

# **Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability**

Key Outcomes Report: Office of Equity & Upstream Investments  
Strategic Collaboration

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# Summary

In 2019, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted Results-Based Accountability (RBA) as a contract management tool for safety net departments. With the establishment of the Office of Equity in August 2020, and the launch of the Racial Equity Learning Program and Core Team Cohort, staff from departments and agencies across the County participated in foundational racial equity and Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability (AR-RBA) trainings, including the Upstream Investments Team in the Human Services Department (HSD). Compared to RBA, AR-RBA focuses on conducting deep root-cause analysis to better understand the *why* behind the outcomes driven by both individuals and systems, setting meaningful strategies for change centered in racial equity, and using data to develop performance measures. Understanding the importance and benefits of adopting this methodology, during the FY 2022-23 contracting cycle, County contracts using RBA shifted to Anti-Racist (AR) RBA. This shift further solidified the adoption of the AR-RBA framework and the partnership between the Human Services Department and the Office of Equity.

The implementation of AR-RBA is supported by two full-time positions, one from the Office of Equity and one from the Human Services Department. The Office of Equity's time-limited Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst allocation was approved in February 2023 through [Strategic Plan funding](#) and is set to expire in October 2026. This position works in partnership with a permanent position within the Upstream Investments Initiative team, at HSD, to provide training and technical assistance for AR-RBA application within County departments.

The AR-RBA strategic collaboration between Upstream Investments and the Office of Equity was designed to establish the competencies and capacity across the County to effectively apply anti-racist data analysis to ensure data-driven program design and meaningful outcomes. Over years of relationship-building, staff development, and systems re-design, the partnership has achieved significant outcomes in shifting County culture toward anti-racist, data-driven decision-making in program evaluation. This document summarizes key insights and recommendations to preserve the progress achieved through the partnership and further develop momentum across the County.

# Result Statement

## **The Goal of our AR-RBA Strategic Collaboration is to:**

Establish the competencies and capacity for anti-racist, data analysis, program design, and evaluation across the County of Sonoma.

Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. AR-RBA begins by recognizing that inequities exist in Sonoma County as a result of generations of institutional and structural racism. AR-RBA is a tool for strategic planning and a framework for performance management through which practitioners:

- Cease the erasure of historically marginalized communities
- Use demographic data to disrupt inequities
- Build and maintain data transparency
- Take responsibility for outcomes and commit to doing better

In Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability, race is centered because it is foundational to this country's history and how individuals experience systems. It uses local data to tell community stories with integrity and honor lived experiences. To the extent permitted by law, AR-RBA provides an ends-to-means framework to assess whether investments are actively mitigating inequities in Black, Indigenous, Asian and local communities of color.

# Why This Work Matters

The OOE and Upstream partnership was formed in response to the Board of Supervisors' [Strategic Plan](#) Healthy and Safe Communities Pillar Goal 2 Objectives 1 in providing staff training and technical assistance on AR-RBA and Objective 3 which directs staff to establish equitable data-driven practices to mitigate negative impact, especially in communities of color. The partnership also directly supports the [Racial Equity Social Justice Pillar Goal 1 Objective 4](#) investing in an ongoing Racial Equity Learning Program and fostering a County workforce and leadership with a shared understanding of key racial equity concepts and other county initiatives ([Racial Equity Action Plan](#), [Health Equity Action Plan](#), and [HSD Strategic Roadmap](#)). The partnership leverages the strengths of each partner to offer something greater than the sum of its parts. Through this partnership, County staff are supported in using the AR-RBA framework to:

- Manage the performance of strategies, initiatives, and programs
- Develop strategic plans with embedded performance measures
- Make data-driven decisions
- Maintain and apply a commitment to anti-racism
- Build a culture that values equity, ongoing learning, and the efficient use of resources

# The Partnership

The AR-RBA strategic partnership is supported by two allocations, one under the Human Services Department (HSD) for Upstream Investments and another one for the OOE. They are the primary AR-RBA training team sustaining this cross-departmental AR-RBA partnership. The elements listed below describe the intentional design of the partnership to reach its intended [results](#).

