

# Diversity & Inclusion Framework

Recognizing diversity and inclusion in our organization and our communities



HALIFAX

# Table of Contents

**Executive Summary ..... 3**

**Framework Goals ..... 9**

**Elements of Success ..... 10**

**Roles and Responsibilities..... 10**

**Implementation Plan ..... 15**

**Glossary of Terms ..... 24**

# Executive Summary

The Halifax Regional Municipality values diversity and inclusion in all that we do, think and pursue. Diversity is more than race, ability, sexual orientation, language, gender or any other descriptive category. Diversity means understanding and utilizing different views, ideas, life experiences, skills and knowledge. By recognizing diversity as a core value, we are laying the foundation for a municipality that aspires to accurately represent the communities we serve.

We must value diversity by actively identifying and addressing systemic barriers in our business practices, services, policies, procedures, and programs, so that we can capitalize on the strengths and talents of our community.

The municipality's Diversity and Inclusion Framework will help us in our continued efforts to build a diverse and inclusive workforce and provide programs and services to our residents by using diversity and inclusion lenses. The Framework identifies key priorities to help advance these efforts, both in our organization and communities, now and into the future.

The Framework also acknowledges that embracing diversity and inclusion helps strengthen the economy, and help us attract and retain talent that will become the cornerstone of a strong community and an anchor of inclusive public service.

The Diversity and Inclusion Framework will drive diversity and inclusion at an operational business strategy level by integrating the Framework's goals into programs and services. The Framework, through an implementation plan, will support business units in recognizing diversity and inclusion in all policies, practices, programs and services, embedding it into the municipality's everyday work. Finally, the Diversity and Inclusion Framework will help the municipality address and remove systemic barriers for employees and residents, to facilitate the full participation of everyone.

In doing so we are upholding the values of respect, collaboration, diversity and inclusion, integrity, accountability, sustainability and evidence-based decision making as stated in [Halifax Regional Council's Strategic Plan 2017-21](#).

*So powerful is the light of unity that it  
can illuminate the whole earth.*

*Baha'i Writings*

## About the Diversity & Inclusion Emblem

More than just an icon or logo, this emblem is a symbol of our renewed commitment to the values of diversity and inclusion on behalf of our employees and our citizens. Our commitment to those values must be demonstrated in our business practices and policies so they are reflected in the programs and services we deliver.

Like our people, the new symbol is multi-dimensional yet cohesive, vibrant and iconic.

Two Xs overlap to bring disparate shapes and colours together in a common goal, to reflect the intent of valuing diversity and inclusion at the Halifax Regional Municipality.



## Background

The *Diversity & Inclusion Framework* is founded in the municipality's strategic values embedded within [Halifax Regional Council's Strategic Plan 2017-21](#), HRM's Plan on a Page 2017-21 and the Making a Difference booklet, which reflect and reaffirm our commitment to delivering high-quality public service to benefit our citizens.

On behalf of residents, it is imperative that we address and remove systemic barriers to accessing diverse and inclusive programming and services. Systemic barriers also prevent us from supporting existing employees and attracting future talent. Doing so supports having the most talented workforce possible, and by extension, a municipality that demonstrates and benefits from the values of diversity and inclusion.

The municipality is governed by legislation and policies that support diversity and inclusion including, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988), *Canadian Employment Equity Act* (1995), *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act* (1989), and the municipality's *Employment Equity Policy* (1997).

***We may have all come on different ships, but  
we're in the same boat now.***

*Martin Luther King Jr*

## The Road to Diversity and Inclusion

Support for diversity and inclusion is not new to the municipality. Previous internal initiatives have been designed to recognize, increase, and celebrate diversity. Examples include education in cultural diversity, human rights, workplace rights, disability awareness and respect in the workplace as well as a designated Workplace Diversity Week in October. Below are highlights of the municipality's work in the area of diversity and inclusion:

---

### Immigrant Services

In 2005, the municipality launched its Immigration Action Plan and developed a *Newcomers' Guide* in support of the plan that is updated annually. Also, each year the municipality supports the Annual Welcome BBQ, Mayors Welcome Party for International Students, Get to know your municipality event and other activities that support the creation of a welcoming community for newcomers. The efforts to integrate immigrant services have continued through the federally funded Local Immigration Partnership project (LIP).

