

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-office Communication

Date: 5/21/2026

To: Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Joseph Lamers, Director, Department of Transportation; Steve Fuentes, President & CEO, Milwaukee County Transit System

Subject: From the Director, Department of Transportation and the President & CEO, Milwaukee County Transit System, providing an informational report regarding MCTS' Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program, including utilization goals, achievement timetable, and historic trends in EEO Program hiring.

File Type: Reference File Report

POLICY

It is the policy of the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) to provide equal employment opportunity to all qualified applicants or employees regardless of race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, genetic information, disability, marital status, national origin, military status, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law. We are strongly committed to this policy and believe in the concept of fair and equal employment opportunity.

BACKGROUND

MCTS is committed to equal employment opportunity and a diverse workforce at all levels and in all parts of the organization. To prevent discrimination of minorities and women, we have in place an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program which includes utilization goals and achievement timetables with respect to employment of available qualified minorities and women within our organization.

We believe that successful achievement of equal employment opportunity utilization goals will help ensure that the culture, values, and opinions of a diverse array of individuals and groups are represented in decision-making processes at all levels of the organization. Utilization goals were updated in 2024 as part of the MCTS EEO Plan that was submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The goals established as part of this plan are in effect through 2027 and are reviewed annually. All 2026 data represents employees that were employed as of April 15, 2026.

At the end of 2024, MCTS began hiring in-house public safety personnel, prompting the need to track EEO goals in Job category for "Service Workers", as the tables will reflect.

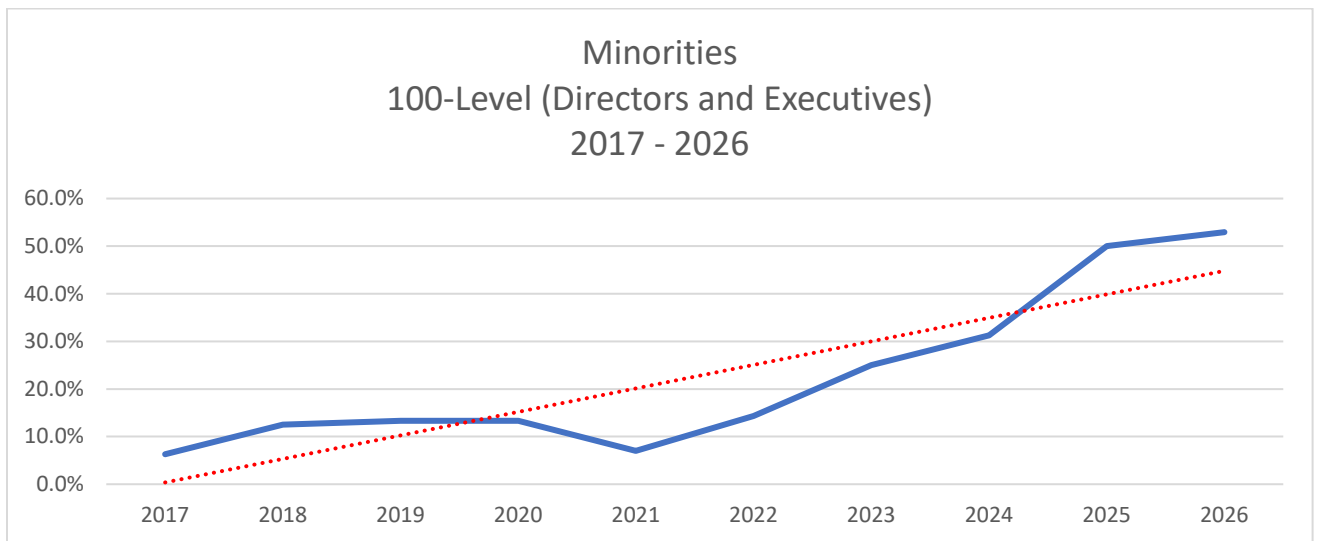
EEO Utilization Status Update - Minorities

MCTS once again surpassed all utilization goals and saw gains in many categories. The data below represents a continuous improvement in the utilization of minorities. This is especially true in higher level positions.

Minorities	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Goal
Directors (100, 101, 102)	36.0%	37.2%	36.5%	35.9%	41.0%	43.0%	45.1%	45.6%	45.7%	47.3%	14.7%
Professionals (200)	24.2%	21.4%	25.0%	34.5%	37.0%	42.0%	43.8%	45.7%	53.3%	58.6%	18.7%
Administrative Support Workers (500)	38.8%	42.3%	39.1%	40.5%	43.0%	47.0%	45.0%	51.2%	57.8%	56.8%	41.0%
Craft Workers (600, 601)	22.4%	24.1%	32.1%	34.7%	35.0%	34.0%	34.9%	33.3%	40.9%	41.2%	40.1%
Operatives (700)	75.5%	77.8%	79.4%	79.7%	81.0%	84.0%	84.8%	86.4%	89.1%	89.1%	72.8%
Laborers and Helpers (800)	76.7%	79.3%	70.4%	69.2%	70.0%	77.0%	75.0%	74.2%	82.1%	77.8%	70.8%
Service Workers (900)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	76.5%	74.1%	32.7%

The EEO breaks the major job category of “Directors” down further, into Directors (100), Managers (101), and Supervisors (102). It is worth noting that the Director category continues to increase and is now at its highest level in the history of MCTS.

