



Metro

**EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT
SURVEY
FINDINGS
2025**

Lexicon & Line LLC

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Section 1: Survey Methodology

Project Team

The Engagement and DEI findings featured in this report stem from data collected by Gallup, Inc. via the 2025 Employee Engagement Survey. Management of the 2025 survey was led by the Office of the COO with support from staff in Human Resources, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Employee Communications. Lexicon & Line President/Principal Investigator Mary Johnstun led the reporting, analysis, and consultation components of the project. Team members Andy Canizares, Makenna Allred, and Julia Schildwachter supplied analysis, consultation, research, and recommendations.

Survey Administration

Gallup's Employee Engagement survey officially opened the morning of July 30th and closed August 22nd. The survey was available online and promoted to employees through email, posters, flyers and a mailer. Metro Leadership offered full support and encouragement for the survey. Furthermore, the Survey project team and their networks supported the survey by sharing information and encouraging participation in remote and onsite meetings and events.

Gallup supplied final aggregate data (for Metro as a whole, by department, and by key demographics) for the Q¹² and other survey items. Gallup also calculated the Q¹² mean scores and overall engagement mean scores. These final, aggregate data were supplied to Ms. Johnstun at Lexicon & Line for overall reporting and for additional Employee Engagement and DEI-focused data analysis. Additional analysis involved building analysis strategies for new DEI survey items. Additional study was completed to carefully compare 2025 data to previous data (from 2019, 2021, and 2023) across all subgroups, as well as study the data from the perspective of statistical significance.

Survey Participants

Participation was successful for the 2025 Metro Employee Engagement Survey with 988 employees (65% of the employee population) participating. This participation rate is slightly lower than that of 2023 administration of the survey (68%). An overview of participation across all departments in Metro is provided in Table 1. Note that data for demographic groups/subgroups with six or fewer participants are not featured in this report.

In the 2025 survey, gender identity options were updated. The term "transgender" was removed as a standalone category to acknowledge that transgender people may identify as men, women, or another gender, and can describe that identity directly through the open-ended response option. Because of these updates and the small number of responses

in some categories, results for participants who did not identify as either man or woman are combined into a subgroup labeled “Non-binary identities.” This subgroup includes respondents who identified as nonbinary, genderqueer/gender nonconforming, Two-Spirit, or another self-described gender identity. Collapsing these responses supports more consistent comparisons across survey years and gender subgroups.

Table 2 presents survey participation across the Metro Employee Engagement Survey’s eight additional demographics items: race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, employment status, job type, compensation status, and work location. In 2025, the work location arrangements were organized as follows: 49% working onsite, 17% working remotely, 31% hybrid, with 2% preferring not to respond. The response, “I did not work here last year,” was changed to “I did not work here in the last year” in the 2025 survey.

The 2025 survey demographics were similar to those found in 2023. There was a slight decrease in the numbers of variable hour employee participating (14.6% of participants in 2023, 13.7% of participants in 2025).

Table 1: Agency and Department-level Participation

	2019	2021	2023	2025		
	# of Survey Respondents	# of Survey Respondents	# of Survey Respondents	# of Survey Respondents	Employee Counts at the Time of the Survey	% of Employee Population Surveyed
Metro Agency Overall	994	629	920	988	1518	65%
Capital Asset Management	—	21	31	32	32	100%
Communications	26	22	13	8	15	53%
Council Office/COO/GAPD	33	29	31	35	50	70%
Diversity Equity & Inclusion	—	—	7	10	10	100%
Portland Expo Center	21	6	18	112	171	65%
Oregon Convention Center	151	34	96			
Finance	42	40	47	53	73	73%
Housing	—	—	15	35	42	83%
Human Resources	23	23	28	29	32	91%
Information Technology (Information Services before 2025)	21	15	27	33	40	83%
Office of Metro Attorney	9	14	17	16	19	84%
Oregon Zoo	246	125	195	188	338	56%
Parks and Nature	93	75	93	87	121	72%
Planning, Development and Research	32	57	56	88	98	90%
Portland'5 Center for the Arts	125	35	68	64	228	28%
Waste Prevention and Environmental Services	149	115	152	154	249	62%
Prefer not to respond	—	—	27	44	—	—

Table 2: Participant Demographics

Please note: Due to non-responses and/or rounding, percentages/numbers provided will not always add to the sum of 988 participants and 100%.

	2019		2021		2023		2025	
	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population
Metro Agency Overall	994	100%	629	100%	920	100%	988	100%
Race/Ethnicity								
Asian or Asian American	22	2.20%	18	2.90%	34	3.70%	42	4.25%
Black or African American	50	5.00%	26	4.10%	48	5.22%	46	4.66%
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	47	4.70%	42	6.70%	66	7.17%	65	6.58%
Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native	8	0.80%	8	1.30%	11	1.20%	11	1.11%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
White	674	67.90%	440	70.00%	604	65.65%	644	65.18%
I identify with more than one option listed	58	5.80%	29	4.60%	55	5.98%	74	7.49%
Prefer not to respond	130	13.10%	64	10.20%	98	10.65%	100	10.12%
Gender Identity								
Woman	485	49.20%	332	52.80%	473	51.41%	494	50.00%
Man	394	40.00%	230	36.60%	319	34.67%	336	34.01%
Non-binary identities	14	1.40%	16	2.50%	37	4.02%	61	6.17%
Transgender	*	*	*	*	7	0.76%		
Prefer not to respond	92	9.30%	49	7.80%	77	8.37%	96	9.72%
Sexual Orientation								
Asexual	25	2.50%	14	2.20%	27	2.93%	37	3.74%
Bisexual	54	5.40%	38	6.00%	58	6.30%	78	7.89%
Gay or lesbian	49	4.90%	43	6.80%	61	6.63%	74	7.49%
Heterosexual	648	65.30%	407	64.70%	572	62.17%	569	57.59%
Pansexual	26	2.60%	19	3.00%	38	4.13%	30	3.04%
I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed	13	1.30%	11	1.70%	11	1.20%	23	2.33%
Prefer not to respond	178	17.90%	97	15.40%	153	16.63%	177	17.91%
Disability Status**								
Yes, Indicated having a disability	150	15.10%	56	8.90%	175	19.02%	236	23.89%
No, Indicated not having a disability	715	72.50%	523	83.10%	649	70.54%	629	63.66%
Prefer not to respond	121	12.30%	50	7.90%	97	10.54%	123	12.45%
Employment Status								
Regular or Part-time employees who have worked at least 600 hours over the past 12 months	769	77.40%	547	87.00%	749	81.41%	823	83.30%
Variable hour employees who have worked more than 600 hours over the past 12 months	101	10.20%	22	3.50%	70	7.61%	72	7.29%

(Continued on page 5)

*Demographics-level findings for subgroups with six or fewer participants have been removed from this report in order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

Table 2: Participant Demographics

Please note: Due to non-responses and/or rounding, percentages/numbers provided will not always add to the sum of 988 participants and 100%.

	2019		2021		2023		2025	
	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population	N	% of Survey Population
Variable hour employees who have worked less than 600 hours over the past 12 months	124	12.50%	32	5.10%	64	6.96%	63	6.38%
Prefer not to respond	—	—	28	4.50%	38	4.13%	30	3.04%
Job Type								
Manager/Supervisor	199	20.00%	150	23.80%	182	19.78%	195	19.74%
Non-Manager/Non-Supervisor	795	80.00%	454	72.20%	690	75.00%	746	75.51%
Prefer not to respond	—	—	25	4.00%	49	5.33%	47	4.76%
Compensation status								
Hourly	613	61.70%	274	43.60%	446	48.48%	441	44.64%
Salaried	381	38.30%	332	52.80%	433	47.07%	510	51.62%
Prefer not to respond	—	—	23	3.70%	42	4.57%	37	3.74%
Work Location								
Onsite, at one of Metro's facilities	—	—	228	36.20%	475	51.63%	487	49.29%
Remote, not at a Metro facility	—	—	347	55.20%	301	32.72%	172	17.41%
I evenly split my time between working remotely and onsite	—	—	24	3.80%	111	12.07%	306	30.97%
I did not work here in the last year	—	—	19	3.00%	15	1.63%	—	—
Prefer not to respond	—	—	11	1.70%	19	2.07%	21	2.13%

**The 2019 Survey used a demographics item for Disability that listed separate disability types. Because the 2021, 2023, and 2025 surveys merely provided participants with three options — Yes, No, and Prefer not to respond — the 2018 and 2019 demographics data have been rolled up for comparison.

Questionnaire

This report focuses largely on data from the 2019, 2021, 2023, and 2025 administrations of the Metro Employee Engagement Survey. Data from 2018 and prior are included in previous reports. Before 2018, the Metro Employee Engagement Survey and Metro's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) survey were administered separately. In 2018, the Metro Employee Engagement Survey began to include both employee engagement and DEI items on one survey form.

Over time, several adjustments have been made to the questionnaire to reflect organizational needs and improve clarity:

- **Department classifications:** In 2025, the Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center were collapsed into one combined department for reporting purposes. Finance and Regulatory Services department title was updated to the Finance department. Department titles continue to be updated as needed each survey cycle.

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- In 2025, six **Reporting Confidence** items were retained, and one new item was added on whether employees feel they have the training, equipment, and resources needed to stay physically safe while doing their job. This new item is reported separately and is not included in overall reporting confidence means, as it measures physical safety resources rather than reporting processes.
 - **DEI items:** From 2018 through 2023, 13 DEI agreement items were included, forming the basis of the overall DEI mean score. In 2025, these DEI questions were retired. Four new DEI questions were introduced focusing on belonging, inclusivity, and organizational values, along with four new questions that assess awareness regarding specific DEI-related resources and policies. The awareness items assessed employee knowledge of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), the Gender Inclusion Policy, the annual DEI learning requirement, and Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (SPAREDI).

This report focuses on the analysis of mean scores. Most quantitative questions on the survey asked employees to express their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale where 5 meant “Strongly Agree” and 1 meant “Strongly Disagree.” Reporting confidence items also used a 5-point confidence scale, where 5 meant “Confident” and 1 meant “Not confident.” The four new DEI awareness questions in 2025 used a 4-point knowledge scale where 1 meant “I’ve never heard of this” and 4 meant “I’m very familiar and could explain it to others.”

Mean scores were calculated for all individual items as well as the following composites:

- Q¹² mean (all Q¹² items, plus the four Q¹² hierarchical domain means).
- DEI mean agreement (all DEI-focused agreement items; note that 2025 results are not comparable to earlier years due to the new item set).
- Overall reporting confidence (mean of the six core reporting items).
- Conduct reporting confidence (mean of the three items focused on harassment, discrimination, and unethical behavior).

The analyses in this report focus on the data for the Agency as a whole, by department, and by demographics subgroup. Data were not analyzed for demographic groups totaling 6 or fewer participants in order to protect employee confidentiality and anonymity.

Section 2: Key Themes

The key themes presented in this section were developed through a mixed-methods analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data from the 2025 Metro Employee Engagement Survey. These themes reflect the findings across all major sections of the survey, including Employee Engagement (Q12 metrics), DEI-related questions, reporting confidence items, and communications and additional engagement measures. Quantitative findings were examined for notable changes in mean scores between 2023 and 2025 and for new insights emerging from items added in 2025. Responses to the three open-ended questions on improving engagement, Metro's greatest DEI accomplishments, and the biggest challenges to achieving DEI goals were thematically coded. These qualitative themes were then interpreted in conjunction with quantitative findings to identify areas where the two data types aligned or diverged. Through this process, five overarching themes were identified as the most representative and meaningful reflections of the 2025 results. These themes are not presented in any priority order:

Theme 1: Employee engagement (Q12) remained steady overall between 2023 and 2025.

Theme 2: New DEI questions show that most employees believe that DEI work is guiding Metro's work, most believe that their supervisors are fostering inclusive workspaces, and most are generally aware of DEI-related resources.

Theme 3: Metro achieved broad, meaningful progress in every Reporting Confidence metric between 2023 and 2025.

Theme 4: Communications access and preference are consistent across Metro; employees are also asking for Metro to listen more deeply and be more transparent.

Theme 5: Employees are worried about the barriers presented by anti-DEI social trends and pressures from the federal government, while praising Metro for the agency's sustained commitment to DEI.

These five themes present a balanced picture of Metro's progress and persistence in 2025. Employee engagement sustained between 2023 and 2025, employees can see their supervisors working to foster inclusivity in their workplaces and that DEI is guiding Metro's values, reporting confidence has grown meaningfully, communications access and preference is consistent overall, and employees praise Metro's commitment to DEI during a national anti-DEI climate while also asking for better two-way communication and transparency in decision-making from Metro.

Theme 1:

Employee engagement (Q12) remained steady overall between 2023 and 2025.

Metro's overall Q12 employee engagement mean score saw a slow, increasing trend from 2019 to 2023, but remained essentially unchanged in 2025. The agency's overall Q12 mean score was 3.91 in 2025, compared to 3.92 in 2023. This suggests that while employee engagement hasn't seen significant progress in 2025 at the agency level, any progress achieved in earlier survey cycles has continued to sustain. Nearly all Q12 domains shifted less than ± 0.1 —the threshold used in this report to mark notable change. The one item showing agency-wide progress was Q11 (“In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress”), which increased +0.12 (from 3.76 to 3.88). Maintaining engagement levels between survey cycles points to a sustained level of employee engagement and satisfaction across the agency.