---

### Designated Recruitment

Some business units, including Halifax Regional Police and Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency, engage in designated recruitment activities, which are designed to increase recruitment from underrepresented populations, including women, Urban Indigenous peoples, African Nova Scotians, and immigrants.

---

### Accessibility

An accessible municipality goes beyond built space and includes evaluating all municipal programs, policies and services. We recognize that there are key barriers to accessibility including attitudinal, systemic, physical, technological and access to information. The municipality is committed to addressing these barriers and has already begun by implementing a number of free programs to increase access to recreation services.

In April 2017, the Province of Nova Scotia passed Bill 59 the *Accessibility Act*. The municipality, through community engagement and in partnership with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, will identify municipal requirements as outlined in the Act and support business units to address any requirements.

In 2018, the Office of Diversity & Inclusion started developing an Accessibility Framework and completed a number of community consultation sessions that will inform the final version.

---

### Community Engagement

Through various community engagement methods (consultations and community circles), the municipality is proactively building trust and establishing relationships with various communities. Examples include engaging African Nova Scotians, Acadian/Francophone community, Urban Indigenous peoples, newcomers, international students, people with disabilities, and others.

---

---

French Language  
Services

In August 2015, the municipality signed the [Comeau Agreement](#), which led to the creation of “The Partnership” — a committee of community partners who work together to enhance Acadian/Francophone services and engagement. The municipality produces PSAs in French, consults and works with the Acadian/Francophone community, and supports the French language proficiency of staff by offering language training through a funding partnership with the Province. Annually, the municipality also identifies a regional council member as the Acadian/Francophone community Liaison. Most recently, the Office of the Municipal Clerk now ensures that French Language materials are available to support municipal elections and appointments to boards and commissions.

---

African Nova Scotian  
Affairs Integration Office  
(ANSAIO)

In 2012 the Halifax Regional Municipality established the African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) in response to [the Africville Settlement](#). The office’s mandate is to provide leadership, strategic direction, policy advice and expertise to the Halifax Regional Municipality to strengthen the delivery of municipal services to the residents of African descent and African Nova Scotian communities within Halifax.

---

Mi’kmaw and Urban  
Indigenous  
Communities

In October 2015, Halifax Regional Council passed a [Statement of Reconciliation](#) to support the municipality’s work with Mi’kmaq and Urban Indigenous communities. The municipality is committed to the recommendations outlined in the report put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and to working with the community to address issues that impact access to municipal services. In 2017, the municipality committed to establishing a Special Advisory Committee on the commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the recognition and commemoration of Indigenous history. A permanent Indigenous Community Engagement Advisor position was established to work with the municipality and the community to advance community engagement and cultural education. The municipality is also continuing its work in supporting nation-to-nation relationships between Indigenous Chiefs and Halifax Regional Council.

---

Diversity and Inclusion  
Officers/Specialists

A variety of business units including Halifax Regional Police, Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency and Parks & Recreation have created positions to focus on issues related to diversity and inclusion. A committee, including the specialists, led by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion meets on a regular basis to share best practices and identify common goals and objectives.

---

## The Office of Diversity & Inclusion

The Office of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I Office) was established in 2015 to demonstrate the municipality's renewed commitment to diversity and inclusion. The D&I Office includes a Managing Director, Advisors (Accessibility, Corporate D&I training/Immigrant Services, Indigenous Services, French Language Services and Senior Advisor African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO). Through external funding the office also includes the Coordinator for the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP).

