



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

April 23, 2024

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #24-73
Empowering Communities through MoCo Pride Center, Inc.

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that SA #24-73 *Empowering Communities through MoCo Pride Center, Inc.* has the potential to help address racial disparities experienced by LGBTQIA+ individuals in Montgomery County. The funding is aimed at providing health resources, creating economic opportunities, and countering anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric and discrimination. There is evidence that proposed uses of funding include the application of an intersectional lens, which strengthens the potential for the funding to help reduce racial disparities experienced by LGBTQ+ community members who also identify as BIPOC. A more comprehensive review of the local LGBTQ+ community ecosystem and its connections to County resources would be beneficial to fully understand how this funding might directly impact racial equity.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #24-73 Empowering Communities through MoCo Pride Center, Inc. is to allocate \$200,000 from General Fund: Undesignated Reserves to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for a new non-competitive contract with MoCo Pride Center, Inc. The purpose of this funding request is to help address an identified lack of “venues, resources, and services for [the County’s] diverse, multicultural LGBTQIA+¹ communities. The MoCo Pride Center, Inc.

¹ The terms LGBTQ, LGBTQ+ and LGBTQIA+ are used throughout this REIA. Their use is dependent on source material.

provides safe space, events, and culturally specific community programming for LGBTQIA+ communities, which are essential to vital service linkages”².

To establish background and context related to this supplemental appropriation, ORESJ reviewed publicly available information about MoCo Pride Center Inc. and County-related LGBTQIA+ resources. The following summarizes ORESJ’s review within the scope of this REIA. A more comprehensive review would be beneficial to understand the ecosystem of supports, resources, and community connections that make up the LGBTQ+ community in Montgomery County, in particular how various organizations, programs, and County government relate to, work together, and respond to the experiences and outcomes of those most impacted by racial disparities within the LGBTQIA+ community. As an intersectional lens and widespread evidence suggests:

“The relationship between race and LGBT status is a complicated one that differs by outcome and racialized group. Regardless of these complexities, the data point to the need for social and policy interventions that address economic and health disparities along racial, gender, and LGBT statuses, separately and at their intersection.”³

The MoCo Pride Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization designed to serve the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) community and its allies in Montgomery County, MD⁴. It is a relatively small organization, with a six-member board of directors and gross receipts no greater than \$50,000 in Tax Year 2022⁵. Its mission is to organize, support, educate, and provide outreach to the LGBTQ community and its allies, and it is among several partner organizations involved in creating social and cultural events like Pride in the Plaza⁶. The County, through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has an informal⁷ – mini contract⁸ with MoCo Pride Inc. to provide “Pride in the Plaza Event Planning and Programming”.⁹ MoCo Pride Inc.’s “Programs” page states, “We’ll

² Montgomery County Council. Agenda Item #3G. April 2, 2024. Introduction. Memo from County Executive, Marc Elrich and Chief Administrative Officer, Richard Madaleno to County Council President, Andrew Friedson. Dated March 14, 2024. Available at:

https://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=169&event_id=16107&meta_id=174549

³ Bianca D.M. Wilson, Lauren J.A. Bouton, and Christy Mallory. UCLA Williams Institute School of Law. “Racial Differences Among LGBT Adults in the US”. January 2022. Available at: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/racial-differences-lgbt/>

⁴ Available at: <https://www.mocopridecenter.org/about>.

⁵ IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search. MoCo Pride Center. EIN: 82-2826357. Kensington, MD. Reviewed Tax Year 2022 Form 990-N (e-Postcard). <https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/details/>. “Organizations who have filed a 990-N (e-Postcard) annual electronic notice. Most small organizations that receive less than \$50,000 fall into this category.”

⁶ Available at: <https://liveinyourtruth.org/pride-in-the-plaza>.

