



CITY OF DALLAS

**BUDGETING FOR
EQUITY**

OFFICE OF EQUITY

In partnership with the Office of Budget

2020-21 | 2021-22

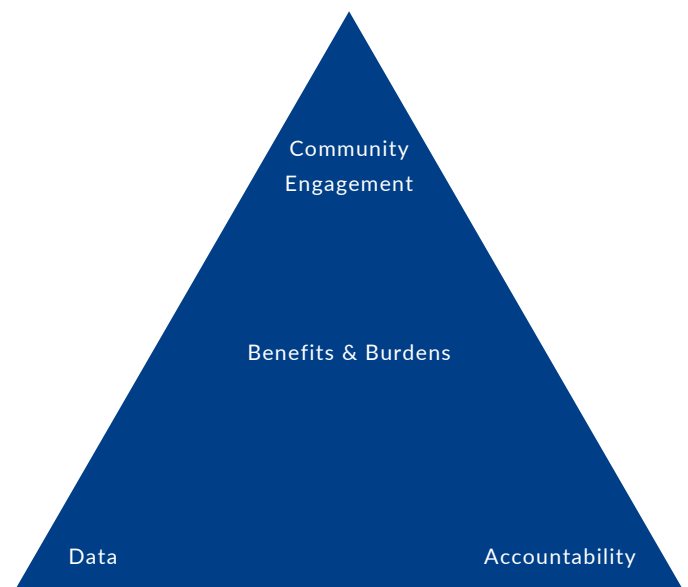
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ADVANCING EQUITY

The City of Dallas' Budgeting for Equity tool is a set of questions shaped to support departments in developing equity lenses and understandings of equity frameworks. This professional development should allow departments to habitually establish policies, plans, and procedures that further equity, particularly for people of color and low-income neighborhoods. The Tool also is designed to assess and document department efforts to advance equity, providing a baseline of data to evaluate over time.

Equity is one of the four core values of service at the City of Dallas (empathy, excellence and ethics are the others). Equity means each person has the resources and services to thrive, such that racial and socioeconomic disparities are eliminated and outcomes improve for all. Different from equality, equity accounts for the unique identities, circumstances, and histories of different people as well as different experiences with institutions and systems. Racial equity—which data indicate is particularly critical in Dallas and the U.S.—occurs when people are thriving and race cannot be used to predict outcomes.



Analyzing data, engaging community and being accountable for equity are the cornerstones—not necessarily sequential—for government to understand the benefits and burdens of policy and service decisions, and to adjust as necessary to further equity.

The Office of Equity, in partnership with the Office of Budget, developed the FY 2020-21 Budgeting for Equity Tool with the goal of supporting departments in advancing equity for City government. The tool will be scored, and scores will be provided to the City Manager's Office. The Office of Equity provides professional development, education and technical assistance, analyzes policies and procedures, and builds robust community collaborations.

THE EQUITY TOOL

Strategy 1: Benefits and burdens from budget implementation

Racial and socioeconomic inequities are not random or natural. Historical governmental policies have led to the intertwined racial and socioeconomic inequities that exist today. Contemporary policies may worsen or sustain inequities unintentionally; therefore, we must purposely use equity tools and frameworks to examine the benefits or burdens or potential benefits or burdens of our policies. Given existing inequities, serving people who have different circumstances and different histories equally is often inequitable. Instead, we must focus on the unique needs of all those we serve to make one cohesive Dallas better for all. (Strategy 1 questions are on page 8.)

Strategy Tip: The Status Quo

In considering the Benefits and Burdens strategy, one should understand that a policy or service decision to act or not act may benefit or burden populations because of existing disparities or inequities, as opposed to simply due to the action or inaction itself.



Strategy 2: Understanding the data—qualitative and quantitative insights

Departments advancing equity use qualitative and quantitative data to inform the ways they engage and involve those they serve, instead of making assumptions about those populations and conditions they face. Equitable departments see the value in qualitative data, including narratives, quotes, and art.

Disaggregated data are essential to furthering equity, because they highlight the unique circumstances and experiences of various populations, particularly communities

of color and other historically marginalized people. Disaggregated data can reveal not just the needs and issues of populations, but also their strengths, assets and priorities.

Disaggregation of data allows departments to focus on race and socioeconomic—often the greatest drivers of inequity—while also considering identity intersections with gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, or ability. Ultimately, disaggregated qualitative and quantitative data can help departments understand the root causes of disparities, key to equitably reshaping policies and procedures. (Strategy 2 questions are on page 9.)

Data categories might include:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Household income
- Gender identification
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability status
- Immigrant or refugee status
- Primary language
- Zip code
- Council district

The "5 Whys" is a technique for determining cause and effect that involves stating the problem, then repeatedly asking "Why?" Each answer becomes the basis of the next question until the root cause is identified



Strategy 3: Community engagement, relationship building and communication

Equitable government-community interaction requires that government develop relationships with communities of color and neighborhoods with limited socioeconomic resources to help understand their unique needs. Historically, government marginalized many of these communities in ways that led to lingering distrust; therefore, the onus is on the government to design methods of engagement that heal and repair community-government relations. The most equitable relationships are built on collaborating and deciding together with the least-resourced communities on plans, policies and services, which requires language access, interpretive services and resources to ensure involvement of people who are differently abled. Departments must recognize there are different levels of community engagement, the most inclusive of which is shared decision-making. (Strategy 3 questions are on page 10.)

