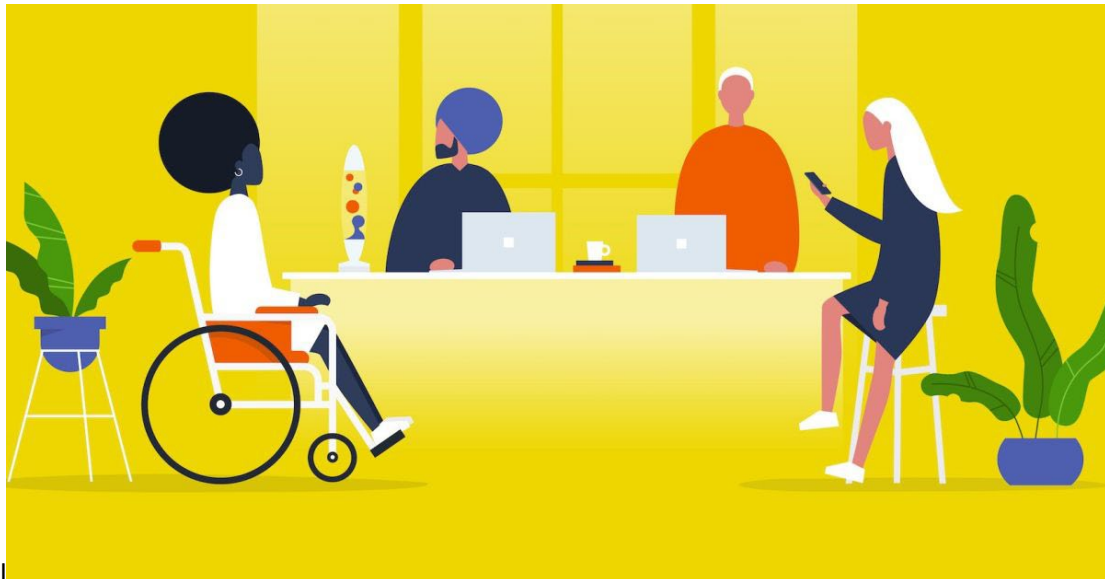




***Shuswap Association
for Community Living***



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Cultural Competency, Diversity & Inclusion Plan

2025



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Definitions

Culture is defined as the integrated pattern of human behaviour that includes the thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, social or any other group.

Cultural Competency is defined as an organization's ability to recognize, respect, and address the unique and diverse needs, worth, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs and values that reflect an individual's racial, ethnic, religious, and/or social groups or sexual orientation.

Diversity is defined as differences due to cognitive or physical ability, culture, ethnicity, language, religion, economic status, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

Inclusion is defined as the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded.

Introduction

The SACL Cultural Competency, Diversity & Inclusion Plan is reviewed at least annually to demonstrate an awareness of respect for and attention to the diversity of all its employees and community partners. SACL strives to ensure that these ideals are reflected in the attitudes, organizational structures, policies, procedures and services.

These efforts will assist SACL in meeting the diverse needs of persons served with respect to:

- Culture
- Age
- Gender & Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Spiritual Beliefs
- Socio-Economic Status
- Language
- Race
- Other factors, as relevant

Each of these areas will be considered in the development and review of the SACL Cultural Competency, Diversity & Inclusion Plan.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Activities

In February 2024, SACL wanted to address diversity, equity and inclusion. Diversity, equity and inclusion are three closely linked values held by many organizations that are working to be supportive of different groups of individuals, including people of different races, ethnicities, religions, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations. People engaged in discussions around reconciliation, the changing diversity of the SACL team, the vulnerabilities of the people we support and more.

It was clear that a diverse group of people from the SACL team might be interested in participating in a committee where anyone and everyone could feel safe and included. Employees willing to spend time on this committee would be paid. The purpose of the committee would be to provide suggestions to SACL about how it can be more supportive of all people have an inclusive work force that was reflective of our community and to partner with individuals, organizations and community groups to promote DEI in our workplace.