## Partnership Elements

- Shared accountability in executing goals, responsibilities, and expectations related to AR-RBA
- Commitment to anchoring ourselves in the AR-RBA [anti-racism principles, beyond standard RBA practice](#) when conducting root cause analyses, disaggregating data, and developing performance measures
- Codesigning curriculum and facilitation with technical expertise and lived experiences from both sides of the partnership
- Using training and evaluation data to drive ongoing development
- Foster County-wide partnerships to generate interest and expand capacity for AR-RBA application

# Performance Measures of the Partnership

## How much did we do?

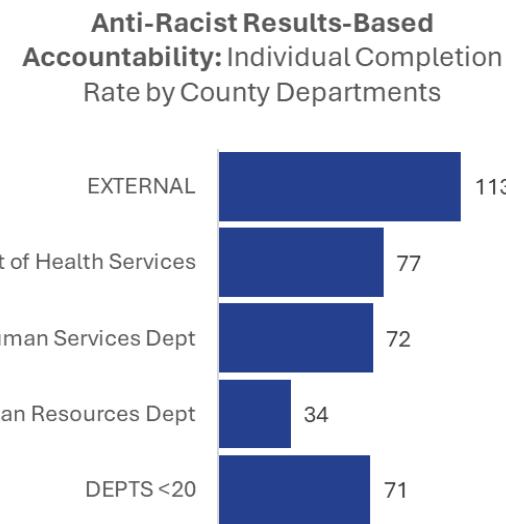
### *Developed an Integrated Training Model & Curriculum*

The Racial Equity Foundations course is a prerequisite training for county staff to take the Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability course. As part of the OOE's Racial Equity Learning Program, both departments worked together to leverage the OOE-led Racial Equity Foundations (REF) training as a bridge to build familiarity and interest in the next level of AR-RBA training offerings. In addition to the Foundational AR-RBA course, there are practical workshops, online content, and Equity in Data trainings offered by the AR-RBA training team. These trainings build staff knowledge and capacity through practiced application of equity and AR-RBA concepts. The training team also developed a coordinated schedule for trainings, which allows staff to complete the prerequisite Racial Equity Foundations training and register for subsequent AR-RBA trainings within a streamlined timeframe.



### *32 trainings AR-RBA <sup>1</sup> offered between August 2023 to December 2025*

As of December 2025, 367 people have been trained in AR-RBA. 30% of those trained have engaged in two or more training courses offered by the AR-RBA training team. The chart below depicts individual unduplicated numbers of people who have completed each training grouped by departments. Departments with less than 20 staff who completed the training are grouped under “Depts <20” and external partners who are not county staff are grouped under “External”.



### *Co-Designed 6 Department/Team-specific special training sessions*

In response to six special requests for program specific AR-RBA courses, the training team codesigned specialized versions of the trainings to fit each group’s needs. This process included understanding each group’s vision, how AR-RBA fits into that vision and providing additional support beyond training. Below are the specific programs:

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<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of individual training completion by county departments, see [Appendix Table 1](#)

- DHS Public Health Division managers
- DHS Behavior Health Division Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) contracted partners
- DHS Behavioral Health Division Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement (QAPI) unit
- HSD Employment & Training Division managers
- Human Resources Department
- OOE and HRD joint LEAD/Core Team 2.0 cohort.

Additionally, the training team provided one-on-one and small group technical assistance (TA) to support County Departments applying the AR-RBA framework in their programs or services. Within HSD, extensive support was and continues to be provided to the Staff Development team, the Adult and Aging Division, and to the department within the context of the HSD Strategic Roadmap. OOE and Upstream have also provided technical assistance to the Community Development Commission, the Probation Department (primarily within the Keeping Kids in School and the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program), and the Department of Child Support Services.



### *Completed Demographic Data Collection Project*

In partnership with Safety Net departments (agencies providing health, security, food, and financial assistance to the community), OOE and Upstream completed an evaluation of all data systems of record used in six county departments: Human Services Department, Department of Health Services, Probation Department, Department of Child Support Services, Community Development Commission, and Office of the Public Defender. The project explores readiness for Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability implementation under the County of Sonoma 5-Year Strategic Plan, Healthy and Safe Communities (HSC) Pillar. AR-RBA is the framework supporting, goal 2 of the HSC pillar which directs staff to establish equitable and data-driven distribution of services.

