



DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
**STATEWIDE
IMPLICIT BIAS
TRAINING**

FINAL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2025

Message From Our Leader

Over the past year, EquitiFy has delivered implicit bias training to over 10,000 Regional Center team members and contractors across California. This monumental effort, spanning online and in-person sessions, represents a significant stride toward fostering equity and inclusion in developmental services.



Our training initiative was designed to educate and drive real, measurable change. By equipping Regional Center staff and consultants with the tools to identify and mitigate implicit biases, we have empowered them to serve individuals and families better. This impact has been tangible: participants reported increased awareness, improved interactions, and enhanced service delivery. These outcomes include more appropriate diagnoses, increased access to services, and a notable improvement in customer service experiences.

Key to this success was our ability to adapt and innovate. From creating FLÖDIFy—a cutting-edge platform for real-time training reporting—to collaborating with training leads to ensure seamless execution, our team consistently rose to the challenge. These efforts have left a lasting legacy, with FLÖDIFy now a valuable tool for tracking progress and ensuring accountability.

The testimonials we received from participants have been both humbling and inspiring. Many shared how the training transformed their perspectives, deepened their understanding, and led to more equitable practices in their daily work. This feedback reaffirms the profound value of this initiative.

We owe much of this success to our partners, particularly the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the African American Focus Group. Their leadership and advocacy were instrumental in addressing service disparities and making this program a reality. Additionally, accreditation from the California Board of Registered Nurses underscores the program's rigor and relevance to professional growth.

I am deeply grateful to our talented team for embodying the principles we teach: collaboration, inclusion, and continuous improvement. Their dedication and expertise made this program not just a contractual deliverable but a catalyst for meaningful change. This journey has been an inspiring reminder of what is possible when passionate professionals unite behind a shared purpose. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a more equitable future in developmental services—ensuring every individual and family receives the care and respect they deserve.

With gratitude,

Dr. Vic Baker
Founder & CEO EquitiFy

Executive Summary

EquitiFy provided implicit bias training to over 10,000 Regional Center staff and contractors in California through online courses and 294 in-person sessions at 41 locations. To ensure comprehensive participation, 66 of these in-person sessions were conducted as makeup trainings following the initial round, accommodating those who had yet to complete the instruction. The training addressed disparities in service access and equity by equipping staff with tools to recognize and mitigate implicit biases. Participants were prepared to deliver more equitable and effective services to individuals and families within the developmental disabilities system.

Key Outcomes

The training led to significant outcomes, including an 81% increase in participants' understanding of implicit bias and a 34% rise in their willingness to intervene when observing bias in the workplace. These changes contributed to increased service access for underserved groups, more accurate diagnoses, and improved customer service. Participants also reported greater awareness of their biases and enhancements in cultural sensitivity and communication, positively impacting service delivery.

Participant Feedback

Participants provided feedback indicating the initiative's influence on their professional practices and workplace culture. Nearly half reported increased self-reflection on biases related to race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Teams described better collaboration and communication with clients and colleagues, creating a more inclusive and respectful work environment. Many participants emphasized integrating cultural considerations into their interactions as a way to improve service equity and outcomes.

Systemic Advancements

The initiative resulted in systemic changes across Regional Centers, including improved translation services and a focus on reducing service disparities. Tracking systems facilitated monitoring participant progress and ensuring accountability for these changes. These efforts supported individual and organizational improvements, fostering a more equitable service approach.

Recommendations for Sustained Impact

To build on these outcomes, it is recommended to implement annual refresher courses, leadership development initiatives, and regular assessments to address systemic biases. Reinforcing these practices will help Regional Centers further enhance service delivery and equity.

Conclusion

The implicit bias training helped transform attitudes and behaviors among Regional Center staff, enabling them to better serve California's diverse communities. This initiative laid a foundation for more effective and equitable developmental disabilities services, ensuring individuals and families receive the care they need.

