



COMMONWEALTH *of* VIRGINIA

Department of General Services

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MEMORANDUM

To: Governor Youngkin and Members of the Virginia General Assembly

From: Banci Tewolde, Director of the Department of General Services

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "BT", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Re: § 2.2-602.B. Annual report submission (2023)

Section 2.2-602.B. requires agencies to establish and maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in coordination with the Governor's Office and report annually. Please find enclosed the Department of General Services (DGS) annual report for calendar year 2023.

DGS is committed in improving its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals into the agency's mission, operations, programs, and infrastructure to enhance equitable opportunities for the populations it serves.



Diversity, Opportunity and Inclusion

2023 Annual Report

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Plan Goal 1: Access & Success

- **Objective 1: Continue to improve hiring processes and increase access to potential applicants from diverse populations.**
 - HR reviewed and streamlined processes related to talent acquisition by clarifying professional and educational qualifications.
 - HR reviewed candidate criminal conviction information to ensure candidates are not automatically rejected due to irrelevant convictions.
- **Objective 2: Continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.**
 - HR trained management on practices and approaches to promote diversity, opportunity and inclusion.

Plan Goal 2: Welcoming & Respectful Culture

- **Objective 1: Persist in creating and maintaining a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.**
 - HR reviewed and redesigned new employee orientation to be more welcoming, appealing, and inviting for a diverse workforce.
 - DGS manages the OnTheSquareVA statewide employee engagement program, which provided dozens of opportunities for state employees to participate in cultural, recreational, educational and social activities with employees from different agencies.
 - DGS completed multiple construction projects around Capitol Square, making it easier for all visitors to experience the seat of government.
 - DGS updated its website with a focus on updating content and enhancing the overall user experience. The agency was recognized by the Virginia IT Agency for its efforts in its Cyber Sweep Competition.
- **Objective 2: Continue to provide an environment where conflicts, concerns and complaints are aired and addressed expeditiously.**
 - HR trained management on approaches to address workplace conflicts and concerns in a timely manner.
 - HR hired an employment attorney to develop training tailored for DGS called Civility in the Workplace, providing guidance on harassment and/or bullying or conduct that is rude, disrespectful, or offensive.
 - DGS conducted eight Civility in the Workplace training sessions, with 514 employees completing the training.

Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

- **Objective 1: Continue to amplify opportunities to advance the goals outlined in this framework.**
 - HR routinely briefed leadership and managers on the importance of being champions of and promoting DOI in the workplace.
 - DGS incorporated DOI principles into its Objectives and Key Results, as well as its Strategic Plan.
 - DGS provided multiple internships, hosted Virginia Management Fellows, and provided a mentorship opportunities.
- **Objective 2: Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness with the Department of Human Resource Management.**
 - HR began review of key human resource and agency policies to increase organizational effectiveness by identifying and eliminating barriers to diversity, opportunity, and inclusion in the workplace.
 - The Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs began looking over DGS' policies to identify opportunities for further operational excellence.
 - As part of the Monthly Management Review process, DGS' multiple business units report accomplishments and employees deserving of recognition, which is shared with leadership.
- **Objective 3: Continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.**
 - HR offered Civility in the Workplace, a customized training on fair and respectful treatment of all employees, to all DGS employees.
 - HR provided managers and supervisors with Windmills disability awareness training.
 - DGS leadership encouraged employees to become active in industry organizations to take advantage of specialized learning opportunities and opportunities to share knowledge.
 - DGS hosted the first in-person Public Procurement Forum since 2019, which was attended by more than 720 state and local government employees and nearly 130 supplier representatives.
 - The DGS Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services worked with Virginia Commonwealth University to establish a master's level concentration in Public Health Laboratory Sciences as part of the Medical Laboratory Sciences curriculum within the School of Allied Health.
 - OnTheSquareVA, managed by DGS, offered numerous educational trainings and other opportunities for all state employees.



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2023 Annual Report

2024 AGENCY DOI GOALS

Plan Goal 1: Access & Success

- **Objective 1:** Improve user experience and digital access of the DGS website, with particular attention on improving accessibility.
- **Objective 2:** Update DGS business forms to ensure access for diverse needs.
- **Objective 3:** Shape the OnTheSquareVA 2024 season around diverse, cultural events for state employees.
- **Objective 4:** Provide a structured training program (Apprenticeship Program) to increase opportunities for a more diverse workforce.

Plan Goal 2: Business Opportunities

- **Objective 1:** Provide opportunities for all vendors to do business with the Commonwealth.
- **Objective 2:** Provide training opportunities for vendors to learn how to maximize their business competitiveness through the use of eVA and other DGS-managed programs.
- **Objective 3:** Take findings from JLL and DGS research and apply those findings to make informed decisions on how to best use DGS-owned space and leased space for state agencies.

Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

- **Objective 1:** Require all DGS employees to complete "Working Together for Virginia" training.
- **Objective 2:** Cultivate meaningful training and mentoring experiences for employees and youth.
- **Objective 3:** Increase training opportunities for supervisors/managers to foster improved communication related to policy, performance management, and work life balance.