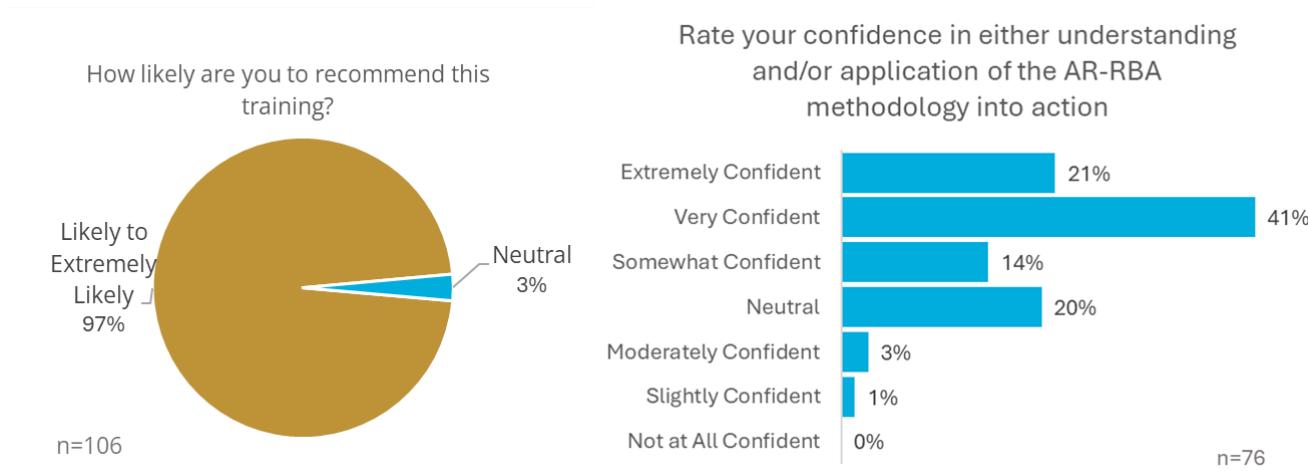
The Office of Equity's AR-RBA PPEA authored a report with the project's findings. It highlights opportunities for improvement in data collection including the need for County-wide guidance and standardized practices for demographic data collection, analysis, and storage. Standardized practice provides an opportunity for cohesive County-wide demographic data, consistent staff training, and a better understanding of communities served. Inconsistent or

inaccurate demographic data may lead to misrepresentation and, in turn, biased inferences and conclusions for underrepresented communities. Addressing these challenges provide an opportunity for a systemic improvement for a cohesive County-wide structure of effective demographic data collection and reporting.

## How well did we do it?

### *Skills Development*

AR-RBA training participants reported increased capacity in equity-centered data analysis and in implementing the AR-RBA framework to their work. 72% of survey participants reported improved ability to use data for decision making and 96% reported considering equity in their program, practices, and policies<sup>2</sup>.



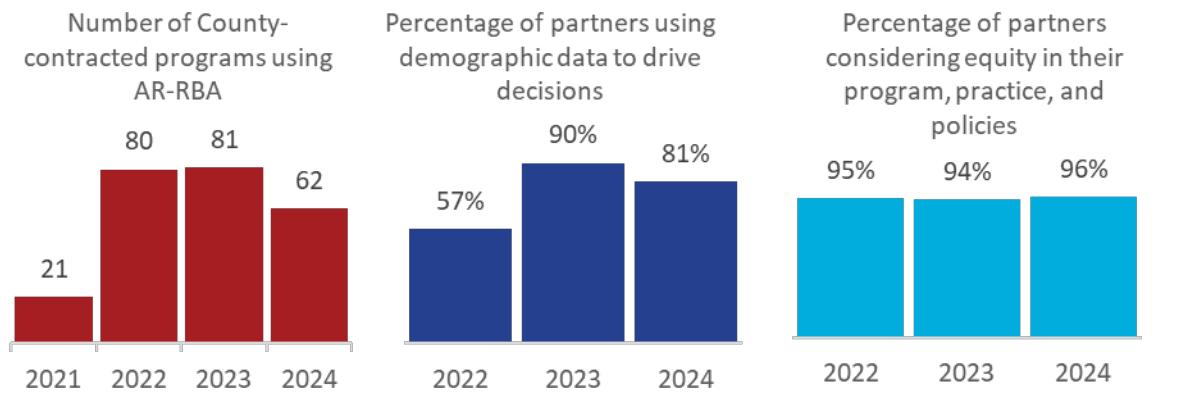
## Is anyone better off?