The role of the Office is to provide advice and support both internally and externally in relation to diversity and inclusion as it impacts municipal services and programs.

The Office also works to build new as well as to strengthen existing relationships with a wide variety of diverse communities within the municipality.

*Diversity is being invited to the party.*

*Inclusion is being asked to dance.*

*Verna Myers*

**Vision**



An inclusive organization as part of a community that values and reflects the diverse people we serve.

**Mission**



To remove barriers that prevent the full participation of our residents, businesses, visitors and municipal employees in municipal programs and services.

**Diversity**

Utilizing different views and ideas.

**Inclusion**

Eliminating barriers, supporting participation and valuing contribution

**Equity**

Giving everyone what they need to succeed





# Framework Goals

1	Inclusive public service	To ensure inclusive and equitable access to and benefit of, municipal services, programs and facilities.
2	Safe, respectful and inclusive work environment	To have a diverse and inclusive workplace free of harassment, discrimination and systemic barriers.
3	Equitable employment	To attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipality.
4	Meaningful partnerships	To develop positive and respectful internal and external partnerships that contribute to inclusive decision making.
5	Accessible information and communication	To communicate both internally and externally, in a way that demonstrates, exemplifies and embodies our municipal diversity and inclusion values.



# Elements of Success

<p><b>Diversity and inclusion goals</b></p> <p>Measurable and achievable strategic outcomes to be implemented at all levels of the organization.</p>	<p><b>Policies and procedures</b></p> <p>Established policies and procedures that reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion, that are free of barriers.</p>
<p><b>Leadership and accountability</b></p> <p>Support from Council, the CAO, Directors, Management, Human Resources and employees.</p> <p>A lead by example approach that shows commitment to diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Defined responsibility to adhere to the Framework and its goals.</p>	<p><b>Resources and professional development</b></p> <p>Education (in a variety of formats and methods), coaching and mentorship for staff at all levels of the organization.</p> <p>Materials, guidelines, and a diversity and inclusion lens to support the implementation of the Diversity &amp; Inclusion Framework.</p>

# Roles and Responsibilities

Diversity and inclusion is everyone’s responsibility. All business units, divisions and individuals shall embrace and reflect this core value. A diverse municipality needs to be an inclusive place where everyone has a role to play, everyone belongs and everyone is included.

Along with our collective responsibilities, different levels within the organization play various roles in supporting, implementing, and evaluating the Diversity & Inclusion Framework. This ranges from, ensuring that diversity and inclusion deliverables are part of annual individual and business unit performance plans, to reporting on diversity initiatives, as well as implementing programs and services that meet the needs of all residents. The Office of Diversity & Inclusion supports the work of all business units and coordinates the annual reporting on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

# Roles

LEVEL	ROLE
Halifax Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold the CAO accountable for meeting diversity and inclusion objectives/deliverables.</li> <li>• Receive regular updates on the municipality’s progress towards its goals.</li> </ul>
All Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uphold all human rights as enshrined under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and human rights legislation.</li> <li>• Make diversity and inclusion part of their everyday workplace practices.</li> <li>• Support their business unit-specific diversity and inclusion goals.</li> </ul>
CAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead accountability for diversity and inclusion at the municipal level.</li> <li>• Receive and review reports on diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Ensure that Directors develop diversity and inclusion deliverables.</li> </ul>
Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the municipality’s Diversity &amp; Inclusion Framework in their business units.</li> <li>• Establish and implement their business units’ diversity and inclusion goals.</li> <li>• Provide an annual update on diversity and inclusion goals to the Office of Diversity &amp; Inclusion.</li> <li>• Support a diverse and inclusive workplace by addressing issues of harassment and discrimination in a fair, respectful and prompt manner.</li> <li>• Ensure Managers and Supervisors are aware of responsibilities under their divisional strategic plans as well as their obligation to support and promote overarching diversity and inclusion goals.</li> <li>• Ensure that Managers and Supervisors have diversity and inclusion deliverables integrated within all aspects of business unit’s process plans.</li> </ul>
Managers / Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support their business units’ specific diversity and inclusion goals.</li> <li>• Ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities under their business units’ strategic plan.</li> <li>• Make diversity and inclusion part of their everyday business operations.</li> <li>• Address issues regarding diversity and inclusion in a fair, respectful and prompt manner.</li> <li>• Work with employees in meeting diversity and inclusion goals through variety of ways including annual individual plans.</li> </ul>
Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on matters related to the diversity and inclusion vision, mission and goals.</li> <li>• Review and monitor existing and proposed policies and practices to ensure full participation of diverse persons in the workplace.</li> <li>• Communicate diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives both internally and externally.</li> </ul>