The first meeting was held March 13, 2024, and the group named themselves the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI). Some topics that quickly became priorities for the committee's review were:

- A land acknowledgement as an organization towards the Secwepemc Peoples
- Developing a mechanism for self-disclosure for identifying as a member of a diversity group Having events to be supportive of different groups
- In April 2024, the DEI Committee provided a land acknowledgment. Each SACL team member added it to their email signature line

September 23, 2024, a meeting was held by the DEI committee. We discussed luncheons and events that we wanted to put on. We planned for an October Diwali Festival of Lights event/luncheon. We wanted Persons Supported to participate and we purchased candle holders that they could decorate. We had a luncheon for this on October 28th. We also planned for a November event to follow "Movember" event and luncheon. We wanted it to be about self-care, with a highlight on Men's self-care and we created an idea of a beard growing contest. We planned to put out posters for this event for staff/PS and to get donations for the winner. We planned on asking people attending what they do for self-care. We held this on November 28th.

December 16, 2024, DEI meeting. We wanted to have a luncheon in December for a "Happy Holidays" event. We looked to create a poster with pictures of different holiday traditions on the poster. We talked about how to message to all why DEI is important and set this for our next meeting topic. We had a Chili Luncheon in CI with different kinds of Chili (including vegetarian) on December 20, 2025.

March 3, 2025, we held a DEI meeting. We discussed the messaging purpose of DEI and why it is important. We discussed wanting to have a workforce representative of our community. We talked about identifying gaps and how to show accountability to this goal. We talked about having cultural luncheons to discuss DEI. We discussed breaking up DEI into 3 parts for 3 different luncheons/events. One would be Diversity-what it means to you? Another event would be Equity and what does that means to you? Finally, having a third event on Inclusion and what that means to you? For these events we would create posters and ask folks these questions and have them put down their responses on the posters. We would at the end of the year tie them in and have discussions about it.



Regarding self-disclosure process. HR consulted with a number of other organizations and CSSEA about a questionnaire that would be suitable to obtain information for the purpose of self-disclosure toward having a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce. No examples were gathered. HR created a survey and forwarded it to others for discussions towards actioning on August 28, 2025.

A DEI meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2025.

Analysis

Shuswap Association for Community Living strives to provide open and responsive service to all individuals in the community and is therefore keenly aware of the need to employ a diverse workforce to serve all community needs. In 2020, less than 20% of employees at SACL were foreign-born and employee's language ability covered three languages. SACL employs persons with disabilities, varied spiritual beliefs, culture, age and gender.

Complaint/Suggestion forms are provided on the website or in person to employees, Persons Supported, families and the community at large. This year they are being revised to be more user friendly.



Recruitment

Assessment/Review

It is recognized as a high priority to ensure that the SACL workforce and Board of Directors reflect the makeup of its community and Persons Supported. SACL may serve diverse groups and therefore need to recruit and maintain an equally diverse workforce.

When reviewing and analyzing workforce composition related to Persons Supported, it was determined that the needs of present cultural and language groups were met by the staffing model. SACL actively recruits and promotes from all groups that are qualified applicants.

SACL monitors the community to ensure it stays abreast of any cultural/diverse group that is being under-served. This is accomplished by being involved in various community groups, activities and events. Recruitment is focused on current service needs.

Action Planning

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Monitor community needs through various resources to help identify those that may be under-served	Executive Director	Reviewed on a continuous basis through participation in community groups
Recruit and hire to both meet the needs of programs and to reflect community and Persons Supported including culture, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, language, race and other factors, as relevant.	Human Resources	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated
Develop a method for tracking employee demographics that includes culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, language, race and other factors, as relevant. Information gathered should allow employees to voluntarily self-declare requested data.	Human Resources	November 2025



Orientation & Training

Assessment/Review

SACL is committed to equal treatment and respect for all. Internal orientation, training, and teambuilding are designed to encompass everyone in the community. SACL is aware that it must continually evaluate and adjust its values, biases, and attitudes by seeking feedback from employees, Persons Supported, families and the community at large. The results of relevant feedback are shared with employees as an opportunity to learn or celebrate successes.