### *Over 350 County Staff & Community Partners with Increased Capacity*

100% of training survey participants reported a likelihood of analyzing current data practices and culture within their work after the training, while 78% reported an increased ability to use data to improve program practice. Training data shows statistically significant changes in participant knowledge and confidence related to the materials. Staff also engage with the AR-RBA team beyond training to strategize implementation and application of the methodology. There was a rapid increase in the use of AR-RBA in contracts with the American Rescue Plan Act funding between 2021 and 2022. Today, although some contracts may have closed, the community-based

<sup>2</sup> For training evaluation and outcomes see [Appendix Table 2](#).

programs developed organizational capacity in equitable, data-driven decision making through AR-RBA. Some organizations have reported sustained use of the framework or parts of the framework after closing contracts with the County.



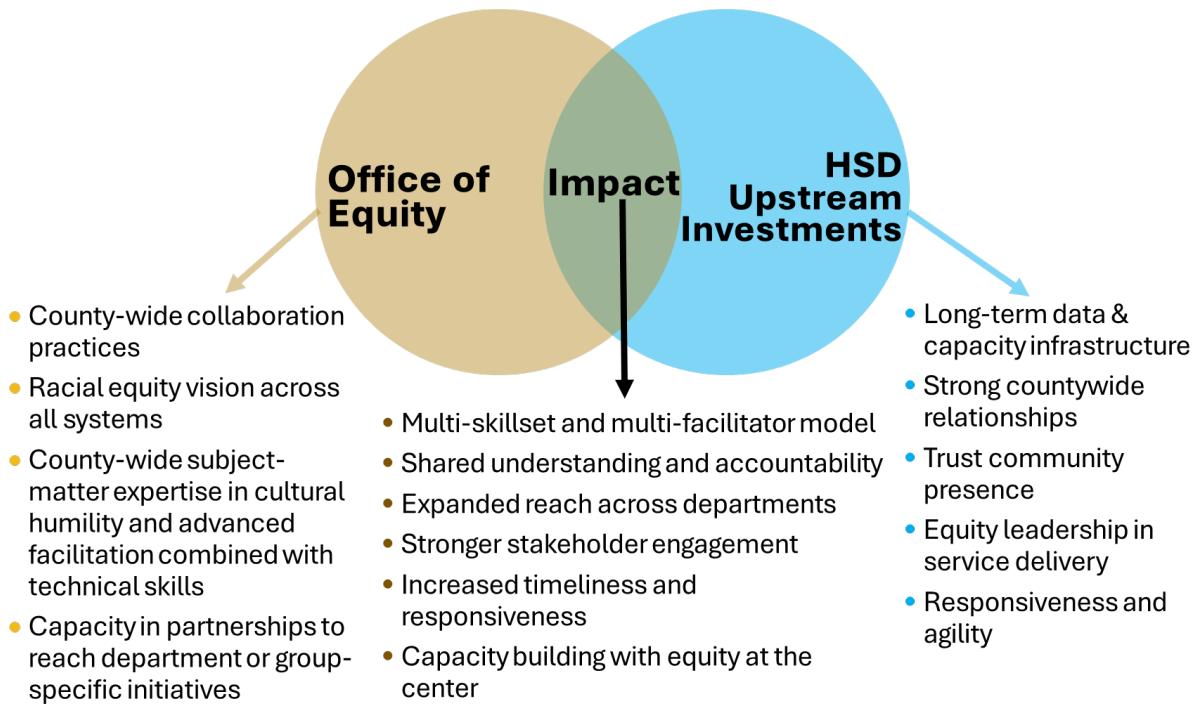
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## The “Why” Behind the Outcomes