LEVEL	ROLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the implementation and reporting of the Diversity &amp; Inclusion Framework.</li> <li>• Advise on the facilitation of the Diversity &amp; Inclusion Framework.</li> <li>• Promote diversity and inclusion through the development of a Leadership Working Group Communications Plan.</li> <li>• Advocate for diversity and inclusion within their business units</li> </ul>
Office of Diversity & Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop diversity and inclusion lenses/guidelines to support business units with respect to diversity and inclusion initiatives.</li> <li>• Support business units in the implementation and reporting of the Diversity &amp; Inclusion Framework.</li> <li>• In cooperation with Corporate Communications, develop and implement a communications plan to increase employee awareness, roles and responsibilities with respect to diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Promote diversity and inclusion across the organization through a Framework communications plan.</li> <li>• Implement organizational diversity and inclusion training and education.</li> <li>• Build internal and external relationships to support the municipality's diversity and inclusion goals.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Human Resources to develop and promote strategies to build a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve.</li> </ul>



# Corporate Responsibilities

## Implementing the Diversity & Inclusion Framework

- Revisit and evolve the Framework to reflect business-unit experience
- Deliver services in ways that demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Recognize diversity as a strategic value of the municipality
- Champion and recognize diversity and inclusion efforts across the organization
- Promote and invest in diversity and inclusion
- Create and maintain an inclusive working environment that supports all employees
- Demonstrate behaviours consistent with the municipality's diversity and inclusion goals, and policies, procedures and practices related to diversity and inclusion
- Provide training and educational opportunities to build on skills related to diversity and inclusion
- Uphold diversity and inclusion as a core value
- Demonstrate zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment
- Lead by example
- Ensure work environments, public spaces and facilities are free from discrimination and harassment
- Embrace other cultures, world views, ideas and different perspectives

# Employee Responsibilities

## Implementing the Diversity & Inclusion Framework

- Deliver services in ways that demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Participate in training and educational opportunities to build on skills related to diversity and inclusion
- Champion diversity and inclusion efforts across the organization
- Promote diversity and inclusion
- Create and maintain an inclusive working environment that supports all employees
- Identify personal goals related to diversity and inclusion
- Demonstrate behaviours consistent with the municipality's diversity and inclusion goals, and policies, procedures and practices related to diversity and inclusion
- Understand diversity and inclusion as municipal core values
- Speak up and speak out against discrimination and harassment
- Lead by example
- Ensure our work environment, public spaces and facilities are free from discrimination and harassment
- Respect coworkers and residents

# Implementation Plan

The *Diversity & Inclusion Framework* outlines what diversity and inclusion means to the Halifax Regional Municipality. The Framework comes to life through implementation and evaluation plans created by individual business units and divisions.

The Framework is a roadmap designed to assist business units in actioning diversity and inclusion initiatives. It contains goals and best practices that can be incorporated into your business planning and customized to meet your business unit needs.

The Framework is built around five key goals that can guide your business unit's implementation plans:

- 1) Inclusive public service
- 2) Safe, respectful and inclusive work environment
- 3) Equitable employment
- 4) Meaningful partnerships
- 5) Accessible information and communication

Furthermore, the Framework will be supported by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion and guided by the Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Working Group.

