



American Heart Association®

CEO Roundtable



# DRIVING HEALTH EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Creating a more equitable workplace is the right thing to do.

Instituting health equity practices leads to a healthy, productive workforce. As **champions for health equity**, by 2024, the American Heart Association will advance cardiovascular health for all, including identifying and removing barriers to health care access and quality.

“To ensure every person has the same opportunity to live a full, healthy life, we must come together to dismantle the economic, social and racial barriers to health—especially in vulnerable communities.”

— Nancy Brown, CEO  
American Heart Association

Visit [Heart.org/WorkplaceEquity](https://www.heart.org/WorkplaceEquity) — your one-stop destination for employer resources, actionable strategies and sample policies on the journey toward health equity.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- Practice intentional inclusion at all levels of the organization, including but not limited to shared decision-making, ensuring participation and listening to perspectives of individuals from historically excluded populations.
- Eliminate structural racism and bias to promote health equity and improve employee health and well-being.
- Commit to practicing allyship, modeled and supported by leadership, to promote health equity.
- Adopt a common language guide promoting dignity and culturally sensitive use of language.
- Adopt policies, practices and programs that address the historical legacies of structural inequities and how current systems, practices and norms may perpetuate inequity. Explore and acknowledge the organization's role in these histories and systems.
- Create a plan for assessing the impact of organizational change on health equity.
- Be accountable for having a true impact on advancing health equity. Intent is not enough.

## INTERNAL ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES



1. **Review and revise hiring, retention and recruitment practices** to eliminate policies that may favor one group of people or disadvantage others.
2. **Include equity in evaluation** of employees, managers and leadership.
3. **Offer comprehensive, understandable and affordable health care coverage** for all employees.
4. **Ensure leadership is composed of people from diverse backgrounds** and representative of your workforce and community.
5. **Support employee financial well-being** through education, employee benefits and other strategies.
6. **Adopt anti-racism principles and implement anti-racism policies.**
7. **Promote employee health literacy and employee benefits literacy.**
8. **Offer paid family and medical leave.**
9. **Ensure pay equity and provide a living wage.**
10. **Promote use of employee assistance programs.**
11. **Ensure employees have a voice in organizational decision-making.**
12. **Offer diversity, equity and inclusion training among employees.**
13. **Review contracts to maximize hiring of historically underrepresented businesses** and ensure supplier commitment to equity and equitable practices.
14. **Advocate for culturally and linguistically effective training** for all employees, providers and vendors.
15. **Review organizational communications** for cultural appropriateness, diverse representation and accessibility.

## EXTERNAL ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES

Employers can focus their advocacy efforts to advance equity through these actions.



1. Advocate for **comprehensive, understandable and affordable health insurance coverage for all.**
2. Advocate for **affordable housing.**
3. Advocate for **high-quality, accessible and affordable early care and education for children.**
4. Advocate for **culturally and linguistically appropriate services in the health system.**
5. Advocate for **increased support of public health infrastructure.**

To access these resources and additional digital content, visit [heart.org/WorkplaceEquity](https://heart.org/WorkplaceEquity).