

## City of Long Beach

Working Together to Serve

## Memorandum

Date: August 12, 2016

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.H.W.*

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services *KC*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

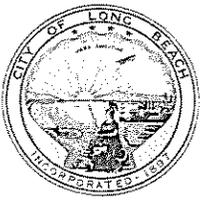
**Subject: Board of Health and Human Services Letter – Office of Equity**

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Attached, please find a letter from the Board of Health and Human Services to the Mayor and City Council supporting the creation of an Office of Equity within the Department of Health and Human Services.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at extension 84016.

(Attachment)



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

BOARD OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

2525 GRAND AVENUE • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90815 • (562) 570-4014 • FAX: (562) 570-4049

August 12, 2016

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers:

The Board of Health and Human Services commends the actions of our Councilmembers in requesting a feasibility study to potentially establish an Office of Equity for the City of Long Beach within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). This action shows great leadership and a vision for economic, social, and cultural achievements. An Office of Equity will contribute to the vibrancy of our City and position us as a national leader in the growing awareness and acceptance of the need to address equity.

We are writing today to offer our support in the creation of the Office of Equity as well as some suggestions for ensuring its success, including a thorough planning process, establishing clear goals and mechanisms for measuring progress, and providing adequate financial resources to establish and maintain the office.

The City of Long Beach is the second most diverse city in the nation, the second largest city in the County of Los Angeles, and a regional economic and transportation driver. Implementing an equity framework will help us realize access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy essential needs, advance the well-being, and achieve the full potential of our communities. We support the City Council's motions to explore avenues that will synergize and leverage our existing resources and initiatives such as the Safe Long Beach Violence Prevention Plan, the Healthy Communities Policy, the Mobility Plan, the Language Access Policy, our Healthy Vendor Policies, and our participation in the Government Alliance for Race and Equity (to mention a few) in an effort to align Citywide policies, programs, and initiatives through an equity lens.

We encourage the City Council to authorize the DHHS to undertake a six-month planning process. Drawing from the experiences of cities such as Austin, TX, Madison, WI, Seattle, WA, Portland, OR, and others, we recognize the need to clearly articulate the short- and long-term goals of an Office of Equity so that:

- City and community expectations are understood,
- Goals, by being appropriately matched to available resources, do not over-promise, and
- Goals are communicated in a way that sets the Office up for success, in collaboration with the City and its many stakeholders.

Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
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Establishing an Office of Equity will require strong support from our Mayor, City Council, and City Manager to spearhead sustainability planning. Sustainability planning, conceived from the very beginning, will help ensure we deliver on the goals established for the office. We encourage the City Council to provide the necessary financial appropriations and strategic visioning to successfully launch this office in collaboration with the DHHS.

We join together with you in this laudable and necessary undertaking. The socio-cultural and economic prosperity of our communities lies in our ability to use an equity lens to explore how and where resources are being deployed to best address need, as well as to further the vision of Long Beach as a safe and healthy community for all. We look forward to working with our Mayor, City Councilmembers, and City Manager in the successful undertaking of an Office of Equity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. Petit".

Christine E. Petit, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Health and Human Services