

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts at MassDOT

April 26, 2021

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## Purpose

- Recent events have laid bare systemic racial injustices that pervade our communities and country
- At MassDOT, we need to confront conscious and unconscious bias and how they have reinforced systemic racism
- Meaningful and sustainable change involves working together with employees to elevate the concerns of members of groups that have historically faced discrimination based on protected class, and to rebuild new systems that support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

## Approach

- Engage with employees
- Develop new programs and changes to practices, share with employees, and incorporate feedback
- Build ongoing governance to make these efforts sustainable
- Communicate periodic updates to employees

# Governance to Make DEI Efforts more Sustainable

## DEI Executive Council

Purpose: To implement policies and programs approved by the Secretary, and to report back to the Secretary on status/impact of policies and programs related to MassDOT's agenda to make our workplaces more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Co-Chairs: Sec. of Transportation, Chief Diversity Officer

### Senior Manager Members:

- HR Director
- General Counsel
- HWY Administrator
- Registrar (RMV)
- Secretary's Office
- DEI Council Representative(s)

## DEI Employee Advisory Council

Purpose: To advise, propose and provide feedback on new policies and programs and other ideas MassDOT is developing to make our workplaces more diverse, equitable and inclusive (DEI). To communicate efforts and receive feedback from fellow employees on success of initiatives. Assist in the sustainment and evolution of MassDOT's DEI efforts by holding MassDOT leadership accountable for the success of these initiatives and recommend improvements.

Chair: Julian Tynes ( Assisted by Mary Joyce)

### Membership:

- ERG Representatives
- Volunteers
- COMTO and WTS reps
- (Unions offered seat on Council and declined at this time.)

# Implemented and Ongoing Efforts

Changes to naming “acting” positions and postings

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Establishment of Mentorship Pilot program at RMV

Transition of Anti-Discrimination and EEO related trainings to allow virtual interactive training sessions

Ongoing Series of Communications

Adding a question regarding diversity to interviews



# Appointments and Acting Positions

- **What we heard:** MassDOT use of acting positions and appointments have circumvented traditional posting processes. This leaves employees unclear on how to advance through the organization and discouraged by the lack of transparency in decision making.
- **What we have done:** MassDOT has worked with the Human Resources Division (HRD) to develop clear, consistent guidelines for the use of “Acting Positions” and Appointments to Management positions.
- Acting positions are limited in time to a total of six months, must be justified in writing and have approval of position justification prior to employee being placed in position.
- Managerial Appointments are limited to direct reports to the Secretary.
- Procedures regarding Acting positions and Appointments in bargaining unit positions are determined by the Collective Bargaining Agreement {CBA} germane to the title in question
- **Goal of Change:** A clear, transparent process that allows employees to be aware of and express interest in opportunities. Expand the talent pool that departments can draw upon when considering promotional opportunities.

# Employee Resource Groups

- ERGs are affiliated subgroup of employees who share distinctive qualities, interests or goals. Groups are workforce lead and workplace focused.
- MassDOT and the MBTA have launch/relaunched 5 ERGs: Accessibility, Multicultural, PRIDE, Womens, and Veterans.

## Steps Taken

- MassDOT sent “pulse” survey in July to all employees (see appendix for highlights) and invited employees to volunteer their interest
- Recruited Executive Sponsors from MassDOT and MBTA leadership. ODCR assistance in the development of updating charters. Executive sponsors allow members access to Leadership and to Decision Makers within MassDOT and MBTA
- ODCR continues to support the expansion of ERGs and their efforts to organize, focus, and gain additional competency
- 120 employees have signed up as of 04/10 (55% DOT; 45% MBTA)
- All groups are now scheduled for reoccurring meeting

# Mentorship Program Pilot



# Mentorship Program Pilot

## Milestones

1. HR developed a draft plan July 2021
2. Draft shared with select employees for feedback
3. MassDOT wide surveys done to determine level of employee interest, and expectations.
4. Pilot program launched in RMV October 2020 with application process, trainings and other details
5. Prospective Mentors and Mentees interviewed. Mentors receive training
6. Mentor and Mentees matched. Compatibility determined through interview process.
7. 63 pairs of Mentors/Proteges enrolled and active in the program.

The organizational-wide mentorship program will be rolled out June 2021.

