

Monterey County 2022 CSAC Challenge Award Entry
Issue Area: Government Finance, Administration and Technology
Population: Suburban County Category

Monterey County – Online Self-Paced Mandated Civil Rights Training

OVERVIEW: As a result of COVID-19 protocols, we developed an online version of the Civil Rights Training to support the County’s diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

CHALLENGE: The County of Monterey requires all employees to complete Civil Rights Training every two years to advance conversations around bias and racial equity. With the onset of the pandemic and remote work, becoming the new norm in many organizations, the Civil Rights Office saw an increase in social justice issues yet a decrease in employee participation and engagement in the mandated Civil Rights Training. This challenged the Civil Rights Office to reimagine the delivery of their mandated in-person Civil Rights Training to engage participation while also advancing grassroots equity efforts.

SOLUTION: In 2022, the Civil Rights Office expanded its live two-hour Civil Rights Training to include a self-paced online version. The self-paced online course consists of four sections that cover topics around overcoming bias, working towards equity at the local level, building cultural awareness, and the role of government employees in promoting and sustaining equitable services with members of the public. Participants are also allowed to take the course at their own pace and access training materials from anywhere and at any time of the day. This new training can accommodate all County employees, including those that do not work traditional office hours.

INNOVATION: The self-paced online Civil Rights Training was purposely designed to give participants the impression they are reading an article on a website instead of taking a mandatory training. Participants are able to learn about common consequences of unconscious bias, how culture awareness empowers collaborative equity efforts, and the County’s obligation to abide by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1965. The training is highly interactive and includes videos and audio recordings as content. The training also includes activities and knowledge checks under each section to test participants’ attention to the training and understanding of the material.

RESULTS: After testing the content, the Civil Rights Office plans to implement the first wave of the self-paced version of Civil Rights training to non-management employees in mid-August, and to managers and supervisors the coming month. Although the training has yet to launch county-wide, the Civil Rights Office has conducted focus groups in the organization to gauge how the content is received. Responses from the diverse focus groups were submitted anonymously to assess what, if any, updates were needed before launching County-wide. The focus groups rated the content with over 87% satisfaction. As the organization has picked up on the innovative upcoming training modality, other local agencies have expressed interest in purchasing the training to use in their own organization.

REPLICABILITY: The self-paced Civil Rights Training is customizable to target the needs of any organization. The training could be accessible via an organization's Learning Management System (LMS) or website. The Civil Rights Office is currently in talks to customize and provide the training to a local law enforcement agency.

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OPTIONAL SUBMISSION:

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