Across departments, mean Q12 scores in 2025 largely mirrored 2023 levels. The Office of Metro Attorney (4.47), Human Resources (4.44), and Planning, Development and Research (4.33) reported the highest overall engagement means. Departments who saw declines in employee engagement scores include Council Office/COO/Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.28), Finance (-0.22), Capital Asset Management (-0.20), and Oregon Zoo (-0.12). Meanwhile, the DEI Department (+0.16), Planning, Development and Research (+0.14), Office of Metro Attorney (+0.12), and Communications (+0.11) saw modest increases. Collectively, these shifts balanced out, producing an overall stable agency mean.

Across demographic subgroups, Q12 engagement results in 2025 saw some variations across groups. Subgroups who saw decreases of 0.1 or more in their employee engagement scores between 2023 and 2025 include Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native employees (-0.26), employees identifying with more than one racial identity (-0.18), bisexual employees (-0.22), and employees identifying with more than one sexual orientation (-0.31). Meanwhile, subgroups who saw increases of 0.1 or more include Black or African American employees (+0.18), non-binary employees (+0.21), employees with a disability (+0.14), and variable-hour employees working more than 600 hours over the past 12 months (+0.09), which is just below the significance threshold.

Theme 2:

New DEI questions show that most employees believe that DEI work is guiding Metro's work, most believe that their supervisors are fostering inclusive workspaces, and most are generally aware of DEI-related resources.

The 2025 DEI agreement set establishes a new baseline (overall mean 3.90). Employees reported the highest agreement with “My supervisor fosters an inclusive environment where all team members feel a sense of belonging and where diverse backgrounds and viewpoints are respected” (4.06), followed by “Diversity, equity and inclusion are core values that guide Metro’s work across the region” (4.00). The lowest mean score of the new DEI items was “I feel a sense of belonging at Metro” (3.63), indicating that personal feelings of belonging trail broader perceptions of inclusion and implementation of DEI values.

Awareness of DEI resources, reported as Top Box % (general understanding + very familiar), was nearly universal for the annual DEI learning requirement (~96%) and high for the Gender Inclusion Policy (~88%), while familiarity with Employee Resource Groups (~80%) and the DEI Strategic Plan (~77%) was more variable. Awareness tended to be higher among managers, salaried staff, and remote/hybrid workers; and lower among hourly, variable-hour (especially 600+), and onsite employees. For example, variable-hour 600+ scored in the mid-50s to upper-50s on ERG and Strategic Plan awareness, while remote and hybrid employees were in the mid-80s to high-90s across those items. Employees with non-binary identities reported Strategic Plan awareness around the high-70s (~78%).

Theme 3:

Metro achieved broad, meaningful progress in every Reporting Confidence metric between 2023 and 2025.

Across every reporting confidence metric, employees expressed stronger trust in Metro’s systems in 2025 than in 2023. Agency-wide, Overall Reporting Confidence rose from 3.94 (2023) to 4.17 (2025), and Conduct Reporting Confidence (covering harassment, discrimination, and unethical behavior) increased from 3.82 to 3.99.

Item-level results show clear improvements where they matter most:

Confidence to report without retaliation increased for both areas:

- Safety concerns: +0.28 (4.06 to 4.34)
- Conduct concerns: +0.19 (3.73 to 3.92)

Confidence that Metro will take appropriate action after a report also improved:

- Safety concerns: +0.16 (3.87 to 4.03)
- Conduct concerns: +0.13 (3.56 to 3.69)

Knowledge of how to report increased as well:

- Safety concerns: +0.15 (4.27 to 4.42)
- Conduct concerns: +0.20 (4.17 to 4.37)

A new 2025 item measuring confidence in having the training, equipment, and resources to stay physically safe averaged 4.36 and is reported separately, as it is not included in the overall reporting means.

Patterns across the organization were broadly positive. Departmentally, results were strongest in Human Resources and the Office of Metro Attorney (both well above 4.5 on overall confidence, with similarly high conduct reporting confidence), with consistently strong scores in Planning, Development & Research, Information Technology, and Capital Asset Management. By subgroup, managers/supervisors and several large race/ethnicity subgroups (Asian/Asian American, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a/x) scored at or above agency averages, while Native American/American Indian employees, employees with non-binary identities, hourly staff, and onsite employees tended to report lower confidence.

Theme 4:

Communications access and preference are consistent across Metro; employees are also asking for Metro to listen more deeply and be more transparent

In 2025, 87% of employees reported having weekly access to computers and paid time for communications, which is unchanged from 2023. Preferences for how to receive information were clear: email is now the dominant channel ($\approx 95\%$), with MetroNet and supervisors serving as secondary sources. While employee communication preference for email greatly increased from 2023, so too were there gains on the mean score of the item “I feel informed about Metro policies, workplace events and changes, and my pay and benefits” (+0.16 increase; 3.89 in 2023 to 4.05 in 2025).

While the quantitative data shows that most employees have stable communication access, the qualitative data reveals a deeper theme raised in open-ended responses: employees want Metro to strengthen the quality of communication by demonstrating active listening and showing how the agency considers employee input in decision-making. Employees voiced frustration when communication felt one-sided or when decisions were announced without sufficient explanation. As one respondent put it, “It would help a lot if management would ask for the thoughts & opinions of employees (and actually take them into consideration) and then explain the reasoning behind decisions made before implementing major workplace changes.” Another employee wrote, “It seems that there have been (and are potentially more coming) organizational changes that haven’t been communicated to all staff in respectful, timely fashion. Leadership changes, department changes, org structure changes all seem to be coming from senior leadership with little to no advance (or even zero day) communication of any kind.”

These sentiments point to a consistent need for transparency to build trust. When employees see how their input is acknowledged, considered and, where possible, incorporated into changes, confidence in leadership and engagement in organizational goals may increase. Conversely, when communication feels top-down and opaque, employees interpret silence as disregard, even if action is happening behind the scenes. 10

Employees also tied communication to accountability. Several respondents highlighted that “talk without follow-through” undermines trust just as much as silence. Staff want leaders to demonstrate not only that feedback is collected, but that it drives concrete changes or at least explained where there will be limitations in implementation of employee feedback. In the words of one participant, “Acknowledge what you hear. Respond honestly about what can and can’t be done and why, even when it is may not be what staff want to hear. Follow through and share what was done.”

Ultimately, clearer two-way communication is essential for sustaining engagement. The dominance of email communication preference and stable access to computers show that Metro has the infrastructure for communication in place. What employees are asking for is not necessarily more messages, but better messages that are transparent about decision-making, clear about trade-offs, and explicit about how employee input is influencing organizational direction. Closing the gap between communication access and meaningful dialogue represents a key opportunity for Metro to strengthen trust, reinforce engagement, and align employees more closely with agency goals.

Theme 5:

Employees are worried about the barriers presented by anti-DEI social trends and pressures from the federal government, while praising Metro for the agency’s sustained commitment to DEI.

In 2025, when asked to identify Metro’s greatest challenges in achieving DEI goals, employees most often cited the federal government and anti-DEI political climate (~25%) as posing barriers to Metro’s DEI work. This was a significant emerging theme from the qualitative responses in the 2025 Survey. Internally, culture-related barriers are still relevant (~16% bias/discrimination/exclusion). A nuanced cluster of negative DEI sentiments accounted for ~14% overall, including views that DEI excludes them (4.4%), that there is too much emphasis/time spent on DEI (3.9%), that DEI is not Metro’s biggest challenge compared to workplace conditions/staffing (3.0%), and that hiring should be based on qualifications rather than DEI (3.0%). Additional hurdles included resourcing (~8%), communication/coordination (~8%), training needs (~7%), inconsistent efforts (~7%), accountability and measurement (~7%), and ongoing recruitment/retention concerns (~6%).

When asked to identify Metro’s greatest DEI accomplishment, employees most frequently praised Metro’s sustained commitment to DEI (~24%), training/education (~20%), and the strategy/framework guiding this work (~18%), along with approvals of specific policies and initiatives (~16%) and progress in diversified hiring/retention (~16%). Cultural shifts (~12%) and community engagement (~6%) were also cited as positives. These recognitions dovetail with high agreement that DEI guides Metro’s work and that supervisors foster inclusion.

Section 3:

Recommendations

Theme 1. Employee engagement (Q12) remained steady overall between 2023 and 2025.

Engagement scores remained stable between 2023 and 2025. The stability of results suggests that engagement remains strong but perhaps has reached a natural resting point after previous improvement trends. It is important to note here that “no-change” data is not a negative – especially considering how previous gains have maintained.

Recommendations

- Consider why engagement has leveled off. It may be valuable to review open-ended feedback and/or examine contextual factors between 2023 and 2025 that may have affected employee engagement in Metro. Employees mentioned workload, limited advancement opportunities, and a sense that past initiatives have slowed. Understanding these influences can help Metro identify which actions are most likely to renew energy and motivation.
- Recognize and develop employees. Stable scores often signal a need to refocus on appreciation and professional growth. Metro might consider reinforcing everyday recognition, creating space for employees to highlight accomplishments, or continuing to expand learning and mentorship opportunities. When employees feel seen and invested in, engagement tends to deepen.
- Learn from areas of strong engagement. It is worth noting that some departments in Metro reported higher Q12 employee engagement scores than others. Exploring what contributes to those higher engagement scores may reveal ideas that could benefit others. For departments whose employee engagement scores may be lagging, consider investigating factors affecting employee engagement in the department-level analysis and elevate any agency-wide findings that are applicable to the department’s context.
- It is worth noting that experiences vary. Some employee groups, particularly those in variable (600+ hours yearly), hourly, and onsite roles, reported lower engagement. Exploring these perspectives with curiosity rather than prescription may reveal how communication access, recognition, or career pathways differ across work environments.

By continuing to learn from employee experiences, Metro can sustain the positive culture it has built while identifying new ways to support growth and connection.

Theme 2. New DEI questions show that most employees believe DEI work is guiding Metro's work, and that supervisors foster inclusive workspaces, though belonging remains an area for growth.

The new 2025 DEI questions established a baseline for understanding inclusion and belonging across Metro. Employees generally agreed that diversity, equity, and inclusion guide the agency's work (mean 4.00) and that supervisors are putting in the effort to create inclusive environments (mean 4.06). Most also reported feeling comfortable sharing different perspectives (mean 3.90). The area of greatest opportunity is belonging, which received the lowest mean (3.63), suggesting that while employees are seeing the work in making their workspaces more inclusive, some feel less personally connected to Metro.

Recommendations

- Consider new ways to strengthen belonging. Employees may benefit from continued efforts that help them feel connected to one another and to Metro's mission. It may be valuable to explore opportunities such as cross-team projects or staff-led gatherings that encourage interaction across departments and roles.
- Increase awareness of DEI resources. While most employees were familiar with required DEI learning and gender inclusion policies, awareness of Employee Resource Groups and the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion was lower. Sharing simple, consistent information about these resources in orientations or internal communications can help employees understand how they support inclusion.
- Support supervisors as facilitators of belonging. Supervisors play an important role in translating inclusive values into daily experiences. Providing continued learning focused on psychological safety, communication, and trust-building may help them foster stronger connection within and across teams.
- It is worth noting that awareness varies across work settings. Onsite, hourly, and variable-hour employees reported lower familiarity with DEI resources than remote or hybrid employees. Looking at ways to ensure learning opportunities and resources reach all employees can help make DEI engagement more consistent agencywide.

Continuing to build both awareness and belonging across the organization will help Metro move from understanding inclusion in principle to experiencing it collectively in everyday work.

Theme 3. Metro achieved broad, meaningful progress in every Reporting Confidence metric between 2023 and 2025.

The most positive development in 2025 was the increase in employee reporting confidence, both for safety concerns and for harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior. Employees felt more knowledgeable about how to report, more trusting that Metro will act appropriately, and more confident they could report without retaliation. These are major wins. The work now is sustaining that momentum and ensuring these perceptions continue to match employees' day-to-day experiences.

Recommendations

- Celebrate and learn from progress. Metro may wish to share these improvements broadly and recognize the collective work that led to stronger confidence. Highlighting updated policies, training, or reporting channels can reinforce transparency and help employees see how system improvements make a difference. It is worth examining what enabled success (such as clear communication or accessible reporting tools) and considering how to sustain those practices across departments.
- Continue exploring confidence gaps. While overall gains were substantial, some employee groups expressed lower confidence or greater uncertainty about retaliation. There are opportunities to continue working on reporting confidence for employee subgroups such as Native American/American Indian employees, hourly staff, employees who have a disability, pansexual employees, and employees with non-binary identities. Approaches can be tailored to meet the unique needs of different work environments and employee roles.
- Reinforce trust and anti-retaliation culture. As confidence grows, some employees discussed the importance of trusting their reports of safety or conduct concerns. One employee emphasized, "Take safety seriously and trust when someone says they are afraid of retaliation or afraid of someone." Ongoing communication from leadership affirming confidentiality, respect, and follow-through can strengthen that trust.

These efforts can help ensure that Metro's strong progress in reporting confidence becomes an enduring part of its culture of safety, respect, and accountability.

Theme 4. Communications access and preference are consistent across Metro; employees are also asking for Metro to listen more deeply and be more transparent

In 2025, most employees reported weekly access to a computer and paid time for communications, unchanged from 2023. Email is now the dominant preference for communications about Metro (about 95% preference), with MetroNet and supervisors serving as secondary sources. With these communication systems and preferences being consistent across Metro, there is an opportunity to deepen communication and improve employee engagement by listening to employees' desire for stronger two-way communication, transparency in decision-making, and closing feedback loops.

