

CULTURAL COMPETENCY PLAN



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Introduction

The members of the Hillsboro Police Department, as expressed in the Department's Mission Statement, are committed to enhancing the quality of life of all persons in our city. Police management staff and city administrators have embarked on the community policing philosophy as a vehicle for accomplishing this goal. Our efforts in promoting neighborhood wellness and crime fighting endeavors are dependent upon a cohesive relationship between the police and the community they serve. In order to achieve the maximum benefit of this liaison, the police must understand the ethnic diversity of our city, as well as the cultural practices germane to individual racial and religious groups.

It is the goal of the Hillsboro Police Department to partner with the citizens of Hillsboro, acknowledge the diverse cultures within the community and through this understanding develop a valuable partnership that will assist towards improving the livability of our community.

This Cultural Competency Plan represents the collective efforts of Hillsboro Police Department (HPD) employees, inclusive of front line and management levels to define the principles and core values associated with the development of a culturally competent organization. As with the development of any strategic plan, the key lies not so much with the development, but with the implementation of the plan. In this, HPD recognizes that staff from all levels of the organization will have a role to play in making this plan a "living" document.

Special thanks to those staff members that participated in the development of the Plan:

Lila Ashenbrenner, Deputy Chief
Allen Zaugg, Lieutenant
Brian Kennedy, Administrative Services Manager
Bruce Parks, Sergeant- Youth Services
Trudi Coggins – Secretary
Julie Keys- Administrative Assistant
Bertha Martell – Volunteer Coordinator
Christine Navarro – Crime Analyst
Alex Oh – Detective
Adela Rios – Youth Services Officer
Tina Sahnaw – Project Coordinator

Definition

HPD, through the development of its Cultural Competency Plan, defines Cultural and linguistic competence as: *“a set of compatible behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations.”* ‘Culture’ refers to human behaviors that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious or social groups. ‘Competence’ implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and as an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors and needs presented by members of our community.

In order to adequately move toward becoming a culturally competent organization, HPD describes the purpose of the Plan as follows: Provide guidance, context, and a framework for shaping, planning, designing and implementing strategies and actions to ensure fairness to all individuals and deliver high quality, culturally sensitive services to all.

The Planning Process

The Cultural Competency Plan Development Committee began its task on November 17, 2004, with the convening of its first meeting. The committee was lead in discussion by both Lt. Allen Zaugg and Project Coordinator, Tina Sahnou. During this meeting, committee members identified standards that are either currently in progress or will be achievable by the initial plan implementation date of April 30, 2006.

The committee was guided in a direction that would focus on 1) defining cultural competency, 2) describing the purpose of the plan, 3) determining the components of the plan, and 4) concluding developmental activity and moving toward implementation.

Subcommittees were assigned to specific standards and tasked with documenting the department’s progress towards the identified standards as well as identifying what areas may still need to be addressed in order to successfully meet the standard. The larger committee met through December, 2005 to finalize the draft plan, with the end product being given to HPD Management at the beginning of February, 2006.

Current Situation

The City of Hillsboro is the fifth largest city in the State of Oregon, encompasses 22.2 square miles with a population of 79,940¹. As the City continues to grow, a significant transformation in the cultural makeup of the citizenry has occurred as well.

The following is a comparison of current population demographics to department demographics:

| Ethnicity² | % City Population | % HPD Total Staff | % HPD Sworn Staff |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Latino | 18.9% | 10% | 7.4% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 6.8% | 3.5% | 4.6% |
| Black | 1.2% | 0 | 0 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | .8 | .07% | .09% |
| White | 77.5% | 90% | 89% |

The City of Hillsboro continues to experience growth in population. Located at the heart of the “Silicon Forest”, it is projected that the City’s population will reach 150,000 within the next five years. With the recovery of the high tech industry and construction of residential and commercial development, it is anticipated that the City will expand its diversity along with its growth.