The **Office of Diversity & Inclusion** will lead the rollout of the Framework by supporting business units in the development and implementation of diversity and inclusion action plans. The Office will also work with business units to advise on best practices and support community engagement initiatives, as well as analyze roadblocks to success and help to develop strategies to overcome these challenges.

The **Leadership Working Group** will advise the Halifax Regional Municipality on the impact of municipal policies, programs and services on diverse employees and communities through the monitoring and implementation of the *Diversity & Inclusion Framework*.

The Office of Diversity & Inclusion in collaboration with the Leadership Working Group will revisit and evolve the Framework to reflect business-unit experience.

## How to use the Framework

- The Framework is designed to provide a list of options, around five key goals, which your business unit can use to develop its diversity and inclusion action plan.
- The Framework functions as a guideline and does not preclude business units from initiating specific diversity and inclusion ideas.
- The Framework provides tools to communicate ways that diversity and inclusion can create an environment that promotes excellence in your business units and the municipality at large.
- The Framework supports business unit's efforts to align its diversity and inclusion goals with the municipality's corporate diversity and inclusion goals.
- Following the guidelines in the framework can help your business unit demonstrate that diversity and inclusion is an important driver of excellence.
- Use the framework as a guide to establish an evaluation plan to measure the benefits and value of investing in diversity and inclusion.
- The best practices listed are actions that can be included within a business unit's action plan.





# Priority 1 – Inclusive Public Service

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES
<p>1.1 Business units have diversity and inclusion plans embedded within their goals and objectives</p>	<p>1 Business units include diversity and inclusion objectives into their annual business planning.</p> <hr/> <p>2 Business units provide annual progress reports on their diversity and inclusion action plans</p>	<p>Number of business units' strategic plans that follow the D&amp;I organizational goals.</p>
<p>1.2 Diversity and inclusion lens tools/strategies support Business Units in developing diversity and inclusion goals</p>	<p>3 Business units use diversity and inclusion frameworks, strategies, lens tools and other resources for serving diverse communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility framework and lens tool</li> <li>• Immigration strategy and lens tool</li> <li>• Global diversity and inclusion lens tool</li> <li>• Urban Indigenous framework and lens tool</li> <li>• In Nova Scotia, two community-specific frameworks include African Nova Scotian framework and lens tool, and Acadian/Francophone framework and lens tool</li> </ul>	<p>Number of progress reports on implementation and evaluation of diversity and inclusion action plans.</p> <p>Number of lens tools developed.</p> <p>Annual report presented to Council and senior leadership.</p>

# Priority 2 – Safe, respectful and inclusive work environment

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES	
2.1	Strengthen organizational and business-unit policies and practices to ensure a workplace that is supportive of diversity and inclusion and free of harassment, discrimination and systemic barriers	4 Business units review policies and practices to ensure that diversity and inclusion are supported and that systemic barriers are addressed and actions are taken to remove them.	Number of reports submitted by business units on their policy reviews.
	5 Business units train and support their staff in the implementation of policies, procedures and practices with respect to diversity, inclusion, and the elimination of systemic barriers.	Number of senior staff trained in the implementation of the municipality's Employment Equity Policy and supporting action plan. Distribution, use and evaluation of resources.	
2.2	Embed diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the of the organization	6 Staff at all levels of the organization participate in diversity & inclusion training.	Increased participation in corporate diversity & inclusion training (benchmark 2016 number).
	7 Business units develop methods to demonstrate and communicate their commitment to diversity and inclusion, For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch &amp; Learns</li> <li>• Standard item on team agendas</li> <li>• Included in newsletters</li> </ul>	Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Working Group established, Terms of Reference created, regular meetings held.	
2.3	Create and host a collaborative community of practice for diversity and inclusion partners	8 Internal affinity groups are created. (e.g. the Racially Visible Employee Caucus and the African Nova Scotian and Racialized Women's Group.	Continue supporting existing internal affinity groups.
	9 Business units support staff engagement and participation in the affinity groups.	Increased number of affinity groups established to support staff within the	

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES
	10 Internal Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Working Group (led by CAO or Senior Director).	municipality (current baseline is two). Number of staff participating in affinity groups.