Recommendations

- Protect communication access time. With email now a clear universal preference, it may be valuable to continue ensuring that employees in operational or field-based roles have scheduled time to review email and Metro updates. Clear expectations and manager support for this access can help make communication equitable across work environments.
- Strengthen manager communication. Managers play a key role in bridging information and engagement. As one employee shared, "There is a disconnect between management and workers. Communication is poor. It is an 'us and them' environment where we are told what is happening long after the path has been determined." Providing support or training for consistent message-sharing and opportunities for two-way dialogue can reinforce trust.
- Build dialogue and close the feedback loop. Employees appreciate regular updates but want communication to be interactive. Consider strategies that are appropriate for Metro to facilitate two-way communication with the employees. Following up on employee feedback—showing what was implemented and what remains under consideration—demonstrates transparency and follow-through.
- Connect communication to trust. Employees linked consistent communication with respect and credibility. As one employee shared, "Increased communication on a more regular basis would be very helpful. Only hearing from leadership when something is going wrong gives the impression that they are interested only covering for themselves rather than creating a culture of trust and openness." Taking a proactive approach with communication and being clear with constraints in the process can strengthen confidence in leadership.

When employees understand both what is happening and why, and see their feedback reflected in decisions, communication becomes a foundation for engagement and organizational trust.

Theme 5. Employees are worried about the barriers presented by anti-DEI social trends and pressures from the federal government, while praising Metro for the agency's sustained commitment to DEI.

Employees praised Metro's ongoing commitment to DEI, training and education, and the strategy and framework guiding this work, along with policies and diverse hiring efforts. Yet they also pointed to external challenges such as the federal government and political climate, as well as internal challenges including bias, discrimination, and exclusion in Metro's culture.

Recommendations

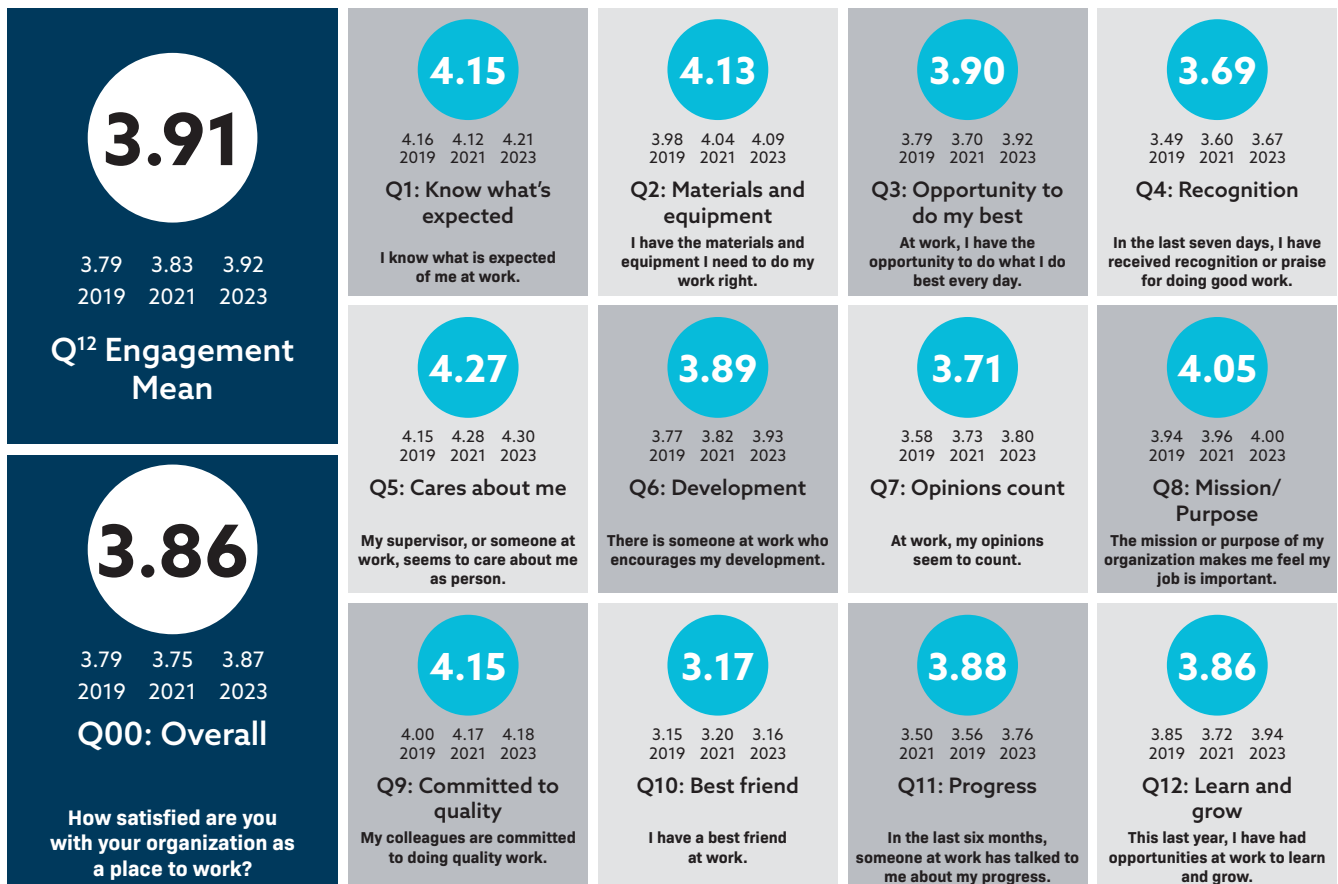
- Celebrate accomplishments and continue building momentum. It may be valuable to highlight the wins employees identified, i.e., Metro's training programs, DEI policies, and progress in diverse hiring. Recognition helps sustain engagement and reinforces that employee observations are reflected in organizational action.
- Acknowledge external pressures and sustain commitment. About one-quarter of employees referenced national or political forces that can make DEI work more difficult. As one employee reflected, "I am proud of Metro continuing to be committed to DEI work when there's an attempt to shift society's focus away from it." Maintaining open communication about these influences, while reaffirming Metro's commitment to advancing equity within its own authority, can strengthen employee confidence in the agency's direction.
- Consider continued focus on workplace culture. Employee comments about bias or exclusion suggest that some teams experience DEI progress differently. Continued attention to accountability, respectful dialogue, and leadership modeling can help ensure DEI values are reflected consistently across the organization.
- It is worth noting that employees often linked DEI to broader workplace factors. Staff connected equity efforts with issues such as workload, staffing, and retention. Integrating these conversations may help align DEI with overall organizational health and employee well-being.

Section 4: Findings

Metro's overall Q¹² Employee Engagement score saw little change from 2023 to 2025.

Metro has seen notable gains in employee engagement and job satisfaction mean scores between 2019 and 2023; the trend has plateaued between 2023 and 2025. Both the Q¹² engagement mean score and overall satisfaction score varied less than 0.02 points from 2023 to 2025, showing that employee engagement has overall remained stable between the two time periods.

- **Q11/Progress** was the only metric that showed notable increase of 0.1 point or more, increasing to 3.88 mean from 3.76 in 2023.



Q¹² Hierarchy: Comparing Levels of Employee Engagement

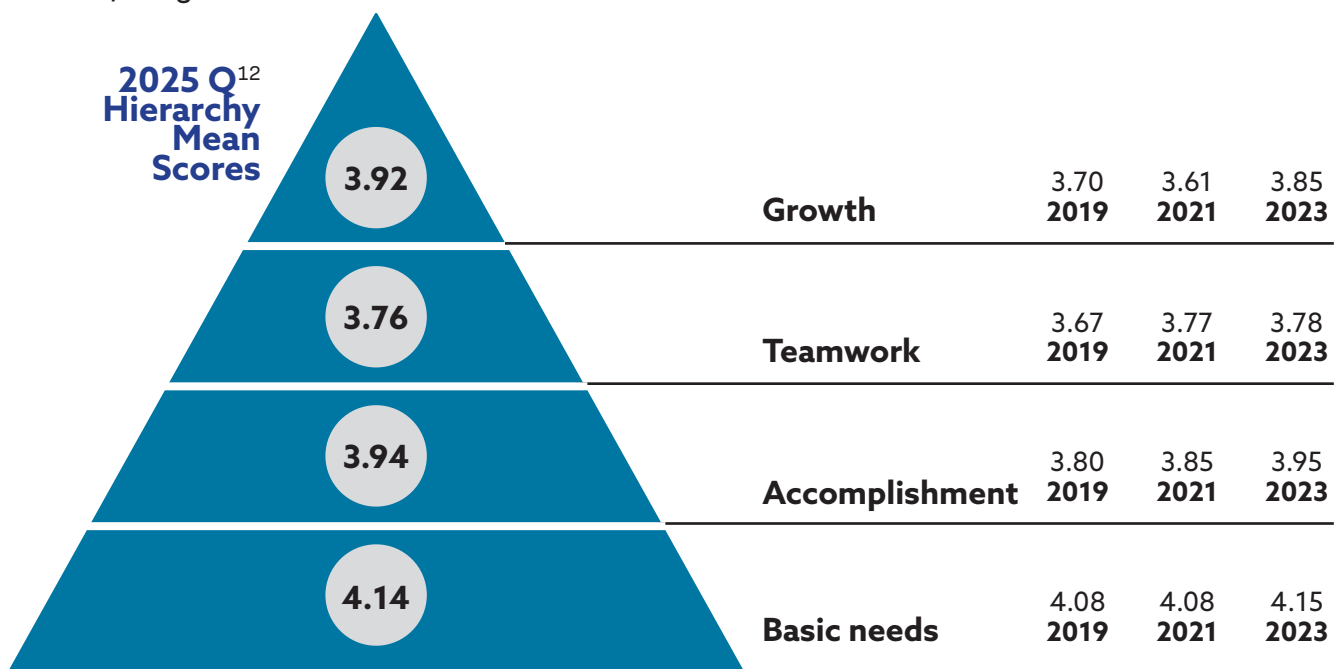
The Gallup Q¹² Survey is based on 30 years of scientific research with more than 35 million employees. To determine what employees require for growth, Gallup interviewed more than 1 million managers to identify the highest predictors of team and employee performance.

From this research, Gallup was able to determine 12 unique items which represent four fundamental employee engagement categories: 1 Basic Needs *What do I get?*, 2 Accomplishment *What do I give?*, 3 Teamwork *Do I belong here?*, and 4 Growth *How can I grow?*. The triangle below demonstrates the hierarchy of these four engagement categories.

Gallup’s survey and Q¹² management strategies have been shown to increase productivity, profitability, and employee retention.

The image below displays Metro data from 2019 to present across the Gallup Q¹² four hierarchical levels.

- **Basic Needs** remained steady, holding at 4.14 in 2025 compared to 4.15 in 2023.
- **Accomplishment** also remained essentially unchanged between 3.95 in 2023 and 3.94 in 2025.
- **Teamwork** held steady as well, at 3.76 in 2025 compared to 3.78 in 2023.
- **Growth** slightly increase from 3.85 in 2023 to 3.92 in 2025, reflecting the improvement in Q11/Progress’s mean score.



Q¹² Employee Engagement Department Highlights

This section features Q¹² Employee Engagement data by Department. Department-level analysis will consider both Gallup's Overall Satisfaction item and its 12 individual Q¹² items, with a focus on departments that are leading for each item in terms of presenting high scores, as well as those making notable gains in engagement from 2023 to 2025. Note that both the Housing and Planning, Development and Research departments saw significant increases in employees/participants in the 2025 survey, which may inform those department-level data changes from 2023 to 2025. In terms of overall Q¹² engagement scores in 2025, department-level leaders include the following:

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.47 Q¹² mean)
2. Human Resources (4.44 Q¹² mean)
3. Planning, Development and Research (4.33 Q¹² mean).

Q00: How satisfied are you with your organization as a place to work?

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.56)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.32)
3. Capital Asset Management & Human Resources (4.31)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Communications (-0.39), Information Technology (-0.31), Housing (-0.24), Parks and Nature (-0.12), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (-0.11), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.17), Planning, Development and Research (+0.11), Office of Metro Attorney (+0.32), and Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.40).

Q01: I know what is expected of me at work.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.69)
2. Human Resources (4.62)
3. Capital Asset Management (4.5)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.43), Finance (-0.42), Parks and Nature (-0.20), Oregon Zoo (-0.13), Office of Metro Attorney (-0.13), Planning, Development and Research (-0.10), Housing (+0.13), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.13), Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts (+0.10), Human Resources (+0.10), and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.33).

Q02: I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.81)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.55)
3. Human Resources (4.48)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Finance (-0.26), Parks and Nature (-0.13), Information Technology (-0.20), Housing (-0.10), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy

Development (-0.15), Planning, Development and Research (+0.14), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.19), Communications (+0.62), and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.91).

Q03: At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.63)
2. Human Resources (4.52)
3. Capital Asset Management (4.38)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Finance (-0.42), Communications (-0.29), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.20), Housing (-0.22), Planning, Development and Research (-0.10), Oregon Zoo (-0.13), Human Resources (+0.15), Information Technology (+0.12), Portland's Centers for the Arts (+0.13), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.11), Office of Metro Attorney (+0.34), and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.60).

Q04: In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

1. Human Resources (4.39)
2. Communications (4.38)
3. Planning, Development and Research (4.18)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.30), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (-0.24), Housing (-0.24), Human Resources (-0.19), Finance (-0.19), Information Technology (-0.21), Capital Asset Management (-0.21), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (+0.11), Planning, Development and Research (+0.23), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.40), and Communications (+0.55).

