

Saint Louis University Policy Equity Lens Review

Introduction

The equity lens is a tool to help policy owners consider who is affected by their policy (see identify groups to consider below) and to think about how their policy will impact these groups.

The application of the equity lens to policy development is a process in which policies are analyzed for the impact their design and implementation have on under-served and marginalized individuals and groups, and to identify and potentially eliminate barriers.

Equity Definition: Equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as successful as possible. This requires removing identified barriers and their consequences.¹

Questions to ask while writing/reviewing the policy

1. Who does the policy impact (see identity groups to consider below)?
 - a. Are there individuals and/or communities that will be disproportionately (and negatively) affected by this policy?
 - b. How will disparities be mitigated or eliminated?
2. What forces are driving this policy to be revised or created?
3. How does this policy perpetuate or help dismantle, historical, legal, or other barriers set in the past?
4. How does this policy promote equitable outcomes?

Tips for writing the policy

1. **Title:** When considering policy titles, identify language that could help with preventing barriers with understanding or interpreting its meaning from a variety of intended audiences.
2. **Statement:** It is important that policy owners consider the impact on those who need to understand, apply, or follow its requirements/directions.
3. **Procedures:** When creating procedures, consider the potential for disproportionate or undesirable impact on those who are most impacted by the policy. Consider if the procedures are impacting a single or select few identity groups. The policy owner should consider the impact of the procedures on those who need to understand, apply, or follow its requirements/directions.

¹ Adopted in part from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

4. **Definitions:** When selecting definitions, avoid definitions that perpetuate historical, legal, or other barriers.

Identity Groups

1. [Race](#): Race is a human classification system that is socially constructed to distinguish between groups of people who share phenotypical characteristics.
2. [Ethnicity](#): Ethnicity is a broader term than race. The term is used to categorize groups of people according to their cultural expression and identification. Commonalities such as racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin may be used to describe someone's ethnicity
3. [Color](#) Color refers to a person's complexion. A Person of color (POC) is an umbrella phrase meant to categorize anyone who does not identify as white. We recommend not using person of color and instead of being specific about which racial, ethnic, national, or cultural groups you are referring to.
4. [Religion](#) : A particular system of faith or worship to which someone ascribes to.
5. [Gender-Identity](#) : A socially constructed system of categorizing a person's sense of masculinity, femininity, or androgyny. Common terms to define a person's gender are male, female, androgynous, non-binary, transgender, gender-fluid, and gender-queer.
6. [Gender-Expression](#) : The full spectrum of communicative behaviors that a person uses to communicate their gender to other. Gender expression can range from clothing and grooming choices to chosen pronouns and mannerisms.
7. [Sexual-Biological Sex](#) The genetic characteristics of a person that are used to assign a person male, intersex or female; biological sex is determined by chromosomes, hormones and external and internal genitalia.
8. [Sexual-Orientation](#) : A person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are sexually attracted. Common sexual orientations include heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, gray-sexual, and queer.
9. [Age](#) : The length of time a person has been alive as measured in decades, years, months, and days. Ageism occurs when people are discriminated against or treated in biased ways because of their age.
10. [Disability](#) : A physical, neural, or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.
11. Socioeconomic : The social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. Common terms used to describe someone's socioeconomic status include middle, upper, and lower class, working class, and poor.
12. Veterans: A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

13. **Familial Status:** Familial status covers: families with children under the age of 18, pregnant persons, and. any person in the process of securing legal custody of a minor child (including adoptive or foster parents).
14. **Marital Status :** A person's state of being single, married, separated, divorced, or widowed.
15. **[Genetic Information](#)** Genetic information includes information about an individual's genetic tests and the genetic tests of an individual's family members, as well as information about the manifestation of a disease or disorder in an individual's family members (i.e. family medical history).