# Anti-discrimination and EEO Related Trainings

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ODCR has been in the process of transitioning from a strictly in-person, in-class training module to a virtual training module that retains the interactive nature of a classroom experience.

This new initiative will allow ODCR to have in-person, remote, and hybrid trainings. ODCR is also taking to opportunity to update content to ensure training are engaging and high quality across platforms and learning environments

# Anti-discrimination and EEO Related Trainings

1) Anti-Discrimination Harassment Policy Training (ADHP)

2) ADHP For Supervisors and Managers

3) American with Disabilities Acts/Disability Awareness Training (For Managers and Supervisors)

4) EEO Policy and Internal Complaint Procedures

5) Legal Interviewing for Managers and Supervisors

# Ongoing Series of Communications and Engagement Efforts



Quarterly “Town Hall” meetings hosted by Secretary



Annual series of DEI listening sessions hosted by Secretary and Chief Diversity Officer



Monthly Diversity Celebrations and Lunch and Learns hosted by Partners in Transportation and



Development of DEI Calendar with all DEI related events. (ERG meetings and events, DEI Employee and Exec. Council meetings, Diversity Celebrations and Lunch and Learn events, etc.)

# Ongoing Initiatives

- **Executive Leadership training**

RFR issued-18 responses. Top 5 currently being evaluated to determine vendor

- **Inclusive Leadership Training**

Training curriculum for all Managers and Supervisors. RFR currently in development

- **Leverage ACES and EPRS**

DEI related goals, initiatives as part of overall performance evaluations. Review of effectiveness after 1st year of inclusion in performance evaluations.

- **Improvement and expansion of trainings available at MassDOT Learning Hub**

(E.g. Diversity awareness, How investigations are conducted, the roles of ODCR, HR, and others)

- **Improvements to recruiting, hiring, retention and promotion practices.**

Targeted recruitment. Better use of exit interviews and data to spot troubling trends

# THANK YOU!

- Employees, Managers, and Senior Leaders from every division and MassDOT workplaces across the Commonwealth have come together to taking on and sustain our focus on DEI action and improvement DEI.
- Thank you to those participating in councils, project and program working groups, ERGs, and RFP reviews, and have taken on new work and new responsibilities.
- Thank you to those who took the time to participate in Town Hall Meetings, listening sessions, other opportunities to share experiences and engage in uncomfortable conversations.
- Thank you to the small but mighty cross departmental team of managers meeting each week and working everyday to advance this work.



## Appendix: Data

# Diversity Dashboard

[www.mass.gov/info-details/state-employee-diversity-dashboard](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/state-employee-diversity-dashboard)



Secretariat Name

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF T...

Department Name

All

Job Category

All

Full-Time/Part-Time

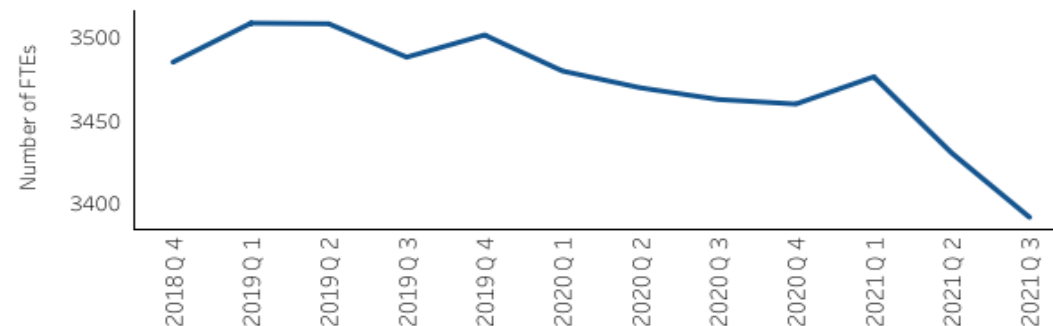
All

Fiscal Quarter

2021 Q 3

## What is state employment over time?

The number of selected full-time equivalent (FTE) employees has averaged 3,472.1 over the last 12 fiscal quarters, with 3,485.4 in 2018 Q 4 and 3,391.9 in 2021 Q 3.



