



Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is a mindset.

**SOUTH OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
WORKPLACE EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
TOOLKIT**

SOUTH OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP
LAST UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 2022



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Acknowledgements

We live, work and learn on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation. We are grateful to be here and we honour the Okanagan Nation who have always cared for these lands, water, and air and continue to do so today. This land acknowledgement does not replace our obligation to work to decolonize our daily life and practices. It is a step on our journey of learning the truth and working towards reconciliation.

A special thanks to the Bow Valley Immigration Partnership and Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality (RACIDE) in Wood Buffalo for sharing their Workplace Inclusion Charter resources, templates, and learnings. We continue to work closely with them to build a collaborative ongoing partnership for inclusion and equity work in Canada. We also thank Kingston Local Immigration Partnership for their Charter, parts of which we adapted.

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Background

Increasingly, businesses are recognizing that inclusive practices improve innovation, retention, and productivity. Research by Deloitte, Catalyst, McKinsey, and more all point to the same conclusion: diverse and inclusive businesses perform better.

Developed by a partnership of community agencies and employers, the ideas and resources that follow make it easy to support the health, success, and retention of your diverse team members.

The Equity and Inclusion Charter aims to create and promote inclusive, equitable and prosperous environment for our community members that often experience discrimination and racism, including:

- Newcomers
- Indigenous people
- People with disabilities
- LGBTQ2S+ community
- Women
- Seniors (older workers)
- Racialized people

These groups are the focus of inclusion strategies because they continue to experience systemic barriers to employment, high rates of unemployment and underemployment, and disproportionate representation in low-pay and low-status jobs. We recognize that there are other population groups not listed here, who experience regular discrimination and would benefit from equitable and inclusive practices in the workplace. Furthermore, we acknowledge that there is intersectionality among these populations and that often people cannot be confined to one category.

The charter includes three parts:

- A declaration of principles
- A list of commitments
- Tools and resources to support implementation

We'll provide support and recognize your efforts every step of the way. Read on to learn more and sign up.

We look forward to working with you to create a more prosperous and welcoming community!

Key Terms

Diversity is the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes, both visible and invisible, within a group, organization, or society. These characteristics could be everything that makes us unique, such as our cognitive skills and personality traits, along with the things that shape our identity (e.g. race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background).

Equity is a condition or a state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment that recognizes and acknowledges the accommodation of differing needs and expectations. Equity acknowledges that equal treatment does not always yield equal results. Equity is the fair distribution of *opportunities, power* and *resources* to meet the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, gender or background. (*City for all Women Initiative. (2015). Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities*)

Inclusion is what happens when diversity and equity meet. It involves creating an environment where people have both the feeling and reality of belonging and are able to grow and develop their potential. It is a situation where disadvantaged communities and designated group members share power and decision making at all levels in projects, programs, and institutions.

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities (e.g. gender, sex, race, class, sexuality, religion, disability, physical appearance, height, etc.) combine to create unique modes of discrimination and privilege.

Benefits

Implementing the commitments in this Charter will improve:

Productivity & Financial Returns

Research indicates that diverse teams outperform homogeneous teams, provided inclusion is valued and protected. Your diverse colleagues have many skills and talents. Employing an inclusion lens will help identify these gifts.

- 83% increase in the ability to innovate. (Deloitte 2013)
- 29% increase in team citizenship behaviours/“going above and beyond.” (Prime & Salib 2014) –find newer data
- Businesses that rank in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35% more likely to have financial returns higher than the average in their industry. (Hunt et al 2015).

Access to New Markets

- Research published in the Harvard Review states that diverse companies are 70% more likely to report that they have captured a new market.

Morale, Wellness & Team Work

- The Inclusion Charter represents an opportunity to clearly declare that your diverse colleagues are highly valued and lays out simple changes to promote a sense of belonging for all.
- Research shows 42% increase in team collaboration when employees feel included and that the employer is supportive and committed to diversity. (Deloitte 2013)
- Vulnerable groups face many challenges and barriers to accessing services. The commitments in this charter will help your team access support for health and wellbeing in and outside of work.

Customer Experiences

- The charter promotes use of free skill development opportunities proven to improve communication skills.
- Employees are 31% more likely to be responsive to customer needs (Deloitte 2013)
- Better able to tap into the purchasing power of target consumer groups (McKinsey 2013)
- 80% of consumer purchases are made by women. (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
- Lesbian and gay household incomes are 80% higher than average. (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
- Customers prefer dealing with staff their own age so hiring older workers especially since the population is aging is important. (Conference Board of Canada, 2007)
- Social responsibility is increasingly important for businesses and affects decisions made by job seekers, consumers, and community members. (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
- Businesses that implement the Workplace Inclusion Charter commitments receive public recognition as an Inclusion Champion.

Attraction and Retention

- Increased ability to attract talent and fill labour shortages. (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
- A 2016 study found that LGBTQ2S+ respondents felt more comfortable applying for jobs at an organization that publicized LGBTQ2S+ related policies like anti-discrimination policies and transition guidelines. (Lee, 2016)
- Increased retention rates and employee satisfaction. (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
- By strengthening feelings of being included in only 10% of employees, a business can increase work attendance by almost one day per year per employee. (Deloitte 2013)
- Hiring older workers can save employers time and money as older workers tend to stay at a job longer. (Conference Board of Canada, 2007)
- In addition to promoting career development and morale, policies in this charter will empower team members to bring forward and resolve concerns.

Recognition

- Participating organizations will be issued a certificate of recognition as an Equity & Inclusion Champion and named in a media release from the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership.
- These tools signal to job seekers, customers, and the community that your organization is serious about valuing diversity.

The Need

According to a 2015 study by Randstad, the largest staffing and human resources consulting company in Canada and the second-largest in the world:

- 1 out of 5 Canadians reported gender discrimination in the workplace.
- 26% reported age-based discrimination.
- 17% experienced racial discrimination.
- 16% reported discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- 16% said they've been discriminated against because of their religion.

Studies in Canada and the United States consistently find evidence of discrimination in hiring procedures:

- 20%-40% of applicants with Asian names on their resume are less likely to receive a callback compared to when they submit their resumes with an Anglo-name (Banerjee, Reitz & Oreopoulos 2018).
- 25% black candidates received call backs when they used an Anglo name on their resumes compared with 10% when they used their own names.

According to a Statistics Canada 2014 report:

- 31% of lesbian and gay individuals and 39% of bisexual individuals over age 18 experienced discrimination in the last five years.
- 50% of individuals reporting discrimination said that their experience was in the workplace.

Recognition

The South Okanagan-Similkameen Equity and Inclusion Charter outlines a list of commitments for participating employers. Work your way through the commitments and receive recognition for each level achieved! Recognition includes media releases, social media posts, an “Inclusion Champion” window decal, and a certificate.

Inclusion Partnership Member

Complete # Training Commitments
Complete # Policy Commitments
Complete # Human Resource Commitments
Complete # Inclusive Spaces Commitments
Complete # Community Connections Commitments

Collaborator

Complete # Training Commitments
Complete # Policy Commitments
Complete # Human Resource Commitments
Complete # Inclusive Spaces Commitments
Complete # Community Connections Commitments

Inclusion Champion

Complete all # Training Commitments
Complete all # Policy Commitments
Complete all # Human Resource Commitments
Complete all # Inclusive Spaces Commitments
Complete all # Community Connections Commitments

Process & Timeline

Declare

First Three Months

1. *Endorse* the declaration and commit to complete a minimum of five commitments. Return the signed declaration to your Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP): Elmira, elmirag@soics.ca)
2. *Announce* your participation internally and externally. A sample press release and employee memo are enclosed.
3. *Begin to Implement* - determine which commitments to prioritize and assign a specific leader to oversee implementation of each. Provide a copy of the resource package and contact SOSLIP for additional resources.