The image below describes the strengths of each partner and how they combine to amplify impact. The [Office of Equity](#) is a standalone department that is responsible for County-wide initiatives in service of equity. Through this core function, the OOE fosters collaboration, trust, and support in the implementation of equity practices. The OOE PPEA combines their expertise in cultural humility with advanced technical skills to create a learning environment rooted in seeking and understanding community voices. The HSD Upstream Investments team has been a trusted community presence in its long-standing data and capacity-building efforts with Safety Net departments. Therefore, they have sustained strong countywide relationships. The HSD PPEA is a trusted partner for their responsiveness and agility across government, community organizations, and agencies. The OOE and Upstream partnership models culturally aware facilitation by fostering spaces for shared learning with a focus on applicability and accountability. In its totality, this partnership is projected to continue to strengthen and deepen relationships across county departments and agencies, expanding the County’s collective capacity to implement AR RBA with consistency, accountability, and meaningful impact.

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<sup>3</sup> The number of safety net department contracts using AR-RBA to fidelity continues to fluctuate as contract periods begin and end, departments and divisions update or switch databases, and contract managers are onboarded.



## Conclusion

As a result of this partnership, the County is better off through an integrated model of support to departments related to thoughtful data collection, analysis, and anti-racist decision-making. This framework contributes to improved program monitoring, allocation of resources, and decision-making all centered in equity. The success of this partnership was not accidental; it was **the product of sustained investment and intentional collaboration starting in 2021**. The following describes the most significant considerations and impacts of reduction or expiration of the OOE PPEA allocation:

- The relationships, credibility, and coordinated support systems that have been created through this partnership are critical **intangible assets** that, once lost, will be difficult and slow to rebuild.
  - For example, the OOE PPEA led the initiation of department-wide trainings and AR-RBA capacity building with the Human Resources Department and Department of Health Services' Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement Division.
- The capacity and scope** of this work will decrease from supporting 28 County departments and agencies to 6 (safety net) departments.
- Without the OOE PPEA allocation, AR-RBA is at risk of being relegated as a tool limited to contract management for safety net departments.