## What is our employee count?

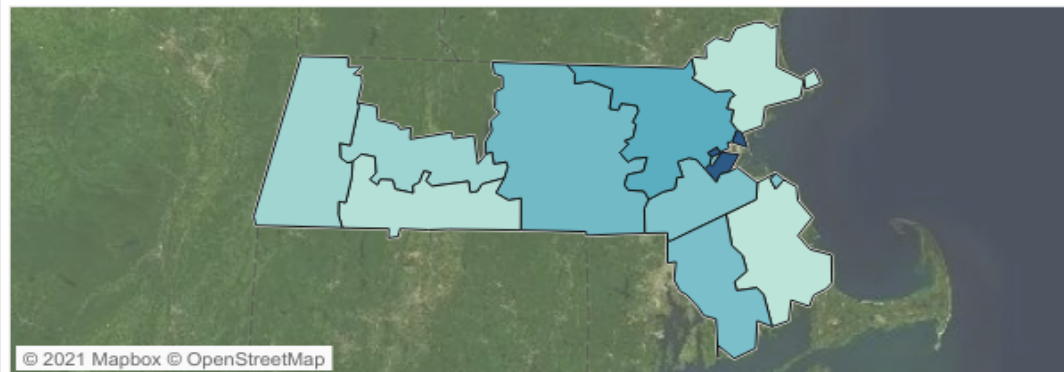
Number of selected FTEs:

**3,391.9**

as of FY 2021 Q 3

## Where do our employees work?

Suffolk county has the largest number of employees, representing 35.6% of selected FTEs.

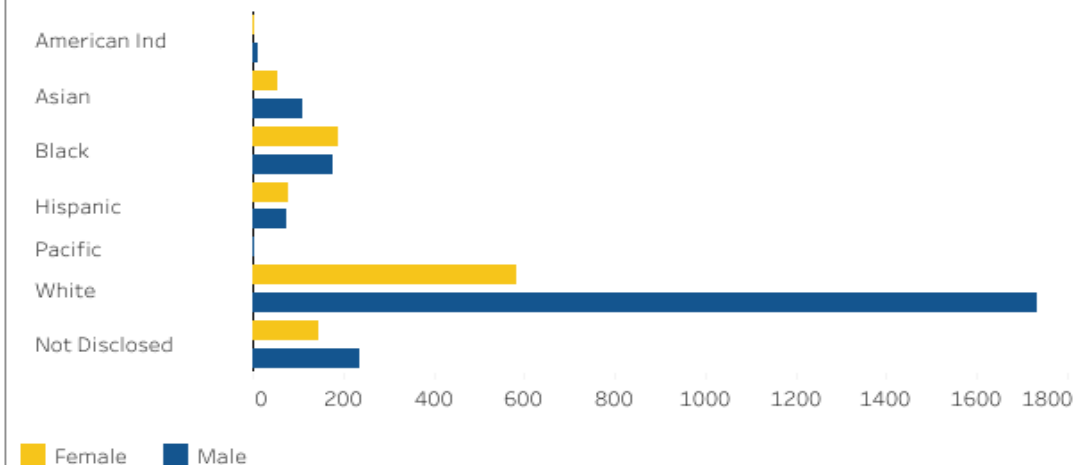


\*Map displays counties with more than ten employees

37 1,208

## What is our racial diversity?

20.5% of selected FTEs are people of color.



## What is our gender breakdown?

Of the selected FTEs, 31.0% are female, and 69.0% are male.



# Workforce Demographics

Race/Ethnicity Breakdown						
Female						
White	Black	Hisp	Asian	NHPI	AI/AN	U
593	186	73	56	0	2	155
Male						
White	Black	Hisp	Asian	NHPI	AI/AN	U
1751	178	77	106	1	6	241
Total						
White	Black	Hisp	Asian	NHPI	AI/AN	U
2344	364	150	162	1	8	396

# Employee Engagement

“We Can Do Better” email to DOT employees from Secretary Pollack. Ongoing series of email communications from Secretary Tesler.

