

# EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

Executive Management Commitment shows that the organization is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and that leadership is willing to set the tone for a culture of respect to be embraced throughout the entire organization.

## WHO IS CUWA?

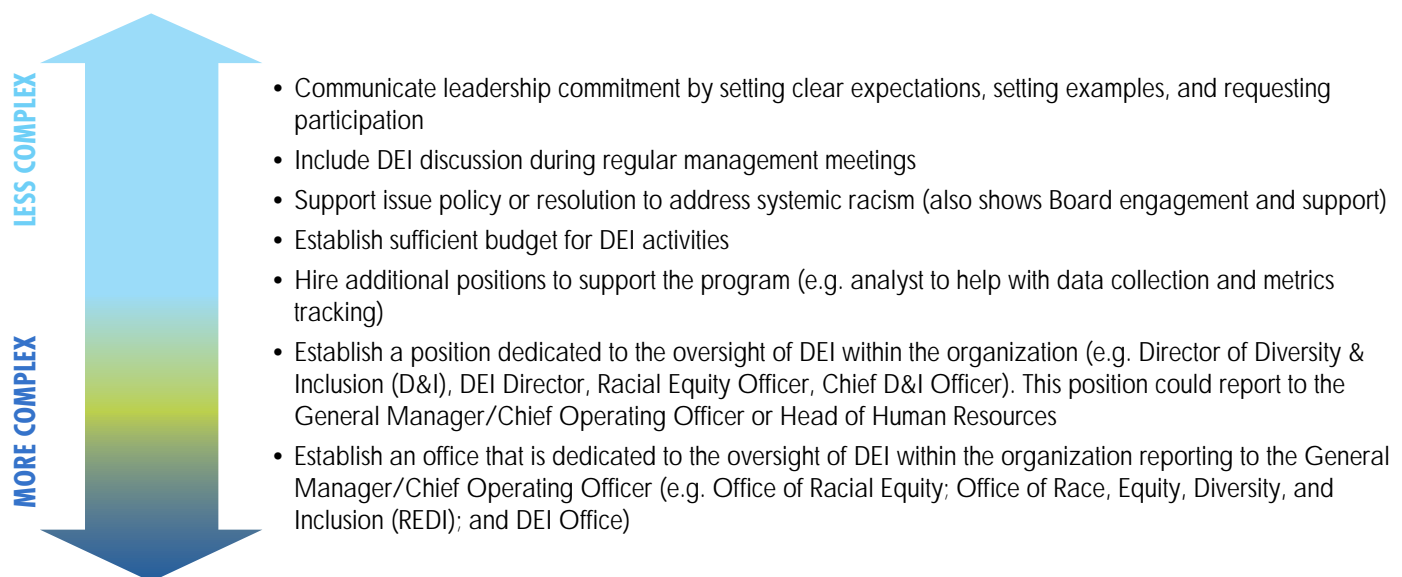
Established in 1990, California Urban Water Agencies (CUWA) is a nonprofit corporation of 11 major urban water agencies collectively delivering drinking water to approximately two-thirds of California's population. Water delivered by CUWA's 11 member agencies is a lifeline supporting California's urban populations and powering the bulk of the state's \$3.2 trillion economy. CUWA agencies are committed to addressing systemic racism, promoting equity, and catalyzing change for marginalized communities throughout the water community.

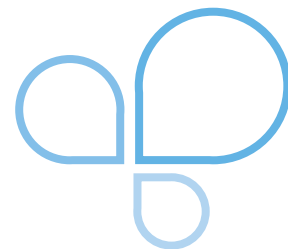
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## Types:

Executive Management Commitment can take several forms. Implementing multiple forms of commitment strengthens visibility and can accelerate the pace at which change occurs. Some examples shown in order of complexity include:





## Other Considerations:

- Executive Management Commitment alone is not enough. The commitment must be paired with other actions/activities (such as those identified in the **Action Plan**) to secure buy-in from all levels within the organization.
- Employees can often show skepticism that “new initiatives” are fleeting. Executive Management Commitment communicates that culture change is here to stay and DEI is ingrained into the culture. Sustained commitment can help overcome skepticism and provide needed support while longer term actions are implemented.
- An organization’s leadership can take action even without directives from government leaders (e.g., mayors). While actions can be easier to implement if the governing body has a directive on racial equity (providing the organization an outside impetus for response), it is not required.

## Implementation Best Practices:

Executive Management Commitment can be sustained throughout all levels of the organization by describing how DEI initiatives are in alignment with the overall organization mission, vision, values, and goals.

### **Repeat and reinforce messages**

In addition to clear communications on why actions are needed, repeating and reinforcing messages conveys that the organization is committed to change.

### **Understand that DEI is an ongoing process**

Leaders must be willing to be vulnerable to make mistakes and model conduct as this is a continual learning process (don't let perfection be the enemy of good).

### **Overall support takes resources and commitment**

Leaders champion recruitment programs that are structured to mitigate bias, improve diversity, and elevate their teams. Senior leaders often want to be supportive but may not fully grasp what the right activities are or what is needed to do each activity. The level of resources an organization is willing to put into supporting these DEI activities can also be a signal for level of overall support/commitment.

## References:

- [Contra Costa Water District. 2020. Diversity & Inclusion Employee Advisory Groups \(Administrative Procedure XII-5\).](#)
- [East Bay Municipal Utilities District. 2020. Principles and Action Plan for District's Response to Racial Discrimination and Violence Against Black and African Americans as most Recently Exemplified by the Killing of George Floyd \(see page 217\).](#)
- [Los Angeles, City of. 2020. Racial Equity in City Government \(Executive Directive No 27\) -](#)
- [San Diego, City of. 2020. Statement on Creation of Office of Race and Equity.](#)
- [San Francisco, City of. 2019. Administrative Code – Office of Racial Equity \(Ordinance No 188-19\).](#)
- [San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. 2009. Environmental Justice Policy \(Resolution: No 09-0170\).](#)
- [San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. 2020. Resolution Condemning Systemic Racism and Promoting Racial Justice \(Resolution: No 20-0149\).](#)

References will be updated on the CUWA website as more information and examples become available.