

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. S-49-24

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS (ERGs)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Order is to promulgate a mechanism through which Employee Resource Groups may be formed by City employees in the workplace.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are voluntary, employee-initiated groups of the City of Omaha, who share common interests, issues, backgrounds, characteristics or pursuits. The City supports participation in ERGs as a way to cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and equitable work environment. ERGs support the personal growth and professional development of its members and they help develop programs and learning opportunities not only for themselves but for the rest of the workforce.

The ERG program is designed to support employee's forming ERGs that assist the City of Omaha in the following:

- Sustaining a diverse and inclusive workplace
- Strengthening the City's ability to recruit a diverse workforce
- Enhancing employees' sense of belonging and connectedness
- Promoting personal and professional development for all
- Building highly effective teams
- Increasing community involvement
- Create an open forum for exchange of ideas and provide a collective voice around shared issues and concerns

All ERGs must be inclusive, open to all employees, and may not limit participation by race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or other protected classifications. ERGs should promote diversity, openness, understanding and inclusiveness. ERG participation by employees is voluntary. Additionally, ERGs and members participating in the same, must adhere to all City policies and procedures.

ERGs are not intended to create a public forum or platform nor are they intended to establish or promote any political or social agenda. ERGs are not intended to engage in any political activity and should not be used to advance or oppose any political agenda or activity. Additionally, under no circumstances will the ERGs address wages or terms and conditions of employment that are reserved for collective bargaining.

A. Establishing an Employee Resource Group

To receive recognition as a City of Omaha Employee Resource Group, a group of two or more employees must complete the following **“Application for ERG Recognition”**, attached as **Attachment “A”** and submit the same to the Deputy Chief of Staff of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – City of Omaha, Mayor’s Office (hereinafter referred to as DEI Chief of Staff):

- a. Proposed Official Name;
- b. Statement of Purpose that clearly defines the mission of the ERG;
- c. Be signed by any founding members of the proposed ERG with provided email contact information.

ERGs must have two founding participants (second year and subsequent renewals also require a minimum of two regular members).

The **“Application for ERG Recognition”** and any supporting documentation the ERG deems appropriate, must be submitted electronically as indicated on the application.

These materials will be reviewed by the DEI Chief of Staff who will determine whether or not to recognize the ERG. The decision will be submitted in writing to the members submitting the application.

If the ERG is not recognized by the DEI Chief of Staff, the members shall have fifteen (15) calendar days to appeal the decision to the Mayor’s Chief of Staff for review. The Mayor’s Chief of Staff shall review the matter on the information that was previously submitted and decide as to whether to recognize or not recognize the ERG and shall submit the decision in writing to the members within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the appeal. Said decision will be final.

The DEI Chief of Staff reserves the right to suspend or terminate its recognition of an ERG at any time. Should this right be exercised, notice will be provided outlining said suspension or termination to the contact on file for the ERG with a summary of the reasons for the action. In the event of a suspension or termination of a recognized ERG, all meetings and activities of the ERG shall cease. The suspension or termination may be appealed to the Mayor’s Chief of Staff for review and consideration following the same process and timeline outlined immediately above.

This Executive Order does not restrict or limit a group of likeminded employees who have concerns about an issue from gathering and talking about said concerns without going through the outlined process of establishing an ERG.

B. Standards, Meetings and Other Requirements

ERG meetings and activities should generally be held before and after work. If an ERG meeting is held during normal working hours a meeting should generally be scheduled for one (1) hour or less. If ERG meetings are scheduled during the normal work day, efforts should be made, to the extent possible, to schedule ERG meetings during lunch breaks for the majority of the members of those participating in the ERG so the employee may use their regularly scheduled lunch break to attend the same to the extent possible.

If an exempt or non-exempt employee wants to participate in an ERG-sponsored meeting or event during normal work hours, the employee must receive supervisor permission to attend this event during their normal work hours, unless the meeting or event solely falls within an allowed break time. Supervisors should not unreasonably deny approval of the same but do have the discretion to consider operational needs, staffing needs, service delivery needs of the department and other items necessary for their department. Employees may utilize their annual or comp leave balances for attendance at ERG-sponsored meetings or events, with advance notice and approval of their supervisor following all applicable leave requests procedures. Supervisors reserve the right to cancel approval if there is not sufficient coverage in the employee's absence or for any other event that may arise after approval warranting said cancellation.

