DEI Committee Charter



Despite the current backlash in the U.S., many companies in Canada remain committed to the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). That includes some of the country's biggest and most powerful corporations such as Scotiabank, Procter & Gamble, D2L Corporation, Air Canada, CBC/Radio Canada, and BC Hydro. But achieving DEI goals requires more than lip service and public relations. There must be active and energetic leadership at the highest levels of the organization. One of the hallmarks of leadership engagement is the formation of a DEI Committee made up of corporate decision makers and governance-level executives. The first step in creating such a committee is to create a Charter. Here's a DEI Committee Charter template that you can adapt for your own company.

ABC Company Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee Charter

1. **PURPOSE**

This Charter hereby establishes the ABC Company Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee ("Committee") whose purpose is to provide governance, oversight, and strategic direction for the Company's DEI initiatives. Specifically, the Committee's purpose is to:

- Support compliance with applicable human rights and employment legislation, including, without limitation, The Canadian Charter, the [*province/territory/federal*] Human Rights Act, and, where applicable, the Employment Equity Act, Accessible Canada Act, and Canadian Multiculturalism Act.
- Identify and address systemic barriers within ABC Company's business operations, HR policies, employment systems, and workplace practices.
- Promote equitable access to recruitment, retention, advancement, and compensation opportunities.
- Strengthen organizational culture through inclusion-focused initiatives.
- Monitor progress toward achieving measurable DEI objectives.

2. **COMMITTEE AUTHORITY**

The Committee is advisory and strategic in nature and does not replace management's legal or operational decision-making authority. The Committee is authorized to:

- Review workforce data (in aggregated and anonymized form).
- Request relevant reports from HR and other Company departments or operations.
- Recommend policy revisions.
- Propose measurable DEI objectives.
- Propose performance metrics to measure progress toward achieving DEI objectives.
- Recommend DEI training and education initiatives.
- Escalate material risks or compliance concerns to any level of the Company necessary.

The Committee does not have authority to:

- Make individual employment decisions.
- Participate in disciplinary proceedings.
- Participate or make reasonable accommodation determinations.
- Access confidential personal information beyond aggregated data unless legally authorized.

Individual complaints of discrimination or harassment shall be handled through established reporting and investigation procedures, not through the Committee.

3. **SCOPE OF COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT**

The Committee’s oversight responsibilities include:

3.1 Workforce Composition & Representation

- Review aggregate demographic data where lawfully collected.
- Identify potential underrepresentation trends.
- Recommend lawful strategies to broaden recruitment pools.

3.2 Recruitment & Hiring Practices

- Review recruitment processes, policies, and protocols for systemic barriers.
- Assess the effectiveness of DEI outreach initiatives.
- Recommend structured, merit-based hiring safeguards.

3.3 Retention & Advancement

- Review promotion and turnover data.
- Identify trends and signs of underrepresentation or systemic barriers to advancement.
- Recommend mentorship and development initiatives.

3.4 Equitable Compensation

- Review compensation analysis reports.
- Identify unexplained disparities in pay that are not related to performance or merit
- Recommend corrective action where appropriate.

3.5 Training & Education

- Oversee development of DEI-related training.
- Monitor DEI training completion rates.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of DEI training and recommend corrective actions and improvements.

3.6 Workplace Culture & Climate

- Review DEI survey results and exit interview trends.
- Identify systemic concerns and red flags.
- Recommend corrections and cultural improvement initiatives.

4. **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**

The DEI Committee must:

- Be chaired by an ABC Company senior executive.
- Include representatives from the HR Department.
- Include members from different functional areas and levels of ABC Company.
- Reflect diversity of experience and perspective to the extent feasible.

5. **MEMBERSHIP TERMS**

Members shall serve on the Committee for a term of [*two years/other specified period*]. Membership terms shall be renewable at ABC Company management discretion.

6. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Committee shall meet at least [*quarterly/other specified duration*]. The Chair may call additional Committee meetings. The member representing the HR Department shall record and maintain the minutes of Committee meetings.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Committee shall provide ABC Company senior management an annual report that:

- Describes the progress made toward achieving the Company's DEI objectives.
- Identifies DEI-related trends, problems, systemic barriers, or areas of legal or reputational risk.
- Recommends measurable objectives for the upcoming year.

Senior leadership shall retain ultimate accountability for:

- Approving DEI strategy.
- Allocating DEI-related resources.
- Ensuring compliance with applicable law.

8. **CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY**

Committee members shall:

- Maintain confidentiality of all sensitive information.
- Review only aggregated, anonymized data unless otherwise authorized.
- Comply with all applicable privacy legislation and standards.

9. **COMPLIANCE SAFEGUARDS**

The Committee shall ensure that:

- All DEI initiatives remain consistent with human rights and other applicable laws.
- DEI objectives and initiatives do not override merit-based employment decisions.
- DEI and affirmative action initiatives are implemented in accordance with applicable law and do not constitute reverse discrimination.
- DEI data collection is voluntary unless otherwise required by law.

10. **ANNUAL REVIEW**

This Charter shall be reviewed and updated at least annually and as necessary in response to:

- Legislative, regulatory, case law, or other legal changes.
- Organizational restructuring.
- Results of internal DEI surveys, exit interviews, complaints, incidents, or other indications of current DEI program ineffectiveness or compliance risks.
- General workplace DEI governance Best Practices.