Research & Stakeholder Engagement

The project prioritized extensive stakeholder engagement to ensure the development of a curriculum highly relevant to the specific needs and experiences of Regional Center staff. This involved a comprehensive approach, encompassing individual and small group interviews, focus groups, and meetings with key stakeholders such as Regional Center Executives, DDS staff, and community members. EquitiFy

utilized qualitative methods, including grounded theory and narrative analysis, to gather insights from these sessions. By focusing on real-life scenarios encountered within the Regional Center system, the project aimed to create a program that enhanced participant engagement and comprehension and ensured the curriculum's direct applicability to the unique challenges and contexts faced by Regional Center staff in their daily work.

Engagement sessions were conducted with various groups, including Regional Center Executive Directors, DDS staff, and the DDS African American and Hispanic Focus Groups. Several interviews were held with Subject Matter Experts, including Dr. Larry Yin, Dr. Lauren Libero, and Dr. Sienna Go.

Several key lessons emerged from the research and engagement session process:

- **Scheduling Considerations:** Scheduling large group sessions as the sole agenda item for the meeting is crucial to maximize engagement and ensure adequate time for in-depth discussion.
- **Group Composition:** For future engagement sessions, consider smaller, more targeted groups based on their role or department (Intake, Early Start, Community Services) to gather more nuanced feedback. Consider including non-direct service staff (e.g., Finance, IT, HR) in separate engagement sessions to capture their unique perspectives and ensure the curriculum's relevance across all departments.
- **Training Manager Input:** Conduct dedicated engagement sessions with Training Managers to gather information on existing training programs, identify potential overlaps, and ensure the implicit bias curriculum complements existing training initiatives. This will also help create buy-in from the group that will be most intimately involved in executing the training.

Findings: This part of the project underscores the critical need to address systemic biases and improve equity within the Regional Center system. Engagement with diverse stakeholders revealed key challenges disproportionately impacting underserved communities, including families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and those facing socioeconomic disparities.

“The responsibility to fix the problems should not be put on those receiving services.”

Participant in the
Hispanic Focus Group

- **Communication and Language Barriers:** Challenges in effective communication due to language barriers, cultural differences, and inadequate translation services.
- **Systemic Inconsistency:** Variations in service availability, quality, and access across different regions within the system.
- **Cultural Competency:** The critical need to enhance cultural competency among staff includes understanding and respecting diverse cultural values, communication styles, and family experiences.
- **Implicit Bias:** The recognition that implicit biases exist within the system and the importance of developing strategies to mitigate their impact on service delivery and decision-making.
- **Family Empowerment:** Families need to be empowered by enhancing their knowledge of the system, providing them with the tools and resources to advocate for their needs, and ensuring they have the tools and resources to participate actively in the decision-making process.
- **Staff Turnover and Large Caseloads:** The significant impact of staff turnover and large caseloads on service continuity and excellence and the need for strategies to improve staff retention and recruitment.

Clinicians must have the mindset of ruling it in first, rather than ruling it out. They must understand they have the power to change lives.

Curriculum

The overarching goal of the implicit bias training was to reduce the stigma associated with biases, acknowledging that everyone possesses them. By exploring the impact of biases on decision-making and service delivery within the Regional Center system, the training ultimately aimed to improve service outcomes for individuals and their families.

The overall learning outcomes for the implicit bias training were the following:

- Define implicit bias and explain how it can impact our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- Understand the impact of implicit bias on diagnostic and clinical outcomes for developmentally disabled individuals and families.
- Identify common implicit biases and how they can manifest in the clinical setting.
- Utilize evidence-based strategies for managing implicit bias in ourselves and identify when implicit bias may be at play in others.
- Understand the impact of implicit bias on decision-making and how to mitigate disparate outcomes.
- Apply the strategies learned in the training to reduce the impact of implicit bias on service delivery and within the workplace.

Participant Pathways to Success

1

Program Introduction and Kickoff Webinars: Regional Center staff were initially introduced to the training program and invited to attend one of a series of Kickoff Webinars.

2

Platform Access: Following the introductory webinar, participants were directed to the training portal, where they created individual accounts to access the online training modules.