Six Months After Endorsement

First Check In

We'll contact you to see how things are going. Be sure to let us know if you need any help or additional resources!

12 Months

Second Check In

We'll contact you to see how things are going. Be sure to let us know if you need any help or additional resources!

Evaluate

Complete the attached questionnaire and provide evidence of commitments implemented. Let us know what you liked and didn't like about the charter program.

Celebrate

SOSLIP will issue a media release to celebrate the participating employers as Inclusion Champions at the gold, silver and bronze levels. Certificates and decals will be issued for marketing and recruitment use. We will work with the Chambers of Commerce to include this recognition in their annual award ceremonies.

Repeat annually with revised commitments & support.

Annual commitments

Training

Training on the following topics should be offered to all staff:

1. Cultural Awareness
2. Anti-racism and Anti-oppression
3. LGBTQ2S+ Awareness
4. Indigenous Awareness & Truth and Reconciliation
5. Accessibility Awareness (physical and mental disabilities)
6. Gender Equity
7. Age-Friendly Awareness
8. Bullying, Harassment and Abuse
9. Privacy/confidentiality

Board, Management and HR need to complete Inclusive Hiring & Retention Practices, Employment Standards and Managing Diverse Teams.

Policies and Guidelines

1. Fair Treatment /Anti-Discrimination Policy and Complaint Procedure
2. Health, Safety & Emergency Response Policy
3. Diverse Representation Guidelines: Guidelines outline requirements for diverse representation in all visual marketing and promotion.
4. Policy on Bullying, Harassment and Abuse
5. Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
6. Inclusive Washroom Policy: Policy that outlines the rights of individuals to use the washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity or gender expression.
7. Breastfeeding Policies: Policies that outline the right to breastfeed while accessing services, and that support breastfeeding during work hours.
8. Inclusive Forms: All forms are easy to read, refrain from requesting non-essential information, and use gender-neutral language.

Human Resources

1. Board & Team: Diversify your team/board/volunteers: create paid internships, hire summer students, develop targeted job postings and outreach strategies to attract diverse employees
2. Recruitment & Onboarding

- Inclusive job postings: refrain from requiring non-essential qualifications or information about the country in which work experience was gained; use plain, gender neutral language;
- Inclusive resume screening: refer to the Employer Toolkit for tips (Resources section)
- Inclusive interviewing and onboarding: refer to the Employer Toolkit for tips (Resources section)

Workplace Buddy System

What is a buddy system?

It is an onboarding method to orient new employees that involves assigning them an existing employee who guides them through the first few weeks or months on the job. It should include a formal process that outlines the buddies' responsibilities.

Why is it important?

The first few days determine the new employee's perception of the job and the organization. According to a study at Microsoft, new employees involved in the buddy system were 23% more satisfied with their onboarding experience, 73% indicated that this helped them become more productive.

Examples of Buddy Responsibilities

- Give a tour of the office and introduce to team members
- Have lunch together
- Help understand the organization's policies and procedures (e.g. Employee Handbook)
- Provide an overview of the organization's culture, vision and values (e.g. review the organization's Strategic Plan)

Buddy Characteristics:

- knowledgeable professional who can offer advice about work and the workplace
- reliable single point of contact for a new employee's questions
- good communicator who provides relevant information and encourages self-directed learning
- role model who proudly exemplifies company values and leads by example
- motivated, encouraging person who helps engender self-confidence and loyalty
- proficient and experienced worker who is able to devote time to new employees
- culturally sensitive person who may or may not speak the same first language as the new hire, depending on the desired result
- responsible and conscientious professional who's fully aware of the impact of the role in advance
- a peer, not a supervisor

References & Additional Resources:

Employer Playbook by World Education Services: <https://www.wes.org/ca/employer-playbook/national/>

Inclusive Onboarding Tools by TRIEC:

<https://triclearning.ca/course/index.php?categoryid=5&categorysort=default>

Mentorship

Mentoring is a cost-effective approach to help integrate newcomers and build cross-cultural understanding at the workplace. It also helps employers and employees better understand the talents that newcomers bring and challenges they face.

Mentoring helps newcomers:

- develop stronger emotional bonds and sense of belonging
- experience higher job satisfaction
- learn about the organizational culture and what is needed to succeed at the workplace

Here are some tips for employers on establishing a mentorship program:

- Define your goal – what are you trying to achieve? E.g. welcome and integrate new hires, foster a culture of inclusion, provide a leadership path, help develop particular skills.
- Choose your mentors in accordance with your goals and ensure that they clearly understand the goals and are committed to them. A mentor should not be a direct supervisor of a mentee. Ask mentees to help identify the mentors they are comfortable working with.
- Support mentors with time and resources
- Set expectations for the mentors and mentees: format, time commitment, expected outcomes.
- Evaluate performance after three months (e.g. employee satisfaction survey, conversations with mentors and mentees)
- Make adjustments, as needed.

Adapted from “Employer Playbook” by World Education Services:

<https://www.wes.org/ca/employer-playbook/national/>

Inclusive Spaces

1. *Quiet Room*: A space for meditation and prayer is provided for employees.

2. *Accessibility Commitment:* Review your space for accessibility- physical (equipment) and social (values and attitudes). Make appropriate changes and show that you are committed to and accountable for equity and inclusion practices by displaying your Declaration, etc. Don't forget to use plain, gender-neutral language. Please see the Resources section for examples.

Community Connections

1. Provide resources for newcomers, LGBTQ2S+, seniors, women and people with disabilities to connect with various support services (please see the Resources section)
2. Ensure that employees have time to receive supports – coaching, settlement supports, physical and mental health services
3. Organize inclusive social events

Declaration

Of Commitment to South Okanagan-Similkameen Equity and Inclusion Charter

VISION

South Okanagan-Similkameen employers are leaders in creating a welcoming and inclusive community. Our residents feel respected, valued, and supported to participate, succeed, and stay in the workplace and the community. Employers recognize and value diversity, encourage mutual respect and understanding, uphold human rights, and support inclusive and equitable workplace practices.

PRINCIPLES

- Diversity (including but not limited to race, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, and sexual orientation) contributes to the strength and prosperity of our business and our community.
- Everybody has the right to a safe and respectful work environment.
- Everybody deserves to access goods, services, accommodation, and facilities without discrimination, harassment, or fear.
- Employers play a key role in reducing inequity in our community and integration barriers for residents.

ENDORSEMENT

On behalf of, _____, I/we the undersigned endorse this Charter and commit to carry out a minimum of nine commitments as per the Bronze Inclusion Champion guidelines and to share this commitment throughout the organization.

SIGNED

Name, Title

Date

Name, Title

Date

Resources

SAMPLE COMMUNICATION DOCUMENTS

Charter Signatory Press Release

The following is a simple media release you can adapt and share with local and regional media once you've endorsed the charter. You can also use language from this release to craft an internal announcement so your whole team can get excited about the project. Alternatively, you may choose to simply post the release on your website. Whatever you do, bear in mind that other signatories to the charter will have a copy of this same release, so we recommend you personalize the message.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[BUSINESS NAME] champions workplace inclusion
[TOWN], British Columbia

[BUSINESS NAME], a [DESCRIBE BUSINESS HERE], announced this week a plan to strengthen its commitment to equity and inclusion through a partnership with local service providers. As one of the first organizations to endorse the new Equity and Inclusion Charter, [BUSINESS NAME], plans to lead by example to build a culture of inclusion throughout the region.

The Inclusion Charter, a project of the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP), outlines targeted actions employers agree to take over the next year, paired with appropriate resources and support. Developed by a partnership of service providers and employers, the charter includes ## commitments that have been identified as key for inclusion in our region.

