

# OHPB Health Equity Committee Annual Digest 2023

## Committee Name: Health Equity Committee

Website: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/EI/Pages/Health-Equity-Committee.aspx>

Name(s) of Oregon Health Authority Lead staff: Maria Elena Castro, Alex Freedman

Name(s) of Chairs: Jorge Ramirez Garcia (2023 Co-chair), Katie Cox (2024 Co-chair), Bryon Lambert (2024 Co-chair)

Oregon Health Policy Board Liaison: Sandy Sampson

Number of members: 14 + 1 Tribal representative

Number of vacant seats: 2

## Summary of 2023 Progress, Updates and Changes

After completing its **charter update** in 2022, HEC turned to **developing its strategic priorities** based on the charter's updated focus areas in 2023. With the help of a consultant and the focused time of a strategic workgroup made up of HEC members and OHA staff, HEC was able to develop the attached **Strategic Priorities 4-Pager document**. This document incorporates the updated charter's mission, vision, values, and focus areas, and then outlines 1-3 goals under each strategic priority area (policy, feedback, and collaboration). OHA committee lead staff have reviewed and received approval of this document with OHA leadership, including Leann Johnson (director of Equity and Inclusion Division) and Dave Baden (interim OHA Director). Currently, OHA staff are preparing to work with a consultant to develop an implementation workplan for the strategic priorities.

HEC had its **annual hybrid retreat** in November, where it focused on relationship-building amongst HEC members and Equity & Inclusion staff, mapping of the OHPB and OHA environment, and translating the strategic priorities outlined in the Strategic Priorities 4-pager document into a **2024 workplan**. The retreat also included a presentation by representatives of Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) on their Community Needs Assessment. The committee also approved its **two letters to OHPB and OHA**: one representing **community-driven policy recommendations for Gender Affirming Care** and one in **support of the Ombuds program**, requesting action on Ombuds report findings and overall connection of the program to health equity. HEC finished its 2024 recruitment round and had its new slate with 5 new members approved by the Board; new members were welcomed as guests at the December 2024 HEC meeting. The HEC is planning to open recruitment in Spring 2024 to increase important areas of representation, including adding more OHP members to the one OHP member currently on HEC.

## Upcoming committee work

Most if not all HEC strategic goals relate to Oregon Health Policy Board's proposed "advance health equity" priority. Some of the 2024 strategic goals include:

1. *Work with E&I division to develop, adopt, and implement an anti-racism approach and practices within OHA*

2. *Compile and/or create an equity toolkit for widespread use at OHA composed of existing or newly developed tools*
3. *Advocate for and support the adoption of a community engagement approach across OHA*
4. *Develop and pilot a specific process with clear expectations for HEC to provide policy consultation to OHA*
5. *Collaborate with other OHPB Committees to embed equity in their work*
6. *Clarify and document relationships between OHPB, OHPB committees, and OHA related to communication flows, decision-making, and accountability*
7. *Bring community-driven health equity policy recommendations to the attention of OHPB and OHA*
8. *Integrate Tribal perspective on Health Equity into strategic planning and goals*

### **Committee changes**

Based on community and committee member feedback, HEC is exploring ways to make committee meetings more equitable and accessible for community members to participate and advocate for their needs. These meeting structure changes will be discussed at the annual HEC retreat, and may include suggestions to change how HEC meetings are publicized, how presenters are recruited and their discussion focused on equity impact, and how material is linked to HEC strategic priorities.

### **Strategic Workplan**

HEC is in the process of adapting a public version of its workplan, which will be available on its website with SMARTIE-formatted goals, key milestones, and timelines.

### **Advocacy Letter Writing**

HEC members and staff leads are currently drafting two advocacy letters on the following topics:

- Uplifting the findings of the 2022 Ombuds report and requesting OHA support the Ombuds work in general
- Calling OHPB's and OHA's attention to Transgender Health Equity issues affecting the LGBTQIA2S+ community in Oregon, and requesting support for a community engagement and policy response.

### **Upcoming recruitment opportunities**

HEC will have another round of recruitment either in Spring 2024 or Fall 2024 to fill vacant seats, filling specific gaps in representation including OHP consumers and male-identifying individuals.

### **2024 meeting dates:**

HEC Meetings take place on the **Second Thursday of each month, 12:00pm – 2:00pm**. All public meetings are fully remote or hybrid format with a remote joining option. Meeting links, materials, and past meeting recordings are provided on the [HEC website](#).

### **2024 meeting dates:**

*Thursday, January 14, 2024*

*Thursday, February 8, 2024*

*Thursday, March 12, 2024*

*Thursday, April 11, 2024*

*Thursday, May 9, 2024*

*Thursday, June 13, 2024*

*Thursday, July 11, 2024 - Retrospective meeting*

*Thursday, August 8, 2024*

*Thursday, September 12, 2024*

*Thursday, October 10, 2024*

*Friday, November 15, 2024 - HEC Annual Retreat*

*Thursday, December 12, 2024*