

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

RESOLUTION NO. 20-

ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM AND PROMOTING EQUITY

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) has adopted policies upholding its commitment to diversity, inclusion equity, and justice; and has reflected on the current events of the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others that underscore a history in which Black and African Americans have been unjustly accused, detained, or killed by citizens or police officers as a result of prejudice, abuse of power, racial bias, and racism; and

WHEREAS, in this sobering and heartbreaking moment, our eyes have been opened to the ongoing burden and the resulting inequalities that prejudice, abuse of power, racial bias, and racism in both overt and systemic forms have inflicted on the Black and African American community; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water is committed to the fair treatment of all races, cultures, ethnicities, socio-economic classes, genders, gender identity, sexual orientation, and affirms that diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and respect are core values of the agency; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water is committed to advancing racial justice by centering the agency's programs and resource allocations on racial and social equity, both as a regional employer, as well as a service provider; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water understands that many members of the communities served by Valley Water, as well as members of our own employee community, are hurting deeply because of the events surrounding the unjust killings and abuse of power of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others; and

WHEREAS, the Governance Policies of the Board GP 7.7 states that the Santa Clara Valley Water District is committed to creating an inclusive work environment, which reflects and supports the diversity of our community and enriches our perspectives; and

WHEREAS, In 2018 the Valley Water Board adopted the Environmental Justice Policy, aligning with the Federal Environmental Protection Agencies' definition of Environmental Justice and adding a value statement that we are committed to upholding Environmental Justice for Disadvantaged Communities in Santa Clara County (including low-income, minority, immigrant, tribal, and Limited English Proficiency residents), and will strive to ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to our projects and programs; and

WHEREAS, Valley Water acknowledges that increasing diversity, representation, inclusion and a sense of belonging at all levels, including the Board, Executive Leadership and Professional and Managerial classes is critical, as it results in better outcomes for individuals as well as for the Agency; and

WHEREAS, On June 22, 2020, the Board of Directors took an emergency legislative position of support on ACA 5 (Weber), an Assembly-proposed constitutional amendment to repeal

Proposition 209 enacted in November 1996, in order to support equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in state and local government hiring practices; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District stands against prejudice, abuse of power, racial bias, gender bias, gender identity bias, sexual orientation bias, and racism in both overt and systematic forms, and does hereby adopt the following guiding principles, at Valley Water we will:

1. Recognize and acknowledge that black lives matter.
2. Stand up against acts of racism, exclusion, and abuse of power in our organization and in our community.
3. Provide leadership in calling out institutionalized racism and broken systems within water resources community and working to fix them.
4. Go beyond diversity and inclusion and build cultural competence and address issues of racial inequity to become an anti-racist, anti-hate organization.
5. Intentionally and proactively change our ways of thinking about racial equity through dialogue, education, training, and engaging all Valley Water employees and contractors.
6. Create a supportive work environment regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity and create a more equitable and safe work environment for LGBT employees.
7. Combat hate, discrimination, and unfair treatment against all people.
8. Be a resource for education and awareness for Valley Water employees and the communities we serve, relative to Valley Water's mission, by regularly sharing educational resources about ongoing social justice issues in America.
9. Offer consistent, equitable amenities across Valley Water projects regardless of community demographics or affluence.
10. Support First Amendment rights that allow freedom of speech and peaceful non-violence public protests to educate and advocate for justice and stand against injustice.
11. Condemn systematic racism that sanctions police violence against people of color and especially Black and African American people.
12. Ensure that all employees voices be heard, creating a culture of equity, diversity inclusion, and belonging by continuing to support the Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board further calls upon Valley Water labor union partners to affirmatively address racial, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and social inequalities and ensuring equitable benefits, decision-making, and negotiation demands.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board acknowledges and calls on all employees to recognize that the responsibility falls on each of us, regardless of the color of our skin to work together to create a "new normal" in which the legacy of bigotry and unequal treatment no longer infects our institutions, systems, and values.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to move beyond acknowledgement of injustice and take concrete actions that are visible in the prioritization of resources and programs to (1) create a culture where employees feel safe, respected, valued, and are invited to participate fully in sharing their unique gifts, talents, and backgrounds; (2) expand access to equity, diversity, and inclusion evidence-based strategies, such as implicit bias trainings, culturally competent education and historical learnings, including through collaboration and support of ERGs; (3) recognize and ensure access to clean and safe drinking water as a human right; (4) recognize and make sure flood protection is provided in an equitable fashion to all communities; and (5) recognize and ensure that environmental restoration and watershed stewardship projects equitably benefit all communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to bring forward an Environmental Justice Ends Policy for the Board's adoption, consistent with the Board's Environmental Justice Executive limitation before end of this fiscal year FY2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to identify and dismantle structural and institutional racism within Valley Water by (1) affirmatively addressing racial and social inequities and (2) promoting environmental justice consistent with the Board's policies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to assess, strengthen, and fund outreach and engagement strategies to ensure that communities of color and disadvantaged communities have true access to representation and participation in our agency's processes, as well as equitable access to engage in Valley Water processes and programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to assure hiring, retention, and promotion practices ensure personnel decisions are made equitably and justly, and make sure the workforce is diverse and enjoys equal opportunities for promotions and benefits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Valley Water Board directs the CEO to put into place programs that will ensure the greatest diversification of its contractors to strive to aim for inclusion and utilization of all Local Business Enterprises, including Minority and Women Business Enterprises.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors directs the CEO to identify actions Valley Water will implement to advance racial, and social equity across all enterprises and, including developing performance measures, incorporating a racial, and social equity lens in budgeting, personnel, contracting decisions, and in all strategic long-term planning processes for the express purpose of advancing racially just outcome reporting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors directs the CEO, upon the passage of Proposition 16, the numeric designation assigned to ACA 5 (Weber) for the statewide General Election to be held on November 3, 2020, to put in place programs, policies, and procedures to implement the expressed intent of Proposition 16.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Valley Water will support and continue to explore additional efforts in the communities which it serves, the State of California, and nationwide to address racial inequalities.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District by the following vote on September 22, 2020:

AYES: Directors

NOES: Directors

ABSENT: Directors

ABSTAIN: Directors

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

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Chair, Board of Directors

ATTEST: MICHELE L. KING, CMC

Clerk, Board of Directors