

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER DECLARING THE ADOPTION OF A CITY-WIDE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AND ACTION POLICY; DIRECTING THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TO COORDINATE WITH THE CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER IN ORDER TO TAKE ANY NECESSARY ACTION TO FORMALIZE, PUBLISH, AND IMPLEMENT THE CITY-WIDE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AND ACTION POLICY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Mayor's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (MOEDI) serves as the internal and external resource for ideas, practices and policies that operationalize Mayor Andre Dickens' Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) goals for the City of Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, MOEDI strives for equitable opportunity and a city that works for everyone; and

WHEREAS, MOEDI does this work with an orientation towards systems change, efforts that provide education and resources to increase understanding of EDI and social justice issues, examine and change policies and practices that perpetuate inequalities, and build supportive and inclusive communities where all individuals feel valued, respected and belong; and

WHEREAS, it is the goal of MOEDI to support the many diverse communities of this amazing city in ways that ensure outcomes for success and life are not dictated by race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, zip code or any other identity markers; and

WHEREAS, MOEDI is committed to Equity in Action, i.e., making data-driven decisions that prioritize people and progress with a sense of urgency; and

WHEREAS, MOEDI believes inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate; and

WHEREAS, an inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people; and

WHEREAS, increasingly, a recognition of unconscious or "implicit bias" helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity, and inclusivity is critical for diverse organizations to attain equitable actions and outcomes; and

WHEREAS, when an organization commits to actively focusing on and operationalizing inclusion, the benefits are numerous; and

WHEREAS, inside an environment that allows people to feel psychologically safe, evidence notes that we see better decisions, more effective problem solving and deeper connection to an organization's mission, and we are able to understand those we work and serve with more effectively; and

WHEREAS, to serve the dynamic people and needs of those who live, work and play in Atlanta, we must identify their diverse needs and work to develop inclusive communities that create equitable opportunities for them; and

WHEREAS, inclusive language is a form of communication that avoids using words, expressions or assumptions that would stereotype, discriminate, demean or exclude people; and

WHEREAS, inclusive language acknowledges the evolving nature of language, and commits those of us who work at the City to expanding, reimagining, and working to advance best practices in language that fosters a sense of belonging both internally and externally; and

WHEREAS, by practicing inclusive language, organizations begin to encourage a mental model shift, the foundation of systems change; and

WHEREAS, when we foster inclusion, we see teams and leaders develop more effective policies and procedures that acknowledge the complexity of people and their needs, and these changes can lead to systemic shifts, and ultimately organizational transformation; and

WHEREAS, language is powerful and can have varying effects, and it is important to understand that certain words or phrases are considered hurtful or offensive; and

WHEREAS, outdated language across government can exclude thousands of people; and

WHEREAS, when bias appears in foundational documents that guide our practices and behavior, we embed those same biases in our work,

WHEREAS, and by reviewing language, we can identify opportunities to leverage language to shift how we understand and engage in our work; and

WHEREAS, inclusive language avoids discriminatory words, promotes social change, and contributes to achieving equality; and

WHEREAS, accordingly, it is my desire to create a more inclusive government and community, declaring a city-wide Inclusive Language and Action policy; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this policy shall be to utilize language as a bridge to welcome all persons regardless of their actual or perceived characteristics of age, ancestry, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, financial or socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion or religious beliefs, sex, or sexual orientation, political or social affiliations; and

WHEREAS, this policy shall reaffirm the City of Atlanta's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion by requiring the implementation of measures to ensure these values and practices are incorporated and accounted for in the work we do across the city for our employees, residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, this policy shall also help spotlight the City of Atlanta's responsibility to inclusion and to ensure an awareness by all residents, visitors and anyone planning to call Atlanta home; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to this policy, members of my Administration shall take steps to ensure that any language in any City of Atlanta official documents does not exclude any particular groups of people; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the declaration of a city-wide Inclusive Language and Action policy, I am hereby directing the Chief Operating Officer to coordinate with the Chief Equity Officer in order to take any necessary action to formalize, publish, and implement the city-wide Inclusive Language and Action policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, pursuant to Sections 2-182(4) and 2-301 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, it is hereby ordered that the adoption of a city-wide Inclusive Language and Action policy is hereby declared.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that in accordance with this declaration, the Chief Operating Officer is hereby directed to coordinate with the Chief Equity Officer in order to take any necessary action to formalize, publish, and implement the city-wide Inclusive Language and Action policy.

BE IT FINALLY ORDERED, that this order shall remain in place until rescinded.

This 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2023.

  
Andre Dickens, Mayor

ATTESTED:

  
Interim Municipal Clerk

**A. Vanessa Waldon**  
**Municipal Clerk**