

# Pierce County Community Engagement Task Force DEI Lexicon

- **Ally**

Describes someone who supports a group other than one's own (in terms of racial identity, gender, faith identity, sexual orientation, etc.) Allies acknowledge disadvantage and oppression of other groups than their own; take risks and supportive action on their behalf; commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

- **Anti-Racism**

An active and conscious effort to work against multi-dimensional aspects of racism.

- **Culture**

A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication. Culture can be learned from a country, state, neighborhood, family, religion etc.

- **Discrimination**

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories. It's typically the dominant class that perpetuates discrimination.

- **DIVERSEQUALUSION**

Removing barriers only to replace them with boundaries.

- **Implicit bias**

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that all people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to surpass individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, citizenship, and other topics.

- **Inclusion**

Inclusion authentically and deliberately brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policy making.

- **Individual racism**

The beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can occur at both a conscious and unconscious level and can be both active and passive. Examples include telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, or believing in the inherent superiority of whites.

- **Institutional/Systemic racism**

The ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

*Examples:*

- Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans (also known as "red-lining").
- City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

- **Power**

Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. Some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual's internal strength). Learning to "see" and understand relations of power is vital to organizing for progressive, social change.

- **Privilege**

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless, it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

- **Racial and ethnic identity**

An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.

- **White supremacy**

A historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by the white, dominant class and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending an economic system of wealth, power and privilege.