Workforce Diversity in Southeast Minnesota

We surveyed over 1,000 Minnesota employers to see what diversity means to them. Here’s what employers in the Southeast part of the state told us.

What is diversity?

Employers use the term “diversity” to refer to many different things. Survey respondents in Southeast Minnesota say they talk about...

Percent of regional employers agreeing that they include the following in their definition of diversity:

Race/ethnicity: 28%
Age: 48%
Gender: 41%
National origin: 41%
Disability: 55%
Sexual orientation: 49%

So, are businesses diverse?

71% of Southeast Minnesota employers report that their workforce is diverse, according to their own definition of diversity.

Did You Know? In Southeast Minnesota...

- The region saw its population increase by 41,750 residents from 2000 to 2015, a 9% gain, as compared to an 12% rise statewide.
- The region is projected to add 57,200 residents in the next 20 years, an 12% growth rate, which is on par with the state’s average projected growth.
- The region’s largest communities of color in 2014 are Hispanic or Latino (25,890), Black or African American (13,510), and Asian (12,910).

How diverse is the workforce in Southeast Minnesota?

Percent of jobs held by persons of color in the Southeast region...

When asked about racial diversity...

- 16% of regional employers say they do not employ workers who identify with a community of color.

The good news is...

- Nearly 60% of the region’s employers are actively trying to increase the racial diversity of their workforce.

Are businesses as racially diverse as their communities?

The population in Southeast Minnesota is less diverse than the state overall, but is becoming more diverse over time.

The fastest growing segment of the region’s population are people from communities of color. Residents from the Black or African American (142%), Hispanic or Latino (94%), two or more races (83%), and Asian (48%) communities grew the fastest between 2000 and 2014.

We asked businesses to think about the racial diversity of their workforce as compared to the diversity of their community.

One in four businesses in Southeast Minnesota report that their workforce is less diverse than their customer base.

Southeast Minnesota is expected to see only a slight increase in the labor force between 2015 and 2025. This means the region will face a tight labor market in the future, with employers needing to respond to changing labor force availability in the region.

Sources:

- Minnesota Employer Workforce Diversity Survey, 2016
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- American Community Survey and Quarterly Workforce Statistics
- U.S. Census Bureau

Visit mn.gov/deed/diversity for more