



The Advocate



Raising the Bar

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

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Executive Director,
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The term “raising the bar” originated in the 20th century from competitive track and field events, specifically the high jump and pole vault competitions. Each time the bar was raised, the participants would have to try harder to attain the next goal.

For over a year the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) has been working hard to make equity a key value of our work. CHFS has established a three-step strategy to achieve this goal: normalizing, organizing and operationalizing. We are currently in the normalizing phase. Each department within CHFS has been charged with developing measurable, safe and constructive ways to facilitate discussions about equity with an initial focus around racial equity. Some have established book clubs, the HR Department developed a game modeled after the TV show “Jeopardy” and The Advocate has featured puzzles and information about racial equity. As Secretary Friedlander said in the September 29 CHFS department wide meeting, it is important for all of us to “listen to understand.” He was particularly impressed by the intergenerational insights that some CHFS Departments reported from their discussions around equity.

Each of the OOAR divisions has representation on the Equity Core Team and has worked hard to facilitate these discussions. I encourage each of you to speak to your manager or your equity core team representative about how you can become more involved in this important work. So consider the bar raised! Let us do this together Team!

Everyone you meet knows something you don't know, but need to know.
Learn from them. C. G. Jung

Reminders:

October 11-29, 2021— The Open Enrollment period for 2022 employee benefits.

Document submissions to The Advocate are due by the 24th of each month to:

carolyn.vose@ky.gov



Inside this issue:

[From The Director's Desk](#)

[Employee Spotlight:
Denise Balz, DPP](#)

[Division Report —
Program Performance](#)

Special points of interest

- [Crossword Puzzle](#)
- [Reminders and Submission Requests](#)

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Employee spotlight:

Denise Balz



Denise has 30 years of service with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. The first 10 years of her career were dedicated to determining benefit eligibility for Kentucky residents. She began with Food Stamp determinations, and received promotions to Case Manager and Case Manager II where she determined KTAP eligibility and assisted her clients with participating in the Kentucky Works Program. After 10 years with the Cabinet, Denise promoted to Quality Control (QC) reviewing SNAP eligibility determinations. She has been with SNAP QC for 20 years – the longest of anyone in the Division of Program Performance!

Denise is a lifelong resident of Louisville and has been married to her husband, Michael, for 43 years. They have two grown children and four grandchildren. Denise enjoys time with her family at Dale Hollow Lake where they all love to camp.

Division of Program Performance: Pat Walden, Assistant Director

The Division of Program Performance (DPP) consists of 3 branches – the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Quality Control (SNAP QC) branch; the Public Assistance Quality Control (PA QC) branch; and the Performance Enhancement branch. SNAP QC reviews SNAP eligibility determinations. PA QC reviews eligibility determinations completed for Medicaid programs, the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP), the Kentucky Works Program (KWP), and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). The Performance Enhancement branch also reviews SNAP eligibility determinations, as well as SNAP claims, SNAP actions completed by the Call Services branch, and agency processes regarding access to apply for benefits.

The SNAP QC branch reviews SNAP eligibility determinations – new approvals along with denials/discontinuances. The positive SNAP error rate refers to eligibility determinations that receive ongoing SNAP benefits in the sample month. The positive SNAP error rate is based on the amount of the SNAP benefits issued during the sample month. If incorrect benefits were issued – either more or less than they should have been – then an error occurred. Currently there is an error threshold of \$39 which means if the amount of the over or under issuance is \$39 or less, it is not considered in the error rate calculation. The SNAP positive error rate is calculated by dividing the amount of benefits issued in error by the total amount of benefits issued for the cases being reviewed in given sample month. For example, in June, 2021, 85 SNAP cases were reviewed. The total amount of SNAP benefits issued for those 85 cases was \$25,000. QC determined that \$750 of those benefits were issued in error. $\$750 \div \$25,000 = 3.0\%$. The positive error rate for June, 2021 is 3%. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) considers anything below 6% very good.

The Case and Procedural Error Rate (CAPER) refers to SNAP eligibility determinations that were denied or discontinued in the sample month. If an eligibility determination was denied or discontinued incorrectly, it is considered invalid and results in an error. Also, cases are considered procedurally incorrect if the denial/discontinuance was untimely, if a notice was not issued, if a notice was issued incorrectly, or if a notice was not clear and understandable. These denials/discontinuances are considered invalid and result in an error.

