



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

An Ordinance Amending City of Boston Code, Ordinances, Chapter XII, Section 12-20, Office of Cultural Affairs for Public Health and Welfare

ORDERED: That the City of Boston Code, Chapter XII, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new section and subsections:

SECTION 1.

12-20.1 Purpose.

The City of Boston is inhabited by a broad and diverse set of constituents from cultural communities, some of which have been and may continue to be underrepresented in City government decision making. Therefore, a concerted effort to develop policies and programs that are responsive to the strengths and needs of these cultural communities is necessary to ensure equity and inclusion for these communities in our City.

12-20.2 Establishment of the Office of Cultural Affairs.

There shall be established in the City of Boston the Office of Cultural Affairs, hereafter referred to as the Office, which shall be under the charge of an Officer known as the Director of Cultural Affairs (hereafter called the Director), who shall be appointed by the Mayor. The Office will be a part of the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet.

12-20.3 Director Responsibilities.

The Director, or designee, of the Office shall have the power and the duty to:

1. Develop, implement and evaluate culturally competent programming aimed at fostering a sense of belonging in the City among diverse cultural communities;
2. Connect with City departments, community leaders and cultural organizations to curate events or find resources and opportunities for constituents. Enhance the accessibility of City programs, benefits, and services to the historically excluded cultural communities represented by this office by establishing outreach programs in conjunction with other City agencies and departments to inform and educate those communities of relevant City programs, benefits, and services;

3. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop and advocate for policies that address the unique needs and challenges of various cultural communities and perform policy analysis and program evaluation to ensure the social, emotional and financial well-being of these cultural communities;
4. Solicit community and stakeholder input regarding programming and policies to ensure that the priorities of underrepresented communities are properly considered in City decision making;
5. Manage a staff of Cultural Advisors responsible for leading the above functions for specific historically excluded cultural communities in the City of Boston:
 - a. Historically excluded cultural communities will be defined as groups of Boston residents:
 - i. With common ethnic ancestry, country of origin, language spoken, and/or region of the world;
 - ii. With significant populations in the City of Boston; and
 - iii. That, as a whole or with a subgroup, have economic, health, or civic indicators demonstrating an insufficient ability to benefit from Boston's resources.
6. Cultural advisors will develop a midyear progress report and end of year review on current lessons learned, community priorities, and policy recommendations to better serve the residents within each cultural community;
7. Advise the Mayor on challenges faced by historically underrepresented residents, including, but not limited to, obstacles to accessing City programs, benefits, and services, and on socioeconomic trends related to such persons; and
8. Identify model policies, practices, and programs within City departments or agencies, as well as in other municipalities across the United States, that effectively support historically excluded residents that can be adopted or adapted across the City; and
9. Perform such other duties and functions as may be appropriate to pursue the policies set forth in this section.

12-20.4 Reporting Requirements.

The Office shall provide to the City Council a midyear progress report and end of year review on current lessons learned, community priorities, and policy recommendations to better serve the residents within each cultural community developed by the Cultural advisors.

SECTION 2.

Severability. The provisions of this ordinance are severable, and if any provision, or portion thereof, should be held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such

unconstitutionality or invalidity will not affect the remaining provisions, which will remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3.

Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective July 1, 2024.

Filed in City Council: October 4, 2023