*What we need to do is learn to respect and embrace our differences until our differences don't make a difference in how we are treated.*

*Yolanda King*

# Priority 3 – Equitable Employment

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES
<p><b>3.1</b> Hiring practices and policies that support an equitable and inclusive workforce</p>	<p>11 Business units review hiring practices and policies on a regular basis using the lens of diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>All Human Resources hiring practices reviewed by 2020 using a diversity and inclusion lens.</p>
	<p>12 Business units ensure that diversity and inclusion objectives are part of annual individual performance planning for all non-union employees.</p>	<p>Diversity hiring strategy developed and implemented.</p>
	<p>13 All hiring managers receive training to ensure that diversity, inclusion and employment equity best practices are part of the hiring process.</p>	<p>Increased number of diverse applicants for municipal positions (need baseline data).</p>
	<p>14 Human Resource create hiring best practice toolkits that support hiring from diverse communities (e.g. hiring best practices, job postings free of systemic barriers).</p>	<p>All hiring managers trained in bias-free hiring, employment equity hiring and diversity hiring by 2020.</p>
	<p>15 Business units use best practice toolkits that support hiring from diverse communities.</p>	<p>Best practices toolkit developed and implemented by 2019.</p>
	<p>16 Business units ensure reasonable accommodation practices/procedures exist to support inclusive recruitment and hiring processes.</p>	<p>Increased retention of diverse employees within the municipality.</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> Tools and methods to gather workforce diversity data</p>	<p>17 Collect workforce diversity data every five years.</p>	<p>Diversity and inclusion workplace data collected and analyzed by 2019.</p> <p>Number of job applications from individuals reflective of employment equity.</p> <p>Increased number of job offers and promotion of applicants of diverse backgrounds.</p>

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES
	18 Business units prepare annual reports on diversity staffing data and submit to the CAO.	
3.3 Recruitment policies and practices that are reflective of diverse backgrounds	19 Business units develop diversity recruitment strategies to support the recruitment of under-represented groups.	
	20 Human Resources embed diversity and inclusion in the employment opportunities section of halifax.ca and hiring promotional materials.	

***Until all of us have made it,  
none of us have made it.***

*Rosemary Brown*

# Priority 4 – Meaningful Partnerships

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES
<b>4.1</b> Strong partnerships that support the municipality's diversity and inclusion goals and objectives	21 Business units conduct ongoing community engagement with diverse communities on the provision of municipal services.	Data collected and compared to previous years to ensure steady increase.
	22 Business units work with community-based organizations in the hiring and retention of diverse employees.	Increased municipal participation in community sponsored diversity and inclusion initiatives.
	23 Business units identify opportunities to work with community partners to create an accessible, welcoming and inclusive municipality.	Increased external outreach.  Increased support from community partners for the municipality's diversity and inclusion initiatives

*To gaze into another person's face is to do two things: to recognise their humanity and to assert your own.*

*Lawrence Hill*

# Priority 5 – Accessible information

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	BEST PRACTICES	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS MEASURES	
5.1	Communication tools and products to promote diversity and inclusion	24 Municipalities have corporate diversity and inclusion communications plans.	<p>Communications plan established and implemented.</p> <p>Increased number of external promotional tools supporting diversity and inclusion initiatives.</p>
		25 Municipalities have internal and external promotional tools that support their commitment to diversity and inclusion.	<p>Increased number of events/initiatives that highlight the diversity of the municipality (e.g. African Heritage Month, Asian Heritage Month, Mi'kmaq History Month, Halifax Pride Festival and other cultural acknowledgements).</p>