[NAME, TITLE] says endorsing the charter is a step forward in the company's inclusion efforts. [QUOTE HERE, e.g. "We are excited to be at the forefront of this important initiative. At [BUSINESS NAME] we see the value of supporting our diverse teammates in the workplace and in the community, but the support that is needed is changing. The Equity and Inclusion Charter gives us an easy to follow roadmap to improve our efforts where they are most needed."]

[BUSINESS NAME] will begin/has begun implementing its charter commitments [TIMEFRAME], beginning with [DESCRIPTION OF FIRST COMMITMENT TO BE IMPLEMENTED]. The company intends to complete [NUMBER] commitments [DATE].

About [BUSINESS NAME]
[BIO]

###

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact [CONTACT NAME], [CONTACT EMAIL] or [CONTACT PHONE NUMBER].

For more information on the Equity and Inclusion Charter, please contact the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP) at (250) 492-6299 or elmirag@soics.ca

Internal Memo Sample

Note: The following template provides a basic example and suggested information to share with company managers once the declaration of commitment to the Charter has been signed. Please personalize the template to avoid having all signatories using the same message.

TO: Department Managers
SUBJECT: Commitment to Equity & Inclusion

Dear [NAME],

As you know, [COMPANY NAME] is proud of our diverse team. Our colleagues offer a variety of skills, ideas, and perspectives that help our business perform better.

One of the most important things we can do is help foster an inclusive environment for our employees and clients to thrive in. [COMPANY NAME] has strengthened its commitment to diversity and inclusion by endorsing the South Okanagan-Similkameen Equity and Inclusion Charter. As one of the first organizations to endorse the Charter, [COMPANY NAME], plans to lead by example in building a culture of inclusion throughout the region.

The Charter outlines targeted actions employers agree to take paired with appropriate resources and support. Developed by a partnership of service providers and employers (South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership), the charter includes ## commitments that have been identified as key for integration and inclusion in our region. [COMPANY NAME] recognizes the benefits of implementing the Charter commitments including improving employee attraction and retention, increasing productivity and financial returns, enhancing customer experience and being better able to tap into underserved markets.

As part of our commitments, it is important that your department takes the following steps: [LIST THE STEPS THIS DEPARTMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDER THE CHARTER].

To learn more about the Charter or for support in facilitating implementation, please contact the Partnership Coordinator: elmirag@soics.ca

Please share this message with supervisors in your department.

Thank you for your valued work and commitment to ensuring an inclusive, equitable, and productive workplace for all.

Sincerely,

[CONTACT INFORMATION]

Sample Memo: Community Support Services for Employees

TO: Department Managers

SUBJECT: Scheduling Accommodations for Community Supports

Dear [Manager Name],

As you know, [Business Name] is proud of our diverse team. Our colleagues offer a variety of skills, ideas, and perspectives and in doing so help our business to perform better.

One of the most important things we can do to ensure equity and inclusion of all our team members is to support their access to the free information and services provided by community organizations in the region, including peer support groups, English language training, coaching and workshops.

As part of our commitment to our colleagues, our retention strategy, and regional Equity and Inclusion Charter, we ask that you support scheduling requests related to community services for newcomers, Indigenous people, seniors, LGBTQ2S+, women and people with disabilities.

To learn more about the programs listed above or the Equity and Inclusion Charter, or for support in facilitating access to these programs, please contact: [CONTACT INFORMATION]

Please share this message with supervisors in your department.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring [Business Name] is a fair, inclusive, and productive place to work.

Sincerely,
[CONTACT INFORMATION]

Sample Waiver: Colleagues Pursuing Permanent Residency

CONSENT FORM

For employees applying for Permanent Resident Status

I, _____, give permission for my employer to share my name, phone number, and email address with the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS) for the purposes of sharing information regarding workshops, information sessions, and other free supports for newcomers.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Employer, please send copy of the signed form to: info@soics.ca

TRAINING CONNECTIONS

Cultural Awareness

South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services: www.soics.ca

LGBTQ2S+ Awareness

Foundry Penticton (Radar Program)
FoundryPenticton@OneSkyCommunity.com
778-646-2292

Pride at Work: Workplace inclusion certificate training
<https://education.prideatwork.ca/>

Provincial Health Services Authority: online training on gender diversity
<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/health-professionals/education/trans-intro>

Qmunity: Queer competency training
qct@qmunity.ca
604.684.5307 ext. 115
<https://qmunity.ca/learn/training/>

Kelowna Pride: peer support groups, parent groups, educational materials
<https://www.kelownapride.com/resources>

[LGBTQ2+ Inclusiveness: Toolkit for Inclusive Municipalities in Canada and Beyond](#)

This toolkit includes an overview of the issues, courses of action and examples of good practices from Canadian municipalities that are members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. It was developed by CCUNESCO in partnership with UNESCO's International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities.

Mental Wellness/Emotional Well-being

Mindfulness: <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/mindfulness>

Video tools/reference from Mental Health Commission of Canada
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-Geb1fkM58>
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/13factors>

Canadian Mental Health Association:
www.cmha.bc.ca
Wellness programs:

- Bounce Back
- Confident Parents Thriving Kids
- Living Life to the Full

Here to Help: resources on mental health and addictions
www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health
www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com

The website includes a number of resources including self-guides workshops on such topics as:

- Conflict, bullying, harassment
- Emotional intelligence and resilience
- Inclusivity and discrimination
- Team Building
- Work-life Balance

Indigenous Awareness & Truth and Reconciliation

Free 12-session online course by the University of Alberta. From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.

<https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html>

Aboriginal Worldviews and Education – free course on Coursera

Intended for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, this course will explore indigenous ways of knowing and how they can benefit all students. Topics include historical, social, and political issues in Aboriginal education; terminology; cultural, spiritual and philosophical themes in Aboriginal worldviews; and how Aboriginal worldviews can inform professional programs and practices, including but not limited to the field of education.

https://www.coursera.org/learn/aboriginal-education?ranMID=40328&ranEAID=D8u8CTDRU0o&ranSiteID=D8u8CTDRU0o-4fLWKtw5TBEO_RL7jRndiw&siteID=D8u8CTDRU0o-4fLWKtw5TBEO_RL7jRndiw&utm_content=10&utm_medium=partners&utm_source=linkshare&utm_campaign=D8u8CTDRU0o

Fee-based Training by Indigenous Works (former Aboriginal Human Resource Council)
<https://indigenousworks.ca/en>

Short (60-90 min on average) self-contained courses suitable focusing on workplace inclusion.
<http://inclusionclassroom.skillbuilder.ca/product-list>

[1. Fundamentals of Aboriginal Inclusion 00P1](#) (\$60 per person; discounts available;)

As part of all staff professional development plans, core competencies in Indigenous inclusion will be enhanced. Fundamental inclusion elements such as: building and articulating the business case for inclusion, the why of inclusion and closing the socio-economic gap, and finally, benchmarking and measuring your progress.-- 75-90 mins.

[2. Strategies for Indigenous Recruitment, Retention and Advancement 00P2](#) (\$60 pp)

Of special interest to HR and diversity managers, this course will articulate elements of Indigenous recruitment, retention and advancement challenges and explore how to capitalize on the benefits of each.

[3. Indigenous Partnerships 101: Getting Started 00P3](#) (\$60 pp)

Managers in every realm of inclusion: HR, procurement, CSR, marketing and communications will build skills and understanding of both the benefits and the 'how-to' of nurturing productive and mutually beneficial partnerships with Indigenous people.