Q05: My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as person.

1. Human Resources (4.86)
2. Communications (4.75)
3. Planning, Development and Research (4.66)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Finance (-0.25), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.21), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (-0.21), Capital Asset Management (-0.25), Housing (-0.16), Information Technology (-0.13), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (-0.12), Communications (-0.10), and Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.49).

Q06: There is someone at work who encourages my development.

1. Human Resources (4.66)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.45)
3. Office of Metro Attorney (4.38)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Oregon Zoo (-0.36), Finance (-0.25), Communications (-0.25), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.19), Capital Asset Management (-0.13), Information Technology (-0.11), Portland's Centers for the Arts

(+0.10), Planning, Development and Research (+0.34), and Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.50).

Q07: At work, my opinions seem to count.

1. Human Resources (4.41)
2. Office of Metro Attorney (4.38)
3. Planning, Development and Research (4.27)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.59), Capital Asset Management (-0.39), Oregon Zoo (-0.28), Housing (-0.33), Planning, Development and Research (-0.18), Human Resources (+0.18), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.28), Communications (+0.33), and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.33).

Q08: The mission or purpose of my organization makes me feel my job is important.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.63)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.45)
3. Information Technology (4.39)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Capital Asset Management (-0.48), Housing (-0.42), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.13), Communications (-0.15), Parks and Nature (+0.11), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.14), Office of Metro Attorney (+0.16), Planning, Development and Research (+0.16), Information Technology (+0.20), and Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.52).

Q09: My colleagues are committed to doing quality work.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.75)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.68)
3. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (4.6)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Housing (-0.70), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.52), Communications (-0.40), Oregon Zoo (-0.27), Human Resources (-0.21), Capital Asset Management (-0.24), Finance (-0.10), Planning, Development and Research (+0.11), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (+0.15), and Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.25).

Q10: I have a best friend at work.

1. Communications (4)
2. Office of Metro Attorney (3.77)
3. Human Resources (3.71)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Information Technology (-0.26), Capital Asset Management (-0.29), Portland's Centers for the Arts (-0.14), Oregon Zoo (-0.12), Planning, Development and Research (+0.19), Parks and Nature (+0.19), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (+0.17), Communications (+0.27), Human Resources (+0.23), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (+0.21), Housing (+0.43), and Office of Metro Attorney (+0.89).

Q11: In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.

1. Communications (4.63)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.5)
3. Human Resources (4.46)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Finance (-0.34), Information Technology (-0.34), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (-0.29), Capital Asset Management (-0.23), Office of the COO, Council, Government Affairs and Policy Development (-0.20), Human Resources (-0.12), Portland’s Centers for the Arts (-0.13), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.56), Planning, Development and Research (+0.50), Parks and Nature (+0.43), Communications (+0.71), and Housing (+1.12).

Q12: This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

1. Office of Metro Attorney (4.69)
2. Planning, Development and Research (4.61)
3. Human Resources (4.38)
 - Notable changes (0.1 or more) from 2023 to 2025 were found in the following departments: Capital Asset Management (-0.29), Finance (-0.26), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (-0.25), Information Technology (-0.13), Oregon Zoo (-0.14), Human Resources (-0.12), Parks and Nature (+0.11), Communications (+0.21), Portland’s Centers for the Arts (+0.21), Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.46), Office of Metro Attorney (+0.34), and Planning, Development and Research (+0.48).

Q¹² Employee Engagement Demographics Subgroup Highlights

Table 3 on page 23 provides demographics-level findings for Q¹² Mean Employee Engagement scores. These scores represent an overall measurement of Employee Engagement across one job satisfaction item and 12 individual employee engagement items. Subgroups with six or fewer participants were eliminated from analysis to ensure anonymity in reporting. Takeaways and highlights are as follows:

Race/Ethnicity: Q¹² Employee Engagement means, ranked highest to lowest: Asian/Asian American (4.13), Hispanic/Latino/a/x (4.07), Black/African American (3.99), White (3.96), Multiracial (3.95), and Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native (3.52). From 2023 to 2025, Asian/Asian American (+0.13) and Black/African American (+0.18) employees showed notable increases, while Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native employees (-0.26) and multiracial employees (-0.18) reported a significant decrease.

Gender Identity: Q¹² Employee Engagement means, ranked highest to lowest: Women (3.99), Men (3.95), and Non-binary identities (3.83). Scores for women and men were

largely stable since 2023, while the non-binary identities subgroup saw a notable increase (+0.21).

Disability: Employees without a disability (4.02) continued to report higher engagement than employees with a disability (3.82). From 2023 to 2025, engagement for employees with a disability increased (+0.14), while scores for those without a disability remained unchanged.

Sexual Orientation: Q¹² Employee Engagement means, ranked highest to lowest: Gay/Lesbian (4.14), Asexual (4.00), Heterosexual (4.00), Bisexual (3.89), Pansexual (3.89), and “I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed” (3.66). The Bisexual (-0.22) and “I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed” (-0.31) subgroups saw a notable decrease, while other groups remained relatively stable.

Job Type: Managers/Supervisors (4.14) indicated higher levels of engagement than non-managers/non-supervisors (3.88). Engagement scores for both groups remained relatively unchanged since 2023.

Employment Status: Variable hour employees working fewer than 600 hours in the past year reported the highest mean engagement (3.99), compared to part-time/regular employees (3.94) and variable hour employees working more than 600 hours (3.73). Compared to 2023, variable <600 employees decreased slightly (-0.13), while part-time/regular and variable 600+ stayed relatively stable.

Compensation Status: Salaried employees (4.07) continued to score higher in overall engagement compared to hourly employees (3.76). Both groups remained largely unchanged since 2023.

Work Location: Q¹² Employee Engagement means, ranked highest to lowest: Hybrid (4.10), Remote (4.01), and Onsite (3.79). Compared to 2023, remote employees' mean score decreased (-0.14), while onsite and hybrid employees saw little change.

Table 3: Q¹² Overall Employee Engagement Mean Scores by Demographics

		Q12 Means				Change 2023—2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
		2019	2021	2023	2025	
Metro Agency Overall		3.79	3.83	3.92	3.91	-0.01
Race/Ethnicity	Asian or Asian American	3.74	3.68	4.00	4.13	0.13
	Black or African American	4.04	3.78	3.81	3.99	0.18
	Hispanic or Latino/a/x	3.9	3.94	4.11	4.07	-0.04
	Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native	4.31	3.54	3.75	3.52	-0.26
	White	3.87	3.89	3.99	3.96	-0.03
	I identify with more than one option listed	3.74	3.93	4.13	3.95	-0.18
	Prefer not to respond	3.26	3.39	3.33	3.34	0.04
Gender Identity	Woman	3.91	3.87	4.04	3.99	-0.04
	Man	3.81	3.87	3.9	3.95	0.06
	Non-binary identities	3.69	4.17	3.49	3.83	0.21
	Transgender	-	-	3.90		
	Prefer not to respond	3.16	3.24	3.34	3.38	0.10
Disability	Yes	3.7	3.66	3.68	3.82	0.14
	No	3.6	3.88	4.04	4.02	-0.01
	Prefer not to respond	3.47	3.42	3.56	3.5	-0.05
Sexual Orientation	Asexual	3.53	3.42	3.98	4.0	0.03
	Bisexual	3.75	4.04	4.12	3.89	-0.22
	Gay or Lesbian	3.9	4	4.06	4.14	0.09
	Heterosexual	3.89	3.91	3.99	4.0	0.02
	Pansexual	3.61	3.39	3.96	3.89	-0.05
	I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed	3.71	4.29	3.97	3.66	-0.31
	Prefer not to respond	3.51	3.42	3.52	3.55	0.03
Job	Manager/Supervisor	4.01	4.01	4.11	4.14	0.03
	Non-Manager/Non-Supervisor	3.74	3.82	3.92	3.88	-0.04
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.9	3.24	3.37	0.13
Employment Status	Regular or Part-time employees who have worked at least 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.79	3.85	3.95	3.94	-0.01
	Variable hour employees who have worked more than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.76	3.7	3.64	3.73	0.09
	Variable hour employees who have worked less than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.86	4.01	4.12	3.99	-0.13
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.22	3.45	3.23	-0.22

(Continued on page 25)

Table 3: Q¹² Overall Employee Engagement Mean Scores by Demographics

		Q12 Means				Change 2023— 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
		2019	2021	2023	2025	
Compensation Status	Hourly	3.68	3.71	3.77	3.76	-0.01
	Salaried	3.97	3.99	4.13	4.07	-0.05
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.82	3.32	3.39	0.08
Remote/Onsite	Onsite, at one of Metro's facilities	-	3.59	3.74	3.77	0.04
	Remote, not at a Metro facility	-	4.01	4.16	4.01	-0.14
	I evenly split my time between working remotely and from onsite	-	3.71	4.09	4.1	0.02
	I did not work here in the last year	-	4.14	4.21	-	-
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.64	3.51	3.4	-0.1

Additional **Employee Engagement Data**

The 2025 Employee Engagement Survey also collected other engagement measures that have been tracked through previous Metro surveys since 2012. These additional questions focus on department leadership, department pride, work/life balance flexibility, and workload.

Additional Employee Engagement Items

As with Q¹² scores, additional employee engagement items in 2025 were generally stable compared to 2023, with small shifts across some departments and subgroups. Of the five items featured below, “I am proud to work for my department” received the highest agreement mean (4.19). Key findings follow:

I have confidence that my department has the leadership in place to be successful.

- The 2025 mean score was 3.64, essentially unchanged from 2023 (3.70).
- **Departments:** Leading departments included Capital Asset Management (4.19), Information Services (4.17), and Human Resources (4.00). Some departments saw decreases since 2023, including Capital Asset Management (-0.16) and Communications (-0.12). By contrast, the DEI department showed a strong increase (+0.43).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian/Asian American employees (4.26) and Black/African American employees (3.96) both reported meaningful increases since 2023 (+0.29 and +0.18, respectively). Hispanic/Latino/a/x employees (3.89) and White employees (3.78) remained largely stable.
- **Employee Status:** Variable hour employees working fewer than 600 hours reported the highest confidence (3.93), compared to part-time/regular (3.62) and variable 600+ employees (3.41). Scores across all groups remained stable.
- **Work Location:** Remote workers reported the highest confidence (3.78), followed by hybrid (3.68) and onsite (3.54). New employees averaged 3.72. No location subgroup showed significant movement since 2023.

I am proud to work for my department.

- The 2025 mean score is 4.19 (compared to 4.20 in 2023).
- **Departments:** Leading departments included Capital Asset Management (4.52), Housing (4.48), and Human Resources (4.43). Communications (3.75) and OCC (3.77) were among the lowest. DEI saw a notable increase (+0.24), while Capital Asset Management and Communications decreased slightly.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian/Asian American (4.32), Black/African American (4.21), and Hispanic/Latino/a/x (4.45) employees all reported meaningful gains since 2023. White employees remained stable (4.28 in 2023, 4.29 in 2025). Native American/American Indian employees (4.00) were flat compared to 2023.
- **Work Location:** Remote employees reported the highest pride (4.27), followed by new employees (4.19), hybrid (4.05), and onsite (4.01). No group shifted significantly from 2023.

I have enough flexibility in my job to maintain work/life balance.

- The 2025 mean score was 4.06, stable compared to 2023 (4.07).
- **Departments:** Top-scoring departments were Communications (4.50), DEI (4.20), and Human Resources (4.18). Capital Asset Management (-0.22) and DEI (-0.37) saw decreases, while Communications (+0.35) reported a strong increase.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian/Asian American employees (4.15) and Black/African American employees (4.09) saw increases since 2023 (+0.26 for Black/African American). Other race/ethnicity groups remained steady.
- **Work Location:** Remote employees reported the highest flexibility (4.16), while onsite workers averaged 3.90. Hybrid (4.02) and new employees (4.08) reported stable scores since 2023.

In general, the amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable.

- The 2025 mean score was 3.97, up slightly from 2023 (3.89).
- **Departments:** Capital Asset Management (4.06) and Housing (4.05) were among the highest. Communications showed a strong increase (3.23 in 2023 to 4.00 in 2025, +0.77). OCC also increased (3.23 to 4.00, +0.77), while DEI (3.50) and others remained moderate.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Black/African American employees reported a significant increase (3.73 in 2023 to 4.24 in 2025, +0.51). Asian/Asian American employees also saw a positive shift (4.15 to 4.24, +0.09). Most other groups were stable.
- **Work Location:** Remote employees reported the highest score (4.09), while onsite employees (3.91) remained lower. Hybrid (3.97) and new employees (3.96) were in line with the agency average.

I understand how my role relates to the overall goals and directions of Metro.

- The 2025 mean score was 4.00, stable compared to 2023 (3.96).

I feel informed about Metro policies, workplace events and changes, and my pay and benefits.

- The 2025 mean score was 4.05, a significant increase from 2023 (3.89).
- **Departments:** Human Resources (4.72), the Office of Metro Attorney (4.63), and Planning, Development & Research (4.48) reported the highest levels of feeling informed in 2025. Oregon Zoo (3.82), Waste Prevention & Environmental Services (3.84), and DEI (3.90) were among the lowest. Notable increases since 2023 included the Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center (+0.51), the Office of Metro Attorney (+0.39), and Parks & Nature (+0.38). DEI (-0.39), Capital Asset Management (-0.16), and Communications (-0.15) showed meaningful decreases.
- **Employment Status:** Regular/part-time employees (4.15) scored higher than variable-hour employees working fewer than 600 hours (3.77) or more than 600

hours (3.67). Variable-hour employees working fewer than 600 hours reported a significant decline (-0.20).