In order to appropriately serve a diverse community, HPD must be committed to the ideology and values of cultural competence. The commitment must be seen in developing and maintaining a diverse and skilled work force, providing the necessary training and employee development services that will enhance the department’s relationship with the community. As well, HPD must dedicate itself to recruiting and retaining highly skilled employees throughout the work force.

The Hillsboro Police Department provides services to multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, ethnic communities. Its partners and employees must be better prepared to deliver high quality, appropriate services that are inclusive, respectful, sensitive, and effective, in order to enhance the livability of our community.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the Hillsboro Police Department’s Cultural Competency Plan are based on fundamental attributes set forth in a department document entitled “Our Expectations”. It is the expectation of all department members to treat all people with fairness, courtesy, impartiality, and respect. This document in conjunction with our policies and procedures sets forth the moral and ethical standards that govern our organization. They motivate us to provide competent, appropriate and effective services to those individuals and families and to foster enduring relationships with our community partners.

¹ Certified population statistics obtained from Portland State University Population Research Center

² Ethnicity data based on U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Guiding Principles, cont.

Principle 1: Diversity and cultural competence are valuable assets given high priority by HPD.

Principle 2: The Cultural Competency Plan will be developed and integrated into the organization with representation and participation from all levels and entities of HPD.

Principle 3: Cultural competence will be an integral part of every employee's performance evaluation. These will be evaluated through the core competencies outlined in the Employee Evaluation and Career Development Process sections of 'Quality Service' and 'Respect and Community'.

Principle 4: The Plan will provide meaningful, legitimate opportunities for members of the community to share their concerns and ideas in the development of the department's strategic plan and their input will be used to develop programs and enhance procedures that will contribute to the quality of life within our community.

Principle 5: Every member of HPD will be accountable for the success of the Plan. A critical element in the success of the Plan is to have culturally competent staff members who demonstrate a willingness to work with culturally, ethnically and socially diverse populations.

Principle 6: The Plan will be integrated into all aspects of any future strategic planning process.

Principle 7: In consultation with the Cultural Diversity Committee, HPD management will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Plan.

Facilities

The Hillsboro Police Department has two precincts. The Main Precinct is located within close proximity to mass transit—light rail and bus; the Tanasbourne Precinct is located on the Tri-Met bus line. Both facilities were designed and built to meet ADA standards to include wheelchair access to all areas within the departments and Braille signage in public access areas.

Human Resources

The members of the Hillsboro Police Department, as expressed in the Department's Mission Statement, are committed to enhancing the quality of life of all persons in our city. Police management staff and city administrators have embarked on the community policing philosophy as a vehicle for accomplishing this goal. Our efforts in promoting neighborhood wellness and crime fighting endeavors are dependent upon a cohesive relationship between the police and the community they serve. In order to achieve the maximum benefit of this liaison, the police must understand the ethnic diversity of our city, as well as the cultural practices germane to individual racial and religious groups. This can be best realized by expanding the ethnic, racial, and gender make-up of the members of the Hillsboro Police Department.

This is not a new concept in the hiring practices of the Hillsboro Police Department. Our equal opportunity efforts, as affirmed in the City's equal Employment Opportunity policy statement, have been geared to attract multi-cultural candidates for police service. This is evident in the continual reformation of our workforce.

The biggest budget item in our organization is the amount spent on HPD's human capital. This is in the form of salaries, benefits, training, development and recruitment. By maximizing the contribution of every employee and recognizing that with diversity comes new ways to look at old issues, we can create an atmosphere where all employees, citizens and community partners feel valued, understood and included.

Recruitment/Promotion

The objective of the Hillsboro Police Department is to hire and promote qualified police officer candidates and support staff members while striving to bring diversity to our organization that reflects the community that we serve. This objective will be met by using proactive recruiting to increase the size and diversity of our applicant pool. Personnel that recruit on behalf of the Hillsboro Police Department are expected to be familiar with all applicable laws/regulations, and should exhibit the values of this police agency.