[4. 16 Dimensions of An Aboriginal Retention Strategy 00P4](#) (\$60 pp)

Ensure that your investment in targeted recruitment efforts pay off with effective Indigenous employee retention strategies. Staff in the human resources division will be most interested in this eLearning course but with a focus on a variety of workplace behaviours impacting retention. -- 45-60 mins

[5. Aboriginal Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Canadian Companies 00P5](#) (\$45 pp)

Managers in HR and procurement, community and stakeholder relations understand that inclusion often starts with a solid process for Aboriginal self-identification. Learn the business case for, and the components of, an effective Aboriginal self-identification process. -- 45-60 mins.

[6. Leveraging CSR for the Inclusion Advantage: Successful Practices for Canadian Companies 00P6](#) (\$45 pp)

This course demonstrates the power that targeted CSR initiatives along with ways that committed social purpose leadership can contribute to and accelerate your enterprise-wide Indigenous inclusion goals—to becoming an employer-of-choice as well as a company-of-choice for Indigenous people, communities & businesses. -- 30-45 mins

[Core Inclusion - Package 00P7](#) (\$162 pp)

Courses 1-3 are the essential courses. These classes cover the basics of Indigenous workplace inclusion including: 1) the Fundamentals of Aboriginal Inclusion; 2) Strategies for Indigenous Retention, Recruitment and Advancement; and 3) Indigenous Partnerships 101: Getting Started.

[Mastering Inclusion Resource Series 00P9](#) (\$99 pp)

Mastering Inclusion Resource Series is a learning series designed to nurture and grow competencies that helps your organization become employers-of-choice for Aboriginal talent. The series is designed to help guide your company up the Inclusion Continuum.

[Workplace Inclusion Mastery Certificate and Resource Series OOP8](#) (\$295 pp)

Courses 1-6 (with additional resources) are for managers looking to grow their inclusion competencies and better prepare their organizations for the design and implementation of inclusion strategies. Each user that completes all six courses in the Inclusion Classroom curriculum will receive a Mastering Indigenous Inclusion Certification Certificate. Also included in this package is the 'Mastering Inclusion' five volume resource series (a \$195 value) with over 250 pages of rich text containing additional tools, tips, models and strategies.

Indigenous Community Educators/Elders/Collaborators

Anona Kampe, Indigenous Educator

Anona's traditional name is sknir'mən, which translates to Buttercup. She is a singer, drum carrier, beadworker, storyteller, dancer, teacher, harvester, disciplinarian, knowledge keeper, future elder in training, water protector and a woman who follows Okanagan protocols. A member of the Penticton Indian Band in the Okanagan Nation, Anona has worked within the Nation sharing Okanagan culture with schools, museums, youth groups and government entities. Her presentations include:

- Traditional Storytelling
- Regalia Presentation
- Purpose/Colonization Presentation
- Sage Harvest
- Tea Harvest
- Pictograph Tour & Learning on the Land
- Talking Circle
- Teaching the Okanagan Song
- Beading Pins & Beaded Spiders
- Residential School Presentation

Contact: (250) 809-2147; anonak@icloud.com

Leon Louis, Syilx Cultural Knowledge Keeper

Leon Louis cewel'na is a member of the Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Syilx Nation. Leon has committed his life's work to uphold the love and respect of our traditions and worldviews of Indian people. These worldviews are the relationship between the Creator and the land, environment and each other. He has knowledge of Syilx Okanagan Culture and practices the harvesting of Syilx traditional foods and medicines. Leon is a Cultural knowledge person who is invited to organize many different ceremonies throughout the Territories. At the Syilx Nation he is an active member of the Okanagan Nation Critical Incident Response Team, Syilx Unity Youth Run, Indian Residential School Committee, Natural Resource and Fisheries Cultural support person and dedicated member and participant in the Annual Syilx Unity Canoe Trek. Leon travels and supports other Tribal initiatives and Ceremonies such as the Tribal Journey Canoe events where Indigenous Tribes throughout the world come and join in celebrating their cultures and languages in solidarity – on the water and throughout their beautiful lands.

Contact: (250) 499-0271

Herman Edward, Syilx Cultural Knowledge Keeper, Artist, Musician and Language Teacher

Herman Edward is a humble man, having great respect for the traditional and cultural values of the Similkameen Syilx/Okanagan People. He is a fluent speaker of the nsyilxcen Okanagan language. He currently teaches the nsyilxcen Okanagan Language, culture and protocols to children and adults. In addition to being a teacher and fluent speaker, Herman is known both locally and afar as an aspired flute player, knowledge keeper and a dugout canoe carver. His recorded flute music CD titled “It’s About Time” was nominated for a Native American Music Award in 2011. His second CD titled “Past and Present” was nominated for an award in 2016. His life-long learning has provided him with the experience of being an accomplished artist who has worked with various aboriginal art forms including antler carving, buckskin tanning, moccasin, rattle, traditional regalia and tule mat making, beadwork and much more. Today in 2017, Herman Edward, a traditional flute player, educator and advocate for revival of traditional art forms resides in the Similkameen Valley, Syilx Okanagan Territory, within what is commonly known today, as the Southern Interior of British Columbia.

Contact: Lower Similkameen Indian Band, 250.499-2717

Kelly Terbasket, IndigenEYEZ Program Director

Kelly Terbasket has a contagious laugh, a talent for connecting people, and a passion for the power of community. With more than 20 years’ experience managing community projects, Kelly is known in First Nations throughout BC for her inspiring workshops on everything from team building to strategic planning to effective leadership. As a person of mixed heritage, Kelly has been bridging distinct worlds all her life, weaving together the strengths of her Syilx and European ancestry. A mother of two beautiful young women, Kelly lives in her family’s ancestral home in the south Okanagan.

<http://indigeneyez.com/>

Dr. Bill Cohen

Dr. Bill Cohen is from the Okanagan Nation with extensive kinship ties throughout BC and Washington. He specializes in the areas of Indigenous knowledge, research, education, and transforming pedagogy. He is an educator, artist, story-teller and author. The focus of Bill’s continuing research is to identify, understand and theorise the transforming potential of Indigenous and Okanagan knowledge and pedagogy through organic language and cultural knowledge revitalization.

Contact: UBC Okanagan, Faculty of Education, billy.cohen@ubc.ca

Other Resources:

Website on Reconciliation: <https://reconciliationcanada.ca/>

National Center for Truth and Reconciliation: TRC report and finding, Resources for Students and Educators: <http://www.trc.ca/>

Report: Reclaiming Power and Place – National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls has Indigenous Peoples and Canada 107 released their final two-volume report on violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people.

<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

Symposium Recording: Indigenous – Newcomer Relationships: An Organizational Dialogue On Unsettling Practices – AMSSA

<https://www.amssa.org/resources/videos/other-video-esources/symposiumindigenous-newcomer-relationships-an-organizational-dialogue-on-unsettlingpractices>

Salmon Nation’s Festival of What Works

Facebook page containing a number of videos from the Festival on various topics including Tourism as a Force for Good, Food Solutions During the Pandemic, Indigenous Knowledge Holders panel and much more.

<https://www.facebook.com/SalmonNation>

Orange Shirt Day (interview with Phyllis Webstad): <https://www.uvic.ca/event/orange-shirt-day/index.php>

Video about cultural safety, humility and competency by Northern

Health: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkxcuhdglwY>

Kairos blanket exercise: <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – Poster

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/product/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-poster>

Indigenous Ally Toolkit

http://reseaumtlnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ally_March.pdf

The Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, through Leilani Shaw, offers an easy to read, three-step toolkit to be a better ally to Indigenous peoples. This document guides you through a journey of learning, self-reflection, and action.

Decolonize First, a Liberating Guide & Workbook

<https://www.nahaneecreative.com/>

This 16-page workbook by Ta7talíya Michelle Nahanee supports the decolonizing journey by providing anti-oppression tools to unpack and transform colonial impacts.

