



The Department of Children and Families' Office of Diversity, Equity, and Belonging, was established in March 2021 to advance policies and approaches that prioritize a work culture respectful of the unique needs, perspectives, and potential of every team member.

The office supports the department's efforts to:

- Become an equitable and fair system by addressing racial bias, disproportionality, disparities, and inequities
- Address diversity and inclusion for African Americans, people of color, women, people with disabilities and individuals who identify as LGBTQ+
- Create a culture of belonging for all people inside and outside of the organization, that respects and embraces differences, treats everyone equitably and promotes psychological safety.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Belonging has responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a DEB program structure
- Developing and advancing specific policies and practices that reduce disparities in outcomes for children and families that are the result of bias based on race, ability, gender, and gender expression, and/or sexual orientation
- Identifying and analyzing the causes of disproportionality in New Jersey's child welfare system in recommendations to the Commissioner that will continuously and aggressively eliminate disparities in DCF policies and practices for children and families of color
- Providing strategic DEB leadership on policies, best practices and change management to accelerate a climate of equity and inclusiveness
- Partnering with division leaders in setting goals for DCF programs to reduce the over-representation of children of color
- Developing and implementing initiatives that promote equitable outcomes for children and families of color
- Building the capacity of staff at all levels to identify and respond effectively to implicit bias, prejudice, institutional racism, and structural racism
- Promoting culturally relevant policy and practice with a focus on equitable results for children and families served within DCF and among its contracted agencies
- Developing methodology to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the Department's programs and initiatives
- Building out processes and procedures that scale and measure the impact of DEB and agency culture
- Ensuring the Department's vision that all New Jersey residents are safe, healthy, and connected is inclusive by proactively applying DEB practices and policies that will lead to equitable services for all