DIVERSITY FOR INTERPRETERS

... If there are laws, why do we need to pay attention?

Julia Ortiz, MS
INTRODUCTIONS

Do tell...

- Name
- Language(s)
- Are you a staff or an independent interpreter
- Have you ever attended diversity training before?
TODAY’S OBJECTIVES

- Increase your awareness of the need for and value of Diversity within your agency
- To provide a broad overview of the legal basis of existing laws
- To define and distinguish between Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA), and Diversity
WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN TO YOU?
DEFINING: DIVERSITY

- Diversity - A voluntary effort focused on achieving and sustaining an inclusive environment where all are valued
- Diversity - represents an approach to building equitable relationships among all people and to reflect the population demographics
THE GOAL OF PROMOTING DIVERSITY

- To establish acceptance of the Difference ≠ Difference paradigm
- Help individuals gain self-awareness of their views on difference(s)
- To overcome the “conspiracy of silence” that hinders people’s understanding of perceived differences
What is Diversity about?
DIVERSITY

AND

THE LAWS THAT GOVERN IT
THE LAWS

- MA G.L. 151B
- H.3810
- Executive Order 526
MASSACHUSETTS NEW TRANSGENDER EQUAL RIGHTS LAW – H.3810

- Adds “gender identity” to Massachusetts existing non-discrimination laws for:
  - Employment
  - Housing
  - Public K-12 education
  - Credit and lending

- Adds “gender identity” to Massachusetts hate crimes law

The Act does not expressly prohibit discrimination based on gender identity in public accommodations; however, there is a house bill that was recently filed to address this. The Equal Access Bill would add “gender identity” to existing Massachusetts civil rights law for public accommodation.
DEFINITIONS

- Gender Identity: is the individual’s internal and innate sense of being male, female, both or neither; how a person identifies him/herself
- Gender Expression: is the way an individual expresses his or her gender identity, by appearance (clothes, hairstyle, jewelry) or behavior (how a person interacts and communicates with others through mannerisms, voice, comportment) and may or may not conform to social stereotypes associated with a particular gender
- On February 17, 2011 Governor Deval Patrick signed Ex. Order 526
On February 17, 2011 Governor Deval Patrick signed Ex. Order 526

Prohibits discrimination based on *gender identity or expression* in state employment

The Executive Order applies to all state agencies in the Executive Branch including all current and future boards, commissions, agencies, departments, divisions, councils, bureaus, and offices

Additionally this order prohibits discrimination in all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted by the state
EXECUTIVE ORDER #526

PROTECTED CATEGORIES

- Age (40 and over)
- Ancestry
- Color
- Criminal Records (applicants only)
- Disability
- Gender
- Genetics
- National Origin
- Race
- Religion
- Retaliation
- Military Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Transgender (7/12)
THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES:

- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
- Affirmative Action (AA)
- Diversity
### The Major Differences Between Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA), and Diversity

Adapted from workforce America. Managing employees Diversity, by M. Loden and J.B. Rosener

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EEO / AA</th>
<th>Diversity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Initiated</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally Driven</td>
<td>Productivity Driven (Agency Driven)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Focused</td>
<td>Opportunity Focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes Assimilation</td>
<td>Assumes Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally Focused</td>
<td>Internally and Externally Focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactive</td>
<td>Proactive</td>
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</tbody>
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THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO), AFFIRMATIVE ACTION (AA), AND DIVERSITY, CONT.

- **Employment Opportunity (EEO)**
  - A law that requires employment conditions to be non-discriminatory based on protected categories
    - Governed by MA General Law Chapter 151B,
    - in addition to other federal laws,
    - of which the MA law is considerably strictest
  - A permanent obligation for every employer with more than six (6) employees
The major differences between Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA), and Diversity, cont.

- **Affirmative Action (AA)**
  - Is by nature, a temporary remedy
  - It’s a set of laws, regulations and policies that seek to redress past discrimination by ensuring equal opportunity
  - Although Affirmative Action is a legal obligation it is a voluntary action and gives preferences to individuals based on protected characteristics
The major differences between Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action (AA), and Diversity, cont.

- **Diversity**
  - Is neither a permanent obligation nor a temporary remedy.
  - A voluntary effort for employers to achieve and sustain an inclusive work environment where all employees are valued.
  - Represents an approach to building equitable relationships among all people and to reflect the population demographics.
  - Depending on the population demographics, it is constantly taking on different shapes and sizes.
BENEFITS OF BEING DIVERSE

“new solutions are available only when new people are in the conversation.”

- Margaret Wheatley
THE BALL IS IN YOUR COURT!

What steps will you take now:

- Personal steps
- Interpersonal steps
- Organizational steps
Wow!
Please complete your end of workshop evaluation!
REFERENCES


- Diversity curriculum (2014, February 13), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Customer Service Module 9-handout; Center for Youth and Communities. Heller School, Brandeis University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

