

## FY 2022 - Equity in Budgeting - Three Focus Areas

---

In the Budget Guidance Letter, Chair Kafoury stated, “Our values are the bedrock of who we are and how we serve. Budget proposals should always reflect Multnomah County’s commitment to creating and promoting equity and justice; strengthening our community’s health, safety and stability; and doing so with integrity, creativity and wise stewardship of taxpayer dollars.” Incorporating equity into the budgeting process is a County expectation.

For the FY 2022 budget, there are three key areas where Multnomah County could potentially focus to meet budget expectations. The recommendation is to focus heavily on the first area, with a priority on service-delivery, while ensuring that we are actively working to connect each of these elements into a cohesive strategy.

**Please note:** It is expected that departments engage with their Equity Manager as part of this process.

### Three Key Focus Areas:

1. **Focusing on process and practices at the program level.** This could include using data to assess racial disparities for client populations, meaningful engagement/client feedback for quality improvement, and targeted culturally specific strategies and programmatic design.

As you think through your program offers, you may want to consider questions such as:

- a. What is the program goal (short/long term)?
- b. What does this program do (what is the operations of this program)
- c. What is the population this program is aimed at?
- d. How do people access this program?
- e. Have there been any major changes or are there anticipated changes?
- f. How does this program engage with or specifically reach populations most disparately impacted by the intended goal of the program?
- g. How have clients/consumers/those in our care informed the programmatic design?

You can find additional questions that may help guide your budget process on: [Examples of questions to consider when developing your program offer](#). These questions would then ensure that programs were being accountable in the short

and long term to demographic shifts, disparities data, and client/consumer feedback to improve our program delivery and outcomes for our clients.

2. **Data and outcome measures.** Program offers currently include both output and outcome measures. A focus on outcomes, while helpful for assessing the efficacy of programs, also would require potential significant shifts in capacity for research and evaluation. However, in alignment with a focus on key data indicators, programs could include outcome measures that for example, “increase by a certain percentage the culturally specific contacts within a program” or a “decrease in the disparity of those served by a program” based on specific actions and program shifts. Answering the question of “whether a program is getting the results that we are paying for” is a difficult and complex question to answer. And yet, incredibly important for our clients and community.

As you think through your program offers, you may want to consider questions such as:

- a. What adjustments/additions could be made, to how the program outcomes are measured, to help us make more informed decisions about program effectiveness with inclusion or racial justice?
  - b. What data do you use to analyze racial disparities for your service population?
3. **Department level.** Departmental budgets tell a story of how our organization is working towards addressing specific issues and experiences in our community. Multnomah County has consistently asked departments, in their departmental submittal letters to incorporate and describe the ways that departmental budgets reflect our organizational commitment to advancing equity. This is important, and provides a narrative of how the cumulative effect of programs can advance racial equity and eliminate disparities. Developing program offers (under the framework in #1 above) would allow the connection between program and departmental budgets to be clearer.

As you think through your program offers, you may want to consider questions such as:

- a. What was your department’s decision process? Who was involved? How was equity considered?
- b. Who will bear the burden of a proposed spending reduction or program cut?

We also encourage you to build capacity to support equity in budgeting in your department. You may want to consider:

- a. Providing technical training on budgeting 101 and the program offer process. Please reach out to Christian Elkin, Budget Director for assistance.
- b. Provide technical training on Equity Analysis or Budget Analysis, please reach out to through your Equity Manager or directly to Ben Duncan, ODE for assistance.
- c. Requesting Department Directors and Equity Managers to assist in identifying pilot programs/process/tools for FY 2022 budget.