Indigenous Writes

Amazing book on First Nations, Metis and Inuit issues in Canada by Chelsea Vowel. Very well written, informative and engaging. Available on Amazon:

https://www.amazon.ca/Indigenous-Writes-Nations-issues-Canada/dp/1553796802/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3NW3GVZP3X55X&dchild=1&keywords=indigenou+s+writes&qid=1603318797&srefix=indigenous+%2Caps%2C232&sr=8-1

Accessibility Awareness: Physical and Mental

The Presidents Group is a network of businesses focusing on making businesses more accessible for people with disabilities. You can join the network for free to access various training opportunities and resources, including:

- The Business Case webinar
- Legal Requirements of an Inclusive Employer course
- Accommodations in the Workplace course
- Create an Accessible Workplace course
- An instructor-led workshop for those who complete e-learning

To join, please visit: <https://presgroup.wpengine.com/join>

Contact: Trish Kelly, Senior Accessibility Consultant, trish@accessibleemployers.ca

Webinar “Supporting Clients with Disabilities” (AMSSA):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI3Oh9kmcuU>

TEDx Talk: Disability vs the Workplace: https://youtu.be/W3_RjJtd6Eo?t=636

Michael Haines, Employer Consultant/Speaker with a lived experience (based in Kelowna):

<https://michaeldhaines.com/>

Michael’s Intro Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtfGYrqxvVE>

Anti-racism and Anti-oppression

“Call it out- racism, racial discrimination and human rights” offered by the Ontario Humans Right Commission: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/elearning/call-it-out>

Understanding Systemic Racism in Canada:

<https://acs-aec.ca/en/events/systemic-racism-in-canada-concept-and-data/>

Gender Equity

Free online course on Gender Equality and Sexual Diversity:

<https://www.humanrightscareers.com/magazine/free-online-course-on-gender-equality-and-sexual-diversity-sign-up-now/>

Local expert/advocate: South Okanagan Women In Need Society

<https://sowins.com/>

Age-Friendly Awareness

Self-assessment tool for employers:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors/forum/tool.html>

Bullying, Harassment and Abuse

Free online resources (presentation, videos, posters):

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/bullying-harassment/resource-tool-kit>

Privacy/confidentiality

Privacy and Information Sharing: Awareness Training for Contractors and Service Providers (\$35 p.p.)

https://order.openschool.bc.ca/Product/Detail/ps_7540006302

Inclusive Hiring & Retention Practices

South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services: www.soics.ca

Employment Standards

Work Safe BC (Kelowna)

2045 Enterprise Way Suite 110, Kelowna, BC V1Y 6H7

250-717-4301

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

1. Provide resources for newcomers, LBTQ2S+, seniors, women, Indigenous people and people with disabilities to connect with various support services. Please refer to the Welcome Guide developed by the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership for lists of local resources: <http://soics.ca/welcome-guide>
2. Ensure that employees have time to receive supports – coaching, settlement supports, physical and mental health services.
3. Organize inclusive social events.

SAMPLE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Sample Values Statement

What you Say Matters

Here are some ideas of how you can remind your team of the commitment you've made to support inclusion and diversity. Make these statements your own, then embed them in your signature line, employee manual, and internal communication:

"[BUSINESS NAME] is proudly diverse and committed to inclusion. Read about our Equity and Inclusion Charter commitments at [URL]"

"At [BUSINESS NAME] we're proud of our diverse team and committed to supporting inclusion for all our colleagues. That's why we've signed the Equity and Inclusion Charter. Learn more about our inclusion efforts at [URL]"

Fair Treatment Policy Guidelines

BACKGROUND

Many vulnerable groups find it more difficult to seek resolution for workplace concerns, as they may fear retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak up, may believe their concerns will be ignored, or may simply be unsure about organizational procedures. These barriers have the potential to allow problems to worsen, leave colleagues feeling undervalued and unheard, increase employee turnover, and ultimately harm to your organization's reputation through word of mouth regarding problems you may not have been aware of.

This is a complicated problem to solve, but we believe the following will help:

- Carefully examining existing policies and practices through an inclusion lens,
- Adopting fair, accessible, and clearly stated protocols for escalating concerns,
- Clearly, frequently, and consistently communicating that fair treatment policies are in

place to protect all team members.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Every workplace and every set of policies is different, but we recommend a policy that addresses:

- Purpose of the policy
- Who the policy applies to (e.g. every employee regardless of role, gender, immigration status, length of service etc.)
- Definition of unfair treatment, including specific terms such as: harassment, discrimination, abuse, exploitation, and bullying
- A mechanism for bypassing immediate supervisors to raise or escalate unfair treatment complaints. Many organizations adopt an 'open door' policy, which encourages or requires complainants to begin the resolution process with their immediate supervisor and escalate the issue up the management chain as needed. Feedback from certain vulnerable groups tells us that hierarchical and rigid procedures like this can prevent complaints from being raised at all. Instead, a 'no wrong door' approach in which concerns can be raised with human resources or upper management at any stage can help build trust and help important concerns to be brought forward. If a formal escalation policy is in place, consider how the policy might be reworded to add flexibility.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO INCLUDE

- Overview of roles and responsibilities of employees, managers, and human resources with respect to the policy
- Time line for resolution and response from human resources/management
- Recruitment, selection, and promotion criteria
- Discipline and termination procedures and appeal procedure

NEXT STEPS

Enacting policies that build trust and make it easy for colleagues to raise questions and concerns is a great first step, but sharing the policy is equally important. If your organization experiences high seasonal turnover and/ or frequently promotes from within, it is especially important to have a plan to train all leaders in your fair treatment policy and how to uphold it. Anecdotally, we've heard that employment standards and fair treatment problems happen most frequently during busy times when training can't keep pace with hiring and promotions.

To combat this, we recommend:

- Have all new employees sign to signify their understanding of the policy at onboarding;
- Write your policies in plain language to make them accessible for all;
- Mandate an annual or bi-annual (depending on frequency of turnover) review of an employee manual, including fair treatment policy;
- Post the policy on a staff Intranet;
- Print and post the policy in staff public areas;
- Discuss the policy in internal announcements and/or meetings;

- Regularly follow up with team leaders to ask how the policy is being shared within their teams.

Age-friendly Practices

Start with reviewing your current practices. Seniors First BC has simple [self-assessment tool](#) that you could use. It includes a human resources planning checklist, a recruitment checklist, a training and development checklist and a retention checklist.

There are other ways you can make your workspace age-friendly for your clients, besides older staff working there. These include:

- Ground floor accessibility or elevators
- Office door(s) easy to open or assisted
- Door handles rather than door knobs
- Indirect lighting
- Furniture that is easy to get in and out of (firmly padded armchairs rather than plush sofa)
- Non-glare paper (ideally pale blue rather than '90 bright' white)
- Large font (14 Times Roman)
- Bowl of reading glasses on conference table
- Good signage to washrooms and exits
- Pocket amplifier available

For more information please visit: <http://seniorsfirstbc.ca/for-professionals/age-friendly-workplace/>

Workplace Buddy System

What is a buddy system?

It is an onboarding method to orient new employees that involves assigning them an existing employee who guides them through the first few weeks or months on the job. It should include a formal process that outlines the buddies' responsibilities.

Why is it important?

The first few days determine the new employee's perception of the job and the organization. According to a study at Microsoft, new employees involved in the buddy system were 23% more satisfied with their onboarding experience, 73% indicated that this helped them become more productive.