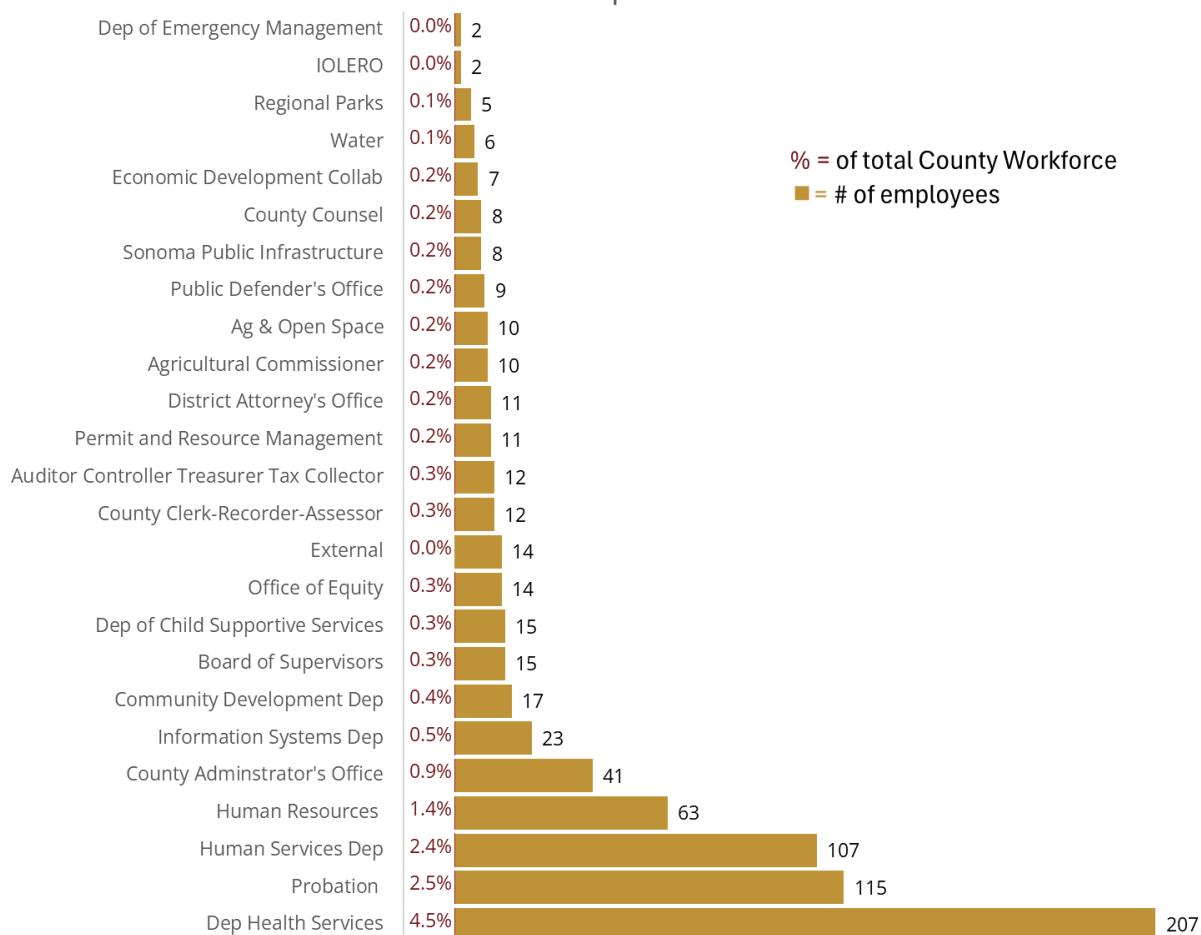
- The capacity to support several strategic planning efforts beyond the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Plan will significantly be reduced including Department of Health Services Health Equity Action Plan, Human Services Department Strategic Roadmap, and Adult & Aging Division Roadmap
  - This also directly impacts the deliverables outlined specifically in the Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP).
- The loss of institutional knowledge, expertise in cultural humility and advanced facilitation of the OOE PPEA will result in a gap in the AR-RBA partnership.
- The safety net demographic data evaluation project will experience a significant reduction in staff capacity for continuation and loss of project expertise.

