



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive


Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

March 2, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

cc: Gabe Albornoz, President
Montgomery County Council

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation #22-62
MCFRS End of Year Supplemental

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ)'s finding is inconclusive. There is insufficient information to confidently determine the extent to which funding for Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) personnel and operating expenditures are likely to advance racial equity and social justice in the County.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #22-62 MCFRS End of Year Supplemental is to support MCFRS' general personnel and operating expenditures through the end of the year, as actual expenditures are expected to exceed the FY22 budget. This is mainly due to vehicle maintenance and repair, snow removal, facilities maintenance, wireless communications, and insurance.

Typically, to assess the extent to which a supplemental appropriation like this advances racial equity and social justice in the County, ORESJ would look at whether services provided under this appropriation are equitably distributed and/or address a racial disparity as well as the demographics of the workers receiving overtime payments compared to the demographics of the MCFRS workforce. At the time of this analysis, information about beneficiaries of service delivery and workforce data was not available for such an analysis.

In addition, it is also valuable to apply a racial equity lens to the policies used to determine overtime eligibility and utilization. Both types of analyses—demographic and policy—are useful for determining whether this supplemental appropriation is likely to advance racial equity and social justice, as racial equity is both a process and an outcome¹.

Overtime that is not considered mandatory, presents opportunities for employees to boost their take-home pay, which at different times is likely highly sought after across ranks. Therefore, it is central to issues of equity and fairness to understand how demand for these finite opportunities is managed. Available information about the policies determining overtime eligibility and utilization in MCFRS suggest that overtime assignments should first go to the “employee with the least accrued overtime worked, year-to-date, before bargaining unit employees with higher accrued year-to-date overtime”². It is unclear, in practice, what this process looks like and the extent to which employees perceive it as fair. Under certain limited circumstances, rank hierarchy is used to determine overtime assignment. It is unclear whether this process would advance racial and gender equity, as it would depend on the extent to which the distribution of women and people of color in prioritized ranks is equitable. Further, a robust equity assessment would also include information about the extent to which these processes are carried out as written and support MCFRS’ retention and promotion goals as well as recommendations in MCFRS’ forthcoming racial equity audit³.

cc: Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive

¹ “What is Racial Equity?” Race Forward. Available at: <https://www.raceforward.org/about/what-is-racial-equity>

² Montgomery County, Maryland. Agreement between Montgomery County Career Fire Fighters Association, International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1664, AFL-CIO and Montgomery County Government/ Montgomery County, Maryland. Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLR/Resources/Files/IAFF%20CBA%202020-2022%20Second%20Year%20SIGNED.pdf>

³ The San Francisco Fire Department 2021-2023 Racial Equity Action Plan is a strong example of how issues of overtime, compensation, and promotion can be addressed using a racial equity lens. Available here: <https://sf-fire.org/files/2021-01/Fire%20Racial%20Equity%20Action%20Plan.pdf>