All employees are limited to a total of two (2) hours of attendance at an ERG meeting or event per calendar month during normal working hours for which they can receive pay. Any attendance outside of the two (2) hours per non-calendar month or outside of normal working hours shall be unpaid.

All participation in ERG groups or activities outside of an employee's regular duty hours shall be solely on the employee's time and under no circumstance shall said employee be compensated for said participation unless approved in advance, in writing, by the Department Director.

If an ERG would like representation at a City-sponsored event and it is approved, representatives can participate on work time with supervisor approval. If an ERG wants to participate in a City-sponsored event, the request should be made in writing at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the event or activity, and shall be made to the DEI Chief of Staff. Said approval or denial by the DEI Chief of Staff shall be final.

Managers and supervisors are strongly encouraged to support employees in ERG participation.

If an ERG is recognized by the City the ERG must select a leadership team that shall include at a minimum a Chair and Secretary. Within forty-five (45) calendar days after an ERG is recognized by the City, it shall submit the names of the above officers to the DEI Chief of Staff and shall keep him or her apprised of any changes in the ERG leadership team should they occur.

Membership in an ERG is voluntary and open to all City employees. Participation in an ERG must not conflict with work responsibilities.

ERG groups and members should ensure that activities and decisions are consistent with this policy and all policies, rules and regulations of the City. ERG members should remain positive and respectful and keep the ERG atmosphere productive.

C. Utilization of City Resources

Recognized ERGs and ERG activities will have appropriate access to meeting rooms to conduct their meetings or events. These meeting rooms should be scheduled/reserved in advance through the appropriate procedures outlined by said department/office.

D. Annual Renewal and Tracking

To continue to receive the City's recognition and support, each ERG is required to submit the following to the DEI Chief of Staff between November 15th and December 31st of each subsequent calendar year.

- a. A narrative outlining past year's activities and dates of meetings held; and
- b. A statement outlining the number of members in the ERG (a minimum of two members is required).

The DEI Chief of Staff will review said reports submitted and determine whether the ERG's recognition will be extended for another calendar year.

The DEI Chief of Staff may utilize survey's or other measurement tools to help gather information and data on the ERGs, its membership, and its progress. The DEI Chief of Staff reserves the right to use the data collected how he or she deems appropriate to measure variables that are determined to be valuable in its analysis.

E. Publicizing Employee Resource Groups

An ERG is responsible for publicizing information about itself. Interested employees will be able to contact the ERG Chair directly. If an ERG will be disbanded due to low participation or lack of facilitator interest, the Chair of the ERG must contact the DEI Chief of Staff with notification of the same.

Prior to publicizing an ERG via a posted/printed bulletin in the workplace, the content of the material must be approved by the DEI Chief of Staff and each Department Director that oversees the bulletin board where the information will be posted. If the bulletin is being posted in a common area at the Civic Center, the same must also be approved by the Building Commission per their procedures.

The DEI Chief of Staff shall keep a current and active list of all recognized ERGs, denied ERGs, and ERGs no longer in existence. The current and active list shall include the contact name, phone number and email of the Chair, Co-Chair (if applicable) and Secretary. The City further commits to providing said list of all current and active ERGs to all new-employees during its new employee orientation class conducted by the Human Resources Department.

F. Limitation of Liability Disclaimer

The ERG, while comprised of employees of the City, are not acting on behalf of or as agents of the City of Omaha. All statements, opinions and views contained within an ERG website, social media accounts, during meetings, or during any event are representative solely of the ERG and its members and do not represent the opinions or positions of the City of Omaha.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – City of Omaha, Mayor’s Office (DEI Chief of Staff) shall be responsible for the administration and oversight of this Executive Order.

BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS MAYOR BY SECTION 3.04 OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF OMAHA, 1956, AS AMENDED, I HEREBY PROCLAIM THIS TO BE THE EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING AND GOVERNING EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS.

WITNESS my hand as Mayor of the City of Omaha this 22 day of Jan., 2024.



Jean Stothert, Mayor
City of Omaha

Attachment “A”

Application for ERG Recognition

A. Proposed Official Name

B. Statement of Purpose that clearly defines the mission of the ERG

(attach additional sheets if necessary)

The below members submit this application and seek recognition for the above identified Employee Resource Group.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO:

Keith Station
Deputy Chief of Staff
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
City of Omaha, Mayor's Office
Keith.Station@CityofOmaha.org