

Madawaska Valley

Association For

Community Living

**POLICY: EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

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**REVISED:**

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**CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCES**

Policy Statement:

MVACL is committed to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment where all board members, employees, volunteers, people supported and families, feel respected and valued regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, disability, education, or any other bias.

MVACL is committed to being non-discriminatory and providing equal opportunities for employment, volunteering, and advancement in all areas of our work.

MVACL respects the value that diverse life experiences bring to our board and leadership and will strive to listen to their views and give them value.

MVACL is committed to modeling equity, diversity, and inclusion, and maintaining fair and equal treatment for all.

In its efforts to foster awareness, reduce barriers, promote inclusion, engage our stakeholders and provide informed leadership for diversity, inclusion and equity, MVACL will:

1. Employ a lens based on equity, diversity, and inclusion, in connection with our vision and mission for the benefit of the people supported, their families and employees.

2. Aim to recognize and address inequities in our policies, programs, and services.

3. Update and document progress on our equity, diversity, and inclusion practices.

4. Commit to investigate underlying assumptions that interfere with our equity, diversity and inclusion policy.

5. Commit to advocating for systemic inequities that impact our work at the board level and address it according to this policy and in accordance with our mission.

6. Commit to challenging commonly accepted notions about what constitutes strong leadership within the organization.

7. Commit to being transparent about diversity in all interactions.

8. Dedicate time and resources to expanding greater diversity within the board and leadership positions.

9. Commit to leading with respect and tolerance and encourage all employees, volunteers, people supported and families to express this in their work within our organization.

Policy Goals and Objectives:

1. Create new learning opportunities and formal transparent policies as we strive for cultural competency throughout the organization.

2. Conduct and identify research related to equity in order to make progress in the area of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

3. Take action to improve equity, diversity, and inclusion in Board and leadership positions.

4. Identify resources for underrepresented constituents by networking with other organizations that are also committed to efforts for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

5. Develop internal resources that demonstrate the organization’s commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and present them to our agency.

6. Develop a system to create awareness and address biases during recruiting, hiring, and evaluating processes.

7. Train employees to be responsible for orienting, onboarding, and training employees and volunteers on equitable practices.

8. Advocate for public and private policies that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion and challenge systems and policies that describe inequity, disparity, and oppression.

Monitoring Report Requirements:

1. Annual report to the Board, Management Team and Bargaining Unit Members on equity, diversity, and inclusion progress.

Glossary of Key Policy Terms

Cultural Diversity is when different races, ethnicities, ages, abilities, languages, nationalities, socioeconomic statuses, genders, religions, and/or sexual orientations are well represented within a community. The group is diverse if a wide variety of groups are represented. It's important not only to have cultural diversity in communities but also in the workplace. Policy: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Cultural Competency can be defined as the ability to recognize and adapt to cultural differences and similarities. It involves “(a) the cultivation of deep cultural self-awareness and understanding (i.e., how one’s own beliefs, values, perceptions, interpretations, judgments, and behaviors are influenced by one’s cultural community or communities) and (b) increased cultural other-understanding (i.e., comprehension of the different ways people from other cultural groups make sense of and respond to the presence of cultural differences).