

# MCDHHS Equity Principles and Standards

## I. Equity Value

Equity refers to fair policies, decisions, and actions by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services when impacting the lives of people.

Equity is a value of fairness that guides the way that Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services works with customers, staff, and community to promote health, safety, well-being and self-sufficiency.

## II. Equity Principles

**Dignity** – We believe that all individuals should be treated with dignity and respect.

**Elimination of Disparities** – We believe in preventing and eliminating social and health disparities to achieve optimal health and well-being.

**Access** – We believe in ensuring access to effective and high quality services that meet people’s needs, when they need them, delivered by a professional workforce which is competent to provide those services in a caring and respectful manner.

**Distribution of Resources** – We believe that the resources of the Department should be distributed in a manner that maximizes the health, safety, well-being and self-sufficiency of the community as a whole.

**Community Engagement and Participation** – We believe that our diverse communities should be meaningfully engaged in providing input and feedback on policies, practices and services.

## III. Equity Standards

The MCDHHS Equity Standards are intended to operationalize the Equity value and principles for the department. The standards will guide our actions to improve quality, expand access and eliminate inequities. By these standards, we will measure impact, advocate for resources and maximize health gain for the whole population.

1. An integrated service delivery system equitably supported by technology, which enables staff to share information and work collaboratively for improved client outcomes.
2. Recruit, develop and maintain a workforce that is engaged, accountable, responsible, respected, recognized and prepared for changing roles within the department and representative of the community we serve.

**CHARGE AND ROLE** - To improve the Department’s capacity to serve the community and fulfill its mission to eliminate inequities in health and human services, including child welfare, juvenile justice, behavioral health services, and employment and housing assistance. This work involves engaging in systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities to help the Department understand and adopt equity as a value in all of its work and successfully integrate equity into the fabric of the Department.

### EQUITY WORKGROUP MEMBERS

**Pazit Aviv**, *Aging & Disability*

**Theresa Bennett**, *Behavioral Health and Crisis Services*

**Shawn Brennan**, *Aging and Disability Services*

**Perry Chan**, *Asian American Health Initiative*

**Raymond Crowel**, *Director, Health and Human Services*

**Rita Deng**, *Healthy Montgomery*

**Mark Hodge**, *Office of the Chief Operating Officer*

**Betty Lam**, *Chief, Office of Community Affairs*

**Dennis Linders**, *Planning Accountability and Customer Service*

**Sonia Mora**, *Latino Health Initiative*

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**Susan C. Selig**, *Office of the Director*

**Robyn Simmons**, *Maternity Partnership Program*

**Patricia Spann**, *Child Welfare Services*

**Pearline Tyson**, *Neighborhood Opportunities Network*

**Arlee Wallace**, *African American Health Program*

3. Working in partnership with the community, focus on the promotion of community health and well-being and the prevention of adverse outcomes.
4. Services to customers are delivered in a respectful manner and in the context of the customer's culture, language, values, and beliefs.
5. Print and multimedia communication materials and forms are developed in easy to understand language, taking into consideration literacy level, cultural and linguistic appropriateness and people with other forms of communication needs.
6. Program hours are accessible to customers, wait time for walk in services will be reasonable, appointments will be kept on time.
7. Locations for direct services have adequate parking and are accessible by public transportation with the physical layout of the exterior and interior adopting a universal design approach to accommodate people of diverse ability.
8. Each employee understands disparities, inequities, the social determinants of health and well-being and is knowledgeable about community issues, needs and resources.
9. Data Standards are in place to accurately describe, measure, and evaluate disparities and inequities in ways that are compliant with federal and other funding requirements.
10. Decision tools supported by quantitative and qualitative data are applied to assist in determining policies and equitable distribution of resources.
11. Clear strategies for community engagement that focus on capacity building, creation of public policy, data collection and data sharing that supports health and equity across communities.