## Employee listening sessions and feedback

- 4 listening sessions and more than 100 employees participated
- Invitations sent to all employees and sessions held at various dates and times (morning, afternoon, evening)
- Participants invited to provide additional feedback on ideas being developed.
- Series of Town Halls held on quarterly basis by Secretaries Pollack and Tesler

2 pulse surveys sent to all employees

- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Developing a Mentorship Program

Meetings held with union officials, Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), and industry experts

Discussions with members of DOT leadership

Meetings with existing Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Some of what we heard:

- Hiring, Access to Opportunity, and Raises:
  - Hiring managers are not objective and are unaware of their biases in their decisions
  - People of color are not getting support or resources to prepare for interviews and higher roles
- Transparency:
  - Employees do not hear back about positions after applying
- Retaliation:
  - People are fearful to report cases of discrimination because there is the subliminal threat of retaliation
- Career development:
  - Managers do not seem to care to nurture career development.

# Mentorship Value Proposition

## **Examples of value to employees**

- An advocate to assist with reaching personal and career goals
- Improving organizational communication and a sense of belonging
- A trusted resource to share ideas with, while learning from each other
- Learn point of view of another about the culture at MassDOT
- Help break down barriers to make a more inclusive workplace
- Feel your organization supports employees, beyond daily work

## **Examples of value to employer**

- Cultivate diversity and encourage stronger communication streams within an organization
- Strengthen an internal talent pipeline, contribute to retention rates, help recruitment of future talent



# Employee Survey on Interest in Mentorship Program

## Is there interest from MassDOT employees on having a structured Mentorship Program?

Survey Communication sent to all MassDOT employees between July 21-27, with 245 responses.

### Survey Responses Include:

- **91%** of respondents feel it's important to launch a Mentorship Program at MassDOT
- **54%** responded that being involved with a mentorship program would assist them in their career
- **85%** responded that they would be interested in enrolling in a Mentorship Program either as a Mentor or Mentee

Those wanting to be a **Mentee** sighted the following top reasons for wanting to join a mentorship program:

- Having an advocate to assist with reaching personal and career goals.
- Gaining practical advice and support.
- Having a trusted contact to learn from and share the experiences.

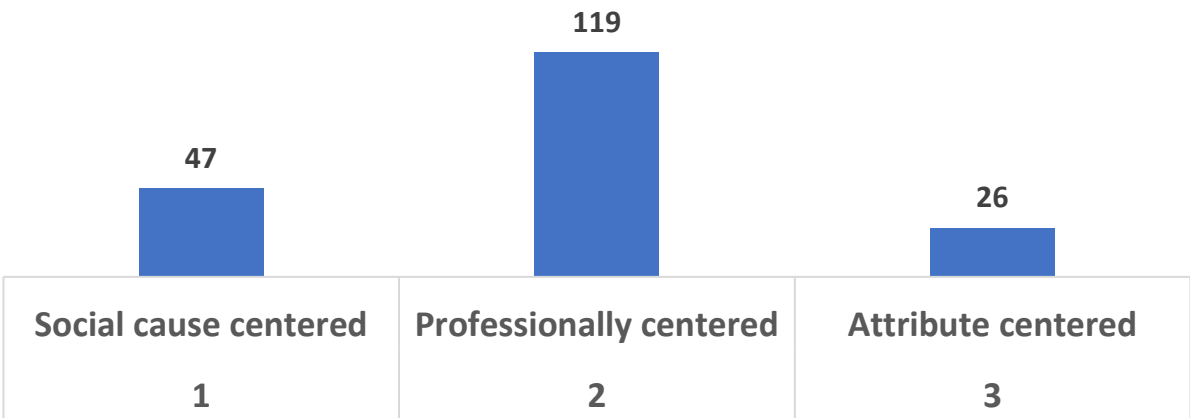
Those wanting to be a **Mentor** sighted the following top reasons for wanting to join a mentorship program:

- Sharing professional knowledge with others
- Benefiting from a sense of fulfilment, personal growth, and overall level of engagement
- Listening from the point of view of another about the culture at MassDOT

# Employee Resource Group Survey Findings

- The majority of respondents prefer a professionally centered ERG
- The topics that employees expressed the most interest in were:
  - Flexible/remote workers (80)
  - Cultural and racial diversity (75)
  - Women in the workplace/professional development for women (67)
- Respondents have multiple goals for an ERG, which they weight similarly, with professional and personal development being the most common goal

An Employee Resource Group (ERG) is an affiliated subgroup of employees who share distinctive qualities, interests, or goals.  
What type of ERG would interest you the most? (n=192)



What topics/goals would you like to see your preferred ERG explore? (n=192)

