



Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

Policy Title: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Division: Corporate Services

Department: Legislative Services

Effective Date: June 1, 2021

Revision Date: March 1, 2022

Approval Level: Town Council

Contact Person: Accessibility Coordinator or Municipal Clerk

Contact Information: diversity@cobourg.ca

Section Number:

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Purpose

This policy is intended to provide the overarching framework to guide the review and development of other policies, standards, procedures, by-laws, and all elements that guide the Town of Cobourg in order to consistently be incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion.

This policy can be provided in an alternative format upon request. Please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at accessibility@cobourg.ca or 905-372-4301.

Policy Statement

The Town of Cobourg is committed to identifying and meeting the needs of all persons by communicating and working with the diverse communities and groups make up the population of Cobourg.

The Town of Cobourg values the contributions made by all its people and believes that the diversity among its people has strengthened Cobourg.

The Town recognizes the dignity and worth of all people by equitably treating communities and employees, fairly providing services, by consulting with communities and making sure everyone can participate in decision-making.

The Town recognizes the unique status and cultural diversity of the Indigenous communities and their right to self-determination.

The Town recognizes the barriers of discrimination and disadvantage faced by human rights protected groups.

To address this, the Town will create an environment of equality in the government and in the community for all people regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, disability, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, same sex partnership, age, marital status, family status, immigrant status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation, level of literacy, language, and/or socio-economic status.



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The Town of Cobourg will implement positive changes in its workforce and communities to achieve access and equality of outcomes for all residents and to create a harmonious environment free from discrimination, harassment and hate.

Definitions

Anti-Oppression

Anti-Oppression is the work of actively challenging and removing oppression perpetuated by power inequalities in society, both systemic oppression and individual expressions of oppression. Anti-Oppression is a way of naming oppression that happens based on a person's identities.

Decolonization

Decolonization is the work of supporting Indigenous sovereignty and land repatriation, abolishing slavery, and dismantling imperialism.

Discrimination

Discrimination is the treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit and that can be used to privilege (special treatment in favour of) as well as disadvantage (special treatment against) a particular group or individual.

Diversity

Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess.

Equity

Equity refers to the fair and respectful treatment of all people. The Town will proactively address systemic issues that will create a level playing field and equal access to opportunities. The Town will also do everything they can to identify and eliminate unfair biases, stereotypes or barriers that may limit full participation in our education system. A barrier is anything that keeps someone from participating fully in all aspects of society.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values difference.

Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as



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they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Oppression

Oppression is the use of power or privilege by a socially, politically, economically, culturally dominant group (or groups) to empower (take away or reduce power), marginalize, silence, or otherwise subordinate one social group or category.

Self-Determination

Self-determination is the right of Indigenous peoples to choose how they live their shared lives and structure their communities based on their own norms, laws, and cultures

Systemic Oppression

Systemic Oppression consists of practices, policies, laws, and standards that disadvantage a particular group or category of people.

Tokenism

Tokenism is the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce, institutions, society, committees, and structures.

Third Party

Third Party refers to contracted parties that provide services on behalf of the Town under the logo or umbrella of the Town of Cobourg. This includes but is not limited to bus drivers and fitness class instructors.

Application

This policy shall apply to all departments of the Town, Council, its boards and committees, and all persons who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town.

1.0 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Town of Cobourg's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee is established and appointed by Municipal Council, and is the result of a Council resolution



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and Town commitment to the principles of EDI. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee is responsible for advising Municipal Council on all matters related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee meets on a monthly basis and is dedicated to promote and foster inclusion and to address issues of discrimination based on:

- Race,
- National or ethnic origin,
- Colour,
- Religion or faith or other forms of conscientiously held beliefs,
- Sex,
- Sexuality (including sexual orientation),
- Language and linguistic origin,
- Gender identity and gender expression,
- Age (children, youth, adult, seniors),
- Mental or physical disability,
- Family status (including marital status), and
- For those persons who identify as First Nations with or without status, Métis, and/or Inuit.

This Committee is committed to the promotion of equity, racial acceptance, and multicultural education where residents are empowered to achieve their full potential in our community. Further, the Committee is committed to creating safe spaces for all persons to voice their opinions and understanding and to work together to create inclusion in Cobourg.

