



"People to match our mountains."
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Buncombe County, North Carolina is seeking a Chief Equity and Human Rights Officer.

The community boasts unparalleled aesthetic beauty in tandem with established and ever growing cosmopolitan amenities. With a population of nearly 260,000 people and spanning 660 square miles, Buncombe County is the perfect intersection of mountain charm and creature comforts. Asheville is the county seat, and there are five other municipalities as well as a diverse mix of unincorporated areas. Here you'll find a unique mix of urban and rural communities, all a short drive from cities such as Charlotte, Atlanta, Knoxville, and more. Buncombe is known for its natural beauty and is surrounded by multiple national parks. An evening drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway is an unforgettable scenic trip with breathtaking views of our majestic mountains.

More than 225 years old, Buncombe County has compiled an impressive roster of historically notable visitors and residents such as George Vanderbilt, E.W. Grove, Thomas Wolfe, Lillian Exum Clement, Edward W. Pearson Sr., F. Scott Fitzgerald, and others whose imprints are scattered throughout the County. The iconic Biltmore House is the country's largest privately owned residence, still owned by George Vanderbilt's descendants and receives more than one million visitors every year.

Buncombe County is home to two innovative public school systems, charter schools, a community college with diverse offerings, private colleges, and the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

Whether it be venerable institutions or up-and-coming businesses, Buncombe County has the infrastructure, outdoor amenities, and quality of life that continues to attract top-notch talent from around the world.





Job Title: Chief Equity and Human Rights Officer

The Chief Equity & Human Rights Officer, reporting directly to an Assistant County Manager, is responsible for implementation of Buncombe County's goals to integrate equity in every fiber of its organization through practical and impactful policies, procedures, programs, and services. The Chief Equity & Human Rights Officer will lead the County's Equity & Inclusion Workgroup, provide support and consultation to departments/offices and propel the Countywide strategy for advancing equity and inclusion into organizational culture and service delivery. This position will also serve as a key liaison to the community and for community equity and human rights efforts including the implementation of the County Racial Equity Action Plan and administration of the recently adopted Non-Discrimination Ordinance.

Top/Immediate Priorities:

- Lead the development of the County's Racial Equity Action Plan implementation roadmap;
- Lead the administration of the newly adopted County Non-Discrimination Ordinance;
- Lead the development of the Countywide equity training curriculum including results based accountability; and
- Co-Lead the development of a robust community engagement plan to inform the County's equity strategies.

The ideal candidate will be a visionary, supportive, and inspirational leader and will be able to build trust with diverse communities and stakeholders. A successful candidate will understand relevant local, state, and federal laws and how to work within them. The Chief Equity & Human Rights Officer will be a champion for equity and may collaborate with other County departments to enact significant and systemic change.

Purpose of the position:

The primary purpose of this position is to lead the development, implementation, monitoring, and improvement of local government policies, programs, and initiatives that promote anti-discrimination, anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the County.

Essential Functions of the position:

- Lead and coordinate the County Equity and Inclusion Workgroup, staff focused on equity, diversity and inclusion responsibilities, various related taskforces/committees, established county affinity groups and County staff liaison to the Human Relations Commission of Asheville. Assist Commission, workgroups, committees, and taskforces in carrying out policy directives and mission.

- Advance and direct the County's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion of anti-discrimination laws in public accommodation, County programs, and services.
- Manage the development and implementation of departmental goals, objectives, policies and priorities. Lead the development, coordination, and implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion tools, programs, efforts, and initiatives and, in collaboration with the County Managers Office and Departments, collect, analyze, and present data measuring the County's progress on incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and initiatives.
- Manage the receipt, review, and investigation of complaints under the County's Non-Discrimination Ordinance, Title VI, and ADA investigations conducted under contracts with the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission and local and state laws.
- Develop human and civil rights discrimination educational programming and outreach for Buncombe County.
- Lead development, implementation, and updates of Buncombe County's Racial Equity Action Plan.
- Establish Countywide performance indicators and progress benchmarks to ensure accountability toward equitable delivery of County services.
- Facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration with County departments, employees, community members, and other stakeholders to make meaningful movement toward a more equitable County.
- Ensure policies, procedures, budget decisions, program design, and other County functions are evaluated using an equity perspective as part of the decision-making process.
- Facilitate collaboration of interdepartmental/agency task forces, teams, and working groups; build effective partnerships with external organizations, both public and private, to support and achieve broad community DEI efforts.
- Facilitate and support County training on diversity, equity, and inclusion in collaboration with the other County Departments.
- Engage with community and/or interest/stakeholder groups (e.g., neighborhood organizations, environmental advocates).
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Minimum Education, Training and/or Experience:

