result of the response to COVID-19.
 - Inputs to the **Workforce** segment of the D&I Strategy (Workforce Census survey and Employment Systems Review) are temporarily paused.
 - The Region will leverage existing community partnerships to collect community-based input about Regional programs and services to inform the **Community** segment of the Region’s D&I Strategy.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Region of Peel is committed to its vision of a Community for Life, where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive at each stage of their lives. To deliver on this commitment, key strategies must guide the work of the organization, including an organizational Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (D&I Strategy).

On March 5, 2020, the report entitled, “Revised Culture Strategy and Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Development”, was endorsed by the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee and further approved by Regional Council on April 23, 2020.

This report outlined key inputs into the development of the Strategy, as follows:

a) Workforce Census

- Data collection to understand the composition of the workforce and alignment to positions and job levels.
- To be administered by end of Q2 2020

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b) Employment Systems Review

- To identify systemic barriers in the organization's policies and practices, as it relates to recruitment, promotion and pay.
- To be completed by the end of Q4 2020.

2. Updates Regarding the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Supporting Activities as a Result of COVID-19

On March 10, 2020, the Region activated the Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) in accordance with the Region's Emergency Management Program to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, on March 18, 2020 the Region of Peel declared a State of Emergency. REOC's focus has been:

- Staff Safety
- Stakeholder Communications
- Business Continuity

With this COVID-19 focus, several projects and initiatives across the organization have been impacted, including some of the work for the D&I Strategy and supporting activities. At present, the decision to delay the Workforce Census and Employment Systems Review has been made in order to redeploy resources to support essential programs and services within the Region of Peel, such as Long-Term Care.

3. Collection of Community-based Input

Although data collection to inform the Workforce segment of the D&I Strategy has been paused, the opportunity to collect community-based input to inform the Community segment of the D&I strategy has emerged.

By leveraging the work of community tables and existing partnerships, there is an opportunity to collect input about Regional programs and services and explore systemic issues that exist within systems, such as access, gaps in programming or identification of priority under-served populations.

This information, as well as other initiatives, such as Peel Public Health's Health Equity Strategic Priority and the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, will be used to inform the D&I Strategy and identify opportunities to improve diversity, equity and inclusion in Regional programs and services.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

The D&I Strategy work, including supporting activities, such as the Workforce Census and Employment Systems Review, will resume post COVID-19 response and recovery.

Pausing this work during the COVID-19 emergency was required to focus on the response and recovery. Not resuming the work after COVID-19 would result in reputational risk for the Region of Peel and a failure to effectively identify and meet the diverse needs of the Region's workforce and community. The current plan is to recommence the Strategy work in a phased approach during and after the COVID-19 recovery period.

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CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel has committed to its vision of a Community for Life, where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive at each stage of their lives. An organizational Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is a key component to enable the Region to achieve this outcome.

Although the D&I Strategy work has been temporarily paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is anticipated that this work and the supporting activities will resume as part of COVID-19 recovery.

For further information regarding this report, please contact Juliet Jackson, Director, Culture and Inclusion, Ext. 6741, Juliet.jackson@peelregion.ca.

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Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer