



CITY OF BEND

City Hall
710 NW Wall Street
Bend, OR 97703

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP

Policy No. HR-0901

City Manager Administrative Policy

Bend Code Chapter 1.30.005 provides for 'City Manager Authority to Adopt Administrative Regulations, Policies and Guidelines.' All regulations, policies and guidelines adopted by the City Manager shall be consistent with the City of Bend Charter, the Bend Code, and Council ordinances.

The following policy conforms to the above stated standards. This policy replaces and rescinds Policy No. 2024-9.

Authorized by City Manager:

Reviewed by Legal Counsel:

Signed by:

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Eric King, City Manager

Signed by:

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Ian Leitheiser, City Attorney

Dated: 5/12/2026

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Policy Number: HR-0901

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Adopted: 12/05/2024

Revision Number: 1

Owner: City Manager's Office – Employee Experience Program



I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the authority, responsibility, accountability, and procedures for the formation and operations of City of Bend Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). This policy governs the formation, approval, and activities of ERGs at the City of Bend. It also outlines parameters for employee participation in ERGs, as well as the kinds of resources made available to ERGs.

II. Policy Statement

The City of Bend is committed to supporting workforce equity and inclusion by fostering the development of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). It is the City of Bend's policy to increase workforce equity and inclusion by dedicating resources for the formation and maintenance of ERGs.

In keeping with this policy, ERGs must be committed to fostering a sense of community and belonging, helping to introduce new and current employees to the organizational culture, and providing networking, mentoring, informational, and professional development opportunities.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all City employees (full- and part-time). Participation in an ERG is subject to supervisory approval.

Nothing in this policy is to be interpreted as prohibiting employees from joining or creating other types of groups. The City ERG program is not intended to replace existing departmental diversity, engagement, respect, or affinity teams.

IV. Definitions

Employee Resource Group (ERG): A voluntary, City-recognized, employee-led group within the City organization. These groups aim to foster a diverse, connected, informed, and inclusive workplace by bringing together employees who share common identities, interests, or life experiences. ERGs should strive to provide support, create safe spaces, foster personal and professional development, and help identify organizational challenges and opportunities.

Member: An employee who has completed the City's ERG Membership Form and gone through the onboarding processes for the ERG they wish to be a member of. Members are eligible to dedicate 2 hours/month of paid time to ERG-related business.

V. Policy Terms & Provisions

A. ERG Formation

1. ERGs must align with the values, mission, and policies of the City.



2. Groups are organized by employees who support the goals of the ERG and wish to participate in its activities. Groups are responsible for outreach and recruitment of members; the City will not provide any protected employee information related to ERG outreach and recruitment.
3. Membership in an ERG and access to ERG events shall not be denied on the basis of an employee's race, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other protected characteristic. Consistent with that requirement, an ERG may define its purpose and membership in its charter. Groups wishing to define membership should coordinate with the Employee Experience (EX) Program to create a membership definition which will be included in their application and communication.
4. ERGs should be formed as prosocial groups, meaning that they are intended to promote behavior that benefits others or society. To this end, ERGs may not form or evolve for the purpose of opposing other ERGs.

B. ERG Approval

1. ERGs must go through an initial approval process as well as an annual approval process to maintain their active status. Both the initial and annual approval processes are overseen by the Employee Experience (EX) Program.
2. Approval will be based on an assessment of:
 - a. The group's stated goals and objectives, which should have a clear connection to the City's mission, core values, organizational outcomes, and/or initiatives.
 - b. A work plan that describes the ERG's proposed activities for the coming calendar year.
3. The City will conduct an annual review of all ERGs to ensure the goals and objectives of each ERG continue to contribute to the City's mission, values, and organizational outcomes. This annual review may include a review of ERGs' work plans and annual reports.
4. Should there be a situation in which an ERG is being discontinued, formal notice will be communicated in writing to the ERG's Leadership Team by the Employee Experience (EX) Program. Although the City intends ERGs to be employee-driven organizations, the City reserves the right and sole discretion to discontinue any ERG at any time, for any reason.

C. Manager/Supervisor Approval

1. Managers and supervisors should encourage and support participation in ERGs. Managers and supervisors are encouraged to work with employees who are interested in participating in an ERG by allowing employees to adjust their



schedules by flexing their time, while ensuring the employee meets the expectations of their position.

2. ERG participation is subject to manager/supervisor approval. ERG participation will not be approved if it impacts department operational needs and/or results in any overtime.
3. At no time is an employee required to notify their supervisor of which ERG they are participating in as a condition of approval.
4. If the employee's request to participate is denied, the manager/supervisor shall provide a reason to the employee. This should include an explanation of how the department's operational needs preclude the employee's participation, if applicable. Employees that disagree with their supervisor's decision should reach out to the EX Program to discuss how to move forward.
5. The employee and/or manager/supervisor may request consultation with the EX Program or Human Resources Department at any time regarding any aspect of employee participation in an ERG, a decision to approve or deny participation, or any aspect of this Policy.

D. Employee Participation

1. Participation in an ERG is voluntary and open to all City employees. Additional information on participation, including the required forms and processes for membership, is available in the ERG Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Criteria and conditions for participation include:
 - a. Securing prior approval from an employee's manager/supervisor to allow sufficient time for adequate coverage when requesting to participate in an ERG activity on work time. Participation may not produce any overtime obligation, either for the participating employee or for any other employee.
 - b. With prior supervisory approval, ERG members may spend up to 2 hours per month on City working time on ERG business. Employees in approved ERG Leadership positions may spend up to 4 hours per month on City working time on ERG business, as long as it does not interfere with the regular work of employees.
 - c. ERG members, including those in leadership positions, are responsible for ensuring that they do not exceed the hours allotted under this Policy for ERG activities.
 - d. Citywide workgroups and attendance at citywide sponsored events are not included in time allotted for ERG participation.



- e. While on City working time, activities and behaviors are expected to align with the City of Bend Employee Handbook, applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements, and City policies.
 - f. An employee's active participation in a City ERG may be noted in their annual performance evaluation as part of their personal and professional development progress.
2. As a public employer subject to public records law, employees do not have any expectation of privacy regarding their participation in ERGs or ERG activities. All records related to ERGs and ERG activities will generally be considered public records subject to retention and disclosure requirements of state law.
 3. Beyond what is outlined in City policy, it is up to ERG Leadership to define within the ERG what constitutes a violation of any group agreements. Members and participants in ERG meetings and events are expected to follow the agreed-upon group agreements. Behavior that is disruptive to the group or violates established group agreements should be addressed by ERG Leadership and may result in removal from ERG events and/or membership. ERG Leadership may request consultation from the EX Program or Human Resources Department as necessary or desired.
 4. Employees are not guaranteed or entitled to membership or participation in an ERG. If an employee fails to meet job performance expectations, or in the case of a policy violation or other extreme circumstances, an individual's participation in an ERG may be removed by the City, at the City's sole discretion. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Removal from an ERG does not constitute an adverse employment action.

E. ERG Activities

1. The following are permissible official ERG activities:
 - a. Identifying workforce engagement barriers and solutions.
 - b. Helping the City with diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility awareness.
 - c. Hosting events that give ERG members and other employees opportunities to network, develop skills, and further personal and professional growth.
 - d. Helping the City with strategic planning, recruitment, employee development.



- e. Sponsoring events, trainings (i.e., Lunch & Learns), seminars, and conferences that align with the scope and goals of the ERG (subject to EX Program and City Manager or designee approval).
 - f. Taking on special initiatives and projects.
 - g. Celebrating cultural, educational, and other special events.
 2. ERG activities should be accessible to the greatest extent possible. Time, location, and cost should be taken into consideration when planning activities.
 3. Employees should only participate in strictly social ERG activities during non-work time.
- F. ERG Use of City Resources
 1. ERGs may use City communication systems for ERG business (ex. notifying participants of meetings, events, meeting actions, or to distribute minutes).
 2. ERGs may use City conference rooms for the purpose of regular meetings with appropriate coordination.
- G. Funding and Reimbursement
 1. Established ERGs will receive funding each fiscal year, subject to funding availability.
 2. Groups are responsible for ensuring that all expenditures are within the allowable guidelines.
 3. ERGs are City-sponsored groups and are expected to follow the City's procurement and funding processes. ERGs may not charge membership dues or otherwise fundraise.
- H. General Guidelines
 1. ERGs are not bargaining units and do not represent employees or groups of employees in issues related to terms and conditions of employment or in any matter related to collective bargaining.
 2. ERGs may not seek remedies for individual employee matters and do not have any status or role in personnel or performance management, discipline, investigations, or any related topics.
 3. Participants of an ERG may not conduct themselves in any manner that would suggest that they speak for the City, represent the policies or positions of the City, or have authority to bind the City in any way.
 4. No ERG may be organized for the purpose of advancing or opposing any religion or religious viewpoint nor may any ERG engage in religious or worship activity. Employees are free to worship as they please and may create and participate in groups associated with a religious belief or background, but



those groups will not be recognized as ERGs under this Policy. For general information about seeking a religious accommodation, please consult the City of Bend Employee Handbook.

5. All ERG activities must be in compliance with the City of Bend Employee Handbook and all other City policies and procedures.
- I. ERG Program Administration
 1. The City's Organizational Development & Employee Experience Manager (OD & EX Manager) has direct management, oversight authority, and responsibility for the policies, rules, and procedures for all City-recognized ERGs.



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities & Language Assistance Services

You can obtain this information in alternate formats such as Braille, electronic format, etc. Free language assistance services are also available. Please email accessibility@bendoregon.gov or call 541-693-2198. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1. All requests are subject to vendor processing times and should be submitted 48-72 hours in advance of events.

Servicios de asistencia lingüística e información sobre alojamiento para personas con discapacidad

Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto en correo electrónico accessibility@bendoregon.gov o número de teléfono 541-693-2198. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1. Por favor, envíe sus solicitudes con 48-72 horas de antelación al evento; todas las solicitudes están sujetas a los tiempos de procesamiento del proveedor.