



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MISSOURI

ANDREW BAILEY

July 1, 2025

Mayor Barbara Buffaloe,
City Manager De'Carlton Seewood
C/o Ms. Sydney Olsen, Custodian of Records
City of Columbia
P.O. Box 6015
Columbia, MO 65205
*Submitted to the City Manager's Department via the City of Columbia Public
Records Request Portal*

Dear Mayor Buffaloe and Mr. Seewood,

It has been reported to the Attorney General's Office that the City of Columbia is using race-based guidelines and benchmarks as criteria for official city actions, including in the disbursement of funds, hiring of employees, and admittance to programs. If these reports are true, the City of Columbia would be in violation of both federal and state law.

The Supreme Court of the United States made it clear in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. Pres. and Fellows of Harvard Coll.*, that federal law does not tolerate differential treatment based on race.

Systemic race discrimination is illegal under state law. The Attorney General, as the chief legal officer of the State of Missouri, is authorized to bring actions on behalf of Missourians against any group of persons engaging in a pattern or practice of resistance to the full enjoyment of any of the rights granted by the Missouri Human Rights Act, Chapter 213, RSMo.

I am formally requesting copies of the following public records pursuant to Chapter 610 of the Missouri Revised Statutes:

I. Any record(s) containing one or more of the following terms:

- 1) "racial equity toolkit";
- 2) "racial equity lens";
- 3) "PR 56-25"; or
- 4) "equity"

which records (including but not limited to all electronic communications to, from or between any person listed below, including any “cc” or “bcc” of such person) are within the possession of one or more of the following individuals or retained by the City of Columbia on their behalf:

- 1) Mayor Barbara Buffaloe;
- 2) City Manager De’Carlton Seewood;
- 3) Council member Valerie Carroll;
- 4) Council member Jacque Sample;
- 5) Council member Nick Foster;
- 6) Council member Donald Waterman; or
- 7) Council member Betsy Peters.

Additionally, please provide the following:

- II. The City of Columbia’s “racial equity toolkit”;
- III. The City of Columbia’s “racial equity lens”; and
- IV. Any proposed or adopted amendment to PR56-25;

The time period for each requests I through IV above is limited to the dates of March 1, 2025 to present.

Under 610.027, RSMo., the Missouri Attorney General’s Office has the authority to seek judicial enforcement of Chapter 610, RSMo. This letter also serves as a litigation hold demand for all documents relating to the requests above, which documents must be retained by all parties, including the Custodian of Records.

The term “records” used in these requests should be viewed as broadly as possible under the definition of “public record” in Chapter 610, RSMo., and include documents, emails, email attachments, reports, text messages on official City phones, letters, and memoranda.

This request is submitted in the public interest to better understand the operations of the City of Columbia. A waiver of fees is likely to contribute significantly to the public understanding of the operations of the City of Columbia. This request is not in the commercial interest of any person or the Attorney General’s Office. For these reasons, pursuant to § 610.026.1(1), RSMo., the Missouri Attorney General’s Office requests a waiver of any fees associated with processing this request for records.

It is requested that all documents be provided in electronic format and be produced within three business days (or the Attorney General receive a compliant response detailing the date of production under Section 610.023, RSMo).

Sincerely,

Missouri Attorney General's Office