- **Work Location:** Hybrid employees (4.16) reported the highest scores, followed by remote (4.14) and new employees (4.08). Onsite employees were lowest (3.89). Hybrid employees showed a modest increase (+0.23), while other groups remained stable.
- **Gender Identity:** Women (4.15) and men (4.10) reported higher levels of feeling informed than employees with non-binary identities (3.74).

Employee Preferences for Communication and Learning

Metro continued to track employee access to communications and preferred information sources in 2025. The following items capture how regularly employees engage with Metro communications and which channels they find most effective.

During a work week, how often do you have access to a computer and are provided paid time to read Metro emails/updates or attend virtual town halls?

- In 2025, 87% of respondents reported “I have regular access every week,” while 6% reported “I sometimes have access but not every week,” and 7% reported “I do not have regular access.” These results are unchanged from 2023.

How would you prefer to receive information about benefits, resources, and updates about Metro?

- In 2025, employees continued to show a strong preference for receiving information via email messages (95%), up substantially from 54% in 2023. Other sources were identified as secondary or less preferred:
 - **MetroNet** (26%), up from 12% in 2023.
 - **Supervisor or Manager** (35%), up from 20% in 2023.
 - **Workplace bulletin board or handouts** (11%), up slightly from 8% in 2023.
 - **Text messages** (4%), relatively unchanged since 2023 (3%).

Table 4: Additional Employee Engagement and Communication Items

		2019	2021	2023	2025	Change from 2023 to 2025
Employee Engagement and Communication	I have confidence that my department has the leadership in place to be successful.	3.55	3.52	3.7	3.64	-0.06
	I am proud to work for my department.	4.1	4.14	4.2	4.19	-0.01
	I have enough flexibility in my job to maintain work/life balance.	3.88	3.9	4.07	4.06	-0.01
	In general, the amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable.	3.84	3.53	3.89	3.97	0.08
	I understand how my role relates to the overall goals and directions of Metro.	3.80	3.85	3.94	4.0	0.06
	I feel informed about Metro policies, workplace events and changes, and my pay and benefits.	-	-	3.89	4.05	0.16
Employee-Preferred Communication Tools	During a work week, how often do you have access to a computer and are provided paid time to read Metro email updates or access information on MetroNet?					
	I have regular access every week.	-	91%	87%	87%	0%
	I sometimes have access but not every week.	-	4%	6%	6%	0%
	I do not have regular access.	-	5%	7%	7%	0%
	How would you prefer to receive information about benefits, resources and updates about Metro? (Select all that apply)					
	Email Messages	48%	26%	54%	95%	41%
	MetroNet	5%	9%	12%	26%	14%
	Supervisor or Manager	18%	22%	20%	35%	15%
	Workplace bulletin board or handouts	-	20%	8%	11%	3%
	Text	-	16%	4%	7%	3%
Other	7%	-	3%	4%	1%	

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work

Perceptions Across 4 DEI Items and Resource Awareness: Agency

In 2025, Metro’s Employee Engagement Survey revised its DEI-focused questions. Introduced almost 10 years ago, previous questions didn’t reflect Metro’s current DEI efforts, the establishment of a dedicated DEI department, or the way that DEI work is now understood and discussed in Metro. The previous surveys asked for feedback on topics that many employees did not have insight into—like how well Metro measures DEI progress—and framed DEI as optional rather than a shared organizational responsibility. The 2023 survey data analysis also noted that the way the questions were presented may have skewed the response results, and it was challenging to interpret the data in a way that could help Metro take meaningful steps to respond to employee feedback.

The updated questions for 2025 are meant to help gauge how employees are experiencing diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in the organization day to day, including their awareness of specific DEI initiatives and feelings of belonging and psychological safety. The feedback gathered from these questions can better inform where the organization should focus its resources and support.

Four new 5-point scale DEI questions were introduced to better reflect Metro’s current DEI priorities, along with four new awareness questions about key DEI-related programming/resources/policies. Because of these changes, the 2025 DEI mean score is not directly comparable to scores reported in previous years.

The 2025 DEI data (see Table 5) reflect the total of eight new DEI questions. Only the four 5-point scale questions were calculated into the Overall DEI Mean Score. The Overall DEI Mean Score in 2025 is 3.90, establishing a new baseline measure for the agency moving forward.

Belonging and Workplace Inclusion Highlights (2025):

- **Highest scoring item:** “My supervisor fosters an inclusive environment where diverse backgrounds and viewpoints are respected” received the strongest agreement (4.06).
- **Other strong areas:** “I feel comfortable raising questions, sharing different perspectives, and offering new ideas at work” (3.90) and “Diversity, equity and inclusion are core values that guide Metro’s work across the region” (4.00).
- **Lowest scoring item:** “I feel a sense of belonging at Metro” received the lowest mean (3.63), suggesting this is a key area for attention in future initiatives.

Awareness of DEI Resources (2025):

In addition to agreement items, employees were asked about their awareness of key DEI-related resources at Metro, using a 4-point scale ranging from “I’ve never heard of this” to “I’m very familiar and could explain it to others.”

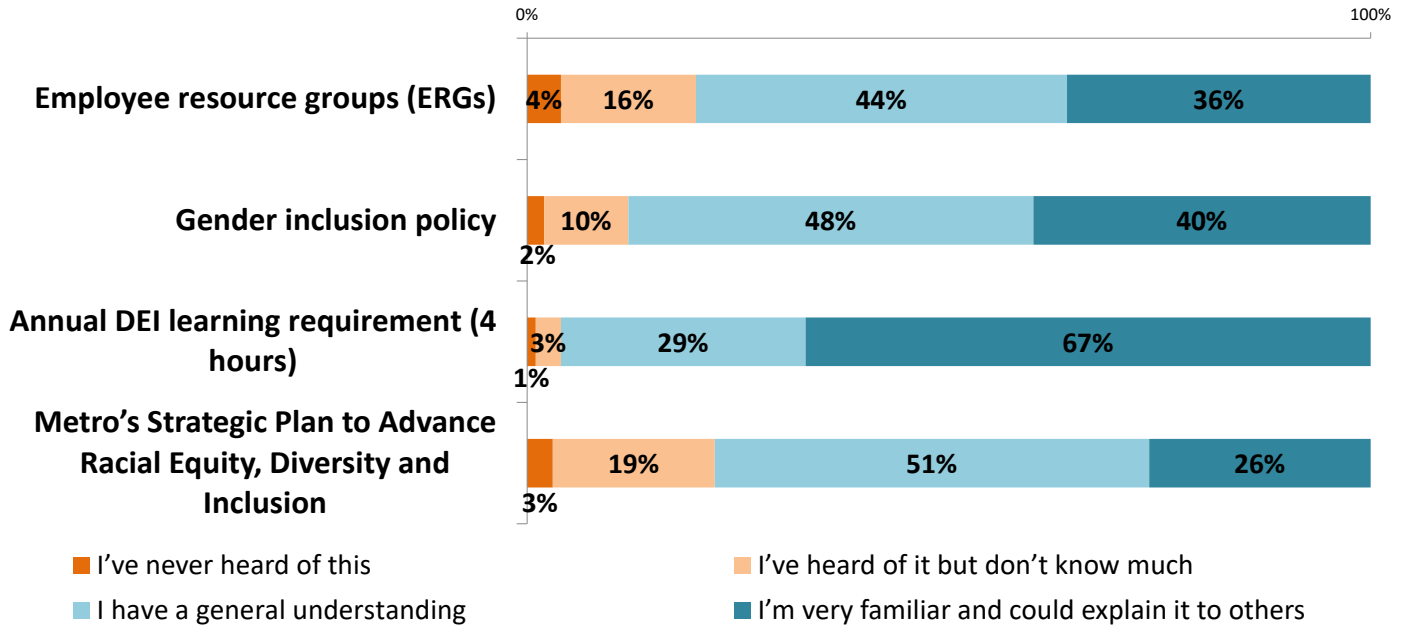
- **Highest awareness:** The annual DEI learning requirement (4 hours) was the most widely recognized resource, with 96% of employees reporting either a general understanding or being very familiar.
- **Strong awareness:** The Gender Inclusion Policy also showed high recognition, with 88% indicating familiarity.
- **Moderate awareness:** Employee resource groups (ERGs) were well known, with 80% reporting familiarity.
- **Lowest awareness:** Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion was less familiar, with 77% indicating they had at least a general understanding, and 22% reporting limited or no knowledge.

Table 5: New Agency-level DEI Mean Scores and Resource Awareness

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) 5-Point Scale Items					2025 Mean Score
Diversity, equity and inclusion are core values that guide Metro’s work across the region. (New to 2025)					4.00
I feel a sense of belonging at Metro. (New to 2025)					3.63
My supervisor fosters an inclusive environment where all team members feel a sense of belonging and where diverse backgrounds and viewpoints are respected. (New to 2025)					4.06
I feel comfortable raising questions, sharing different perspectives, and offering new ideas at work. (New to 2025)					3.90
Overall DEI Mean Score					3.90
Knowledge and Awareness of DEI Related Resources (New to 2025)					
How aware are you of the following...	I’ve never heard of this	I’ve heard of it but don’t know much	I have a general understanding	I’m very familiar and could explain it to others	2025 Top Box
Employee resource groups (ERGs)	4%	16%	44%	36%	80%
Gender Inclusion Policy	2%	10%	48%	40%	88%
Annual DEI learning requirement (4 hours)	1%	3%	29%	67%	96%
Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	3%	19%	51%	26%	77%

Figure 1:

Knowledge and Awareness of DEI Related Resources



Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work Perceptions Across 4 DEI Items: Department

At the department level, DEI mean scores provide a snapshot of how employees experience inclusivity, belonging, and alignment with Metro's values across different parts of the organization. The 2025 data establish a new baseline for department-level DEI scores (see Table 6), with results highlighting both areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

The leading departments in overall DEI scores in 2025 were Office of Metro Attorney (4.60), Human Resources (4.58), and Planning, Development and Research (4.33). Meanwhile, the Oregon Zoo (3.61), Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (3.79), and Communications (3.80) were among the lowest.

While the 2025 DEI framework is not directly comparable to past years, the new baseline results show strong perceptions of the DEI items within Human Resources and the Office of Metro Attorney, while areas such as Waste Prevention and Environmental Services and Communications indicate room for improvement.

Table 6: Overall DEI Mean Scores by Department

Department	Overall DEI Mean Score 2019-2023=13 DEI Questions			Overall DEI Mean Score 2025=4 DEI Questions
	2019	2021	2023	2025
Metro Agency Overall	3.63	3.77	3.77	3.90
Capital Asset Management	-	4.00	4.20	4.31
Communications	3.76	3.75	3.53	3.80
Council Office/COO/GAPD	4.29	3.99	4.08	3.88
Finance and Regulatory Services	3.63	3.90	4.19	4.04
Human Resources	3.06	4.30	4.19	4.58
Information Services	3.69	3.52	4.20	4.22
Office of Metro Attorney	3.99	4.09	4.26	4.60
Oregon Convention Center	3.30	3.97	3.52	4.05
Portland Expo Center	4.02	3.97	3.93	
Oregon Zoo	3.42	3.49	3.43	3.61
Parks and Nature	3.81	3.82	3.81	3.92
Planning, Development and Research	3.81	3.90	3.95	4.33
Portland'5 Center for the Arts	3.71	3.62	3.80	3.89
Waste Prevention and Environmental Services	3.87	3.74	3.78	3.79

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work

DEI Resource Awareness: Department

The 2025 Employee Engagement Survey asked staff to rate their awareness of key DEI-related resources. Results are reported as “Top Box %,” which combines those who said they have a general understanding or are very familiar and could explain it to others. This measure provides insight into how widely employees across departments know about and engage with Metro’s DEI initiatives.

Highest awareness overall was reported for the annual DEI learning requirement, with many departments reaching or exceeding 98%. Finance, Housing, Human Resources, and the Office of Metro Attorney all reported 100% familiarity with this resource.

Employee resource groups (ERGs) were less consistently recognized, ranging from 59% at the Oregon Zoo to 100% in Human Resources and the Office of Metro Attorney. Portland’5 Centers for the Arts (63%) and the Oregon Convention/Expo (74%) also showed relatively lower awareness of ERGs.

The Gender Inclusion Policy was well recognized across most departments, with several reporting 100% familiarity (Human Resources and Capital Asset Management). However, lower recognition was seen at Housing (74%) and Portland’5 (87%).

Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion showed the widest variation, from 65% at Portland’5 and 68% at the Oregon Zoo to more than 90% in Planning (93%), the Office of Metro Attorney (94%), and Parks & Nature (90%).

Awareness of the required DEI learning and Gender Inclusion Policy is nearly universal across Metro, while familiarity with ERGs and Metro’s DEI Strategic Plan varies more significantly by department. Notably, the Oregon Zoo and Portland’5 report the lowest awareness across multiple resources, suggesting areas for targeted communication and outreach.

