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WELCOMING ANCHORAGE: KICKING OFF THE JOURNEY TO CERTIFIED WELCOMING

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AGENDA

1. Process to become Certified
 - Recap on meeting with Welcoming America
2. Draft Work Plan
 - Working Group Formation
 - Timeline
 - Local Considerations
3. Feedback

PROCESS



1

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Localities seeking certification are required to conduct a self-assessment in which they gather evidence and information to demonstrate compliance with the Welcoming Standard. At this stage, localities select the star designation they would like to be evaluated for.



2

DESKTOP REVIEW / ANALYSIS BY CERTIFICATION TEAM

Once the self-assessment is complete, the certification team reviews it and conducts a preliminary analysis of compliance. With this initial assessment, the certification team may request additional evidence or flag items for the audit interviews.



3

AUDIT

The audit, either virtual or in-person, consists of a series of interviews with stakeholders, including community leaders, government employees, and representatives from community-based organizations. The audit provides an opportunity to verify information provided in the self-assessment, gather additional evidence, and gain a better context and understanding of the landscape of local welcoming and immigrant inclusion work.

Courtesy of Welcoming America



4

REPORT

The certification team will produce a detailed final report with their findings, including compliance with the Welcoming Standard, as well as local strengths and opportunities for growth. Reports often provide communities with a roadmap for identifying priorities and next steps to continuously improve work.



5

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE, IF REQUIRED

The report identifies any non-compliant criteria and localities have the opportunity and additional time to provide evidence to demonstrate compliance to gain certification.



6

CERTIFICATE AND ANNOUNCEMENT

Once compliant with all of the criteria for the star designation, local governments receive their certificate and coordinate an announcement. Welcoming America communications staff provide additional support to amplify the achievement, including a press release, a quote from Welcoming America, and branded marketing materials to use.

Courtesy of Welcoming America

CONVERSATION WITH WELCOMING AMERICA

- **Q:** What does the pre-assessment process look like?
- **A:** You will need to fill out an application which asks for basic information. It takes 5 minutes. Prior to the application, it is recommended to take a quick quiz which

- **Q:** What does the intake form process look like?
- **A:** The onboarding call takes about 30 minutes and the intake interview takes about 45 minutes.

CONVERSATION WITH WELCOMING AMERICA, CONTINUED

- **Q:** Is the MOA a member in good standing of Welcoming America?
- **A:** The MOA is a member at general membership (\$500). Core (\$1,500) and Premium (\$2,500) members receive a free one-star assessment.
- **Q:** Is the Certified process something that can be tailored to meet the goals and needs of local communities?
- **A:** The new star system is designed for just this. The report and post audit will give you insights as to what highlights and gaps are in your community.

CONVERSATION WITH WELCOMING AMERICA, CONTINUED

- Q: Are work groups usually formed to help local governments go through the Certified process?
- A: Everyone chooses to collect evidence differently. Some local governments create work groups which meet regularly and collect evidence together and others outreach to partners individually to collect evidence.

DRAFT WORK PLAN: **WORKING GROUP**

Community Partners

Municipality of Anchorage

Community Services

Cultural Organizations

Anchorage Assembly

Office of Equity & Justice

Hold community meeting to ask for volunteers

Hold community meetings (Hispanic/Latino, Hmong, Alaska Native, etc.) to ask for volunteers

DRAFT WORK PLAN: **TIMELINE**

October 26, 2023: Present Draft Work Plan to the Anchorage Equity Committee of the Assembly

November 1 through December 15, 2023: Community Meetings to Determine Composition of Working Group

November 3, 2023: Finalize Work Plan

November 9, 2023: Present to the Anchorage Assembly at the Rules Committee

November 30, 2023: Complete Pre-Assessment

December 15, 2023: Send Invites to Working Group Members and Set Initial Meeting for January 2024

December 15, 2023: Complete Intake Form and Begin Process

December 15, 2023 through December 31, 2024: Go Through Certified Welcoming Process

DRAFT WORK PLAN: LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Welcoming Anchorage Roadmap Categories vs Welcoming Standard Categories
- Inclusion of BIPOC Community
- Indigenous-Informed Process

QUESTIONS?

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