Minorities	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Goal
Directors (100)	6.3%	12.5%	13.3%	13.3%	7.0%	14.3%	25.0%	31.3%	50.0%	52.9%	14.7%
Managers (101)	21.7%	33.3%	28.0%	29.2%	35.0%	38.5%	40.7%	34.6%	19.2%	22.7%	14.7%
Supervisors (102)	53.2%	46.3%	46.4%	45.3%	51.0%	53.5%	52.5%	57.5%	58.8%	55.6%	14.7%



EEO Utilization Status Update - Females

The table demonstrates that there is work to be done with respect to female utilization. However, incremental improvements have occurred as utilization increased in 5 of the 7 categories.

Females	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Goal
Directors (100, 101, 102)	27.9%	28.7%	27.1%	27.2%	30.0%	30.0%	33.3%	32.6%	34.8%	33.3%	42.1%
Professionals (200)	45.4%	53.6%	50.0%	48.3%	52.0%	51.6%	53.1%	44.4%	46.7%	47.6%	55.8%
Administrative Support Workers (500)	59.1%	59.6%	58.7%	54.8%	60.0%	58.1%	57.5%	63.4%	60.0%	60.5%	74.3%
Craft Workers (600, 601)	3.4%	2.6%	1.8%	2.5%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.0%	1.7%	1.7%	10.1%
Operatives (700)	39.6%	42.6%	44.5%	45.4%	45.0%	45.2%	43.9%	42.4%	43.0%	43.9%	27.7%
Laborers and Helpers (800)	13.3%	24.1%	29.6%	19.2%	11.0%	15.4%	10.7%	16.1%	17.9%	29.6%	22.5%
Service Workers (900)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.5%	25.9%	49.8%

Again, the major job category of “Directors” breaks down further into Directors (100), Managers (101), and Supervisors (102). MCTS experienced a decline at the 100-level, but this was primarily due to retirements. It is noteworthy that the 101-level increased substantially.

Females	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Goal
Directors (100)	37.5%	37.5%	40.0%	40.0%	43.0%	35.7%	37.5%	56.3%	50.0%	35.3%	42.1%
Managers (101)	30.4%	33.3%	28.0%	25.0%	26.0%	34.6%	37.0%	30.8%	30.8%	40.9%	42.1%
Supervisors (102)	23.4%	24.1%	23.2%	24.1%	29.0%	27.6%	30.5%	26.5%	32.0%	29.6%	42.1%

Strategies to increase Minority and Female utilization:

- 1. Transparent & Equitable Hiring Processes** - MCTS has a very robust Recruitment and Selection Policy which requires a scoping meeting at the onset of the hiring process. The selection process is equitable, transparent, and consistent which ensures that each job posting has a diverse applicant pool and interview panel. Before an offer can be extended to a candidate, the EEO Officer reviews the entire selection process including the list of applicants, interview panelists, scores and interview notes. MCTS continues to review and improve interview scoring tools that are based on industry best practices.
- 2. Succession Planning** - MCTS continues to experience a high Retirement Exposure rate within the Director levels (Director, Manager and Supervisor). Although this is challenging for the organization, it also provides an opportunity to hire externally and promote internally qualified minorities and females into these positions that are scheduled to be vacated within the next 12-24 months. MCTS has engaged in succession planning for many of these positions to ensure that there is no disruption to service while focusing on the need to increase Minority and Female utilization within all levels of the organization.

3. Employee Development Programs

a. **Job Shadowing Opportunities**

Formal job shadowing programs are available for administrative employees represented by OPEIU Local 9, with durations ranging from three to twelve months. Upon completion, employees are eligible to apply for open positions within the department where they completed their shadowing experience. The program has been instrumental in developing the skills and experience of minority and female employees, strengthening the overall talent pipeline and readiness for future opportunities.

4. **Continuing Training** – Throughout 2025 and continuing into 2026, MCTS conducts training classes to help further our efforts to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. These training courses include:

a. **Compliant Hiring Practices for Supervisors and Managers**

This training provides hiring supervisors and managers with the critical knowledge needed to conduct fair, lawful, and effective recruitment and selection processes. Participants explore Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) standards, relevant state employment laws, and internal company policies and procedures to ensure compliance at every stage of hiring.

b. **Unconscious Bias Training**

This two-part series helps leaders identify and address unconscious biases as well as better understand the negative impact of bias in the workplace so that they can build a more diverse, high-performing team.

5. New Training Initiatives

a. **Stephen R. Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**

This training provides a principle-centered, "inside-out" framework for achieving personal and professional effectiveness. It emphasizes aligning actions with core values such as responsibility, integrity, and respect, rather than relying on short-term tactics.

b. **NAMI**

In partnership with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) of Southeast Wisconsin, this intensive workshop equips employees with a trauma-informed approach to managing conflict and de-escalating individuals in distress.

c. *Transportation Leadership Development Program*

The Transportation Leadership Training Program is a comprehensive 10-month initiative designed to equip current MCTS supervisors with the critical interpersonal and strategic skills necessary to excel as leaders and potentially transition into high-level roles within the organization.

Summary

As reflected in the data, MCTS continues to make meaningful progress in diversifying its workforce, with notable gains in organizational leadership. This progress is driven by a consistent commitment to equitable, transparent recruitment and selection practices. Equally important is the ongoing investment in equipping managers with the tools and training needed to effectively lead a diverse workforce. In addition, MCTS remains dedicated to offering development opportunities at all levels of the organization, ensuring that every employee has a clear and supported path for career growth.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the strategic plan:

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the county at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes only.

FISCAL EFFECT

No fiscal impacts, informational only

TERMS (If applicable)

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

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APPROVED BY:

Joe Lamers

Joe Lamers, Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Director of Legislative Services, Office of the County Clerk