A combination of recruiting methods may be used as current trends dictate. Some of the methods will be, but are not limited to:

- Oregonian Newspaper
- Hillsboro Argus Newspaper
- El Latino Del Hoy Newspaper
- Asian Reporter Newspaper
- Printed Material (Brochures & Mailers)
- City website: www.ci.hillsboro.or.us
- Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS)
- Oregon Employment Office
- Urban League of Portland
- Affirmative Action Office
- Women's Job Bank – YMCA, Portland
- Local colleges and work development sites

Recruitment for female and minority personnel will occur in the following local venues:

- HPD Latino Citizen's academy that provides information about the department and the programs that it offers to the citizens of Hillsboro.
- Neighborhood Watch Meetings conducted in neighborhoods with a high concentration of minorities. These meetings provide the opportunity to discuss safety and livability issues as well as career opportunities and programs offered at HPD.
- Tuesday Market – the Police Department hosts a booth at the Tuesday Market which is conducted every Tuesday evening running June – August.
- Recruitment brochures will be distributed to third places that cater to minority cultures. These will be researched and updated on an annual basis.
- Development of future police officers through the Hillsboro Cadet Program which offers college scholarships to students interested in law enforcement careers.
- Capital Center High School program – This education program is coordinated in partnership with Portland Community College, Washington County High Schools and area businesses. Students attending these classes earn high school and college credits simultaneously.

Advertisements, appearances, and other recruiting methods may be used in areas (locations) that have a high density of specific minority populations in order to reach more minorities in an effort to increase the pool of diverse applicants. In addition, because the military has been successful in recruiting a diverse population and candidates with military background have a higher success rate in the profession of law enforcement, special efforts may be made to recruit from the ranks of military personnel ending their career.

Additional, long-term recruitment opportunities include the Police Department's Cadet Program and the newly established law enforcement program offered by the Capital Center learning program. Hillsboro Police officers are actively involved in these programs and provide instruction and mentorship to high school students interested in a career in law enforcement.

Volunteer/Intern recruitment

The Volunteer Coordinator has established relationships with racial and culturally diverse groups and schools to encourage diverse representation in HPD's volunteer pool and will continue to identify and target such groups for recruitments.

Selection

It is difficult, but nonetheless important to develop rating criteria and interview questions surrounding diversity and cultural competence. Creating an objective scoring criteria and/or consensus judgment of responses to a job application is not an easy task. By enlisting the help of the Cultural Diversity Committee and other contacts, the HR Unit will address this issue and implement the recommended questions throughout the hiring, volunteer recruitment, and interviewing process.

The selection process for sworn and non-sworn personnel shall be administered, scored, evaluated, and interpreted in a uniform manner. Interview panels for all positions consist of a supervisor, FTO/Peer and a citizen or city employee from a different department. HPD values citizen participation during the hiring process to provide a non-law enforcement view of the candidate(s).

Career Development/Training

The Training Division routinely send department-wide notification of training opportunities to all staff which can be taken advantage of with supervisor approval. In addition to job-specific training opportunities, the Training Division seeks out training that will assist employees towards developing cultural awareness on an individual as well as organizational level. Recent training/educational opportunities have included:

- Muslim/Sikh Cultural overview – hosted by Community Relations Service
- Islam and American Life Town hall – Pacific University
- Meetings with Somali-Bantu refugees to discuss American culture, crime prevention and law enforcement activities.
- Participation in Sri Lankan community events in Hillsboro
- Uniting to Understand Racism training sponsored by the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce

Officers and Department employees are encouraged to participate in the numerous youth activities hosted at the department. These have included G.R.E.A.T and 4-H Tech Wizard summer camps conducted at the department and local schools.

The Department is currently working with Portland State University towards developing a cultural competency training component that will be offered to HPD staff as well as other local law enforcement agencies. The main goal for this training will be awareness. Awareness that reactions in certain situations may be caused by fear, frustration, poor communication, etc. The training will share ideas on how to effectively communicate within a multi-cultural, ethnic and societal diverse environment.

