

# Equity and Empowerment Lens

(Multnomah County, Oregon)

Full Version: <https://multco.us/file/31833/download>

The Equity and Empowerment Lens is a 120-page document that was developed by the Multnomah County (Oregon) Health Department in 2012. Its purpose is to increase the capacity of organizations to identify and eliminate the root causes of racial and ethnic inequities. To achieve the end of collective empowerment and equity, “we must constantly assess our capacity to do equity work and intentionally create the supportive, reflective environments within which to do this work well.” The Lens emerges from a deep understanding of the intersections between people, place, processes, and power. It contains valuable tools to initiate the process of critical inquiry into equity.

The following are just a few of the questions contained in the Lens.

- Who does the policy/decision/practice/program intend to serve?
  - Who is it *actually* serving?
- What are the *benefits and burdens* that communities experience with the policy/decision/practice/program?
- How is the impacted community included in the planning, decision-making and evaluation?
- How does the policy/decision/practice/program build community capacity and power in communities most impacted by inequities?
- How does the policy/decision/practice/program explicitly acknowledge the value of equity and racial justice to the organization?
- How does the policy/decision/practice/program perpetuate or help dismantle historical, legal, or political oppressions set in the past?