3

Insight Pre-Survey: Before commencing the training, participants completed the survey to assess their previous knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors around biases.

4

Online and In-Person Modules: Participants progressed through the courses sequentially, with completion of each course a prerequisite for accessing subsequent modules. In some instances, participants were permitted access to Course 4 before completing Courses 1-3 due to time constraints. Courses included the following:

- Defining, Acknowledging, and Understanding Implicit Bias
- The Impact of Implicit Bias on Decision Making in Service and Care
- Empathy and Bias Within a Person-Centered Approach
- Disrupting Bias to Improve Your Approach to Service and Care (In-Person)
- Action Planning: Managing and Mitigating Your Own Bias in the Workplace
- Bias in Everyday Society: Policies and Practices
- Action Planning: Managing and Mitigating Your Own Bias in Service and Care
- Leaders Toolkit: Managing and Mitigating Bias: Workplace Culture (Live Webinar)

5

Insight Post-Survey: After completing Courses 1-7, participants completed a survey to evaluate their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors around biases after completing the course.

6

Certification: Participants receive a certificate of completion upon finishing all assigned courses. The course is also accredited for Continuing Education Credits by the California Board of Registered Nurses.

7

Leadership Training: A separate leadership training program (Course 8) and certificate were provided to those designated as Regional Center leaders.

Evaluation

A comprehensive assessment strategy was employed to gather participant feedback throughout the training program. They provided foundational information at the beginning and evaluative data at the conclusion. This included the Insight Pre- and Post-Surveys, which were required surveys that incorporated quantitative and qualitative questions, and In-Person Training Evaluations conducted after each in-person training session to gather feedback on training content, instructor delivery, and overall learning experience.

Participant Numbers: Although respondents were required to take the surveys, not all questions were answered by every participant. Additionally, some respondents began and then abandoned surveys, leading to varying numbers of responses for each question. A total of 10,555 respondents initiated the Insight Pre-Survey, and 8,298 respondents took the Post-Survey.

Insight Pre-Survey: This survey encompassed several key areas, including awareness of implicit bias, self-reflection regarding one's own biases across various social categories, perceptions of bias within the Regional Center system, and demographic information. The information gathered from the Pre-Survey was used to inform the customization of Course 4 content.

Insight Post-Survey: This was a critical tool for evaluating the impact of the implicit bias training program. It included areas such as knowledge gain regarding implicit bias concepts and their implications for service delivery, attitudinal shifts in respondents' attitudes and beliefs related to their biases and the potential impact of bias within the Regional Center system, personal and organizational changes due to the training, and feedback on the overall learning experience.

Implicit Association Test (IAT): The Insight Pre-Survey included the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which measures the strength of associations between concepts in a person's mind. As it has been developed, the test helps us see where people have a positive association and preference for one group over another. In a typical survey, people are often reluctant to admit pre-judgments and preferences, although uncomfortable, the IAT helps us to understand where people might hold biases against, or stereotypes about people from different groups. Many respondents noted their uncomfortableness with this at the end of the Pre-Survey. For future rounds of training, it has been removed from the Pre-Survey.

The framework for analysis scores the IAT on a scale of -1 to 1. A score of 0 would indicate no preference toward either group. A score closer to 1 would indicate a "preference for white people." The score was 0.3, indicating a "slight preference for white people." This varied at centers across the state.

Insight Pre-Survey Observations

The Pre-Survey included several questions about respondents' perceptions of bias within their Regional Centers, focusing on treatment and service delivery differences.

Services Received: 45 percent of respondents reported seeing certain groups (races/ethnicities, genders, socio-economic statuses, etc.) receiving services that others don't. Twenty-two percent reported no, and 33 percent reported that they were unsure.

Different Treatment: Just over half of the respondents (51 percent) reported that they have not ever noticed a co-worker treating a person they serve differently based on identity factors, such as race/ethnicity, culture, religion, gender etc. 33 percent were unsure and 17 percent had witnessed such treatment. Participants were also asked a follow-up question, which provided them space to describe where they had seen this behavior. Examples were provided regarding race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, culture, gender, and other factors.

