



Workplace Diversity Policy

Policy Owner: Human Resources

Approval: Board of Directors

First Approved: 2006

Current Approval: June 10, 2016

Effective Date: June 10, 2016

Organizational Statement of Commitment

Toronto Community Housing is committed to building and fostering a fair and inclusive workplace which values diversity and encourages respect for dignity, beliefs and ideas consistent with the principles outlined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code (the “Code”)*, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. Toronto Community Housing recognizes the value of identifying and removing barriers and promoting inclusion in the workplace.

Policy Statement

Diversity is an important value of the organization, where each employee is respected and valued for their differences. Toronto Community Housing is committed to enhancing workplace diversity and fostering a workplace that is representative of the resident population it serves. A diverse workplace benefits employees by allowing them to feel valued for their differences by the organization and creating opportunities for advancement. The organization is committed to identifying and removing barriers for diverse employees in recruitment, advancement and retention. Historically, certain groups of people experience barriers to employment and are underrepresented in the workforce. Underrepresented These groups include persons with disabilities, racialized minorities, women, Aboriginal people, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer communities, and persons caring for elder and child dependents. The selection of these groups does not preclude the possibility of addressing systemic discrimination for other underrepresented groups.

Work



Toronto Community Housing protects all employees from discrimination and harassment under the *Code* and TCHC's Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy. Toronto Community Housing will strive to ensure diversity is represented in all areas of the organization including policies, procedures and practices.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and prospective employees of Toronto Community Housing. This policy is particularly relevant for employees who are in a position to make or influence decisions of the organization. Third parties who have business dealings with Toronto Community Housing, including contractors and vendors of Toronto Community Housing, are expected to comply with any provision of their contract related to diversity.

Core Principles

In keeping with our values of respect, accountability, community collaboration and integrity, Toronto Community Housing will implement this policy in accordance with the following principles:

Dignity – Employees are treated in a respectful manner.

Equity – Employees will be provided the same access to programs, services, opportunities, and facilities as all staff.

Standards

Building a diverse and inclusive workforce at Toronto Community Housing encourages employees to work together to help create a respectful and inclusive workplace and to deliver quality customer service that is reflective of the resident population.

Definitions

Prohibited Grounds: The Code prohibits discrimination in employment on the following grounds: citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, ancestry,



disability, age, creed, sex / pregnancy, gender identity, gender expression, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, and record of offences.

Diversity: is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences on the basis of a prohibited ground. Diversity is about the individual employee, it is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities, and characteristics we all possess.

Inclusion: Inclusion is about the collective culture in the workplace. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, and values differences.

Diversity and Inclusion: When these two terms are combined, it adds another dimension to the terms. Diversity and Inclusion is about capturing the uniqueness of the individual, creating an environment that values and respects individuals for their talents, skills and abilities to benefit the collective culture in the workplace.

Access: People from diverse groups gaining equal opportunity to the use of goods, services, programs, facilities, public spaces and participation in social, economic, cultural and political life.

Equity: is not limited to equal access to opportunities but equal benefits as well. It requires the removal of systemic barriers and the accommodation of differences so that individuals can benefit equally.

Barriers: A barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating because of his or her disability. Generally barriers fall into three areas: attitudinal/behavioural, procedural, and physical. Barriers that are usually hidden in the rules, procedures, policies and operations of organizations that limit the access to goods, services, programs, facilities, and economic, social and cultural participation of people from diverse groups. Barriers prevent underrepresented groups from maximizing their contribution to the workplace.

Special Programs: The Code recognizes the importance of addressing historical disadvantages by protecting special programs to help marginalized groups. Under Section 14 of the Code it is not discrimination to put in place a program if it designed to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage, help disadvantaged people or groups to achieve or try to achieve equal opportunity or help eliminate discrimination. Provided the program or initiative meets the requirements of the Code and the Ontario Human Rights Commission, special programs may include Aboriginal employment strategy, statistical goals for priority groups, and continuous training initiatives.