To learn more about the mandate of the [Town of Cobourg's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee](#), as well as past Agendas and Minutes, please see our website here: <https://www.cobourg.ca/en/town-hall/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-advisory-committee.aspx>.

2.0 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

The Town of Cobourg is committed to developing, implementing, reporting, and revising, as necessary, the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.



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The Town of Cobourg will use the latest and newest version of the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks created through the Centre for Global Inclusion to measure and analyze their progress. Currently, this version has been created and updated as of April 1, 2021.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy focuses on four (4) main goals:

1. **Goal #1:** Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.
2. **Goal #2:** Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.
3. **Goal #3:** Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.
4. **Goal #4:** Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.

These goals work together to create a Cobourg that meets the needs of everyone living, working, playing, and visiting. Under each of these goals are areas to be addressed and actionable items to work towards increasing the level of practice under the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks and the practice of equity, diversity, and inclusion for the Town of Cobourg.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy meets the requirements for the Action Plan required under the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

The Town of Cobourg's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy will have three (3) Phases:

1. **Phase One:** Internal Strengthening of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
2. **Phase Two:** Audit and Assess Goods, Programs, Services, and Information
3. **Phase Three:** Collaborate and Build More Inclusive Practices for the Town of Cobourg

The full Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy can be found on the Town of Cobourg's website.

3.0 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Lenses

The Town of Cobourg will develop, design, and implement Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Lenses to assist all persons with the development of new programs, policies, procedures, and initiatives at the Town of Cobourg. The aim is to create an inclusive and intersectional approach to ensure that the Town incorporate EDI principles from the



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development stage.

Specific lenses will be developed in tandem with appropriate departments and include:

1. Communications,
2. Community Engagement,
3. Conflict Resolution,
4. Event Planning,
5. Leading, Supervising, and Managing,
6. Monitoring and Evaluating Performance,
7. Policy Development and Review,
8. Recruiting Staff, Volunteers, and Third-Party Vendors,
9. Request for Proposal and Request for Tender Development,
10. Service and “Product” Development,
11. Strategic Planning, and
12. Training Staff, Volunteers, and Third-Party Vendors.

As these lenses are developed and implemented, this policy will be updated with appropriate links and cross-references.

4.0 Training

4.1 Onboarding Training

All Town of Cobourg Employees, volunteers and third parties providing goods and services on the Town’s behalf shall be required to undergo training on a variety of topics to increase cultural competency and understanding of the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Town Council will be provided with the same training as all other members and can voluntarily partake as their schedule allows.

The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer, or third party and shall be done before or within ten (10) days of hire. Training shall take place as soon as it is practicable and upon completion, the Town shall keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which it took place.



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4.2 Access to Training

All Staff members will be provided access to training and development opportunities. In addition, they will be made aware of the varying opportunities at a corporate level as well as for their own personal and professional development.

Training sessions that require payment will be paid by the Town of Cobourg up front rather than reimbursed after, including all travel related expenses.

During Performance Evaluations, Managers will ask all Staff members about training opportunities they are interested in to ensure that people are accessing the training for their development.

4.3 Resources and Repository

All personnel will have access to appropriate resources and training materials through a knowledge repository that will be consistently updated. This will include video lunch and learns, curated lists on topics, and additional resources.

Personnel will be given the opportunity to access these items as necessary and suggest future content to be created and/or uploaded. On an ongoing basis, Staff will be able to request specific training through an online form that will be hosted on the Town of Cobourg's SharePoint site.

The location of this will be on the Town of Cobourg's SharePoint site and shared with all those who work with and for the Town of Cobourg.

4.4 Outside Training and Third-Party Organizations

When the Town of Cobourg determines that they do not have adequate knowledge, skills, or expertise to design and implement a training regime, they will outsource this to an expert in the field.

To ensure equitable participation, third-party and/or partner organizations will be asked the type of data they collect on diversity metrics and participation gaps.

Additionally, third-party and/or partner organizations will be requested to provide demographic information around their trainers to ensure that all persons are represented in the trainers that provide information.



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When possible, training will be provided by experts with lived and living experience, as necessary.

5.0 Recruitment and Retention

5.1 Recruitment

The Town of Cobourg is committed to creating an inclusive work environment throughout their employment.

The Town of Cobourg will provide any information about equitable accommodations and resources to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. The Town will provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that takes into account an employee's needs.

