

ORANGE COUNTY TOGETHER For a More Inclusive Orange County

A Project Organized by Orange County Human Relations

In moments of national tragedy and collective outrage, organizations sometimes struggle with the question of what to do beyond issuing position statements. At the same time, there is often pressure to quickly “take action” regardless of whether an organization has the knowledge or preparation to wade into what may be complex, contentious, sensitive social issues.

Orange County Human Relations Council (OC Human Relations) has been bringing diverse people together to solve the county’s critical human relations issues for almost 30 years. In keeping with this mission, we have established Orange County Together to mobilize and empower local organizations to promote diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), making Orange County better for all. Orange County Together’s membership has three components: a public pledge, a community of practice, and a financial investment that supports Orange County Together’s activities and strengthens human relations programming in the community and local schools.



Why Join Orange County Together



Belong to a Respected Community of Practice

Join a locally-focused, long-term collective effort to advance diversity, equity and inclusion.

- If your organization has already signed on to a national pledge, our Orange County-focused effort serves as a valuable adjunct
- Help make Orange County an even more attractive workplace for recruiting diverse job candidates
- Leverage the ability to learn from and with peers who understand Orange County's unique opportunities and challenges
- Learning and development sponsored by Orange County Human Relations, a trusted resource for human relations-related education in Orange County for nearly 30 years
- Develop a culture of accountability for progress by becoming part of a community committed for the long term

Cost-Effective Investment

Value of benefits greatly exceeds the cost of membership.

Basic membership includes:

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion education for your leadership and employees, essential to having a positive, productive workplace culture in the 21st century
- Access to resources including general guidance on establishing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives
- Effective diversity, equity and inclusion measures can enhance business performance and play a role in risk mitigation
- Networking opportunities
- Ability to support human relations programming in local schools and community
- Positive branding opportunities (Champions Membership offers added branding opportunities)

The Pledge

Each Member-organization signs this Pledge to demonstrate its commitment to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in Orange County:

OC Together's mission is to mobilize local organizations to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in Orange County.



As workplaces and economic engines that power Orange County, we acknowledge our influence in shaping our community. With influence comes responsibility. We believe we should use our influence to ensure that racism has no place in Orange County and Orange County is a place where every person can reach their human potential.

We know that diversity, equity and inclusion are good for the county's economy, corporate performance and innovation, and for our employees' ability to thrive. Most importantly, we believe that every person deserves to live free of racism and oppression.

But we recognize that there is much more work to do to eliminate racism against our Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian American neighbors, and all forms of bias against other groups. For these reasons, we pledge to take concrete action to eradicate systemic and individual racism, promote anti-racism, and foster diversity, equity and inclusion.

We will:

- 1. Listen**, and assess our own internal organizational cultures for diversity, equity, inclusion and openness
- 2. Learn**, educating ourselves and our employees about how we can live the values we articulate, including understanding systemic racism and what it means to be anti-racist
- 3. Create** strategic plans and concrete goals to achieve diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces (including systems, policies, practices, and processes) and share those plans and goals with our boards of directors
- 4. Build** metrics to track our progress against the goals we set for ourselves
- 5. Drive** accountability for reaching the goals we set for ourselves, which includes transparency about how we're doing
- 6. Lead** brave conversations, maintaining environments where our employees feel their voices can safely be heard, and encouraging awareness and respect for individuals' unique experiences
- 7. Invest** equitably in our community to advance racial inclusion and equitable economic opportunity
- 8. Share** our experiences and best practices with our peers to help create a broader culture of diversity, equity and inclusion among businesses and other organizations in Orange County

Our pledge is not intended to minimize or over-simplify the harm done by racism and other forms of bias in this country. Our pledge does, however, reflect our commitment to moving beyond words – doing our part to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive Orange County.

A Community of Practice

Each Member will have access to learning and development resources designed by OC Human Relations to facilitate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Examples include:*

OC Together's Members will receive a "badge" identifying them as members and advocates for diversity, equity and inclusion, which they may use on their websites, etc.