*Remember, look at the stars and not at your feet.*

*Stephen Hawking*

# Glossary of Terms

**Cultural Proficiency** is the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs that enable people to work well with, respond effectively to, and be supportive of people in cross-cultural settings.<sup>i</sup>

**Discrimination** is broadly defined to include action, speech or behaviour by individuals, organizations or groups which may bring about or have the effect of producing, directly or indirectly, hatred, intolerance and/or prejudice against other individuals or groups based on any prohibited ground covered by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Illegal and/or arbitrary denial of the rights guaranteed to individuals or groups under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with a view to exclude or limit the exercise of these rights in equal participation in the economic, political, social and cultural life of society.<sup>ii</sup>

**Diverse Communities** are broadly defined as including, but not limited to, individuals from diverse communities including Indigenous, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious groups and persons with disabilities residing within the municipality.<sup>iii</sup>

**Diversity** is a combination of differences and similarities among people. It is more than race, ability, sexual orientation, language, gender or any other descriptive category. Diversity means understanding and utilizing different views, ideas, life experiences, skills and knowledge.<sup>iv</sup>

**Duty to Accommodate**, as defined in Canadian law prohibits, discrimination based on any of the eleven grounds identified in section 2 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (CHRA) and employers have a duty to accommodate employees to avoid such discrimination. Employers must accommodate employees who fall into the groups protected by the CHRA up to the point of undue hardship, considering health, safety and cost.<sup>v</sup>

**Employment Equity**, as defined in Canadian law by the *Employment Equity Act*, requires employers to engage in proactive employment practices to increase the representation of four designated groups: women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, and visible minorities.<sup>vi</sup>

**Harassment** is any behaviour that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person, and that a reasonable person should have known would be unwelcome. It includes actions such as touching, pushing, and comments, jokes, name-calling and offensive displays.<sup>vii</sup> For the purposes of this policy, harassment in the workplace includes personal, sexual, and racial harassment, as well as poisoned work environment.

**Inclusion** is about community actions meant to eliminate barriers so all its members can fully participate in and contribute to the community. It means being supported and valued within the community and organization.

**Race Relations** is broadly defined to include, but not limited to, promoting the development of the full potential of individuals from all Indigenous, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious



groups residing in the municipality as well as principles and programs that foster the understanding and sharing of this diversity.viii

**Racism** is broadly defined to include action, speech or behaviour by individuals or groups that may bring about or have the effect of producing hatred, intolerance, prejudice, physical harm and/or discrimination against other individuals or groups based on racial background or skin colour.ix

**Systemic Barrier** is an obstacle or impediment that excludes an individual or group from being treated equitably. These barriers are often not intentional and can frequently occur when policies, procedures, and practices are not designed with diversity in mind. An example of a systemic barrier may be a job application process that can only be done online. This process would prevent potentially qualified candidates from applying for the position because they do not have equal access to technology or another process in place to be inclusive.

**Systemic Discrimination** is discrimination arising from a practice or policy which has a discriminatory effect on a group or class of individuals. Often systemic discrimination arises because of long-standing stereotypes and assumptions perpetuated through acceptance of these stereotypes and assumptions.x

---

<sup>i</sup> [Cultural Proficiency: https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/social-determinants-of-health/cultural-proficiency.html](https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/social-determinants-of-health/cultural-proficiency.html)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/volunteer-boards-committees/community-race-relations-policy>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/volunteer-boards-committees/community-race-relations-policy>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/diversity-inclusion/about-us>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/psm-fpfm/ve/dee/dorf-eng.asp>

<sup>vi</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employment\\_equity\\_\(Canada\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employment_equity_(Canada))

<sup>vii</sup> <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/human%20rights.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/volunteer-boards-committees/community-race-relations-policy>

<sup>ix</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/volunteer-boards-committees/community-race-relations-policy>

<sup>x</sup> <https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/RREI-Glossary.pdf>