Bachelor's Degree in Sociology, Public Administration, Cultural Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, or a related field and a minimum of five (5) years of demonstrated successful and progressively responsible experience in program management and leadership in the administration of community, education, and/or social justice programs that have a sustained focus on the implementation of diversity and equity programming, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Additional Training and Experience Preferred:

- Experience maintaining and building relationships with community members and organizations and being trusted to be a local leader of equity
- Experience working in a fast-paced, high profile and forward-thinking environment, which is supported by respect, integrity, collaboration, honesty, and equity
- Experience in the field of diversity, equity and inclusion, working professionally in the government, business, consulting, nonprofit, and/or academic sectors.

License or Certification Required by Statute or Regulation: Certificate or DEI credential preferred

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities:

- Knowledge of principles and best practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion in both workplace and community settings, processes and procedures associated with development and implementation of equity programs, principles and best practices of change management, and best practices for community engagement and training
- Understand the local context regarding race, gender, and economic disparities and inequities
- Knowledge of critical race theory (a framework in the social sciences focused upon the application of critical theory, a critical examination of society and culture, to the intersection of race, law, and power)
- Knowledge of employment, public accommodations, education, and human rights laws
- Knowledge of Federal Civil Rights laws and North Carolina Human Rights laws, County and local Human Rights ordinances and policy
- Knowledge of strategic approaches flowing from critical race theory into change mobilization using tools such as racial equity impact analysis processes ("equity toolkits") and stakeholder inclusion to identify and make changes that reduce barriers to access and increase equity in government/institutional structures
- Knowledge of techniques for introducing and facilitating exploration of these concepts with new audiences in order to cultivate the critical mass needed to move racial equity forward
- Skill in strategic and critical thinking, problem solving, conflict resolution, and mediation
- Ability to manage and direct a comprehensive diversity and inclusion program, develop and administer departmental goals, objectives, and procedures
- Ability to work across department lines and form partnerships that foster better resident services, eliminate barriers to achieving results, build alliances with key decision-makers, and take full advantage of available resources
- Ability to analyze and assess programs, policies, and operational needs and make appropriate adjustments. Ability to develop performance measurement systems and initiate continuous improvement processes
- Knowledge of public administration and public policy development, including government financing mechanisms and intergovernmental relations. Ability to effectively analyze and develop programs, policies, and initiatives
- Proficient in Microsoft Office with an emphasis in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Department: County Manager

Location: Asheville, NC

Job Posting End Date: This position will be posted until filled. An initial review of applications will begin on June 30th. This posting may close without notice.

Salary Range: \$86,652.10 - \$114,814.01

Buncombe County Government realizes the importance of a diverse professional workforce and the need to foster a responsive and innovative organizational culture, one that fully engages all of our employees, honoring and building on each employee's unique experiences, opinions, and perspective.

It is the policy of Buncombe County to provide equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, age, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other legally protected class under federal or NC State law. In addition, the Agency expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment or discrimination.

Applicants for employment are invited to participate in the affirmative action program by reporting their status as a protected veteran or other minority. In extending this invitation, we advise you that: (a) workers (applicants) are under no obligation to respond but may do so in the future if they choose; (b) responses will remain confidential within the human resource department; and (c) responses will be used only for the necessary information to include in our affirmative action program. We are a company that values diversity. We actively encourage women, minorities, veterans, and disabled employees to apply. Refusal to provide this information will have no bearing on your application and will not subject you to any adverse treatment.