Unfair Treatment: 6 percent of respondents had observed staff of one race/ethnicity treating individuals and families served of the same race/ethnicity unfairly at their Regional Center. Seventy-five percent had not observed such treatment, and 19 percent were unsure.

Co-worker Treatment: When asked if they had ever noticed a co-worker being treated differently by other employees, supervisors, etc., based on identity factors such as race/ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, etc., 68 percent said they had not, while 16 percent said yes and 16 percent said they were not sure.

Differences in Services: 62 percent of respondents reported that their Regional Center is actively working to reduce discrepancies in services based on identity factors, such as race, culture, religion, gender etc. 6 percent reported that they were not working on it, and 33 percent reported that they didn't know.

Insight Pre- and Post-Survey Key Findings

To analyze the impact of the training, data from approximately 5,800 respondents were matched based on unique identifiers. The difference in this number was due to respondents entering their Student ID incorrectly.

Enhanced knowledge: The training program effectively enhanced respondents' knowledge of bias. The self-reported knowledge score increased from 6.25 to 8.38 on a 10-point scale (0=no knowledge, 10=expert).

Intervention: 13 percent of respondents reported an increase in their agreement that if someone is being treated unfairly, it is their place to intervene.

81%

of respondents reported that their knowledge on the subject of bias had increased following the training.

Take Action: 34 percent of respondents reported an increase in their likelihood of taking action if they noticed bias occurring in the workplace.

Observations:

Since taking the implicit bias training course, 12 percent of respondents have observed a co-worker being treated differently by other employees, supervisors, etc., based on identity factors such as race/ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, etc. 67 percent of respondents had not observed this, and 21 percent were unsure.

49%

strongly agreed or agreed that they have noticed an increased awareness related to implicit bias around their workplace.

Assumptions: 17 percent of respondents reported a decrease in how often they made assumptions about individuals and families they serve before meeting them. The decrease was observed across various factors:

Family Name: 13%

Race/Ethnicity: 16%

Language Spoken at Home: 17%

Home Address/Neighborhood: 21%

Recognition of Systemic Factors: 32 percent of respondents reported an increased belief that factors such as income, parental education, home language, cultural beliefs, and race/ethnicity contribute to differences in diagnoses and services offered between the people they serve.

Increased Self-Reflection: The training program positively impacted respondents' self-reflection regarding their biases. A significant percentage of respondents reported an increased awareness and examination of their biases across various categories.

Race/Ethnicity: 46%

Gender: 45%

Sexual Orientation: 47%

Socio-economic Status: 47%

Disabilities: 45%

46%

of respondents reported an increase in their overall self-reflection regarding their own biases.

Changes at the Regional Centers: Respondents were asked if they had seen changes in their Regional Centers around implicit bias. They noted both positive changes and challenges and areas for further changes. Positive changes seen included the following:

Increased Awareness:

- Participants reported increased awareness of their biases and how they might impact their work.
- Increased awareness and discussions of implicit bias among colleagues.
- Greater self-reflection among staff.

Improved Communication and Interactions:

- More open and respectful communication among colleagues.
- More mindful and sensitive language is used when interacting with clients and colleagues.
- Increased efforts to be more inclusive and respectful in interactions.

Enhanced Cultural Sensitivity:

- Increased awareness and appreciation of cultural differences.
- Increased efforts to incorporate cultural considerations in service delivery.
- Increased use of culturally appropriate language and communication styles.

Systemic Improvements:

- Increased availability of translated materials and resources.
- Efforts to improve access to services for underserved communities.
- Increased focus on equity and inclusion within the Regional Center.

Challenges and Areas for Further Improvement

- Limited Behavioral Change: While increased awareness was observed, some respondents reported limited observable changes in their behavior or colleagues' behavior.
- Concerns about System-Level Changes: Some respondents expressed concerns about the slow pace of systemic change within the Regional Center system.
- Continued Need for Focus: Participants emphasized the need for continued training and education on implicit bias and cultural competency and for ongoing reinforcement.