Specialized Skills in Cultural or Linguistic Competence

Employees, who are qualified by the department as bi-lingual in English and Spanish or Japanese, or any language spoken by over ten percent (10%) of City residents as documented by the most recent U.S. Census, receive a monthly premium of 5% of their regular base pay. Spanish language classes are provided to all department employees free of charge and are conducted at the police department. Currently 15% of HPD staff are bi-lingual Spanish.

Community

The mission of the Hillsboro Police Department, in partnership with the community, is to provide public safety services which enhance the safety, security, and quality of life of the community. The Hillsboro Police Department acknowledges the important role that the community plays in the success of service delivery to the citizens of Hillsboro. To meet that goal, the department conducts bi-annual strategic planning sessions with members of the community. The Strategic planning process is based on a community oriented philosophy. Input of internal and external customer visioning, based on the analysis of trends and their impacts was used to determine desired responses and strategically planned actions which may be initiated by the Hillsboro Police Department.

This community oriented approach involves top management, middle management, line supervisors, line level personnel and civilian personnel. Their external customer group should involved elected officials, community leaders, media, small/big business, houses of worship, aged, youth, ethnic groups and schools. This working relationship gives HPD an understanding of what we should be aiming for. A weighed set of priorities is formed. A select set of strategies and action plan are outlines. Its outcome improved foresight and the ability to anticipate changes with the organization and community. This methodology gives a clear picture to HPD and the community of financial, human and other resources required.

The most recent meeting was held in June, 2005 during which community members spent some time brainstorming how public safety should respond to changing demographics. The areas that they identified as need to be addressed included:

- Increase cultural/linguistic training
- Recruit for diversity in high schools
- Targeted education (elderly non-English, etc)
- Expand world view
- Expanding workforce
- Hire for diversity
- Public safety education for community
- Creation of third places (gathering places)

- Recruitment of bi-lingual personnel/personnel that are diverse
- Employ successful models from other cultures
- Variety of businesses
- Training for staff to adapt to new demographics
- Bring in volunteers with diverse backgrounds and cultural understanding

The input from this community meeting has been compiled and will be shared with department employees during the next phase of the strategic planning process.

Community Partners

Boys & Girls Club
 Campfire USA
 4-H Tech Wizards
 Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC)
 South Asian Women's Empowerment & Resource Alliance (SAWERA)
 Hillsboro School District
 Portland Community College
 Centro Cultural
 Saturday Academy
 Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce

Outreach to the community

The Hillsboro Police Department consistently seeks opportunities to engage community members in assisting with enhancing the livability of our community. A mobile command station is deployed to neighborhoods throughout the city where citizens can visit with officers and management staff regarding concerns and issues they may have. Equipped with a bank of computers, the command station has also been taken to apartment complexes where computer camps are held for school-age children. With assistance from HPD Police Reserve Specialists, computer labs have also been set up at two section-8 housing facilities as well as the West Precinct. Children are able to visit these labs to complete homework and learn how to safely navigate cyberspace.

Other community outreach programs include: Neighborhood mediation, Neighborhood Watch, HPD Citizens academy, National Night Out, Graffiti removal, Chaplains Program, Senior Safety projects, Child safety programs, and the Domestic Violence Response Team.

Dissemination

- The existence of the Hillsboro Police Department's Cultural Competency Plan will be communicated to employees with instructions on how to obtain a copy of the document.
- The Cultural Competency Plan will be provided to all new Police Department Employees during their orientation process.

- The Cultural Competency Plan will be discussed periodically during general staff meetings to seek input for outreach opportunities and program implementation ideas.
- Reading and video materials related to cultural and societal issues will be kept in the department's training library. Department employees will be encouraged to read and review these materials.

Future Directions

The Cultural Competency Plan described in this document has been developed with the knowledge that there will be a continual need for regular updates and revisions to the plans and strategies included here. It will be important for the members of the Committee who assembled this Plan to come together periodically (e.g., once a year or every other year) to re-visit the Plan and include any new ideas needed or eliminate any which have been completed. As stated earlier, this document is a "living and ever-changing document." It will never truly be final or finished.