Strategy 4: Accountable for equity

Being accountable for equity requires refocusing the department's evaluation lens to assess any unintended racial or socioeconomic consequences, as well as benefits and burdens. Being accountable for equity means being responsive to the needs and concerns of those most impacted by the issues on which the department is working, particularly communities of color, low-income neighborhoods and others who have been historically underrepresented in the civic process. Being accountable for equity also means departments self-evaluate with qualitative data and narratives from communities of color and low-income neighborhoods. A department cannot advance equity in a sustained way without accountability for equity. (Strategy 4 questions are on page 11.)

TOOL INSTRUCTIONS

1. All departments should submit only one set of responses for the Budgeting for Equity Tool. The Tool responses should reflect the department's overall view of its budget implementation decisions.

2. Departments should gather demographic information that will support them in responding to the Budgeting for Equity Tool questions. In addition to the department's data, the resources below may be useful:

- Policy Map, dallas.policymap.org
- Equity Indicators, bit.ly/dallasequityindicators
- U.S. Census Bureau, factfinder.census.gov

- February: First draft of Budgeting for Equity Tool responses due
- February/March: Office of Equity will provide technical assistance to departments for Tool revisions
- March 31: Final draft of Budgeting for Equity Tool responses due

Strategy 1: Benefits and burdens from budget implementation

1. How will implementation of your adopted FY 2019-20 budget positively or negatively impact communities of color and low-income neighborhoods?

2. In what ways do you anticipate implementation of your planned FY 2020-21 budget positively or negatively impacting communities of color and low-income neighborhoods differently than the impacts of implementation from your adopted FY 2019-20 budget?

Strategy 2: Understanding the data—qualitative and quantitative insights

3. Describe any racial or socioeconomic disparities related to your area of service. Provide details based on internal or external data.

4. Based on your planned FY 2020-21 budget, describe the ways your department used racial and socioeconomic data to prioritize and develop criteria for allocations of financial, human, and other resources. What qualitative data did your department use in this regard?

5. What additional or missing data regarding racial and socioeconomic inequities or disparities would enhance your ability to prioritize and develop criteria for resource allocations in Question 4?

Strategy 3: Community engagement, relationship building and communication

6. How will your planned FY 2020-21 budget enhance your department's capacity to engage or build relationships with communities of color and low-income neighborhoods when compared to your adopted FY 2019-20 budget?

7. How has your department enabled and promoted access to department staff and information on plans, policies, procedures and programs (e.g. language access, interpretive access, and cognitive or physical access for differently abled people)?

8. In what ways have you involved internal and external stakeholders in your department's budget development process, including marginalized communities of color?

Strategy 4: Accountable for equity

9. Describe how your department plans to evaluate the effectiveness of department efforts to advance racial and socioeconomic equity during FY 2020-21? Do these evaluation plans differ from other evaluation plans of your department? If so, how?

10. In what ways does your department involve communities of color and low-income neighborhoods in department evaluation of policies, programs and processes?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Please refer to the definitions below when reflecting on and responding to the Budgeting for Equity Tool questions.

Diversity: A representation of many different types of individuals across dimensions including but not limited to race, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.

Disparities: A measure that indicates a difference between specific groups or populations; the difference is usually unfair.

Communities/Persons of Color: A term that is often used in the United States to refer to people who do not identify as white.

Ethnicity: A term that refers to an individual's cultural attributes including but not limited to nationality, language and ancestry.

Equity: Each person has the resources and services necessary to thrive in each person's own unique identities, circumstances and histories; reducing disparities while improving outcomes for all.

Equity Lens/Framework: A way of analyzing policies, practices, and procedures by assessing disparities as well as the needs and assets of underserved populations.

Implicit Bias: Stereotypes or attitudes towards marginalized populations that unconsciously impact one's understanding, actions or decisions. Acting without implicit bias does not equate to acting equitably.

Inclusion: The intentional act of welcoming various populations and creating an environment that allows marginalized individuals to feel included.

Institutional/Systemic/Structural Racism: Policies, practices and procedures that have been intentionally or unintentionally put into place that work better for white people than for communities of color.

Intersectionality: A way of understanding race, gender, class, sexual orientation, nationality and other identities and circumstances as combining to socially advantage and disadvantage various individuals differently.

Marginalized: A reference to a person or group who have been systemically isolated from resources necessary to thrive, often by means of segregation, separation, and lack of access.

Privilege: A systemic valuing, favoring or enhancing that only certain populations benefit from based on the group of which they are a part.

Race: A social construct that categorizes individuals based on their physical characteristics, particularly skin color and hair texture.

Racial Equity: A situation that is achieved when people are thriving and race no longer statistically dictates, determines or predicts one's social outcomes or ability to thrive.

Underserved: A reference to people or places who have historically or contemporarily not received equitable resources in health, education, justice, or socioeconomic systems.