Differences in Services: Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73 percent) reported that they felt that their Regional Center is actively working to reduce discrepancies in services based on identity factors, such as race, culture, religion, gender etc. 4 percent said no, and 23 percent said they weren't sure.

Thinking About Bias: Respondents were asked how they think about implicit bias now. Common themes that arose were **increased self-awareness, focus on self-reflection, recognition of systemic issues, an emphasis on action, focus on mindful decision-making, and the recognition of the importance of ongoing learning.** Respondents also noted challenges and limitations, including resistance to change, concern about effectiveness in changing attitudes and behaviors, and systemic biases. **Many also mentioned specific changes, including improved interpersonal skills, utilizing more inclusive practices, and increased awareness of systemic issues.**



Changes at Work: 26 percent reported that they had identified places at work where changes could be made to reduce the impact of implicit bias. Respondents were provided a space to identify the changes they could make to reduce bias. Some of the common themes are below.

Stronger Emphasis on Systemic Change:

Respondents expressed a greater awareness of systemic issues within the organization and an interest in changing them. This includes concerns about unequal access to services, power imbalances, hiring and promotion practices, and resource allocation.

Increased Focus on Workplace Culture: Respondents emphasized the importance of creating a more inclusive workplace culture and promoting a culture of respect and inclusivity among colleagues. Respondents were also interested in addressing power dynamics and ensuring equal opportunities for all employees.

Self-Reflection: Respondents continued to emphasize the importance of self-reflection and accountability in addressing their biases, and many committed to actively challenging their assumptions and biases.

Several specific recommendations for improvement were also provided. That included:

- Increased diversity and inclusion training. Including expanded training on implicit bias and cultural competency.
- Improved data collection and analysis to identify potential disparities and address them proactively.
- It'd be great if you could enhance organizational communication, especially regarding policies, procedures, and decision-making processes.
- Improved access to services by addressing language barriers, transportation issues, and other barriers.

73%

of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they would recommend this implicit bias course to others.

72%

of respondents reported that they strongly agreed or agreed when asked if as a result of this Implicit Bias Training Course, they are thinking about implicit bias in a new way.

Recommend This Course:

73 percent of post-survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend this implicit bias course. 21 percent were neutral, and 6 percent disagreed. Respondents also shared who they believe should take this course, with thousands recommending it for everyone. Specific groups mentioned included upper management, vendors, and families within Regional Centers, as well as spouses, friends, and the general public.

In-Person Training Evaluation

Upon completing Course 4, Disrupt Bias to Improve Your Approach to Service and Care, participants had the option of utilizing an online survey system or taking a paper survey to evaluate the session. Over the past year, 7,882 surveys have been completed online or on paper. Quantitative and qualitative responses to the surveys are overwhelmingly positive.

The survey utilized a 1-5 scale, with one being strongly disagree and five being strongly agree. The mean scores for each question are provided below.



4.2 The session met or exceeded my expectations.

4.3 I can use the information I learned right away.

4.4 The speakers were knowledgeable about the topic.

4.2 Activities aided in my learning the material.

4.3 The handouts and materials were useful.

4.3 I would recommend this workshop to others.

Participants also had the opportunity to write comments to the question, "Is there any other feedback you would like to provide regarding the session?" Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Many comments focused on how interactive the material was, how engaging the speakers were, and how much they enjoyed the training.

Overall Positive Feedback

- **Engaging Presenters:** Many respondents praised the presenters for being engaging, knowledgeable, and passionate. Their delivery style was often described as "interactive," "informative," and "relatable."
- **Informative Content:** The training itself was consistently described as "informative," "insightful," and "useful." Participants appreciated learning about implicit bias and its impact.
- **Positive Learning Experience:** Many respondents found the training engaging and enjoyable. They appreciated the interactive elements, such as group discussions and activities, which made the learning experience more dynamic.
- **Safe and Inclusive Environment:** Several participants commented on the importance of creating a safe and inclusive learning environment that encourages open and honest discussions.

