

MARCH 2023

Checklist to Raise the Bar for Maternal Health Equity and Excellence

As an Employer of a Diverse Workforce

Get Started with an Assessment

Ask your HR department to either review – or hire an external expert to analyze – the demographic data and related metrics of your staff, including:

- Establishing your baseline. What is the current diversity of your maternal health workforce? Review their demographic data on race, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (if known).
- Identifying disparities in employees' health outcomes. Review deidentified employee health outcome data, stratified by race, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (if available).
- Completing a voluntary diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) survey for all staff, including contract workers, that includes questions about opportunity, satisfaction, inclusivity, and accessibility.
- Auditing workplace policies and benefits that support the well-being of your pregnant and parenting employees and their beneficiaries.
- Auditing your policies for hiring and supporting contract workers.

Specific Recommendations

- Invest in and support leaders who advance equity, quality, and value.** Increasing diversity at the leadership level can strengthen an organization's policies and practices, which in turn will likely improve maternal and infant health outcomes.
 - Embed DEI into workplace culture and operations.
 - Provide career pathways and leadership opportunities for the people of color on staff.
- Employ and cultivate a representative workforce at all levels to advance maternal health.** Employing a diverse workforce – with regard to race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability status, and primary language – can improve the health of birthing people and families.

- Set a measurable expectation that all staff incorporate anti-racism in their work.
- Set and pursue goals to cultivate a diverse maternal health workforce.
- Redesign recruitment and hiring practices to drive diversity across your organization, especially in roles that directly provide or support maternity care.
- Develop programs, procedures, and personnel to address racism and other forms of discrimination in the workplace.
- Address financial, time, and other barriers to education and professional development.
- Build the pipeline for a diverse maternal health workforce.

Create and sustain workplaces and jobs where employees can be healthy, thrive, and help guide effective and equitable maternal care. Employees who are healthy and economically secure are better positioned to deliver high-quality, compassionate care. Supporting staff's health and well-being is also critical to reducing burnout and churn.

- Create a workplace culture that supports all staff, including pregnant and parenting staff, in maintaining their health and well-being and that of their families.
- Adopt a paid leave policy and culture that promotes the health, well-being, and economic security of all employees and their families.
- Model use of workplace benefits and signal strong support for family-friendly policies.
- Ensure that the organization's health insurance plans provide excellent maternity and reproductive health coverage and benefits.
- Provide and encourage the use of mental health and wellness services.
- Reinforce institutional commitment to workplace safety, both physically and psychologically.
- Pay a living wage, and pay equitably across all roles.
- Ensure that employees and beneficiaries understand their benefits, their legal rights, and how to access these programs and services.

Leverage procurement to ensure the diversity and well-being of contract workers. By instituting policies that help contract workers stay healthy and safe, care for their families, and maintain economic stability, healthcare systems can make important strides toward equity for all their workers and the community overall.

- Hire racially and ethnically diverse vendors, as well as businesses owned by women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities, and prioritize local organizations.
- Develop standard contractual language requiring contractors to employ and support underrepresented staff and provide a minimum set of benefits and protections that support employee well-being and economic security.

Find detailed recommendations and more resources at nationalpartnership.org/raisingthebar

This resource was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.