General Guidance

- Top-level recommendations to answer your questions such as “what to do next?”
- General roadmap for starting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives (for Champions Members)
- The ability for Members to share their own best practices, do’s and don’ts to help Members benefit from the experiences of fellow Members
- Feedback from OC Human Relations on how you’re doing (e.g., completing training modules)

Education—Community of Practice Training

Training sessions by highly regarded experts (i.e., not limited to the usual cadre of corporate consultants) on timely, relevant topics such as:

- Team Building/Social Identity
- Implicit Bias
- Diversity & Inclusion including attitudinal barriers to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Intercultural Communication & Influence of Social Identity
- Conflict Management
- Conflict Engagement
- Inclusive Leadership Development
- History of Race Relations in Orange County
- Additional topics tailored to your needs (for Champions Members)
- Flexible framework to amplify impact of your investment (e.g., train-the-trainer program)

Resources

Access to value-added resources such as:

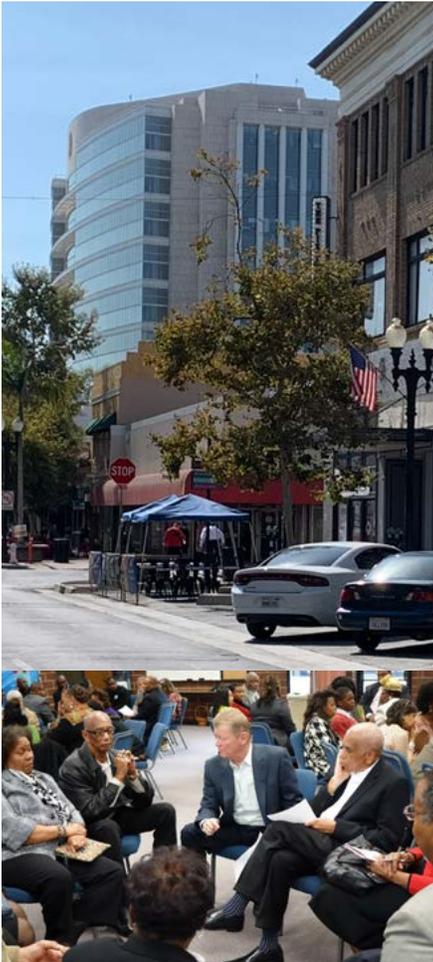
- The ability to create, and access, case studies and best practices maintained by OC Together on behalf of Members
- Networking (via events such as OC Together annual summit) with like-minded organizations, designed to appeal to Chief Executive Officers, Chief Diversity Officers, and Employee Resource Group leaders among others

By taking part in OC Together diversity, equity and inclusion programs, Member-organizations can realize the full value of participation.

** Programming will be rolled out over the remainder of 2020 and into 2021*

Financial Investment

Your investment in *OC Together* allows access to flexible, cost-effective training from a partner you can trust along with other benefits shown below.



In addition to cost-effective training, membership in OC Together offers benefits such as positive branding, opportunities for enhanced employee engagement and recruiting, and the opportunity to support OC Human Relations’ highly regarded community programming such as Bridges Safe and Respectful Schools Programs (middle and high school students) and community mediation.

Benefits	Champion	Practitioner
• Ability to participate in OC Together program design	✓	
• Top-level recommendations to answer your questions such as “what to do next?”	✓	✓
• General roadmap for starting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives	✓	
• Community of Practice Training at your site	✓	
• Community of Practice Training at centrally located site (includes virtual training)	✓	✓
• OC Together “Badge” identifying members as advocates for diversity, inclusion and equity	✓	✓
• Individual recognition as founding member on OC Together website landing page	✓	
• Recognition on OC Together website	✓	✓
• Recognition at OC Human Relations annual awards event	✓	✓
• Access to Member-generated best practice/ case study material	✓	✓
• Feedback on how your company is doing	✓	✓
• Networking (via events) with like-minded organizations including OC Together annual summit	✓	✓

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there expectations Members must abide by?

