

Goodwill Industries Ontario Great Lakes

Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

June 2021



Introduction

Cultural competence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures. Goodwill Industries Ontario Great Lakes recognizes that Cultural Competence is a key principle that must be integrated within all aspects of services we deliver. Through our attitudes, organizational structures, policies and services, we will strive to respond effectively to the needs of all persons served and their families, stakeholders, employees, the community, from culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

Importance of Cultural Competency

As Goodwill Industries continues to meet the needs and expectations of increasingly culturally and ethnically varied populations, a better understanding of cultural differences and their relationship to the hallmarks of quality service – respect, inclusiveness, and sensitivity – become essential. Serving diverse populations, after all, is not a “one size fits all” process. Diversity includes all differences, not just those that indicate racial or ethnic distinctions.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, Goodwill Industries will respond to the changing needs and expectations of the people we serve and our stakeholders, in conjunction with the changing business needs of our organization. Through ongoing strategic planning, we will ensure that our leadership maintains a viable planning structure focused on our mission, vision and core ICARE values that guide our business practices.

The creation and implementation of our Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is an essential foundation to ensure that our staff, persons served and other stakeholders develop awareness and sensitivity specific to the diversity of our service delivery areas. Diversity, equity and inclusion in terms of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status and language are addressed in this plan.

The framework for our Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is based on CARF’s ASPIRE to Excellence® model and uses the CARF standards as a guide to ensure an ongoing process of continuous quality improvement.

Goodwill Industries’ mission, vision, values and purpose for creating this Cultural Competency and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan:

Mission: “Changing Lives and Communities through the Power of Work”

Vision: “Everyone is working and thriving in sustainable communities”

ICARE Values:

Inclusion (*Embrace all people equally*)

Compassion (*Serve with the heart*)

Aspiring Workforce (*Together, changes lives through the Power of Work*)

Respect (*Uphold all people with dignity and trust*)

Empathy (*Walk in each other’s shoes*)

Purpose of Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan:

To ensure Goodwill employees will have a greater awareness/knowledge and then be able to successfully respond to the diversity of our stakeholders (including areas such as spiritual beliefs, holidays, dietary regulations or preferences, clothing, attitudes toward impairments, language, how and when to use interpreters, etc.)

Our equity vision is to build upon our core values, creating an organization that is welcoming, safe, accessible, and inclusive. We are committed to:

- ongoing implementation of our anti-racism/anti-oppression policy which promotes our vision and includes procedures for handling issues of discrimination
- promoting equity principles as an integral part of our ongoing activities
- developing and maintaining ongoing relationships with diverse populations and communities
- encouraging and creating real opportunities for staff, customers, clients and volunteer participation at all levels
- creating and implementing hiring and recruitment practices that are inclusive
- ensuring that all print, visual, and other promotional materials reflect diversity and inclusivity and present positive images
- promoting and conducting ongoing anti-discrimination/equity training
- taking a leadership role in promoting equity within our agency and within the community

All employees, customers and clients have access to Goodwill's Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan, included in our employee orientation manual and on our website at www.goodwillindustries.ca

It is also available upon request.

Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Practices

Goodwill Industries Ontario Great Lakes seeks employees that are committed to their community and represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, particularly those often shut out of the labour market. Discrimination is not tolerated and employees are expected to conduct services and interactions in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms and respects the worth of each individual, protecting and preserving the dignity of each person.

When necessary and requested, translation services to persons served will be provided. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, performance appraisals or evaluation, and meetings. If a client is in need of interpretive services, Goodwill makes appropriate arrangements for these services through community partnerships.

Comprehensive, theoretically based cultural competency trainings are offered, characterized by acceptance and respect for individual differences. Trainings are based upon the following learning techniques:

- Assessment and awareness of personal biases
- Content on general culture-specific attributes, using person centred language

Specific trainings include but are not limited to:

- Cultural Competency training
- Diversity Awareness training
- Mental Health First Aid certification

Goodwill utilizes informal relationships with a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for our employees, their families, and our clients.

These include community resources such as housing supports, legal aid, credit counselling, social service clubs for community involvement, mental health and addiction services.

Policy

All policies are created from a person-centred perspective, reflective of the employee population and stakeholders we represent.

**Please also refer to our ARAO policy, Accessibility policy and Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy, Cultural Holiday policy.*

Our Commitment

As a team, Goodwill Industries Ontario Great Lakes is committed to creating a welcoming, accessible, inclusive environment. We affirm our commitment by making the organization a “hands on” learning experience. We seek the education of culture and diversity from professional trainings and literature as well as learning from our team members. Through these experiences, we learn a great deal about others. More importantly, we learn even more about ourselves.

Resources

National Centre for Cultural Competence
nccc.georgetown.edu

Indigenous Cultural Safety Collaborate Learning Series
www.icscollaborative.com

Human Rights Campaign Tools for Equity & Inclusion
www.hrc.org/resources

National Institutes of Health Cultural Respect
www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/cultural-respect

A Practical Guide to Implementing the National CLAS Standards:
for Ethnic, Racial and Linguistic Minorities, People with Disabilities
and Gender and Sexual Minorities
www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/OMH/Downloads/CLAS-Toolkit-12-7-16.pdf

Cultural Competence – A Guide to Organizational Change
www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Documents/CulturalCompetencyGuide.pdf