

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Considerations for Mobility Programs

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Worldwide
Relocation & Moving

Organizations around the globe are seeking to cultivate workplaces that are diverse and inclusive and provide an equitable environment for all employees. There is a real opportunity to align organizational DE&I initiatives with mobility programs.

Following are some of the approaches and considerations that organizations have taken, and areas of impact to consider when aligning organizational DE&I goals with mobility programs and policies.

We will take a deeper dive into four key areas:

1. Policy review
2. Processes and procedures review
3. Vendor alignment
4. Analytics

Policy Review

When looking to align DE&I goals with mobility initiatives, organizations should review their mobility policies as a key means to support these efforts. Several areas to examine are how mobility policies are differentiated, the language used in the policies, and the benefits being offered.

Appropriate Mobility Policy Differentiation

Organizations should design mobility policies that differentiate by measurable ways to ensure consistency of application for individuals within the same benefit level, and to avoid unintended discrimination. For example, use:

- Mobility purpose/driver (strategic leadership, project-based work, developmental, etc.)
- Job level
- Salary band
- Job type
- Type of move: short-term assignment, long-term assignment, permanent move

Policy Language

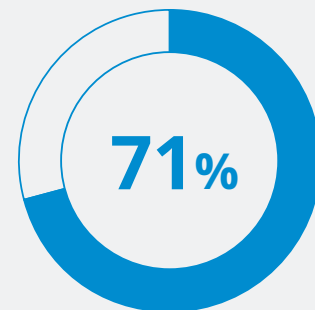
Organizations may be expanding or changing their definitions of family/household/dependents, and mobility policies should be using the same terminology. The language used in mobility policies

should align with your other employee-facing policies, such as compensation, medical benefits, etc. One thing to keep in mind is that these updates could have unintended consequences of expanding policy benefits and costs, so there needs to be a clear understanding of program impacts before policy updates are made. For example, “household member” may legally be defined or interpreted to be broader than “dependents.” So, while it is important to ensure policy language is also inclusive, and companies should consider an expansive view of benefit application, specific terms must be defined to be consistent with the scope of benefits.

Consider the following examples:

- Make gender invisible when it is not relevant for the communication
- Use multiple references like ‘spouse/partner’ or ‘household/dependents’ where appropriate; some prefer ‘household’ or ‘dependents’ in place of ‘family’
- Reference parent/legal guardian in place of ‘mother’ or ‘father’; some prefer ‘household members’ in place of ‘dependents’

Organizations Lagging in DE&I Efforts



of respondents somewhat or strongly agree that their organizations are behind where they should be in DE&I efforts.

– SHRM and Harvard Business Review Survey

Policy Benefits

Ensure that mobility support is being provided in ways that are meaningful to all groups. Consider the following examples of expanded support:

Expand spouse/partner support to be a more inclusive benefit that provides transitional support for the accompanying family/household.

Provide flights for a family member to assist with a home finding trip or final trip for single households or single parent households.

Allow flexible timelines to accommodate for disabilities, defined hardship situations, medical conditions, pregnancy, or ill family members.

Offer additional support for return trips home for defined hardship situations, ill household members, or divorced parents with shared custody.

Provide split family support programs when spouse/partners are not recognized in the host location or where conditions in the host location are not suitable for accompaniment (dangerous, isolated, etc.).

Provide a mix of benefits that can be tailored to the individual needs of the employee and their household:

- Specialized cultural training
- Specialized acclimation support: Transition Assistance Provider, Destination Services Provider (DSP), etc.
- Connection with local support groups
- Shipping considerations
 - Lactation needs
 - Accessibility goods: wheelchairs, ramps
 - Service and support animals
- Modifications for long-term accommodations modifications
 - Ramps
 - Supports, handles
 - Electronics
- Additional considerations for temporary housing
 - Unit selection for families with single parents or who have elderly parents living with them

Provide additional time with the Destination Services Provider (DSP) for hands-on support for:

- Single parents
- Employee or household members with disabilities
- Households with elderly members
- Pregnant household members or with newborns (e.g., lactation needs, birthing classes, programs for babies)
- Medical conditions or illness
- LGBTQ+ employee and household needs with shopping, restaurants, networking, support organizations, welcoming neighborhoods, etc.
- Finding religious and cultural institutions

Consider widening the concept of support for unaccompanied employees, as some employees will not have family or household members moving with them to help but could benefit from the support of a friend or family member to help with the relocation and acclimation to the new location.





Processes and Procedures Review

When looking to align DE&I and business initiatives, organizations will want to look at the processes and procedures that support their program and policies to ensure they are as inclusive as possible. For example, consider the following:

Location Challenges

It is important to understand how regional laws and cultural differences may impact relocating employees and accompanying household members and address ways to provide additional support for impacted individuals. Example of considerations are:

- Locations that don't recognize or welcome same sex partners
- Locations that are challenging based on gender
- Locations that are resistant to particular religious or cultural groups
- Locations resistant to skin tone, race, or gender

Authorization Forms

Apply the same logic used with developing your mobility policies, as appropriate, to the language and data that is collected and provided to relocation vendors: RMC, immigration, tax, destination service providers, etc.

Needs Analysis/Intake Forms

Apply the same logic used with policies as appropriate to the language and data that is collected as part of any needs analysis or authorization questionnaire

for relocation services: destination services provider, household goods shipping, visa & immigration, cultural training, etc.

Data Collected

Review the types of data points being collected and reported out to ensure they align with company initiatives.

Communication Templates

Review existing communication templates, letters, etc. to ensure they are meeting company initiatives.

Vendor Alignment

It is important to communicate DE&I initiatives with mobility partners and vendors to ensure further alignment with organizational goals. Vendor alignment may be challenging as some vendor relationships may be outside the scope of relocation teams, can be difficult to achieve in all locations, and actual diversity may be difficult with localized providers who may not view diversity in the same way. For example, consider some of the following ways organizations have had success aligning with vendors:

Minority and Disadvantaged Owned Businesses

Identify and partner with minority- and disadvantaged-owned vendors such as certified small businesses or women-owned businesses.

Diverse Employee Populations

Support supply chain efforts to identify and partner with vendors who support a diverse employee population and/or utilize other vendors with diverse employee populations.

Setting Expectations

Review organizational DE&I initiatives and expectations for vendor alignment with mobility partners.

Analysis/Update/Implementation

Engage mobility partners/vendors to analyze their scope of work and update necessary documents/processes to ensure alignment with organizational goals and initiatives.

Analytics

Leverage your mobility data to assess your mobility program's alignment and progress in achieving your organization's DE&I initiatives and goals.

Window into Mobility Population

Leverage your mobility provider's reporting capabilities, tied to your HRIS data, to provide insight into mobile population demographics and whether your mobility program is supporting the company's DE&I goals.

Track Utilization & Impacts

Track utilization rates for DE&I focused support, quality scores, employee sentiment analysis, exception requests and escalations, along with manager feedback on performance, to determine if support is having the desired impacts to the employee experience and success in their new location.

Gap Between Perception and Execution of DE&I Initiatives and Goals

87%

of organizations say they track diversity, but:



58%

do not recruit from non-traditional geographies and colleges



41%

of executives do not regularly communicate the value of DE&I



32%

of organizations do not encourage and support open conversations about DE&I

– SHRM and Harvard Business Review Survey

For further information on aligning DE&I initiatives with your mobility program, or assessing your overall mobility program, contact SIRVA Global Advisory Services at globaladvisoryservices@sirva.com or reach out to your SIRVA account manager or SIRVA sales representative.

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We’re a team that works globally to provide the best service locally — a company that is everything you need, everywhere you need it.

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