# Appendix

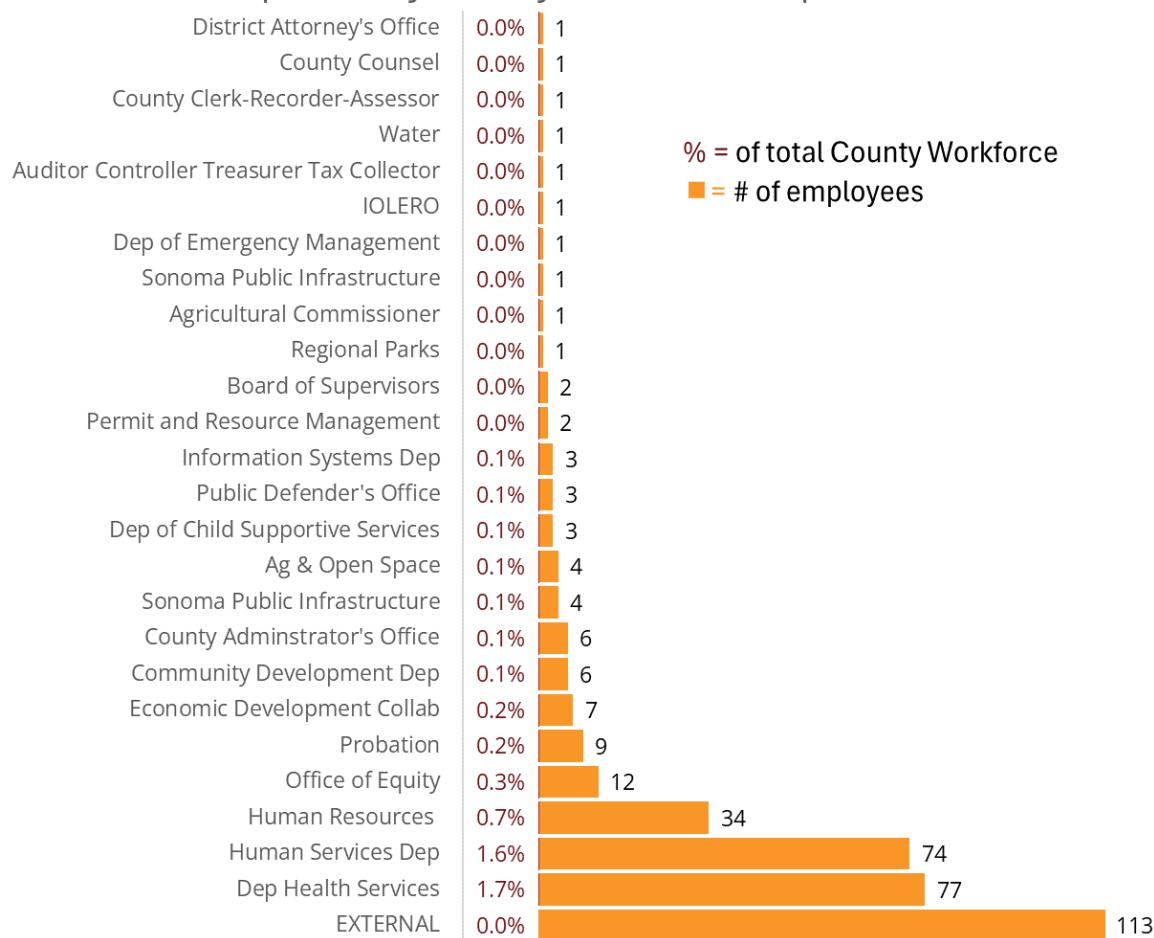
**Table 1: Staff Counts of Training Completion by County Departments**

As of December 2025, the chart below depicts individual unduplicated counts of people who have completed each training offered through the Racial Equity Learning Program (Racial Equity Foundations and Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability) grouped by departments. External partners who are not county staff are grouped under “External”.

Racial Equity Foundations Training Completion by County of Sonoma Departments



## Anti-Racist Results Based Accountability Training Completion by County of Sonoma Departments



**Table 2: AR-RBA Pre and Post Evaluation Outcomes**

### 2025 Foundational AR-RBA Training Pre and Post Evaluation

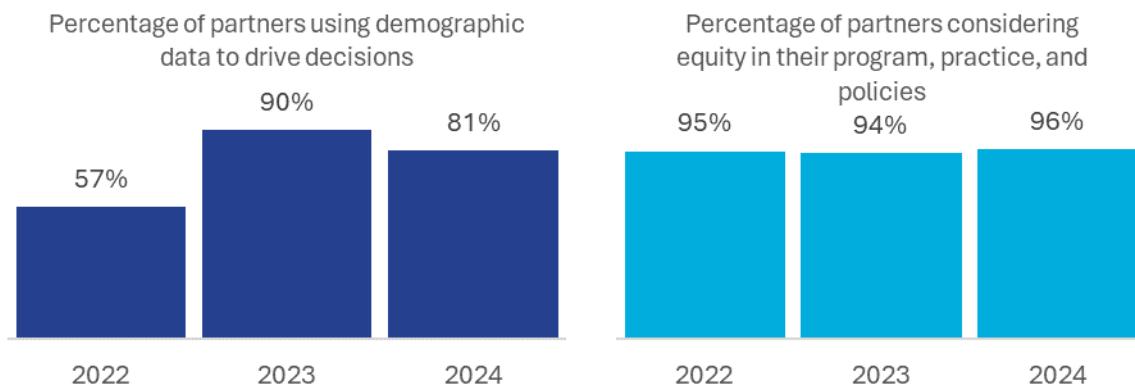
The table below illustrates a paired two sample t-Test for means across 4 different AR-RBA trainings in 2025. Highlighted and **bolded in red** are the p-values for each question in 2025. The p-value are all less than the 0.05 (significance level), which suggests that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre and post tests for each of the AR-RBA trainings. Therefore, respondents had experienced a positive change in knowledge or confidence in application of the training concepts.