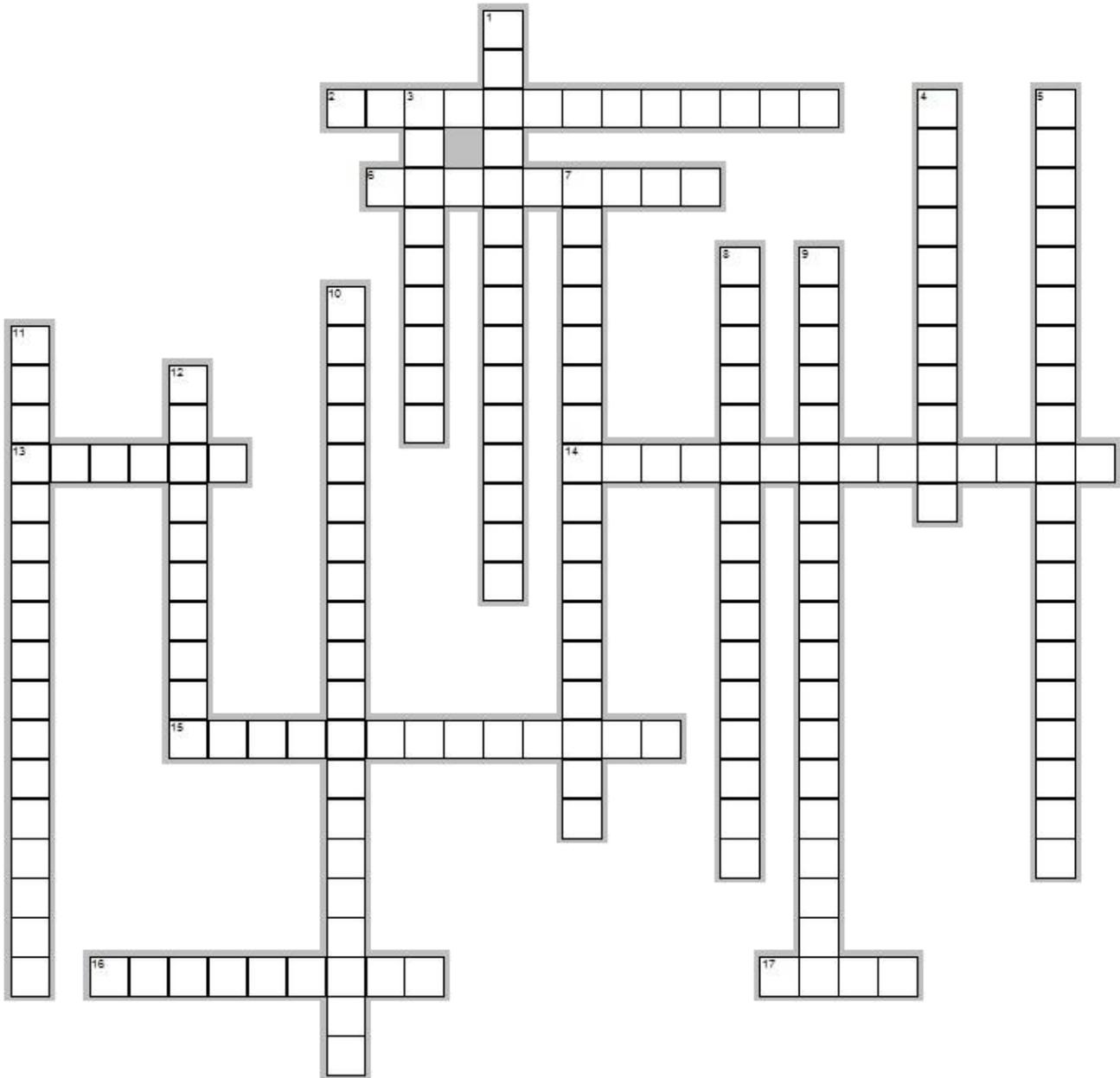
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Take a minute
to give \$24 by
November 24.



You can change a life by donating to KECC. Go to Employee Self Service on KHRIS.

Crossword Puzzle



Thank you to Alicia Whitaker and Erica Turner for sharing this Equity Awareness Crossword puzzle with us. Clues are on the following page.

Use a space to separate words and for hyphens. Managers have the Word Glossary to assist you in completing this crossword puzzle.

Adapted from a puzzle created by Humboldt State University, Winter 2019.

Crossword Puzzle Clues

ACROSS

2. Unconscious negative associations or bias about any group that often undercuts inclusion and fairness. (2 words)
6. What society, a business or group achieves with a mix of races, genders, sexual orientations, classes, ages, countries of origin, educational status, religions, physical, or cognitive abilities, documentation status, etc.
13. Fairness and justice in policy, practice and opportunity for all people.
14. What social justice attorneys hope to achieve by eliminating racial disparities. (2 words).
15. The type of equity social justice attorneys seek in addressing the impact of historic discrimination and unequal justice across races. (2 words).
16. Being part of a group or organization with an authentic sense of belonging.
17. A friend; also someone from a privileged group who works for justice and equity with members of a non-dominant social group.

DOWN

1. Social, economic and judicial advantage enjoyed by Caucasians. (2 words).
3. A special honor; but it can also be an advantage given to a particular group or person.
4. The act of actively opposing institutional or structural racism. (Hyphenated word).
5. A form of competence that is equally responsive to the cultural beliefs, language, interpersonal styles, etc., of those receiving services as well as of those providing them. (2 words).
7. A type of racism created by public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and societal conventions that reinforce the advantage of "whiteness." (2 words).
8. Can be a collection of small very tiny actions or a series of intentional or unintentional actions all of which involve hostility, insults and/or denigrating people with less privilege.
9. Social, political and economic access to resources and decision makers, and the ability to influence others via this access to consistently favor or disfavor a group. (2 words).
10. Also called "systemic racism." This racism is embedded in the laws and regulations of a society or organization. (2 words).
11. A one-word term that describes how race, class, gender, and other aspects of identity intersect and inform social inequities, and are experienced by individuals or groups of people. (2 words).
12. Anyone in a position of power who can grant or deny access to institutional resource.