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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Frederick County Office of Economic Development Unveils Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Tool for Frederick County Businesses

*EmPOWER Employer Resource Toolkit helps businesses
promote healthy, inclusive workplace cultures*

FREDERICK, Md. – Businesses in Frederick County can assess their progress on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives with the help of a new free resource available from the Frederick County Office of Economic Development. The EmPOWER Employer Resource Toolkit is a comprehensive tool for organizations and their employees. It includes a self-assessment tool, as well as videos, podcasts, articles, reading materials, and interactive tools to support a healthy workplace culture and improve DEI efforts.

Research shows that having a diverse team of employees and an inclusive workplace environment will help a company attract and retain talent and create a more competitive marketplace. Data also show the Frederick County talent pool is becoming more ethnically diverse, further emphasizing the importance of creating equitable opportunities for people of color and other historically marginalized groups of people.

“Everyone should enjoy the same opportunity to flourish in their work environment,” Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner said. “I am proud that Frederick County Government supports and embraces diversity and inclusion by providing equitable programs, policies, and resources such as the EmPOWER interactive tool for employers.”

FCOED created the EmPOWER Employer Resource Toolkit as part of its ongoing commitment to serving Frederick County’s diverse business community. In 2015, FCOED created a framework to provide outreach, education and support initiatives for underrepresented businesses looking to start, locate and expand in Frederick County. EmPOWER’s mission is to create an environment of economic inclusion in Frederick County that supports all business owners, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or religion. The EmPOWER program includes mentorship, monthly networking events, business resources, a business directory, and marketing/PR assistance to support, teach and connect local businesses. For more information, see the EmPOWER website listed below.

“Our office continues to support and grow underrepresented businesses in Frederick County,” said Helen Propheter, Executive Director of FCOED. “Every business in Frederick County can use this resource guide to gauge how well their DEI is and then use the videos, podcasts and more to better themselves and create an even more inclusive culture within their organization.”

The EmPOWER Employer Resource Toolkit can be downloaded from FCOED’s website by visiting www.discoverfrederickmd.com/empower. To learn more about the Frederick County Office of Economic Development’s EmPOWER program, contact Shana Knight at sknight@frederickcountymd.gov.

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