



# DHS News

Newsletter of the Allegheny County  
Department of Human Services



**October 2019**

## **County departments gather to advance racial equity**

On October 9, more than 70 representatives from DHS, the Allegheny County Health Department and the Courts attended a training designed to help create interactive and engaging conversations about racial equity.

The training – “Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government” – was designed by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward and presented by a GARE representative and a consultant. Topics covered included historic examples of institutional and structural racism as well as ways that government agencies, and their staff, can work to normalize conversations around race and create change.

“As we advance equity across the agency, we can’t simply focus on individual programs or interventions, we have to look at institutional policies and strategies. In order to examine our existing policies, we need to use a shared racial equity framework. This training introduced the framework to our county,” said Jessica Ruffin, senior leader for equity and inclusion in the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Following the October 9 training, many attendees returned the next day for a train-the-trainer session that provided a deeper dive into the material and tips to provide high quality workshop experiences.

This training was just the beginning. Over the next few weeks, the Office of Equity and Inclusion will be convening a small group of instructional designers to add content to the training that will provide local context and design the county-wide training program. The goal is to facilitate the first session by late spring 2020.

To learn more about DHS's equity and inclusion efforts, contact [DHS-equity@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHS-equity@alleghenycounty.us).