Table 7: Top Box DEI Resource Awareness by Department

Department	2025 TOP BOX % <i>(I have a general understanding/I'm very familiar and could explain it to others)</i>			
	Employee resource groups (ERGs)	Gender Inclusion Policy	Annual DEI Learning Requirement (4 hours)	Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Capital Asset Management	90%	100%	97%	87%
Finance	95%	91%	100%	79%
Housing	95%	74%	100%	72%
Human Resources	100%	100%	100%	79%
Information Technology	85%	88%	97%	79%
Office of Metro Attorney	100%	88%	100%	94%
Council Office/COO/GAPD	91%	89%	94%	92%
Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center	74%	91%	98%	74%
Oregon Zoo	59%	83%	98%	68%
Parks and Nature	92%	95%	98%	90%
Planning, Development and Research	95%	91%	99%	93%
Portland'5 Centers for the Arts	63%	87%	91%	65%
Waste Prevention and Environmental Services	83%	87%	93%	76%

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work

Perceptions Across 4 DEI Items:

Demographics Subgroups

At the subgroup level, DEI mean scores provide insight into how employees across different demographic categories experience belonging, inclusivity, and alignment with Metro's values. As noted previously, the new four DEI items in 2025 establishes a new baseline, and results are not directly comparable to scores reported in 2023 and earlier.

Race/Ethnicity: Asian/Asian American (4.23), Black/African American (4.06), and Hispanic/Latino/a/x employees (3.89) reported the highest levels of DEI mean scores in 2025. Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native employees scored the lowest (3.35).

Gender Identity: Men (4.01) and women (4.01) reported higher DEI mean scores than Employees with non-binary identities (3.93).

Disability: Employees without a disability (4.07) scored higher than those with a disability (3.74).

Sexual Orientation: Gay/Lesbian employees (4.17) and Heterosexual employees (4.03) reported the strongest agreement, followed by Asexual employees (3.96). Employees identifying as Pansexual (3.73) and those listing "Sexuality not listed" (3.56) reported the lowest scores.

Job Type: Managers and supervisors (4.17) reported higher DEI mean scores than non-managers (3.89).

Employment Status: Variable-hour employees working more than 600 hours per year (4.25) reported the highest DEI mean scores, followed by variable-hour employees working less than 600 hours (3.69). Regular or part-time employees (3.94) were in the middle.

Compensation Status: Salaried employees (4.15) scored higher than hourly employees (3.81).

Work Location: Hybrid employees (4.11) reported the highest DEI mean scores, followed by remote employees (4.02) and onsite employees (3.78).

In 2025, the strongest DEI mean scores was reported by Asian/Asian American employees, Black/African American employees, and managers or supervisors, each scoring above 4.0. Gay/Lesbian and Heterosexual employees also stood out with relatively high agreement levels. By contrast, lower DEI mean scores was reported by Native American/American

Indian employees, Pansexual employees, and those identifying “Sexuality not listed,” as well as variable-hour employees working fewer than 600 hours. These results suggest that while many groups experience DEI positively at Metro, certain subgroups report less consistent agreement and may benefit from additional focus.

Table 8: Overall DEI Mean Scores by Demographic Subgroups

		Overall DEI Mean Score <i>2018-2023=13 DEI Questions</i>			Overall DEI Mean Score <i>2025=4 DEI Questions</i>
		2019	2021	2023	2025
Metro Agency Overall		3.63	3.77	3.77	3.90
Race/Ethnicity	Asian or Asian American	3.52	3.56	3.80	4.23
	Black or African American	3.72	3.56	3.55	4.06
	Hispanic or Latino/a/x	3.68	3.71	3.77	4.11
	Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native	4.14	3.34	3.78	3.35
	White	3.73	3.86	3.86	3.98
	I identify with more than one option listed	3.47	3.56	3.91	3.83
	Prefer not to respond	3.06	3.51	3.18	3.27
Gender Identity	Women	3.75	3.82	3.88	4.01
	Man	3.66	3.76	3.78	4.01
	Non-binary identities	3.43	3.90	3.59	3.93
	Prefer not to respond	2.91	3.51	3.21	3.24
Disability	Yes	3.50	3.61	3.51	3.74
	No	3.44	3.82	3.89	4.07
	Prefer not to respond	3.20	3.42	3.38	3.49
Sexual Orientation	Asexual	3.43	3.30	3.87	4.13
	Bisexual	3.44	3.80	3.80	3.84
	Gay or Lesbian	3.73	3.79	3.74	4.17
	Heterosexual	3.76	3.86	3.87	4.03
	Pansexual	3.56	3.51	3.59	3.73
	I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed	3.52	3.90	3.92	3.56
	Prefer not to respond	3.20	3.49	3.39	3.54
Job	Manager/Supervisor	3.91	4.00	3.96	4.17
	Non-Manager/Non-Supervisor	3.55	3.73	3.75	3.89
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.13	3.28	3.40

(Continued on page 37)

Table 8: Overall DEI Mean Scores by Demographic Subgroups

		Overall DEI Mean Score <i>2018-2023=13 DEI Questions</i>			Overall DEI Mean Score <i>2025=4 DEI Questions</i>
		2019	2021	2023	2025
Metro Agency Overall		3.63	3.77	3.77	3.90
Employment Status	Regular or Part-time employees who have worked at least 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.65	3.81	3.80	3.94
	Variable hour employees who have worked more than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.33	3.57	3.43	3.69
	Variable hour employees who have worked less than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.75	3.64	4.03	4.25
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.31	3.40	3.18
Compensation Status	Hourly	3.50	3.64	3.60	3.81
	Salaried	3.83	3.92	3.95	4.05
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.08	3.49	3.39
Remote/ Onsite	Onsite, at one of Metro's facilities	-	3.54	3.55	3.78
	Remote, not at a Metro facility	-	3.95	3.99	4.02
	I evenly split my time between working remotely and from onsite	-	3.63	4.01	4.11
	I did not work here in the last year	-	3.83	4.06	-
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.95	3.85	3.41

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work

DEI Resource Awareness: Demographics Subgroups

In addition to department-level results, subgroup analysis provides insight into how employees across demographic categories are engaging with Metro's DEI resources. As with earlier sections, results are reported as "Top Box %," (see Table 9) which reflects those who indicated they have a general understanding or are very familiar and could explain the resource to others.

Race/Ethnicity: Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native employees reported the highest awareness, with 100% familiarity across all four resources. Asian/Asian American employees also reported strong awareness, especially of the DEI learning requirement (95%) and ERGs (84%). Black/African American employees demonstrated similarly high familiarity, with 94% aware of the DEI learning requirement and 89% of ERGs. Hispanic/Latino/a/x employees showed consistently strong results, particularly for the DEI learning requirement (96%). White employees reported high awareness of ERGs (79%) and the DEI learning requirement (98%), and had the highest familiarity with the Strategic Plan among larger subgroups (79%).

Gender Identity: Women (86% ERGs, 91% gender inclusion, 98% DEI learning, 80% Strategic Plan) and Employees with non-binary identities (86%, 92%, 98%, 78%) showed higher awareness than men (74%, 86%, 96%, 78%), especially regarding ERGs. This suggests that men are less likely than other gender identity groups to be familiar with employee resource groups, though awareness of the annual DEI learning requirement was strong across all gender subgroups.

Disability: Employees without a disability (82% ERGs, 90% gender inclusion, 98% DEI learning, 82% Strategic Plan) consistently reported slightly higher awareness than employees with a disability (80%, 88%, 97%, 78%). While the gap is modest, it is most noticeable for ERG and Strategic Plan familiarity.

Sexual Orientation: Awareness levels varied somewhat across sexual orientation subgroups. Gay/Lesbian employees reported strong awareness overall (86% ERGs, 92% gender inclusion, 96% DEI learning, 80% Strategic Plan), as did Heterosexual employees (81%, 89%, 98%, 80%). Pansexual employees reported particularly high awareness of the DEI learning requirement (100%) but lower familiarity with ERGs (90%). Asexual employees were very familiar with ERGs (84%) and the DEI learning requirement (97%) but reported lower awareness of the Strategic Plan (76%). Bisexual employees stood out for especially high awareness of gender inclusion (95%) and the DEI learning requirement (100%), though ERG familiarity was lower (79%).

Job Type: Managers and supervisors reported consistently high awareness across all resources (92% ERGs, 90% gender inclusion, 100% DEI learning, 86% Strategic Plan), while non-managers were lower across every category (77%, 88%, 96%, 76%). The gap was most pronounced in awareness of ERGs and the Strategic Plan.

Employment Status: Regular or part-time employees (85% ERGs, 89% gender inclusion, 98% DEI learning, 80% Strategic Plan) reported the strongest awareness. By contrast, variable-hour employees—especially those working more than 600 hours annually—reported much lower familiarity, particularly with ERGs (56%) and the Strategic Plan (57%). Those working fewer than 600 hours also showed lower awareness (55% ERGs, 79% Strategic Plan), though scores were somewhat stronger on gender inclusion and DEI learning.

Compensation Status: Salaried employees consistently reported higher awareness (92% ERGs, 92% gender inclusion, 99% DEI learning, 86% Strategic Plan) compared to hourly employees (66%, 85%, 94%, 68%). The widest gaps appeared in ERG awareness (a 26-point difference) and familiarity with the Strategic Plan (18-point difference).

Work Location: Remote employees reported very high awareness across resources (93% ERGs, 93% gender inclusion, 99% DEI learning, 87% Strategic Plan), as did employees splitting time between remote and onsite work (95%, 96%, 98%, 85%). Onsite employees were consistently lower, particularly for ERGs (67%) and the Strategic Plan (70%), suggesting that those based primarily in Metro facilities may have fewer opportunities to engage with or learn about DEI initiatives.

Awareness of Metro’s DEI resources is strongest for the annual DEI learning requirement, which consistently reached the highest recognition levels across nearly all subgroups. Salaried staff, managers, remote and hybrid employees, and Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native employees reported the highest overall awareness, often approaching or reaching 100%. In contrast, hourly staff, onsite workers, and variable-hour employees, particularly those working over 600 hours, showed the lowest familiarity, especially with ERGs and Metro’s Strategic Plan. These gaps suggest opportunities for targeted communication to ensure DEI resources are accessible and visible to all employee groups.

Table 9: Top Box DEI Resource Awareness by Demographics Subgroup

		2025 TOP BOX % <i>(I have a general understanding/I'm very familiar and could explain it to others)</i>			
		Employee resource groups (ERGs)	Gender Inclusion Policy	Annual DEI Learning Requirement (4 hours)	Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Metro Agency Overall		80%	88%	96%	77%
Race/Ethnicity	Asian or Asian American	84%	86%	95%	74%
	Black or African American	89%	89%	94%	78%
	Hispanic or Latino/a/x	81%	86%	96%	80%
	Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native	100%	90%	100%	100%
	White	79%	91%	98%	79%
	I identify with more than one race/ethnicity, or my race/ethnicity is not listed	82%	87%	96%	81%
	Prefer not to respond	70%	74%	88%	63%
Gender Identity	Woman	86%	91%	98%	80%
	Man	74%	86%	96%	78%
	Non-binary identities	86%	92%	98%	78%
	Prefer not to respond	70%	75%	90%	66%
Disability	Yes	80%	88%	97%	74%
	No	82%	90%	98%	82%
	Prefer not to respond	73%	77%	88%	65%
Sexual Orientation	Asexual	84%	89%	97%	76%
	Bisexual	79%	95%	100%	85%
	Gay or Lesbian	86%	92%	96%	80%
	Heterosexual	81%	89%	98%	80%
	Pansexual	90%	86%	100%	80%
	I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexual orientation is not listed	87%	92%	92%	69%
	Prefer not to respond	72%	80%	91%	67%
Job	Manager/Supervisor	92%	90%	100%	86%
	Non-Manager/Non-Supervisor	77%	88%	96%	76%
	Prefer not to respond	76%	78%	94%	72%

(Continued on page 41)

Table 9: Top Box DEI Resource Awareness by Demographics Subgroup

		2025 TOP BOX % <i>(I have a general understanding/I'm very familiar and could explain it to others)</i>			
		Employee resource groups (ERGs)	Gender Inclusion Policy	Annual DEI Learning Requirement (4 hours)	Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Metro Agency Overall		80%	88%	96%	77%
Employment Status	Regular or Part-time employees who have worked at least 600 hours over the past 12 months	85%	89%	98%	80%
	Variable hour employees who have worked more than 600 hours over the past 12 months	56%	80%	90%	57%
	Variable hour employees who have worked less than 600 hours over the past 12 months	55%	86%	92%	79%
	Prefer not to respond	69%	74%	80%	62%
Compensation Status	Hourly	66%	85%	94%	68%
	Salaried	92%	92%	99%	86%
	Prefer not to respond	70%	76%	92%	71%
Remote/ Onsite	Onsite, at one of Metro's facilities	67%	85%	95%	70%
	Remote, not at a Metro facility	93%	93%	99%	87%
	I split my time between working remotely and from onsite	95%	92%	98%	85%
	I did not work here in the last year	-	-	-	-
	Prefer not to respond	67%	72%	91%	67%

Employee Reporting Confidence

Reporting Confidence: Agency

This section discusses Metro employees' confidence regarding reporting safety concerns and reporting harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior (referred to as "conduct concerns" in shorthand). In 2023, these items were consolidated into six core questions: three on safety (knowing how to report, confidence in Metro's handling, and confidence in reporting without retaliation), and three parallel questions on harassment/discrimination/unethical behavior. These items were retained in 2025, allowing comparability with the prior administration.

Confidence in reporting safety concerns:

- Knowing how to report: The mean score increased from 4.27 in 2023 to 4.42 in 2025 (+0.15).
- Believing Metro will take appropriate action: The mean rose from 3.87 in 2023 to 4.03 in 2025 (+0.16).
- Trusting they can report without retaliation: The mean increased from 4.06 in 2023 to 4.34 in 2025 (+0.28).