Examples of Buddy Responsibilities

- Give a tour of the office and introduce to team members
- Have lunch together
- Help understand the organization's policies and procedures (e.g. Employee Handbook)
- Provide an overview of the organization's culture, vision and values (e.g. review the organization's Strategic Plan)

Buddy Characteristics:

- knowledgeable professional who can offer advice about work and the workplace
- reliable single point of contact for a new employee's questions
- good communicator who provides relevant information and encourages self-directed learning
- role model who proudly exemplifies company values and leads by example
- motivated, encouraging person who helps engender self-confidence and loyalty
- proficient and experienced worker who is able to devote time to new employees
- culturally sensitive person who may or may not speak the same first language as the new hire, depending on the desired result
- responsible and conscientious professional who's fully aware of the impact of the role in advance
- a peer, not a supervisor

References & Additional Resources:

Employer Playbook by World Education Services: <https://www.wes.org/ca/employer-playbook/national/>

Inclusive Onboarding Tools by TRIEC:

<https://trיעlearning.ca/course/index.php?categoryid=5&categorysort=default>

Workplace Mentorship

Mentoring is a cost-effective approach to help integrate newcomers and build cross-cultural understanding at the workplace. It also helps employers and employees better understand the talents that newcomers bring and challenges they face.

Mentoring helps newcomers:

- develop stronger emotional bonds and sense of belonging
- experience higher job satisfaction
- learn about the organizational culture and what is needed to succeed at the workplace

Here are some tips for employers on establishing a mentorship program:

- Define your goal – what are you trying to achieve? E.g. welcome and integrate new hires, foster a culture of inclusion, provide a leadership path, help develop particular skills.
- Choose your mentors in accordance with your goals and ensure that they clearly understand the goals and are committed to them. A mentor should not be a direct supervisor of a mentee. Ask mentees to help identify the mentors they are comfortable working with.
- Support mentors with time and resources
- Set expectations for the mentors and mentees: format, time commitment, expected outcomes.
- Evaluate performance after three months (e.g. employee satisfaction survey, conversations with mentors and mentees)
- Make adjustments, as needed.

Adapted from “Employer Playbook” by World Education Services:

<https://www.wes.org/ca/employer-playbook/national/>

Health, Safety and Emergency Response Policy Recommendations

Language:

- Use plain, gender neutral language in your policy and procedures
- Make sure to translate all health, safety and emergency response documents into the native languages of your immigrant employees. You need to be absolutely sure that everyone understands it in order for it to work. If you need help with translation, reach out to the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS): www.soics.ca
- Refer vulnerable employees to the community support organizations – there might be resources for specific groups that you may not be aware of. Please refer to the “Welcome Guide” for information: <http://soics.ca/welcome-guide>

Contact Info

- Update employees contact info, including emergency contacts;
- Collect information on the native languages of your employees to help with the translation and interpretation.

Living Conditions & Immediate Needs

Ask your employees about:

- Housing situation – do they have the capacity to self-isolate if needed?
- Support network – is there someone to help them with groceries and other emergency products in case they have to self-isolate?
- Other jobs they have (formal and informal)
- Communication needs- do they have the Internet connection, computer/tablet/smartphone that meet the needs of the whole family?
- Transportation – are they able to get to the places safely?
- Sanitation products – can they afford to buy enough for their family?

Develop an emergency response to these needs – temporary accommodation, transportation support, supplies, etc.

Combat Discrimination

- Revisit your anti-discrimination/fair treatment policy. Consider whether changes need to be made to prepare for possible COVID-19 related discrimination by guests, customers, or staff (e.g. against Asian employees);
- Communicate protections to workers (translated, if possible).

Consider the Needs of Part-time Staff

- Job sharing or other tactics to maximize hours of work within a single workplace; extending sick leave benefits to part-time workers;
- Communication re: benefits.

Diverse Representation Guidelines

Adopt a guideline for marketing and promotion that includes specific approaches to diverse representation. This includes monitoring the number of images used in a publication in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, etc. and ensuring a representation that aligns with current community demographics.

- Ensure equal representation of men and women throughout documents.
- Ensure equal representation of individuals who are visible minorities and those who are not visible minorities/white.
- Ensure representation of diverse ages and abilities.
- Actively seek out depictions of individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Actively seek out depictions of families beyond the traditional “nuclear” definition (a family unit that includes a man and a woman who are married with their biological children living in the same residence).
- Avoid consistently depicting men in leadership roles and/or as the active player while women are the passive player in the image.

More resources:

https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/import/embedded/anchors/files/diversity_primer_chapter_12.pdf

<https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/other/diversity-guidelines>

Complaint Procedure

It is important for employers to provide a clear procedure for employees facing discrimination or other unfair treatment at work. The process should be confidential and flexible enough to bypass an immediate supervisor if the supervisor is the perpetrator or has not adequately addressed the issue. A ‘no wrong door’ approach is suggested where employees may raise fair treatment issues with human resources, an ombudsman, or management. If an ‘open door’ or similar policy is already in place, consider how it may be amended to add flexibility for employees to bypass an immediate supervisor in addition to ensuring no retaliation takes place.

Sample Confidentiality Statement & Agreement

In the normal course of business, any person connected with an organization has the potential to come into contact with confidential information. In some cases, exposure to such information is coincidental or incidental; in others it is an integral part of the job function. This information may be personal, financial, or other. It may be in electronic form or in hard copy, or even oral in nature.

Examples of such confidential information include, but are not limited to: employee records, financial records and reports, client records, and information found accidentally. It also includes information gained through discussion in committees, from employees, from clients, from external agencies, the media, and so on.

It is the policy of NAME OF EMPLOYER to maintain confidential information in strict confidence, both while at the workplace and when off duty. Therefore, all staff, management, Board and volunteers who have access to confidential information are prohibited from disclosing such information in any unauthorized manner. They must use this information only in ways that are consistent with this commitment to confidentiality. It is also incumbent on all who are exposed to confidential information to see that they use only as much of such information as is needed to their job or perform their function.

It is policy of NAME OF EMPLOYER to maintain all aspects of confidentiality. Employees, management, Board and volunteers are accountable for being aware of the legal implications in respecting the rights of others, especially the right to privacy. The following guidelines are strictly adhered to:

- Confidentiality of client information must never be violated.
- Client personal or family related information may not be removed from the workplace setting.

It is also the responsibility of any who have contact with confidential information to preserve such records against loss, destruction, tampering and inappropriate access and use, including inappropriate disposal. Any breach of confidentiality represents a failure to meet the legal, professional and ethical standards expected, and constitutes a violation of this policy. A breach need not take the form of a deliberate attempt to violate confidentially, but includes any unnecessary or unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information-due to carelessness, curiosity or concern, or for personal gain or malice, including but not restricted to informal discussion. Such breaches may result in discipline and/or civil or criminal penalties.

Confidentiality Agreement

I understand the above statement of confidentially and agree to fulfill its expectations in my treatment of confidential information. Further, I understand that a violation or breach of this commitment to confidentially will be investigated and responded to in a manner to prevent a reoccurrence. I understand that I could also be subjected to disciplinary action that may include legal action.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

Bullying and Harassment Sample Policy

NAME OF EMPLOYER
Workplace bullying and harassment policy statement

This is an example of a policy statement. It can be adapted to meet the needs of individual workplaces. Additional resources and an explanation of legal duties can be found at www.worksafebc.com/bullying/.

1. Workplace conduct

Bullying and harassment is not acceptable or tolerated in this workplace. All workers will be treated in a fair and respectful manner.

2. Bullying and harassment

- a) includes any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but
- b) excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

Examples of conduct or comments that might constitute bullying and harassment include verbal aggression or insults, calling someone derogatory names, harmful hazing or initiation practices, vandalizing personal belongings, and spreading malicious rumours.