**"Great training session.
Best I've had in my time
at the Regional Center.
Very informative and
engaging!"**

Participant in the
In-Person Course

Specific Suggestions and Feedback

- **Partner work vs. group work:** Some participants suggested favoring partner work instead of group work for more intimate discussions.
- **Personal anecdotes:** Some participants found the presenters' stories impactful and appreciated their vulnerability.
- **Addressing systemic issues:**
 - One participant specifically requested a deeper dive into how systemic issues, such as redlining, contribute to bias.
 - Another participant suggested exploring how bias manifests within the Regional Center, particularly among supervisors and committees.
- **Focus on specific groups:** A few participants expressed concern that the training focused too heavily on Black experiences.
- **Increased training duration:** Some participants suggested extending the training to allow for deeper exploration of the topics.
- **Data on service distribution:** One participant specifically requested statistics on service distribution across different racial and demographic groups.

Curriculum Lessons Learned

While results from the overall course post-survey and the in-person course evaluation were overwhelmingly positive and indicated positive outcomes regarding knowledge, awareness, and skills around reducing bias, there is always room for improvement. Lessons learned include:

Training Format

- **Preference for In-Person Training:** While online courses offered flexibility, many participants preferred in-person training to facilitate more significant interaction and engagement with other participants.
- **Course Length:** Participants had varied opinions on the course length. Some found it too long, while others felt it could be more in-depth.
- **Modular Approach:** The modular format of the courses was generally well-received.

Content and Delivery

- **Diversity in Training Materials:** Participants expressed a desire for greater diversity in the training materials, particularly in the videos, including representation of individuals with diverse ages, abilities, and physical features.
- **Knowledge Check Difficulty:** Some participants found the knowledge checks challenging, suggesting a need for simplifying or adjusting the passing score.
- **Focus on Specific Areas:** Some participants wanted more in-depth coverage of specific areas of bias, such as gender, political beliefs, and disability.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Some participants experienced confusion due to the concurrent delivery of the implicit bias and cultural humility training.
- **Spanish Translation:** A Spanish Translation was provided to participants, but very few used it.

In addition to lessons learned around training format, content, and delivery, several lessons were learned around evaluation.

IAT: As mentioned before, some respondents reacted adversely to the IAT.

Student ID Number: To conduct pre/post testing, students were required to input a Student ID number into the survey system. Unfortunately, a formal validation system was unavailable between the LMS and the survey system. This interfered with the matching of pre/post-tests on many surveys.

Addressing Curriculum Challenges

To address these challenges, EquitiFy recommends the following:

- **Training Format:** Regional Centers should continue with a hybrid model that includes online and in-person components. This could vary in that in-person components could also include discussion sessions facilitated by staff.
- **Training Scheduling:** Regional center training managers need to address training fatigue. The shortened timeline for implementing Implicit Bias and the other new training mandated this year created a situation where many Regional Centers struggled to find time for all of the training without overwhelming staff. This includes creating annual or biennial schedules so that training can be spread out throughout the year.
- **Refining Content and Delivery:** As additional trainings are developed for ongoing implicit bias training, a focus should be on increasing representation in the training materials and facilitators. It should also consider ensuring more in-depth coverage of specific areas of bias, such as gender identity, disability, and political beliefs.
- **Review need for Spanish Translation:** Very few (<10) participants actively used the Spanish version of the courses. A conversation about necessity should happen amongst Regional Centers and DDS.
- **Remove IAT:** When respondents raised concerns to leadership, EquitiFy team members addressed them empathetically, ensuring a constructive and respectful dialogue around these findings. Additionally, the IAT has been removed from future pre-surveys.
- **Student ID Number:** The move to a new LMS has provided the technological ability to survey the LMS, removing the Student ID as a barrier to insights.

Training Implementation

Concurrent with curriculum development, the project team focused on thoroughly planning and implementing the training program. This phase involved Learning Management System (LMS) Integration and In-Person Training Logistics.