Confidence in reporting conduct, discrimination, or unethical behavior:

- Knowing how to report: The mean increased from 4.17 in 2023 to 4.37 in 2025 (+0.20).
- Believing Metro will take appropriate action: The mean rose from 3.56 in 2023 to 3.69 in 2025 (+0.13).
- Trusting they can report without retaliation: The mean increased from 3.73 in 2023 to 3.92 in 2025 (+0.19).

A new item added in the 2025 survey asked whether employees feel they have the training, equipment, and resources needed to stay physically safe while doing their job. The mean score was 4.36, indicating high confidence in physical safety resources. Because this item does not directly measure reporting, it was not included in the overall reporting confidence means.

Mean Reporting Confidence:

Overall reporting confidence increased from 3.94 in 2023 to 4.17 in 2025 (+0.23). Conduct reporting confidence (covering conduct, discrimination, and unethical behavior) also increased, from 3.82 in 2023 to 4.00 in 2025 (+0.17). These results suggest that employee confidence in Metro's reporting systems has improved across all dimensions, with the largest gains in confidence that reports can be made without retaliation.

Table 10: Reporting Confidence Items (2019 to Present)

	Reporting Confidence Questions	2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023 to 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
Safety	I am confident I have the training, equipment and resources needed to stay physically safe while doing my job. (New, 2025)				4.36	-
	I am confident I know how to report a safety concern, such as an injury risk or unsafe work conditions. (2025) <i>I am confident I know how to report safety concerns. (2023)</i> <i>I am confident I know how to report on physical/safety hazards. (2012-2021)</i>	4.23	4.31	4.27	4.42	0.15
	I am confident Metro handles reports of safety concerns appropriately. (2023-2025) <i>I am confident Metro takes appropriate action when dealing with problems reported involving physical/safety hazards. (2012-2021)</i>	3.81	4.29	3.87	4.03	0.16
	I am confident I can report safety concerns without encountering retaliation. (2023-2025) <i>I am confident I could report problems involving physical/safety hazards without encountering retaliation. (2012-2021)</i>	4.11	4.22	4.06	4.34	0.28
Harassment, Discrimination, or Unethical Behavior	I am confident I know how to report on harassment, discrimination or unethical behavior. (2023-2025)			4.17	4.37	0.2
	I am confident Metro handles reports on harassment discrimination or unethical behavior appropriately. (2023-2025)			3.56	3.69	0.13
	I am confident I can report on harassment, discrimination or unethical behavior without encountering retaliation. (2023-2025)			3.73	3.92	0.19
Reporting Confidence Aggregates	Conduct (Harassment and Discrimination) Reporting Confidence Mean (2018-2021)	3.68	3.87			0.17
	Conduct (Harassment, Discrimination, or Unethical Behavior) Reporting Confidence Mean (2023-2025)			3.82	3.99	
	Overall Reporting Confidence Mean	3.74	3.91	3.94	4.17	0.23

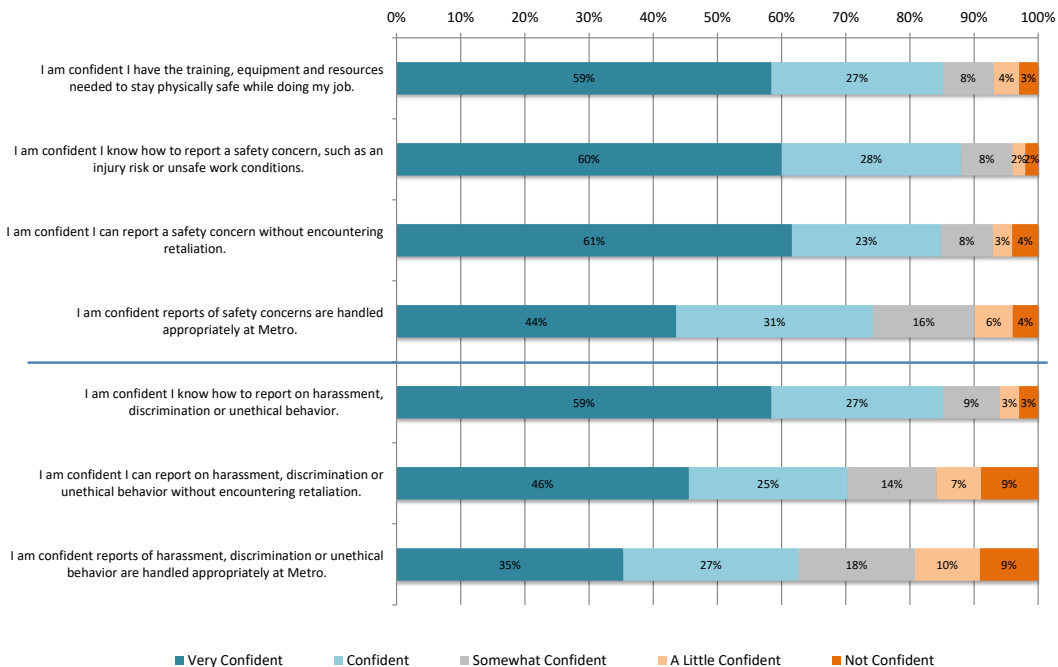
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Table 10: Reporting Confidence Items (2019 to Present)

	Reporting Confidence Questions	2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023 to 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
Previously gathered individual Conduct, discrimination, unethical behavior data	<i>I am confident I know how to report on harassment. (2021)</i>	4.05	4.29			
	<i>I am confident I know how to report on discrimination. (2021)</i>	3.95	4.22			
	<i>I am confident I know how to report on unethical behavior. (2021)</i>	3.92	4.14			
	<i>I am confident Metro takes appropriate action when dealing with problems reported involving harassment. (2021)</i>	3.45	3.61			
	<i>I am confident Metro takes appropriate action when dealing with problems reported involving discrimination. (2021)</i>	3.46	3.66			
	<i>I am confident Metro takes appropriate action when dealing with problems reported involving unethical behavior. (2021)</i>	3.34	3.5			
	<i>I am confident I can report safety concerns without encountering retaliation. (2021)</i>	3.58	3.7			
	<i>I am confident I could report problems involving discrimination without encountering retaliation. (2021)</i>	3.56	3.72			
	<i>I am confident I could report problems involving unethical behavior without encountering retaliation. (2021)</i>	3.42	3.62			

Figure 2:

2025 Reporting Confidence Items: Metro Agency



Employee Reporting Confidence

Reporting Confidence: Department

At the department level, reporting confidence varied across the organization, with several departments reporting well above the agency average and others showing more modest results.

The strongest reporting confidence was found in Human Resources (Overall 4.81; Conduct 4.85) and the Office of Metro Attorney (Overall 4.75; Conduct 4.79). Capital Asset Management (Overall 4.50; Conduct 4.38), Planning, Development & Research (Overall 4.44; Conduct 4.37), and Information Technology (Overall 4.44; Conduct 4.35) also reported consistently high confidence scores.

Several departments clustered near the overall agency mean of 4.17, including Finance (Overall 4.30; Conduct 4.14), Portland’s Centers for the Arts (Overall 4.18; Conduct 4.14), Communications (Overall 4.16; Conduct 3.92), Parks & Nature (Overall 4.15; Conduct 3.96), and Oregon Convention Center & Portland Expo Center (Overall 4.13; Conduct 3.95). The Office of the COO, Council, and Government Affairs (Overall 4.10; Conduct 3.96) and Waste Prevention & Environmental Services (Overall 4.05; Conduct 4.00) also fell in this range.

Lower levels of confidence were reported in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Department (Overall 3.98; Conduct 3.77), Housing (Overall 3.97; Conduct 3.84), and the Oregon Zoo (Overall 3.90; Conduct 3.68). While still within the “generally confident” range, these departments trailed the agency average and represent opportunities for improvement.

Overall, reporting confidence is strongest in Human Resources and the Office of Metro Attorney, both of which exceeded 4.7 in Overall and Conduct reporting confidence. Departments such as Finance, Portland’s, Communications, and Parks & Nature reflected results close to the agency average, while the DEI Department, Housing, and the Oregon Zoo scored lower, highlighting areas where additional support and focus may be needed to further strengthen employee confidence in reporting systems.

	Overall Reporting Confidence Mean Scores (Full Set) <i>2019-2021=12 Questions 2023-2025=6 Questions</i>				Conduct Reporting Confidence Mean Scores <i>2019-2021=Harassment and Discrimination 2023-2025=Harassment, Discrimination, & Unethical Behavior</i>			
	2019	2021	2023	2025	2019	2021	2023	2025
Metro Agency Overall	3.74	3.91	3.94	4.17	3.68	3.87	3.82	3.99
Capital Asset Management	-	4.34	4.48	4.50	-	4.37	4.40	4.38
Communications	3.68	3.54	3.00	4.16	3.55	3.43	2.71	3.92
Council Office/COO/GAPD	4.06	3.78	4.09	4.10	3.98	3.72	4.02	3.96

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	Overall Reporting Confidence Mean Scores (Full Set) <i>2019-2021=12 Questions 2023-2025=6 Questions</i>				Conduct Reporting Confidence Mean Scores <i>2019-2021=Harassment and Discrimination 2023-2025=Harassment, Discrimination, & Unethical Behavior</i>			
	2019	2021	2023	2025	2019	2021	2023	2025
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	-	-	3.55	3.98	-	-	3.48	3.77
Finance and Regulatory Services	3.49	3.93	4.06	4.30	3.33	3.86	3.95	4.14
Housing	-	-	3.52	3.97	-	-	3.46	3.84
Human Resources	3.41	4.42	4.51	4.81	3.34	4.49	4.46	4.85
Information Services	4.02	3.84	4.29	4.44	3.98	3.87	4.23	4.35
Office of Metro Attorney	4.17	4.31	4.60	4.75	3.98	4.26	4.59	4.79
Oregon Convention Center	3.51	3.92	3.71	4.13	3.48	3.87	3.60	3.95
Portland Expo Center	4.2	4.44	4.28		4.17	4.42	4.21	
Oregon Zoo	3.61	3.7	3.76	3.90	3.56	3.62	3.56	3.68
Parks and Nature	3.84	3.9	3.73	4.15	3.75	3.84	3.55	3.96
Planning, Development and Research	3.74	4.1	4.25	4.44	3.65	4.08	4.23	4.37
Portland'5 Center for the Arts	3.99	4.16	4.18	4.18	3.94	4.09	4.10	4.14
Waste Prevention and Environmental Services	3.82	3.91	4.02	4.05	3.75	3.89	3.92	4.00
Prefer not to respond	-	-	3.35	3.46	-	-	3.28	3.21

Employee Reporting Confidence

Reporting Confidence: Demographic Subgroups

Metro's 2025 survey results show an overall reporting confidence mean of 4.17 and a conduct reporting confidence mean of 3.99. While most subgroups scored near or above these averages (see Table 12), several stood out at the high and low ends.

The strongest confidence was reported by Hispanic/Latino/a/x employees (Overall 4.25; Conduct 4.12), Asian/Asian American employees (Overall 4.22; Conduct 4.09), and Black/African American employees (Overall 4.19; Conduct 4.11). Among gender groups, Men (Overall 4.26; Conduct 4.15) and Women (Overall 4.16; Conduct 4.03) also reported high levels of confidence, both above the agency averages.

Several large subgroups scored close to agency-wide means, including White employees (Overall 4.21; Conduct 4.09) and Multiracial employees (Overall 4.03; Conduct 3.87). By sexual orientation, Heterosexual employees (Overall 4.16; Conduct 4.02) were near the agency average, as were Regular/Part-time employees (Overall 4.19; Conduct 4.02). These results suggest that the majority of employees across large subgroups view reporting processes positively.

Lower levels of reporting confidence were observed among Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native employees (Overall 3.59; Conduct 3.27), employees with non-binary identities (Overall 3.94; Conduct 3.71), and employees identifying with "Sexuality not listed" (Overall 3.68; Conduct 3.47). These groups reported below the agency averages, particularly on Conduct reporting confidence.

Overall, reporting confidence is strongest among Hispanic/Latino/a/x, Asian/Asian American, and Black/African American employees, along with men and women, all of whom scored at or above agency averages. In contrast, confidence remains lowest among Native American/American Indian employees, Employees with non-binary identities, and those identifying with "Sexuality not listed." These subgroup findings highlight where Metro's reporting systems are viewed as most trusted and where focused attention may be needed to strengthen confidence.