⁷ “A procurement accomplished without an invitation for bids, request for proposal, or request for expressions of interest. An informal solicitation is not subject to formal public notice.” Montgomery County Office of Procurement. Procurement Terminology. Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/PRO/vendor-resources/terminology.html#INFORMAL%20SOLICITATION>

⁸ “Contract awarded through documented informal competition for professional services.” Montgomery County Office of Procurement. Procurement Terminology. Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/PRO/vendor-resources/terminology.html#INFORMAL%20SOLICITATION>

⁹ Contract description. Available via search of dataMontgomery. Contract Number 1154726.

invest heavily in supporting the development of integrated solutions and delivering reliable tools to those who need them most.”¹⁰ Two programs with direct links to the organization are Pride Prom and Live In Your Truth Programs (LIYT). Pride Prom is a not-for-profit event for LGBTQ+ high school and community college youth across MD, DC, and VA.¹¹ LIYT programs “create affirming spaces, events, media, and employment opportunities for intersectional Black, LGBTQIA+, and IPOC underserved communities throughout Montgomery County, MD, and the DMV, where everyone is welcome!”¹² Specific programming includes the Coalition for Inclusive Schools and Communities!; Black Girl Magic Stories (BGMS); The MoCo Pride Show; Black LGBTQ Pioneers; Drag Duels; and the 3rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration.

The County’s LGBTQIA+ programs and resources are also supported by the Office of Community Partnerships LGBTQ Liaison and a seven-person Advisory Group.¹³ Details about how this group is resourced, its current work and the County’s current level of engagement with the group were not readily available at the time of this analysis. It’s unclear to what extent there are connections between the Advisory Group, LGBTQ Liaison, and MoCo Pride Center Inc. and whether the Advisory Group has been engaged in the development of this supplemental appropriation.

The Montgomery County Pride website includes social and cultural, healthcare, youth, faith-based, trans, families and allies, multilingual, and LGBTQ+-owned business resources. It also has a section focused on the rights and protections of LGBTQ+ people, including the Montgomery County LGBTQ+ Bill of Rights and¹⁴ guidance on reporting discrimination and bullying at school.¹⁵

In a search of the County’s Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCC),¹⁶ ORESJ did not identify a group focusing specifically on providing feedback and policy advice on issues impacting LGBTQIA+ community members. A recent report noted that the LGBTQ+ representation within the County’s BCC is in alignment with national estimates. Population-level data about the percent of County residents who identify as LGBTQ+ residents were not readily available at the time of this analysis, so it is difficult to determine whether the 9% of BCC members who identify as LGBTQ+ or 1.26% who identify as gender queer is representative of the County overall.

Recently, the County’s Anti-Hate Task Force included an LGBTQ+ Cohort. This cohort presented¹⁷ pertinent background about the history, status of, and gaps related to LGBTQ+

¹⁰ Available at: <https://www.mocopridecenter.org/programs>.

¹¹ <https://www.mocopridecenter.org/prideprom>

¹² <https://liveinyourtruth.org/liyt>

¹³ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/partnerships/advisory-groups/lgbtq.html>

¹⁴ https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2020/20201006/20201006_8B.pdf

¹⁵ <https://montgomerycountypride.org/your-rights>

¹⁶ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/list.html#>

¹⁷ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/resources/AntiHateTaskForce/Minutes/LGBTQ-Final-Presentation.pdf>

resources and the resultant community climate. The cohort lifted up national and local evidence of discrimination and health disparities among LGBTQ+ communities and noted increased vulnerability among those who belong to multiple marginalized groups, such as trans and gender expansive BIPOC communities, particularly in interactions with law enforcement. The cohort report included seven policy recommendations. What is notable about these policy recommendations is that they encompass program-specific and systemic investments. Together, these two types of public investment help to address acute service-level needs and build the capacity and infrastructure of the County to plan and respond systemically to gaps in cultural competency training as well as data infrastructure and coordinated multi-agency resources. Several of the policy recommendations have the potential of being advanced by funding proposed in supplemental appropriation #24-73, in particular expanding satellite programming and creating a physical space and dedicated hub for resources, supports, and linkages to services.

