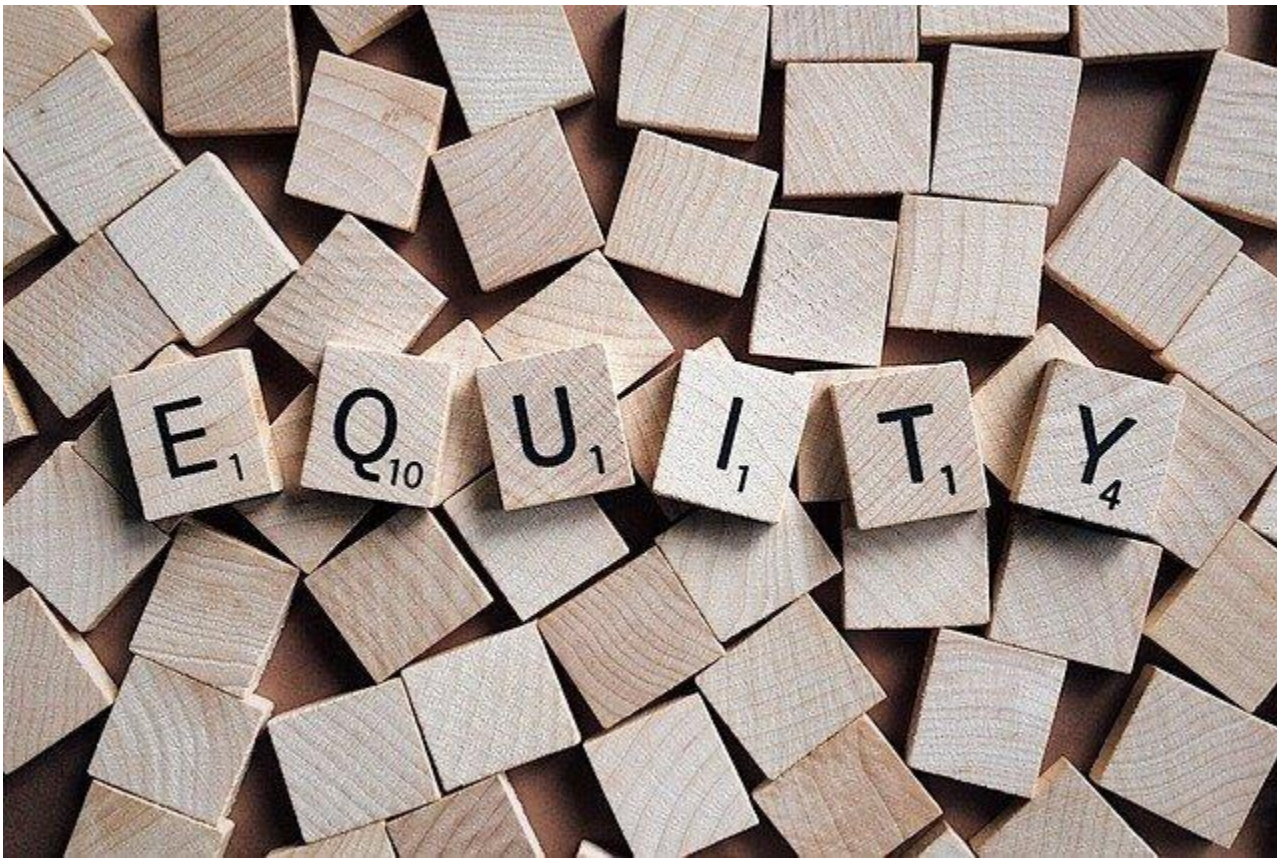


Executive Order Creates New Office of Equity

July 30 2021 3:35 PM



SPRINGFIELD— Building on the administration’s ongoing work to advance equity and inclusion, Governor JB Pritzker today signed an Executive Order establishing the Office of Equity to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across state government. By creating a standalone Office of Equity, the Chief Equity Officer will serve as a leader in creating more equitable systems and opportunity for state employees and all residents.

“It’s been the mission of my administration to carry forth justice and equity in all that we do for the people of Illinois,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “I’m proud that this Executive Order will help shape a more equitable system of justice that makes our state stronger and expands opportunities for all of our residents. It is a goal of mine for the nation to look to Illinois as a leader in true equity. The action we’re taking today takes us one step closer to that goal.”

In April, Governor Pritzker appointed the first Chief Diversity Officer in the state’s history, reinforcing Illinois as a national leader in DEI policies. Within the existing state structure, the Chief Diversity Officer worked within the Chief Compliance Office, created by the previous administration under [Executive Order 2018-02](#).

The newly created Office of Equity, elevates the Chief Diversity Officer position, separating critical equity and inclusion work from compliance work. As a result, the administration has created a more robust mission for the newly renamed role of the Chief Equity Officer.

“I am honored to join the Governor’s office and to work collaboratively with our state leaders, agencies, and community based advocates,” said Dr. Sekile M. Nzinga, Chief Equity Officer of Illinois. “I am keenly aware that many are not only struggling but are often suffering from the deeply embedded social inequities and injustices that exist and persist within our society. I also know that advancing equity requires our collective energy and commitment in order to create the Illinois we all deserve to live and thrive in. Our state’s new Office of Equity is animated by that potential and is eager to harness our shared responsibility, creativity and determination to make our state a better place for all.”

The office will create sustainable procedures for state agencies by making DEI resources available to all state employees, in turn better serving Illinois residents. This includes coordinating DEI trainings to reflect best practices and working to prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace. To ensure lasting benefits, the office will establish tangible goals by developing statewide DEI benchmarks to measure progress.

Governor Pritzker’s executive action builds upon the administration’s commitment to ensure that Illinois’ state government reflects the diversity of the population it serves. This includes hiring the most diverse executive branch in state history and establishing the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative to advance criminal justice reform and equity-focused programs. Earlier this year, the Governor enacted the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus’ historic reform agenda to dismantle systemic racism in key pillars: criminal justice reform, education, economic opportunity, and healthcare.