Yes. To preserve the integrity and value of the OC Together brand for its Members, each Member is expected to conduct itself in a manner that reflects positively on OC Together. More specifics are described below.

Must we comply with every provision of the Pledge? What if we're just starting our diversity, equity and inclusion journey?

Members are expected to make best efforts to abide by the commitments the Member is making in the OC Together Pledge. We recognize, however, that different organizations are at different stages of their journey. Each is expected to do the best they can given their circumstances.

Members are expected to set realistic goals for themselves and make steady progress toward meeting those goals. Members are also expected to create appropriate internal accountability mechanisms that will aid them in meeting their goals. OC Human Relations is available to assist Members who desire more personalized guidance (separate fee applies).

Are we required to participate in OC Together Community of Practice training and events?

Members are encouraged to participate in as much programming as possible to get the full value of their

membership and most importantly, help advance their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. At a minimum, it is recommended that Members participate in OC Together training and ensure that Member employees are aware of these training opportunities

Do I have to worry about revealing information about my company at OC Together events or if we contribute case studies?

It is recommended that companies maintain whatever safeguards they practice to protect their proprietary or confidential information. However, Members are expected to maintain a "safe space" for discussion of common concerns during OC Together events involving other Members, so that all Members can maximize learning opportunities at these events. Members should not reveal information they learn from other Members unless the disclosing party grants permission to do so.

Do I have to worry about my CEO or other company leaders being solicited about non-OC Together matters if we attend OC Together events?

Members are expected to use OC Together events involving fellow Members as an opportunity to further the diversity, equity and inclusion mission (and focus on other business matters at a different time!)

The OC Together Resources include "feedback" from OC Human Relations on Members' progress. What does this feedback entail? Will it be public?

Metrics and feedback specifics are still being developed but are expected to entail reviewing Members' progress in carrying out the commitments in the Pledge and completion of available training. Feedback is intended to be a dialogue between OC Human Relations and each Member. Remember, the intent of OC Together is to help Members accomplish their DEI goals and not to embarrass.

When will OC Together programming be rolled out?

All programming is expected to be rolled out on a continuing basis over the course of the next two years, starting with the training programs. It is anticipated that the first OC Together Summit will be held in 2021. OC Together intends to provide a programming timeline once programming plans are complete.

What if my company already has a robust DEI initiative but still wants to support OC Together?

Your participation is still valuable and most welcome! Speak with your OC Human Relations contact about options for your organization.

About Orange County Human Relations

OC Human Relations has a long-standing reputation as a trusted partner to bring groups together and work within communities, schools and across Orange County to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

The urgent need for swift action to combat hate and all its manifestations is clear. Indeed, in the nearly 30-year existence of Orange County Human Relations, there has seldom been a more pressing need for our services in pursuit of our mission: to foster mutual understanding among residents and eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in order to make Orange County a better place for ALL people to live, work and do business.

Our history began in 1971 when the Orange County Board of Supervisors created the Orange County Human Relations Commission. Twenty years later, the Orange County Human Relations Council was created as a partner agency to augment the Commission's goals and offer much-needed programming and services to the community. Today, the Council (now known as Orange County Human Relations) and the Commission are separate entities joined in an innovative public/private partnership in which OC Human Relations implements the Commission's work.

We fulfill our mission through the implementation of programs and activities that focus on:

- Creating safe and inclusive communities including through programs to promote positive community-police relations
- Developing diverse leaders among our youth and adults
- Mediating conflicts in our communities through civil discourse
- Building understanding and respect to eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination

In addition to these core programs, OC Human Relations responds to human relations crisis situations as they occur in our communities, including tracking and reporting on hate incidents and hate crimes. And we recognize individuals, law enforcement, schools, businesses and community leaders/organizations for their contributions toward positive human relations in Orange County through our annual Orange County Human Relations Awards.