In addition to the insights from the Anti-Hate Task Force Report, the Office of Community Partnerships Montgomery County LGBTQ+ Community Survey (also noted in the Anti-Hate Task Force Report) provides information about the experiences of 842 respondents from 54 different zip codes, ranging from 11 to 84 years old (between June 1 and July 15, 2022). The results of the survey highlighted LGBTQ+ community experiences with safety, housing, healthcare, gender affirmation, sexual health, and law enforcement interactions¹⁸. The report also included a focus on participants who identified as trans, gender-expansive, or questioning. Noted both in the Anti-Hate Task Force Report and in the Survey Report were comments about the representativeness of the survey results, including that “Black and Latino/a/x residents were likely underrepresented in this sample relative to their overall racial/ethnic identities in the County. White residents were overrepresented”¹⁹. There was also noted underrepresentation among residents who are 65 years and older and overrepresentation of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Interpreting the survey results with this limitation in mind can help direct additional targeted information gathering among BIPOC, older, and LGBTQ+ community members with lower levels of education. As noted in a 2023 Montgomery County Municipal Cable segment titled Conversation on the results of the Montgomery County, MD LGBTQ+ survey, the limitations in the representativeness of the survey results were acknowledged, as was the importance of using an intersectional approach across all areas of LGBTQ+-related policy and programming. Community member and advocate Phillip Alexander Downie noted, “It’s so important that we exist in spaces where we’re constantly learning and listening to each other and that then we are focusing our resources on individuals who are the most underserved and disenfranchised. Because if you bring up everyone who is doing the worst, then that means that everyone is doing better”.²⁰

¹⁸ <https://montgomerycountypride.org/2023-lgbtq-survey-report>

¹⁹ <https://montgomerycountypride.org/2023-lgbtq-survey-report>

²⁰ Montgomery County Municipal Cable. “Conversation on the results of the Montgomery County, MD LGBTQ+ Survey”. Available at: https://youtu.be/8ni_5XpUjXA?si=ZgFyVAyRdZwskKHY

- III. **ANALYSIS:** Available information suggests that this funding will focus on providing health resources, creating economic opportunities, and countering anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric and discrimination. Our analysis, therefore, will use an intersectional lens to examine the ways race and ethnicity shape the experiences and outcomes of LGBTQIA+ community members, particularly in the areas of healthcare and economic opportunities. ORESJ identified robust evidence about the racial disparities found in the health and economic outcomes of LGBTQ+ community members.

To begin, the term “intersectionality,” coined in 1989 by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, recognizes the compounding impacts of racial and gender discrimination and gives language to describe the complexity of identities that make up each person²¹. Intersectional theory allows analysis to reflect how different forms of oppression are compounded affecting an individual’s lived experience. Without an intentional intersectional approach to reducing racial disparities within the LGBTQ+ community, it is unlikely that universal goals for the LGBTQ+ community can be achieved. As one source explains, “There is [also] widespread evidence that shows how disaggregating data by race and gender paints a clearer picture of the economy and holds policymakers accountable for creating broad-based economic growth. Further disaggregating data along LGBTQ+ lines would similarly benefit researchers and policymakers alike.”²² ORESJ identified the following data sources (including previously conducted REIAs) that use an intersectional approach in their analysis of racial disparities affecting LGBTQ+ communities:

Healthcare

- “Mental Health Disparities”: LGBTQ. American Psychiatric Association. Available at: <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Cultural-Competency/Mental-Health-Disparities/Mental-Health-Facts-for-LGBTQ.pdf>
- “LGBT+ People’s Health Status and Access to Care”. KFF. Available at: <https://www.kff.org/report-section/lgbt-peoples-health-status-and-access-to-care-issue-brief/>
- “LGBTQ+ Health Disparities”. Cigna healthcare. Available at: <https://www.cigna.com/knowledge-center/lgbt-disparities>
- “Transgender Healthcare in Montgomery County”. Kristen Latham. OLO Report 2024-1. January 16, 2024. Available at: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2024_Reports/OLO_Report2024-1.pdf
- Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-106 and #23-107 (Combined) Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE). Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-106-107.pdf>