Discrimination: is any practice or behaviour which, whether intentional or not, treats people unequally or makes a distinction based on a prohibited ground (e.g. disability, sex, race, and sexual orientation) resulting in a disadvantage, an obligation, or a burden that other individuals or groups do not have. A decision to deny a benefit that relies on any of these grounds, unrelated to a person's abilities, is prohibited under the Code. Discrimination may result from the effect of applying general rules to everyone.

Systemic Discrimination: patterns of policies, practices, and procedures that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate discrimination.

The Duty to Accommodate: is an individualized process designed to improve equality and eliminate disadvantages experienced by individuals or groups related to a prohibited ground, to the point of undue hardship. Accommodation includes appropriate steps designed to the special needs of individuals and groups protected by the *Human Rights Code*. Accommodation is determined in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation.

Harassment: is a course of comment(s) or conduct about a prohibited ground that a person knows or ought to know would be unwelcome. Harassment may result from one incident or a series of incidents.

Policy Details

Toronto Community Housing is committed to building diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and will advance this standard by the following components and specific activities:

- 1.0 **Build Leadership and Accountability:** Transform organizational culture by incorporating diversity in all levels of the organization and develop accountability in the executive leadership team regarding diversity initiatives.
 - 1.1 Toronto Community Housing will develop a Diversity and Inclusion Framework with goals and timelines over a three year period that will assist the organization in building, fostering, and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workplace. The goal is for Toronto Community Housing to support diversity throughout all levels of the organization.



1.2 Toronto Community Housing will review all relevant policies, procedures and practices through a lens that builds, fosters and sustains diversity as a priority.

2.0 **Enhance Diversity Initiatives in Talent Management:** Develop a workforce profile based on the population of the City of Toronto and identify gaps on a regular basis. Create and execute diversity and inclusion strategies for the underrepresented groups in recruitment, advancement, and retention with a goal of being more reflective of the workforce profile. These strategies may include the following:

- 2.1 Expanding recruitment efforts by advertising job opportunities to diverse professional networks, agencies and media¹ and by establishing relationships with partner agencies to attract applicants from underrepresented groups.
- 2.2 Collaborate with external stakeholders, employees, and unions to develop strategies and special programs to promote diversity in the workplace.
- 2.3 Incorporate diversity into the succession planning framework and encourage Managers to identify and develop a diverse pool of talent within the organization.
- 2.4 Implement special programs for the training and development of underrepresented groups to eliminate and reduce barriers and improve their ability to obtain leadership roles within the organization.

3.0 **Foster and Sustain Diversity and Inclusion:** Implement diversity training and develop strategies for employee engagement

- 3.1 Toronto Community Housing will provide training to build awareness on diversity during onboarding and conduct training on an annual basis.

¹ Diverse professional networks include ethnic-media, community agencies such as March of Dimes, CNIB, and other community specific agencies.



3.2 Toronto Community Housing will encourage and support employee network groups to further support diversity initiatives within the organization.

4.0 **Reporting Requirements:** Develop data for tracking and monitoring diversity initiatives.

3.1. Conduct voluntary workplace surveys to understand the workforce demographics and profile

3. 2 Toronto Community Housing will maintain confidential employment diversity databases restricted to authorized staff for the purpose of engaging in activities related to advancing diversity achievements.

Compliance and Monitoring

Diversity Reviews

The Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership Team will ensure the principles guiding this policy are upheld. The Office of Diversity, Fairness and Human Rights will work collaboratively with divisional leads to incorporate diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the organizations.

Reporting

Toronto Community Housing staff will develop metrics on diversity and equity initiatives which will be reported yearly to the Executive Leadership Team.

Governing and Applicable Legislation

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c. 11
- *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O. Reg. 429/07
- *Employment Standards Act, 2000*, S.O. 2000, c. 41
- *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19



Related Policies and Procedures

- Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy
- Accessibility Policy

Commencement and Review

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Approval
First approval:	2006	New	unknown
Revision #1		[List change as major or minor and describe nature of change]	
Last review:			

Next Scheduled Review Date: June 2018