A Customized Training Portal Specific to DDS

This platform was the central hub for all online training activities, providing participants with a user-friendly and engaging learning experience. Key portal features utilized for this project include an intuitive user interface, seamless integration of multimedia formats, comprehensive tracking and reporting functionalities, and customization options to create a unique and engaging learning environment.

In-Person/Live Trainings

In-person training for Course 4 was conducted in two rounds to maximize participation. EquitiFy collaborated with Regional Centers and DDS to accommodate staff availability. While 9,673 attended, turnover contributed to nearly 400 starting the online course but not attending the in-person sessions, preventing them from completing the course. The two-round approach helped expand access and participation.

Scheduling: EquitiFy initially anticipated one round of training to capture all 10,000 staff and contractors. While the offerings, dates, and availability were structured to accommodate everyone, only 7,500 participants completed the course in 234 sessions. In the first round, EquitiFy captured 2,100 participants in just 66 sessions—a 55% increase in efficiency per session. EquitiFy and the Regional Centers initially partnered to register and report registrants and participants. However, over time, EquitiFy took full responsibility for registering, tracking, and reporting participants to ensure greater efficiency and accuracy.

Logistics: EquitiFy collaborated closely with each Regional Center to ensure seamless logistical support, including participant registration, venue securing, audiovisual setup, and provision of all necessary training materials and resources. This included coordinating ASL translators as needed and ensuring compliance with accessibility requirements for all participants.

Live Webinars: Staff at Regional Centers who were identified as leaders participated in Course 8, Leaders Toolkit: Managing and Mitigating Bias: Workplace Culture, which included two online units and one live webinar. Participants registered for one of the scheduled webinars and participated via Zoom.

Facilitator Training and Deployment: EquitiFy assembled a diverse team of experienced facilitators with expertise in adult learning, implicit bias, and change management. All facilitators underwent rigorous training, including in-depth curriculum mastery, comprehensive DDS and Regional Center overviews, advanced facilitation skills development, and mentored practice.

This extensive training ensured consistent delivery of high-quality training across all sessions. Facilitator assignments were carefully considered, considering factors such as scheduling availability, Regional Center demographics, travel expense, geographic knowledge, and specific requests from Regional Centers.

Regional Center Supports and Relationship Management: The successful implementation of the training program relied heavily on strong collaboration and communication between Regional Centers, DDS, and EquitiFy staff, including dedicated Regional Directors and a collaborative approach to logistical planning and feedback mechanisms.

294

in person trainings

41

locations

8

live webinars

9,673

trained in person

Training Portal Limitations

Throughout the training, several challenges emerged. Many came from our original Learning Management System (LMS). The initial LMS was suitable when the proposal was for all eight courses to be presented online. However, various challenges arose as EquitiFy moved to host in-person training and live webinars. This led to challenges with reporting, as our initial LMS did not have in-person registration or attendance management capabilities, which hindered accurate attendance and participant engagement tracking.

Additionally, significant technical limitations were encountered, including:

- Participants could bypass course requirements, such as completing all modules before receiving a certificate.
- Inaccurate course completion notifications
- Limited opportunities for Regional Center Training Managers to access reports and resolve user issues.

These limitations frustrated participants, and Training managers created confusion, delays in completing training, and an overall less-than-optimal learning experience and learning management experience.

Addressing Training Portal Limitations

To address these challenges, EquitiFy launched FLōDIFy, a new portal for implicit bias training. This move offers several key advantages for enhanced user experience:

- **Seamless Tracking:** FLōDIFy provides a comprehensive tracking system, allowing users to monitor their progress throughout the program easily.
- **Improved Course Navigation:** The new platform ensures a logical and sequential learning path, preventing participants from skipping crucial modules.
- **User-Friendly Interface:** FLōDIFy offers a user-friendly interface with intuitive navigation, making it easier for participants to access and complete training modules.

FLōDIFy also provides for streamlined administration. Regional Center Training Managers can now:

- Easily manage user enrollments and learning plans.
- Track completion rates and identify areas for improvement.
- Troubleshoot user issues efficiently through features like user impersonation.
- Improved reporting capabilities: The new platform provides comprehensive reporting capabilities, enabling data-driven insights into training effectiveness and participant engagement.