²¹ <https://gaycenter.org/community/intersectionality/>

²² <https://equitablegrowth.org/new-u-s-census-bureau-data-show-significant-economic-disparities-among-the-lgbtq-community/>

- Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA)#24-49 Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America Grant. Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-49.pdf>

Economic Opportunity

- “New U.S. Census Bureau data show significant economic disparities among the LGBTQ+ community”. Raksha Koppam. Washington Center for Equitable growth. June 29, 2022. Available at: <https://equitablegrowth.org/new-u-s-census-bureau-data-show-significant-economic-disparities-among-the-lgbtq-community/>
- “Racial Differences Among LGBT Adults in the US: LGBT well-being at the intersection of race”. Bianca D.M. Wilson, Lauren J.A. Bouton, and Christy Mallory. UCLA School of Law Williams Institute. January 2022. Available at: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/racial-differences-lgbt/>
- “Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for LGBT People of Color.” Movement Advancement Project and Center for American Progress. April 2015. Available at: <https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/paying-an-unfair-price-lgbt-people-of-color.pdf>
- “Out for Change: Racial and Economic Justice Issues in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Communities” A report from Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues. 2005. Available at: <https://lgbtracialequity.org/publications/LGBT-REJ.pdf>

Pride centers have been established across the country to deliver services, connect individuals to resources, and provide programming, education, and safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community. The Pride Center of the Capital Region, based in Albany, NY is the oldest, continuously operating LGBTQ+ Community Center in the country.²³ The Pride Center, which opened in 1970, has been in operation for more than 50 years. Like the Pride Center, many established pride and LGBTQ+ centers collect and analyze data to track program participation, impact, and outcomes.

Locally, the Pride Center of Maryland (PCOM) operates as the “state’s primary source for guidance, education, cultural competency, and services to improve quality of life, especially for LGBTQ+/SGL (same-gender-loving) youth, adults, elders, and allies of all backgrounds, ethnicities, perspectives, genders, sexualities, and cultures.²⁴ Recent events surrounding PCOM losing grant funding from the City of Baltimore due to improper data reporting on the success rate of a violence prevention center underscore the importance of pride centers implementing strong data management.²⁵ It also highlights the need for grantors to provide funding that allows organizations to undertake consistent data collection. The organization growing from a staff of 3 to 40 personnel within in a 4-year timespan contributed to issues in data reporting. PCOM recently hired a Data Manager to

²³ <https://capitalpridecenter.org/about>.

²⁴ The Pride Center of Maryland (PCOM). Available at: <https://www.pridecentermd.org/>.

²⁵ <https://foxbaltimore.com/morning/board-of-estimates-cuts-funding-for-baltimore-pride-center>

ensure reporting requirements are fulfilled.²⁶ As the MoCo Pride Center is in early development stages, it will be important for the organization to implement strong data management and reporting capabilities as more funding is received. Additionally, disaggregating data by race, when possible, will help the center analyze whether programs are achieving equitable results across racial and ethnic groups and adjust in their approach when possible.

Finally, the supplemental appropriation is also connected to a non-competitive grant, which raises questions about fairness and opportunity in County procurement. As noted in REIA 24-72,²⁷ bypassing competitive bidding could cause the County to overlook more cost-effective or innovative solutions and disproportionately reduce opportunities for small, local businesses, particularly those owned by residents of color, to compete. Additionally, such practices can inadvertently maintain an uneven playing field, limiting these businesses' growth and contributions to the local economy. To alleviate this concern, the County can track, monitor, and publicly make available annual spending with nonprofits, annual spending with nonprofits where a noncompetitive grant was issued, who received that funding, and the racial breakdown of recipients.

cc: James Bridgers, Jr., Ph.D., MBA, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Ken Hartman, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive

²⁶ <https://www.pridecentermd.org/post/the-pride-center-of-maryland-has-never-wavered-in-its-commitment-to-serve-and-represent-the-same-gen>

²⁷ REIA #24-72-Shelter Services, Overflow and Security Expansion. Available at:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-72.pdf>