3. Workers must:

- not engage in the bullying and harassment of other workers
- report if bullying and harassment is observed or experienced
- apply and comply with the employer's policies and procedures on bullying and harassment

4. Application

This policy statement applies to all workers, including permanent, temporary, casual, contract, and student workers. It applies to interpersonal and electronic communications, such as email.

5. Annual review

This policy statement will be reviewed every year. All workers will be provided with a copy.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Date created | Annual review date |
|---------------------|---------------------------|

Inclusive Washrooms

Equal access to washrooms without discrimination, harassment, or abuse is protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act, including the right to access restrooms that best suit one's gender identity and/or gender expression. Inclusive washrooms are safe spaces that anyone can use. They decrease anxiety and fear and there is less chance of harassment or assault, which transgender individuals often experience. Businesses should provide employees with a guideline document that clearly indicates the rights of individuals accessing washrooms; this information should be provided in orientation training for new employees. Other requirements for inclusive washrooms include equipping them with change tables and hygiene disposal units.

INCLUSIVE WASHROOM GUIDELINES

Note: This template can serve as a quick tool for front line employees if there are questions or concerns about gender-inclusive washrooms. It can be printed and posted at information desks or other appropriate locations that are easily accessible when providing customer service support.

[COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing safe and inclusive access to washrooms facilities for all employees and visitors. All persons are permitted to use the restroom facilities that best correspond to their gender, gender identity, and/or gender expression without recourse or discrimination.

This property has multi- and single-occupant facilities with lockable stalls that provide privacy for all users. Any individual has the right to use the facility of their choice, free from harassment of any kind. Those who require greater privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender inclusive washrooms for any reason may use the single-stall washroom located at [INSERT LOCATION].

INCLUSIVE WASHROOM SAMPLE POLICY

Note: An Inclusive Washroom Policy should outline the right for individuals to use the washroom that best corresponds with their gender identity and/or gender expression. Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for employees handling complaints regarding the washroom policy as well as other policies and procedures for providing support to transgender employees and visitors.

1. Policy Statement:

[COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere and supportive space for customers, visitors, volunteers, and employees.

2. Purpose:

To support gender diverse employees, guests, and residents, parents with young children, people with disabilities who need assistance from an attendant of a different gender, and people who require added privacy for a variety of reasons. This policy will allow individuals to have a safe and accessible facility and the option of using a washroom that best corresponds with their gender identity or gender expression. Equal access to washrooms and facilities without discrimination, harassment, or abuse is protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act (Bill C-16). Everyone needs a

washroom and providing safe and accessible washrooms are important. Gender inclusive washrooms are safer spaces that anyone, regardless of gender identity or gender expression, can use.

3. Background:

Equal access to washrooms and facilities without discrimination, harassment, or abuse is protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act (Bill C-16). Everyone needs a washroom and providing safe and accessible washrooms are important. Gender inclusive washrooms are safer spaces that anyone, regardless of gender identity or gender expression, can use.

4. Definitions:

Transgender and/or Gender-Diverse – umbrella terms to refer to individuals whose gender identity does not match with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Employee – refers to any individual hired by [COMPANY NAME].

Visitor – refers to customers, clients, or any individual otherwise accessing [COMPANY NAME]'s services.

5. Applications:

- Individuals are permitted to use the washroom facilities that best correspond with their gender identity or gender expression.
- Single-stall washrooms are available for anyone to use and are clearly marked with non-gendered signage.
- No individual shall be forced by an employee or visitors to use the single-stall washroom.
- It is the responsibility of individuals requiring greater privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender inclusive washrooms for any reason to instead use a single-stall washroom.
- Employees shall indicate where all washrooms are located regardless of perceived gender identity or gender expression of the individual requesting access.

Breastfeeding Sample Policy

Note: A Breastfeeding Policy should outline the right to breastfeed in public, at work, and when accessing services. Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for providing support to breastfeeding employees.

TITLE:

POLICY NUMBER:

EFFECTIVE DATE:

1. Policy Statement:

[COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere and space for breastfeeding customers, visitors, volunteers, and employee.

2. Purpose:

To provide the conditions necessary to support and facilitate breastfeeding customers and employees.

3. Background:

The Alberta Human Rights Act provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in the province. The Act makes it against the law to discriminate against or harass anyone on the basis of gender, which includes pregnancy and breastfeeding. This applies to employment, goods, services, accommodations, or facilities that are customarily available to the public. It is therefore prohibited to discriminate or harass people who are breastfeeding in educational institutions, public places like malls and parks, public transit, stores, restaurants, and when accessing health or recreational facilities.

4. Definitions:

Breastfeeding – includes nursing directly from the breast as well as pumping or expressing milk.

Employee – refers to any individual hired by [COMPANY NAME].

Visitor – refers to customers, clients, or any individual otherwise accessing [COMPANY NAME]'s services.

5. Applications:

Employees

[COMPANY NAME] supports employees who are breastfeeding or expressing breast milk.

The employer shall work with employees who are breastfeeding to determine mutually acceptable conditions (e.g. time, space) that support breastfeeding practices and are

compatible with other company policies wherever possible.

Public

[COMPANY NAME] supports breastfeeding by members of the public when they are visitors. Employees, upon request, shall aid visitors who wish to breastfeed by providing a comfortable location whenever possible and where space is available.

Employee will not ask a breastfeeding visitor to leave the premises, cover up, use the restroom, or move to a more discreet area.

If another visitor expresses concern about another visitor breastfeeding in public:

- Explain that you are a family friendly business, and it is your policy to support breastfeeding.
- Explain that public breastfeeding is a protected right under the Alberta Human Rights Act.
- Offer to move the concerned visitor to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding visitor.

BREASTFEEDING SAMPLE PROCEDURE

Note: Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for providing support to breastfeeding employees.

TITLE:

POLICY NUMBER:

EFFECTIVE DATE:

1. Breastfeeding Procedure for Employees:

- [COMPANY NAME] will advise and educate all employees regarding the Breastfeeding Policy, compliance, and supportive programming matters. A copy of [COMPANY NAME]'s
- Breastfeeding Policy will be provided to all employees and managers.
- Prior to parental leave, [COMPANY NAME] will provide employees with an educational information handout about breastfeeding and returning to work.
- After employees return to work from parental leave, [COMPANY NAME] will support employees for the complete duration of breastfeeding.
- [COMPANY NAME] will provide information to all employees about supporting a colleague who is breastfeeding.
- [COMPANY NAME] will make available a clean, comfortable, and private space (lactation room) in the workplace for employees who wish to use such a facility to breastfeed or express breast milk. This room will not be a restroom. It shall have accessible electrical outlets for an electric breast pump and a sink close by.
- Breastfeeding employees should not be disturbed with work issues when using the lactation room.

- At least one month prior to return to work, [COMPANY NAME] employees planning to continue breastfeeding will inform their manager to inform of their intentions.
- Manager/supervisors are required to respond to requests from employees in a timely manner and assess the worksite and the employee's job responsibilities to identify how the request will be accommodated.
- [COMPANY NAME] will offer support and information by:
 - Establishing a work schedule and assignment that facilitates an employee's breastfeeding needs.
 - Set up, as needed, a system/schedule for booking a lactation room (if multiple employees require access to the room).
 - Refer employees to community resources as needed.

2. Breastfeeding Procedure for Public:

- [COMPANY NAME] will advise and educate all employees about the Breastfeeding Policy, compliance, and importance of their support in creating a friendly and welcoming environment for visitors.
- [COMPANY NAME] will ensure that new employees learn about the Breastfeeding Policy during orientation.
- [COMPANY NAME] will ensure that all employees are aware that breastfeeding is a protected human right and that people in Canada have a right to breastfeed everywhere.
- [COMPANY NAME]'s Breastfeeding Policy will be provided to visitors upon request.
- [COMPANY NAME] will provide information to all employees about how to provide support to a visitor who is breastfeeding.
- [COMPANY NAME] will make available a clean, comfortable, and private space on the premises where visitors can breastfeed if they so choose. This room will not be a restroom.