Orientation and training include ensuring employees are open, accepting and embracing cultural competency, inclusivity and diversity through team building activities, meetings, regular discussions and training. Upon hire Unconscious Bias Training & Creating a Respectful Workplace Training is required for all employees. It is a clear expectation at SACL that all employees, Persons Supported, and community members are treated equally and with respect. Policies and procedures addressing and reflecting respect for cultural competency, diversity and inclusivity have been developed and are enforced.

Action Planning

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Presentation/Webinar to Board of Directors regarding Cultural Competency and Diversity	Executive Director	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated
Include cultural competency, diversity and inclusion training/documentation review for all new employees as part of orientation	Executive Director & Human Resources	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated



Service Design and Accessibility

Assessment/Review

SACL ensures intake, orientation, engagement and exit processes reflect respect for all. Service Plans formally address and document variables inclusive of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, identity, race, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, and language. Cultural differences and preferences are identified during intake and/or throughout service delivery. Social and recreational plans will include activities that bring awareness to and respect of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, identity, race, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status and language. This information is documented in the Persons Supported Nucleus file.

Persons Supported are asked how their needs can best be accommodated. SACL actively seeks feedback to address any concerns one might express. SACL policies and procedures reflect commitment to cultural competency, diversity and inclusion.

SACL solicits feedback by offering annual surveys, regular meetings, discussions, open-door policies, [Complaint, Compliment or Feedback](#) forms in various formats. Contact information is provided on the SACL website and in the Service Handbook for those needing support or having questions. Procedures for providing feedback are offered verbally, in policy, practice, on bulletin boards and on the SACL website.

Action Planning

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Provide various methods of feedback for employees, Persons Supported and other community partners.	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated



Connections with Broader Community

Assessment/Review

To ensure the Cultural Competency, Diversity and Inclusion Plan continuously evolves; SACL supports and encourages feedback from the broader community, through annual surveys, engagement in diverse cultural activities, participation in community forums as well as the SACL Complaint, Compliment or Feedback process that is available on the SACL website.

Action Planning

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Ensure participation, representation and visibility in community through SACL programs and services such as Workday Warriors and the Reverse Job Fair Committee.	Services Managers	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated
Continue to focus on making community events sensitive and open to all in our community.	Services Managers	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated
Ensure transparency of this plan by providing a copy on the SACL website as well as to all SACL employees	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated



Communication

Assessment/Review

SACL has focused on ensuring SACL is more accessible for Persons Supported, families, employees and the community at large. Using plain language, darkening and simplifying fonts on the SACL website, reports, plans and other documents. In March 2025, SACL added text-to-speech assistance on its website. SACL also uses AI (Artificial Intelligence) to review policies and other non-private documents to ensure inclusive language is used.

Inclusive language reflects the mindfulness that we have when using language: we can intentionally create inclusive interactions with our uses of language. With this intentionality, we can avoid situations where the people around us may be or feel excluded, dismissed, or stigmatized.

Action Planning

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion
Provide accessibility/diversity questions regarding the website on the annual satisfaction surveys.	Quality Assurance Coordinator	January 2026
Provide a Website Survey to ensure SACL receives feedback regarding the accessibility of its website.	Quality Assurance Coordinator	October 2026
Address accessibility of SACL website, documents and publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified Language • Ease of reading • All content is of a diverse and inclusive nature 	Executive Director & Quality Assurance Coordinator	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated
Review all written and electronic material to ensure it is neutral and inclusive.	Executive Director & Quality Assurance Coordinator	Reviewed annually for relevance and updated



Plan distribution

The SACL Cultural Competency, Diversity & Inclusion Plan is available:

- The SACL Shared S Drive for employees - S:\Employee Services\Staff Resources\Plans & Reports\Cultural Competency, Diversity & Inclusion Plans
- The SACL Website for all - <https://shuswapacl.com/resources/>
- Upon request for all