Table 12: Overall Reporting Confidence and Conduct Reporting Confidence Means by Demographics Subgroups

		Overall Reporting Confidence Mean Scores (Full Set) 2018-2021=12 Questions 2023-2025=6 Questions					Conduct Reporting Confidence Mean Scores 2018-2021=Harassment and Discrimination 2023-2025=Harassment, Discrimination, & Unethical Behavior				
		2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023— 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)	2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023— 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
Metro Agency Overall		3.74	3.91	3.94	4.17	0.23	3.68	3.87	3.82	3.99	0.17
Race/Ethnicity	Asian or Asian American	3.69	3.54	3.90	4.22	0.32	3.61	3.44	3.75	4.09	0.34
	Black or African American	3.95	3.46	3.83	4.19	0.36	3.87	3.36	3.75	4.11	0.36
	Hispanic or Latino/a/x	3.57	3.61	3.87	4.25	0.38	3.48	3.58	3.68	4.12	0.44
	Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native	4.16	3.66	3.37	3.59	0.22	4	3.65	3.30	3.27	-0.03
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*	4.13	*	*	*	*	4.00	*	*
	White	3.87	4.05	4.06	4.21	0.15	3.82	4.02	3.95	4.09	0.14
	I identify with more than one option listed	3.58	3.82	4.22	4.03	-0.19	3.46	3.74	4.12	3.87	-0.25
	Prefer not to respond	3.1	3.51	3.25	3.55	0.30	3.03	3.44	3.09	3.87	0.78
Gender Identity	Women	3.75	3.87	3.99	4.16	0.17	3.65	3.83	3.87	4.03	0.16
	Man	3.92	4.09	4.12	4.26	0.14	3.9	4.06	4.02	4.15	0.13
	Non-binary identities	3.53	3.58	3.31	3.94	0.63	3.36	3.39	3.14	3.71	0.57
	Transgender	*	*	3.50			*	*	3.40		
	Prefer not to respond	3.02	3.5	3.25	3.59	0.34	2.94	3.44	3.11	3.39	0.28
Disability	Yes	3.51	3.6	3.64	3.96	0.32	3.44	3.47	3.45	3.77	0.32
	No	3.48	3.99	4.10	4.26	0.16	3.35	3.96	4.00	4.15	0.15
	Prefer not to respond	3.29	3.45	3.43	3.77	0.34	3.2	3.39	3.31	3.61	0.30
Sexual Orientation	Asexual	3.67	3.52	3.99	4.20	0.21	3.62	3.51	3.92	4.02	0.10
	Bisexual	3.64	3.98	4.05	4.04	-0.01	3.53	3.9	3.96	3.88	-0.08
	Gay or Lesbian	3.84	3.81	3.92	4.30	0.38	3.76	3.78	3.77	4.15	0.38
	Heterosexual	3.88	4.04	4.07	4.24	0.17	3.83	4.01	3.96	4.13	0.17
	Pansexual	3.12	3.33	3.71	3.68	-0.03	2.96	3.23	3.49	3.50	0.01
	I identify with more than one sexual orientation, or my sexuality not listed	3.7	3.94	3.51	3.91	0.40	3.52	3.85	3.33	3.75	0.42
	Prefer not to respond	3.35	3.55	3.52	3.82	0.30	3.27	3.48	3.36	3.65	0.29

(Continued on page 49)

Table 12: Overall Reporting Confidence and Conduct Reporting Confidence Means by Demographics Subgroups

		Overall Reporting Confidence Mean Scores (Full Set) <i>2018-2021=12 Questions 2023-2025=6 Questions</i>					Conduct Reporting Confidence Mean Scores <i>2018-2021=Harassment and Discrimination 2023-2025=Harassment, Discrimination, & Unethical Behavior</i>				
		2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023— 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)	2019	2021	2023	2025	Change 2023— 2025 (Changes of +/- 0.1 flagged as significant)
Metro Agency Overall		3.74	3.91	3.94	4.17	0.23	3.68	3.87	3.82	3.99	0.17
Job	Manager/Supervisor	4.14	4.32	4.29	4.47	0.18	4.12	4.29	4.16	4.36	0.20
	Non-Manager/Non-Supervisor	3.64	3.83	3.90	4.08	0.18	3.57	3.78	3.78	3.93	0.15
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.94	3.29	3.53	0.24	-	2.94	3.16	3.34	0.18
Employment Status Compensation Status	Regular or Part-time employees who have worked at least 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.71	3.92	3.94	4.16	0.22	3.64	3.88	3.82	4.02	0.20
	Variable hour employees who have worked more than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.76	4.05	3.93	3.99	0.06	3.7	3.99	3.77	3.83	0.06
	Variable hour employees who have worked less than 600 hours over the past 12 months	3.94	4.01	4.16	4.26	0.10	3.89	3.95	4.16	4.19	0.03
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.48	3.57	3.47	-0.10	-	3.46	3.48	3.23	-0.25
	Hourly	3.66	3.79	3.84	3.99	0.15	3.59	3.74	3.71	3.85	0.14
	Salaried	3.88	4.08	4.12	4.29	0.17	3.82	4.05	4.01	4.16	0.15
	Prefer not to respond	-	2.9	3.25	3.62	0.37	-	2.81	3.09	3.42	0.33
Remote/ Onsite	Onsite, at one of Metro's facilities	-	3.83	3.85	4.02	0.17	-	3.76	3.71	3.86	0.15
	Remote, not at a Metro facility	-	3.99	4.00	4.18	0.18	-	3.96	3.90	4.05	0.15
	I evenly split my time between working remotely and from onsite	-	3.86	4.22	4.32	0.10	-	3.78	4.09	4.21	0.12
	I did not work here last year	-	4.03	4.07	-	-	-	4.08	3.95	-	-
	Prefer not to respond	-	3.02	3.78	3.43	-0.35	-	2.91	3.79	3.20	-0.59

Section 5: Qualitative Findings

The 2025 Employee Engagement Survey had three open-ended questions, which allowed individuals to provide additional feedback on employee engagement suggestions, DEI challenges, and DEI accomplishments. This year, the question “Please share one action you believe Metro needs to take to better address DEI moving forward” was not asked in the survey. Qualitative coding was completed in order to better understand general feedback themes and ideas. A listing of open-ended feedback is presented in a supplementary report to the COO Exec team and Directors in Human Resources, Communications and DEI departments. Comments that reported possible conduct concerns and identified individuals or workgroups were redacted from the report and sent to hr.reporting@oregonmetro.gov.

Please provide us with any additional suggestions you have for increasing employee engagement here at Metro.

Table 13: Text Analysis

Response Theme	Percent	Count
More/better quality listening and valuing employee input, better communications	20.40%	63
More/different interaction through events, activities, collaboration with other departments	19.40%	60
Improve work culture/work conditions	17.80%	55
Need better and more accountable leadership	13.60%	42
Sense of unity	12.90%	40
More recognition, appreciation, and care	9.10%	40
No suggestions- happy with DEI work	8.40%	28
Be accountable, be responsive, better reporting system for employees	6.80%	26
More/better training/learning	5.50%	21
Modify hiring, advancement, and retention practices	5.20%	17
Need more resources	4.90%	16
Include variable/temp/part-time employees in engagement efforts/communications/ access to resources	4.90%	15
Better work/life balance	4.20%	15
N/A	4.20%	13
Treat all people equally and as individuals	2.60%	8
Better implementation of DEI work	1.60%	5
Don't know/unsure	1.30%	4
Negative: Too much emphasis on DEI	1.00%	3

Key Takeaways

Employees shared a range of suggestions for improving engagement at Metro, with the most common focused on better communication and valuing employee input (20.4%). Nearly as many emphasized the need for more opportunities to connect across departments through events, activities, and collaboration (19.4%).

Improving the work culture and day-to-day conditions (17.8%) and ensuring more accountable leadership (13.6%) were also frequently mentioned, alongside a desire for stronger sense of unity (12.9%) and greater recognition and appreciation (9.1%).

Overall, employees highlighted that increasing engagement will require stronger two-way communication, more opportunities to build connections, and more visible leadership accountability. Example quotes include:

- *Actually listening to frontline staff, safety professionals, and site leadership... Keeping one safety professional for an entire department is ridiculous.*

- *Create groups that connect people on what they like to do... I would enjoy having a volunteer program that would help us work in different parts of the organization and understand Metro's vision.*
- *Leadership should increase their level of transparency... With layoffs, cutting of divisions and locations, these announcements feel shocking with almost no lead time.*
- *Increase in-person expectations... Engagement stems not only from doing our work, but from connecting with our workplace and each other.*
- *VHEs and frontline staff should have scheduled computer time to catch up on e-mails and updates...*

What do you believe Metro's greatest accomplishment has been in reaching goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion work?

Table 14: Text Analysis

Response Theme	Percent	Count
General commitment to DEI effort	24.30%	125
Good DEI training, education, and awareness	19.80%	102
Good strategy/plan/framework for implementation of DEI work	17.50%	90
Approval of specific DEI policies/initiatives	16.10%	83
Diverse hiring and retention efforts & workforce diversity	15.50%	80
Creating/changing Metro culture	11.70%	60
Community outreach & involvement	6.20%	32
Critical of Metro's implementation of DEI work	6.00%	31
Staff/groups approval and support of the DEI initiative	5.40%	28
Don't know/unsure	5.20%	27
N/A: Disapproves of DEI as an idea/in general	3.90%	20
N/A	3.30%	17
Procurement changes	1.70%	9
Listening to & addressing employee issues	0.60%	3

Key Takeaways

Employees highlighted several accomplishments in Metro's DEI work, most often praising the agency's overall commitment to DEI (24.3%). Many described equity as one of Metro's strongest achievements, noting it has become embedded in daily operations.

The next most frequent theme was training, education, and awareness efforts (19.8%), followed by recognition of strategic plans and frameworks guiding implementation of DEI work (17.5%). Comments emphasized the value of structured learning opportunities and clear direction-setting for advancing equity goals.

Other areas of accomplishment included approval and recognition of specific DEI policies and initiatives (16.1%) and progress in diverse hiring and retention (15.5%). Employees also cited shifts in organizational culture (11.7%) and expanded community outreach (6.2%) as important for making DEI work more visible across the region.

A small minority (6.0%) expressed critical views, pointing to the need for greater consistency in implementation. Below are example quotes illustrating employees' perspectives on Metro's greatest DEI accomplishments:

- *I think one of Metro's biggest accomplishments in DEI has been making equity part of how we work every day, not just something we talk about. From hiring practices to community engagement and how we make decisions, there's been a real effort to center equity and include voices that haven't always been heard. It's still a work in progress, but the foundation that's been built is strong.*
- *I am proud of Metro continuing to be committed to DEI work when there's an attempt to shift society's focus away from it.*
- *DEI in person trainings with actual marginalized groups (e.g., Oregon Black Pioneers, disabled disability advocated, etc.).*
- *The ERG groups are a wonderful opportunity for communities to connect and seem to be actively managed.*
- *Dedicating community grant funding to projects that enhance diversity of access in the region.*
- *Seeing historically underrepresented communities take priority in engagement outreach for projects has been really important. Then following back up with them to show and tell how their feedback impacted and influenced a project really helped to show that they had a voice and encouraged them to continue working with Metro in the future.*
- *Paid internships and community enrichment-engagement. Also there are several individuals in leadership that uphold this very well.*

What do you believe Metro's greatest challenges are in achieving goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion work?

Table 15: Text Analysis

Response Theme	Percent	Count
The federal government/political climate (external anti-DEI pressure)	24.80%	147
Bias, discrimination, and exclusion within Metro culture	15.90%	94
Negative sentiments about DEI work	14.40%	85
Not enough capacity/resources dedicated towards the DEI initiative	8.40%	50
Poor communication, listening, and coordination of efforts	7.60%	45
Need for different or more effective training to understand what DEI is	7.40%	44
Poor consistency among efforts	7.40%	44
Lack of accountability, measurement, and reporting	7.30%	43

Key Takeaways

When asked to identify Metro's greatest challenges in achieving goals related to DEI work, nearly one-quarter of respondents (24.8%) pointed to external factors, particularly the federal government and broader political climate, describing their concerns about how external anti-DEI pressures may impact Metro.

Additionally, several themes emerged regarding Metro's internal culture and organizational barriers. The most common of these were issues of bias, discrimination, and exclusion within Metro's culture (15.9%), as well as a cluster of negative

Table 15: Text Analysis

All talk and no action or implementation of plan	7.30%	43
Improve recruitment and hiring strategies to increase diversity	6.10%	36
Improve retention strategies to increase diversity and decrease turn over rates	5.60%	33
Lack of leadership support or buy in at all levels (including department level)	5.40%	32
N/A	4.20%	25
Don't know/unsure	2.90%	17
Lack of community buy in and support (not enough community outreach/engagement)	2.70%	16
It is hard to be diverse when Oregon is not	2.20%	13
None	1.70%	10
Lack of staff support or buy in	1.40%	8
Slow pace	0.80%	5
Do not feel comfortable or safe participating in DEI efforts	0.70%	4
Training alone is not enough	0.50%	3

sentiments about DEI itself (14.4%). These negative perceptions included feelings that DEI work excludes certain employees (4.4%), that too much time and emphasis is placed on DEI work compared to other priorities (3.9%), that Metro’s real challenges are workplace conditions and staffing rather than DEI work (3.0%), and that hiring should be based solely on qualifications rather than DEI considerations (3.0%).

Other frequently cited challenges were insufficient resources or capacity dedicated to DEI initiatives (8.4%), poor communication and coordination of efforts (7.6%), and a need for more effective training and understanding of DEI (7.4%). Similar proportions of respondents (7.4%) raised concerns about inconsistent efforts, and 7.3% specifically noted lack of accountability and measurement or perceived all talk and no action in Metro’s DEI work.

Example quotes include:

- *Trying not to lose the momentum Metro has build in our current political climate*
- *Lack of coordination, clarity, and proactive communication about DEI across the agency[...] we need to have clear, strong, specific communication, both internally and externally, about how we’re actively remaining committed to DEI.*
- *Unconscious bias on the part of employees and managers. I was part of an interview panel where it was suggested that the male candidate with fewer qualifications might be a better fit than the more qualified female candidate because he had more potential. I had to point out that we aren’t capable of determining an applicant’s potential, and I questioned why he was being given the benefit of assumed potential when she was not.*
- *Metro talks a big game but also does stuff like eliminate the Paint program, where most people of color in WPES work, with little warning.*
- *I haven’t been wholly impressed with contractors we have hired for a few different events or workshops. I don’t know if this speaks to the general state of people doing this work locally or if it’s just who we choose to support.*
- *Policies are only helpful when they are enforced. These policies are applied unevenly and are only enforced when affected employees push management to do so.*