When it comes to recruitment and hiring, the Town of Cobourg will put in place practices that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. Wherever possible the Town will:

- Post job positions to many platforms, including those which target underrepresented and culturally marginalized groups,
- Within our job postings, the Town will stick to the essential requirements of the position, wherever possible as the Town understands that items that fall in the category of “nice to have” may create barriers,
- Openly welcome and invite applications from persons with disabilities or those protected by the Human Rights Code and provide accommodation during all stages of the recruitment and hiring process, upon request. The Town will add statements to this effect to all job postings,
- Train hiring managers about their own biases and how to utilize equitable hiring practices, including how to use an “equity lens” or “diversity lens” when recruiting, and;
- Utilize set interview questions based on the job description to help eliminate biases.

The Town of Cobourg is committed to hiring applicants on the basis of their individual merits such as their skills and knowledge.



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Third-party recruitment agencies will be requested to provide a slate of diverse candidates to the best of their ability when contracted.

5.2 Retention

Regular conversations with leadership, including all in a supervisory position, will be conducted to understand:

- How managers are supporting their employees that fall under a protected class in the Ontario Human Rights Code, and
- Whether managers are experiencing differential turnover between identity groups.

This will allow Town of Cobourg's leadership the opportunity to give Staff a voice and a sense of belonging. Through this, the Town of Cobourg to begin to create a place where inclusion is a top priority.

Leadership will not be penalized if there is turnover in their department; however, it is important to understand the trends and whether there are unintentional barriers in different divisions or departments for different identity groups.

This is one of the Level 5: Best Practices from the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks that the Town noted as a crucial step towards creating inclusion and equity in the workplace.

The recruitment and promotion process will be evaluated in correspondence to the Recruitment Policy and Procedure.

6.0 Policy Development and Review

All policies at the Town of Cobourg will be developed using the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Lens regarding Policy Development.

Further, as policies are reviewed and refined, they will be analyzed for unintentional barriers to inclusion for culturally marginalized and historically underinvested groups.

Each policy should be developed through a lens of inclusivity rather than updating the EDI Policy to reflect the changes that are necessary.



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7.0 Public Consultation and Engagement

The public will be engaged and consulted on all matters related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, as well as other statutory requirements in the Municipal Act.

If an issue arises, the Town of Cobourg asks the public to contact us via email at diversity@cobourg.ca.

Public engagement and consultation will incorporate a variety of aspects of equity, diversity, and inclusion principles in guidance with best practices through the [International Association for Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#) and Indigenous consultation guidelines through the [Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#) and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

When possible, the Town will use different methods to engage the public.

8.0 Privacy and Confidentiality

The Town of Cobourg understands the sensitive nature of information that may be shared during conversations about equity and diversity and will respect the privacy and confidentiality of employee information, at all times.

Complaints surrounding any violence and harassment will be dealt with according to the guidelines set out in our Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination policies.

9.0 Review Period

This policy shall be reviewed in correspondence with the Phases of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy review periods and progress reports.

It will also be revised in light of any legislative changes. If there are legislative changes, review of this policy will be done within ninety (90) days of the legislation becoming law.

Scope

This Policy and its related procedures apply to the following, unless otherwise stated:

- All Town Employees,
- All Members of Town Council,



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- Volunteers, including members on the Boards and Committees of the Town of Cobourg, and;
- To any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, in accordance with the legislation.

This Policy does not apply to the Cobourg Police or Police Services Board. The Cobourg Police and Police Services Board have their own requirements that they must meet under legislation.

For more information on the requirements for Cobourg Police and Police Services Board, [please see the Police Services Act](#) and [Bill 68, Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, 2019](#).

Administration

The Chief Administrative Officer shall implement and administer the terms of this policy with the assistance of the Accessibility Coordinator.

Cross Reference

Other relevant documents and legislation:

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#),
- [Accessible Customer Service Policy](#),
- [Accessible Workplace Policy](#),
- [Early and Safe Return to Work](#),
- [Indigenous Land Acknowledgement](#),
- [Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#),
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#),
- [Town of Cobourg's Accessibility Advisory Committee](#),
- [Town of Cobourg's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee](#),
- [Town of Cobourg's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#),
- [Town of Cobourg's Transportation Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#),
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)