Inclusive Forms

Audit all forms, applications, and documents to ensure that plain language is used, language is gender neutral and confirm that information collected is essential for your organization to successfully serve clients and employees. Forms should use an easy to read font such as Verdana, a font size of at least 12, at minimum 1.5-paragraph spacing, and high contrast between font and background colour.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Please refer to the Employer Toolkit developed by the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership (SOSLIP): <http://www.soics.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Employer-Toolkit-final-draft.pdf>

INCLUSIVE SPACES

Quiet Room

Prayer and/or meditation are an important part of most religious and spiritual traditions. Many faith groups consider prayer obligatory and, for some, it is performed at specific times during the day and/or week. Accommodating employees and clients/visitors should be made up to the point of undue hardship. As such, employers should accommodate employees requesting a short prayer break; a dedicated room for prayer and/or meditation is recommended. This ensures that the room is available when needed and can be used by people of diverse beliefs. A space may not need to be dedicated but rather made available as requested by employees.

Accessibility Commitment

Regular checks must be conducted of all accessibility features – both physical and social. Physical accessibility features include but are not limited to: automatic doors, access buttons, elevators, seating in waiting areas, accessible washrooms, ample lighting, website aids, and entry points clear of debris such as snow and ice. Here is a sample checklist:

<http://obiaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Accessible-Buildings-Checklist-OBIAA.pdf>

Social accessibility is about your company's values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour demonstrated through such things as your Certificate and Declaration, posting appropriate signs – all gender washrooms, access for service dogs, rainbow flags, breastfeeding space, pronouns and land acknowledgement in your correspondence, etc.

OTHER RESOURCES

Inclusive Website Tips

Based on the webinar: "Is your website trauma informed?" by Melissa Egg:
melissa@melissaegg.com

1. Make your mission/vision obvious in 5 seconds (what do you do?)
2. Reduce the cognitive load (reduce question marks – Is it clickable? Where can I find...?)
– simplify, have less choices at a glance (progressive disclosure of information), use white space, keep navigation, search box and other items consistent
3. If your website is for victims of abuse/trauma make sure there is a safety alert and “exit” button, ensure “get help” button is prominent, adjust “contact us” for safety (e.g. contact us e-mail form)
4. Upgrade images – try not to use stock photos
5. Increase readability (FREE Hemingway editor: <https://hemingwayapp.com/> , grade 9 or lower, shorten sentences, avoid excessive capital letters, text should not run across the whole screen, put in columns – no more than 600 pixels wide)
6. Fix broken links and errors:
 - broken link checker: <https://validator.w3.org/checklink>
 - spell checker for websites: <http://tools.seochat.com/tools/free-spell-checker/> or <http://respelt.com> (low cost)
7. Be more inclusive (images, translated text, statement, accessibility)
8. Make your website mobile friendly

Gender Related Resources

Gender Neutral Writing Resources

https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tpv2guides/guides/wrtps/index-fra.html?lang=fra&lettr=indx_catlog_g&page=9tZXuAe4oZYs.html

https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tpv2guides/guides/favart/index-fra.html?lang=fra&lettr=indx_titls&page=9mtUeINzyZ1E.html

http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/ress_didactiques/Writing-Gender-Neutral-Teaching-Guides.pdf

Gender Inclusive Survey Questions

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0178043#abstract0>

<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-apers/2018/adrm/rsm2018-05.pdf>

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/ask-survey-questions-sexual-orientation-gender-identity/>

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/resources/blog/how-to-write-survey-gender-questions/>

Ability Related Resources

Language and Tips:

<https://accessibleemployers.ca/members/presidentsgroup/activity/203/>

Mental Health

An Accommodation Guide for Mental Health in the

Workplace <https://accessibleemployers.ca/members/presidentsgroup/activity/687/>

Mental Health Commission's Mental Health Toolkit for

employers <https://accessibleemployers.ca/members/presidentsgroup/activity/624/>

Accessibility Self-assessment

Accessibility self-assessment and checklist:

<https://accessibleemployers.ca/members/presidentsgroup/activity/206/>

Accessibility self-assessment tool: <https://disabilityinclusion.ca/>

Local Contacts & Funding Supports:

Opportunities Fund – supports for employers (wage subsidy, coaching, etc.)

Southern Interior contact: Terry Watson, 250-572-2664, terry.watson@opendoorgroup.org

Help with finding and vetting candidates – BC Partners in Workforce Innovation:

<https://bcpartnerswin.org/>

Local partner: Neil Squire Society, Mindy Rollins, 250-492-5289, mindyr@neilsquire.ca

Michael Haines, Employer Consultant/Speaker with a lived experience (based in Kelowna):

<https://michaeldhaines.com/>

Michael's Intro Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtfGYrqxvVE>

Funding and support for the new hire - Ready Willing and Able: <http://readywillingable.ca>

Funding for accommodations and wage subsidy – WorkBC:

<https://www.workbc.ca/WorkBC-Centres/Thompson-Okanagan/Penticton.aspx>

174-1848 Main St, Penticton, BC V2A 5H3

+1 833-313-0547

Enabling Accessibility Fund:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/enabling-accessibility-fund.html>

Workplace Accessibility Grant – Small Business BC:
<https://smallbusinessbc.ca/workplace-accessibility-grant/>

Tips for Using Plain Language

Plain language is communication that is simple and easy to understand. It is not a ‘dumbing down’ of language, but rather a clarification of it. The principles of plain language follow guidance by H.W. Fowler in *The King’s English* (1906):

“Prefer the familiar word to the far-fetched.
Prefer the concrete word to the abstract.
Prefer the single word to the circumlocution.
Prefer the short word to the long.
Prefer the Saxon word to the Romance”

Plain language makes your communication easier to understand for:

- Busy people looking to find and understand information fast
- Literacy learners (42% of Canadians have low literacy skills, according to the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network.)
- English language learners

It is always a good idea to communicate as plainly and as clearly as possible. This is especially important when communicating with your whole team and when sending messages about complex topics such as benefits or policies. When designing plain language materials, aim to:

- Avoid the use of jargon or technical terms.
- When you have the choice of words, use the one that is most commonly understood.
- Provide easy to understand definitions of key words if necessary.
- Avoid complex sentence structure. Use short sentences with as few clauses as possible.

Use the active tense instead of passive (ex. “You will be paid by...” rather than “Payment will be made by...”)

Some Tools:

Microsoft Word Readability Tool- Aim for a reading level of 6-8:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/get-your-document-s-readability-and-level-statistics-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2?ui=en-us&rs=en-us&ad=us>

Canadian Literacy & Learning Network Clear Language Tools & Resources:

www.literacy.ca/research-and-resources/clear-writing-tools

US Government Plain Language Guidelines and Resources:

www.plainlanguage.gov/training

Age Friendly Resources

A self-assessment tool to find out if your workplace is attractive to older workers:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors/forum/tool.html>

There are ways you can make your workspace age-friendly for your clients, besides older staff working there. These include:

- ground floor accessibility or elevators
- office door(s) easy to open or assisted
- door handles rather than door knobs
- indirect lighting
- furniture that is easy to get in and out of (firmly padded armchairs rather than plush sofa)
- non-glare paper (ideally pale blue rather than '90 bright' white)
- large font (14 Times Roman)
- bowl of reading glasses on conference table
- good signage to washrooms and exits
- pocket amplifier available

Source: Seniors First BC