

IDS Commission Diversity and Racial Equity Statement

Because diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential to fulfilling Indigent Defense Service’s mission, the IDS Commission is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in the public defense community. Diversity and racial equity in the public defense community better ensures fair and just outcomes for a diverse client base.

Diversity is an inclusive concept and encompasses race, ethnicity, sex, age, mental and physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, nationality, marital and parental status, and other characteristics and experiences. With greater diversity, we can be more creative, effective, and just, bringing more varied perspectives, experiences, backgrounds, talents, and interests to the practice of law and the administration of justice. We recognize that racial inequity exists across systems and institutions and it will require systemic interventions and training to change thinking, reduce disparities, and improve outcomes for all populations.

To this end, we pledge to continuously examine policies, practices, and procedures through a racial equity lens, and facilitate diversity in hiring, retention, and career development within the public defense community. We recognize that achieving diversity and equity requires our commitment to an ongoing process.

IDS Commission Diversity and Racial Equity Plan

GOAL 1	Widely disseminate the Diversity and Racial Equity Statement and Plan within the public defense community and publicly
Strategy 1	Disseminate the Diversity and Racial Equity Statement and Plan after adoption, with a cover letter or email from the IDS Commission Chair to public defense attorneys and IDS Commissioners.
Strategy 2	Continuous dissemination of the Diversity and Racial Equity Statement and Plan through pertinent pages on the IDS website.
Strategy 3	Reference to the Diversity and Racial Equity Statement and Plan in all pertinent materials.
GOAL 2	Expand availability of public education, outreach, and self-navigation materials for clients and North Carolina communities.
Strategy 1	Develop public legal information materials that are accessible to all North Carolinians.
Strategy 2	Enhance outreach to all communities regarding the services provided by IDS, public defense offices and IDS contractors.
GOAL 3	Promote and track diversity within IDS leadership, including IDS Commission, IDS Staff, IDS Contractors, and Public Defender and State Defender Offices.
Strategy 1	Provide IDS Commission Diversity and Racial Equity Statement to entities making appointments to the IDS Commission.

Strategy 2	Expand outreach for appointment opportunities to achieve greater diversity, including race, ethnicity, sex, age, mental and physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, nationality, marital and parental status, and other characteristics and experiences.
Strategy 3	Ensure diversity in IDS Commission committee assignments.
Strategy 4	Promote diversity and racial equity in career advancement and supervisory assignments within IDS Staff, and Public Defender and State Defender Offices.
Strategy 5	Include racial equity training in management training for IDS Commission, IDS Staff, Public Defender and State Defender Offices.
Strategy 6	Create a resource of best practices in recruiting and hiring diverse candidates.
GOAL 4	Promote diversity and racial equity in CLE and other programming, both live and virtual.
Strategy 1	Educate program presenters and participants on the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Strategy 2	Implement strategic actions to improve diversity among program presenters, moderators, and participants, including provide a resource list of affinity bars to groups planning CLE events.
Strategy 3	Provide a copy of the IDS Commission Diversity and Racial Equity Statement in all CLE and other program materials.
Strategy 4	Ensure program content appeals to diverse communities.
Strategy 5	Explore partnering or co-sponsoring opportunities with affinity bars and other organizations that can contribute to diversity.
Strategy 6	Ensure program venues and materials are accessible to participants with disabilities.
Strategy 7	Use program locations and venues, as well as social media, to enhance opportunities for participation by diverse lawyers (e.g., locations that may minimize cost barriers; venues that may increase diverse community participation, like HBCU law schools and affinity bar association locations; and social networking sites that may increase marketing efforts to diverse communities).
Strategy 8	Promote diversity and racial equity in planning and award nominations. Promote diversity and racial equity in award recipients.
GOAL 5	Enhance the current tracking and reporting of progress in diversity and racial equity efforts.
Strategy 1	Track race and gender of CLE and other program presenters by voluntary submission of information.
Strategy 2	Prepare a quarterly report on diversity of CLE and other program presenters, IDS Commission, IDS Staff, Public Defender and State Defender Offices.
Strategy 3	Provide the report to the IDS Commission and to the public on the IDS website.

GOAL 6	Promote IDS's continuing efforts to attain diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Strategy 1	Highlight information about diversity programs and activities of the IDS Commission, IDS Staff, IDS Contractors, Public Defender and State Defender Offices.
Strategy 2	Highlight stories of individual defenders who have utilized diversity and racial equity strategies in their advocacy and work.
Strategy 3	Urge IDS Commissioners, IDS Staff, IDS Contractors, Public Defender and State Defender Offices with an expertise in diversity and racial equity areas to regularly write and speak about their experiences.