While some of these challenges were addressed during Round 2 of training, as staff who missed the first training could attend during this round, there is room for improvement in the future.

- **Advanced Scheduling:** EquitiFy recommends scheduling training sessions three to six months in advance with each Regional Center for future training. This proactive approach allows more flexibility in accommodating staff schedules and securing suitable training venues.
- **Staff Self-Scheduling:** Utilizing FLōDIFY empowers staff to register for sessions that align with their availability. This enhances staff autonomy and provides Regional Center Training Coordinators with real-time, accurate registration data.

Budget: The project budget initially encompassed three separate contracts, primarily focused on online training delivery. However, subsequent project adjustments, including adding an in-person training component, necessitated budget revisions. Incorporating in-person training introduced additional costs related to travel, logistics, coordination, and increased data and systems monitoring. To accommodate the increased costs associated with in-person training, the original contracts were amended to reflect the necessary budget adjustments. A 28 percent increase to the original budget was secured for Year 2 to cover the additional expenses incurred due to the project modifications.

Recommendations for the Future

The current training initiative drove real, measurable change in service delivery. As the current contract wraps up and we look toward the future, EquitiFy recommends the following next steps for DDS and the California Regional Centers to ensure compliance with Section 4511.1 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code: provide continuous and progressive training on implicit bias, reinforce learning through practice, and integrate the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into daily work routines.

Implicit bias is challenging to change and to effect a sustained change; organizations must move beyond training and into action. The components included in EquitiFy's Action Plan will establish a framework for uncovering biases in policies, practices, and programs and embedding equity throughout DDS and Regional Centers. This ecosystem approach implements structures that foster organizational responsibility for diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, opportunities for high-quality intergroup contact, and processes that bypass interpersonal bias. Although no simple, one-size-fits-all solutions address organizational equity and inclusion, organizational leaders will be provided with the tools and training they need to design more effective diversity strategies.

Implicit Bias Action Plan



The action plan builds on the successes, challenges, and learnings of the first year of implicit bias training for Regional Center staff. The following provides the details for the proposed Implicit Bias Action Plan.

- **Reinforce Implicit Bias Learning,** Including scenario-based courses, department-specific training, new hire onboarding, and mandatory annual implicit bias training and refresher courses.
- **Train and Certify Leaders/Staff:** Provide certification to leaders and staff.
- **Establish Culture-Building Practices:** Develop bias and equity reduction tools and training, establish an employee engagement and accountability platform, create an equity and inclusion competency matrix, and assist with continuous improvement to ensure ongoing learning and adoption.
- **Incorporate Change Management:** Implement change management strategies to foster an inclusive environment and support the successful adoption of new policies, practices, and training initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Assessment of Systemic Bias and Inequity:** Conduct assessments for the organization to identify how the systems impact various areas of the organization and the alignment between DDS and the Regional Centers.

In addition to continuing to offer the eight foundational courses from this contract, EquitiFy recommends the following refresher courses be developed for continuing education:

- Recognizing Implicit Bias in Everyday Interactions
- Advanced Strategies for Mitigating Bias
- Integrating Bias Awareness into Daily Work
- Interactive Scenario-Based Training

Additional Data Analysis Opportunities

This report provides a foundational overview of program successes and participant insights. However, a deeper dive into the data collected has significant potential for further analysis and valuable insights. Key areas for further exploration include:

- **Regional Center Level Detailed Analysis:** To provide Executive Directors and DDS with specific, actionable items at each center.
- **Participant Response Detailed Analysis:** More than 23,000 individual qualitative responses were provided on the Insight Pre- and Post-Survey in addition to the quantitative data gathered. A more detailed analysis could provide invaluable insight into implicit bias in the Regional Center system.
- **Training Impact:** Identify key factors that significantly influence training outcomes, including analyzing the impact of different training formats (in-person, online modules) on participant engagement and learning outcomes and the effectiveness of training delivered at the participant's home Regional Center versus training conducted at a different location.



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