How racial inequities are experienced by Sonoma County communities	My familiarity with Anti-Racist Results-Based Accountability	Rate your current confidence in applying equity-centered principles to your work/role:
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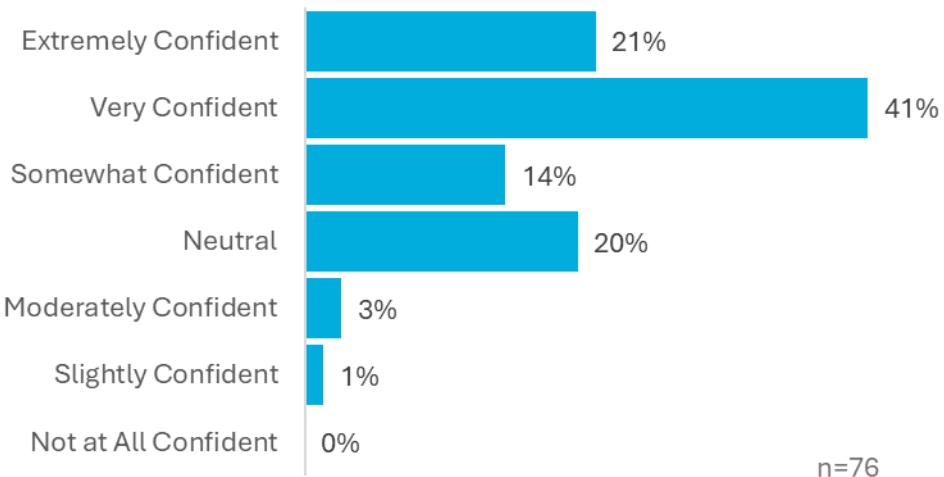
	PRE	POST		PRE	POST		PRE	POST
Mean	5.28	6.24	Mean	5.28	6.24	Mean	5.28	6.24
Variance	1.387	1.943	Variance	1.387	1.943	Variance	1.387	1.943
Observations	5	5	Observations	5	5	Observations	5	5
Pearson Correlation	0.971		Pearson Correlation	0.9707		Pearson Correlation	0.9707	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0		Hypothesized Mean Difference	0		Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	4		f	4		df	4	
t Stat	-5.68		t Stat	-5.677		t Stat	-5.6766	
<b>P(T&lt;=t) one-tail</b>	<b>0.002</b>		<b>(T&lt;=t) one -tail</b>	<b>0.0024</b>		<b>P(T&lt;=t) one-tail</b>	<b>0.0024</b>	
t Critical one-tail	2.132		ritical one -tail	2.1318		t Critical one-tail	2.1318	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.005		P(T<=t) two-tail	0.0048		P(T<=t) two-tail	0.0048	
t Critical two-tail	2.776		t Critical two-tail	2.7764		t Critical two-tail	2.7764	

**Table 3: AR-RBA Training Responses and Outcomes (2023- Present)**

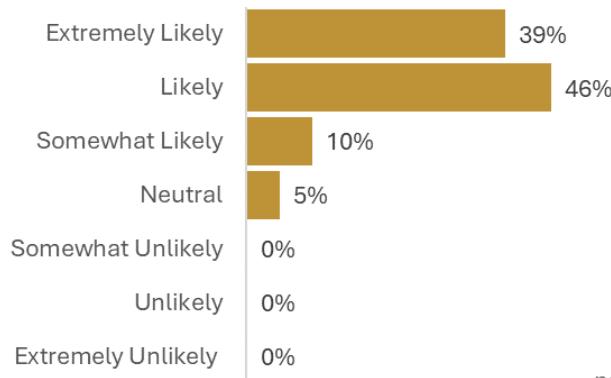
These charts reflect training participants who have completed post training evaluation surveys.



Rate your confidence in either understanding and/or application of the AR-RBA methodology into action



Likelihood to analyze or reflect on current data practices and culture



Better able to use data for decision making or use of demographic data to drive program decisions

