



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Township of Southgate is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and the community. The Township values and embraces diversity and inclusion in all areas.

This policy will guide us in our continued efforts to building an equitable, diverse and inclusive Township internally with staff and externally with the community. The intent is to ensure that all individuals and groups irrespective of their background and identity, are protected and feel safe, valued, empowered, and respected for their contributions to the shared purposes of the Township.

2. Purpose

The main objectives of this policy are:

- To eliminate barriers in the workplace, including all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- To promote a culture of equity and inclusion in the workplace and the community.
- To contribute to the Township's strategic goals and objectives and provide the highest level of customer service and service delivery.
- To support an environment where all employees have full opportunity to show their unique value and develop their inherent ability.

3. Policy Scope

This Policy applies—but is not limited—to our practices and policies on all public services we provide including social and recreational programs, as well as internal practices and policies related to recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; and the ongoing development of a work environment. This policy applies to all employees of the Township; including Council Member and volunteer firefighters, persons acting on behalf of the Township; including consultants and contractors and any individual who interacts with Township staff.

4. Definitions

- Equity** - is defined as the act of ensuring that processes and programs are impartial, fair and provide equal possible outcomes for every individual.
- Diversity** - refers to the presence of differences within a given setting. The range of human differences is listed within the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, chapter H.19 s. 5 (1). <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>
- Inclusion** - Is the act of creating environments and spaces in which any individual or group feels welcomed, valued, respected, supported and can fully participate. An



inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

5. **Declaration**

The Township of Southgate is committed to fostering an environment which makes diversity, equity and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for staffing, services, public spaces and communications in general and with the below specific areas:

a. **Knowledge**

The Township will continue to provide staff training including accessibility, Ontario Human Rights Code, antiracism, inclusion, religious observances and cultural awareness training to ensure all staff understand the values and responsibilities expected of them.

b. **Policies**

The Township will continue to review existing policies to ensure an equity lens with gender-neutral and inclusive language. When creating new policies and procedures, equity and inclusion will be considered.

c. **Communications**

The Township will ensure communications follow accessibility standards and inclusive languages and images.

d. **Staffing**

The Township will ensure recruitment practices, hiring policy, job descriptions and job postings include an equity lens and gender-neutral language and will provide accommodations when requested.

e. **Management**

Management staff have the responsibility of understanding and upholding the principles set out in this policy. They also will work towards incorporating equity, diversity and inclusion principles into strategic objectives and operational initiatives of the Township.

f. **Public Services**

The Township commits to providing diverse, equitable and inclusive programming and services by continually reviewing and consulting with the public and community groups. When creating new programs and services, we will work with the community to develop inclusive consultation and engagement processes to develop services in appropriate ways.

g. **Public Spaces**

All Township public spaces will be welcoming to everyone and ensure they are inclusive and accessible physically, visually and mentally.



6. Related Policies and Legislation

- a. Ontario Human Rights Code
- b. Policy #33B Respectful Workplace Policy

7. Policy Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed at minimum every three (3) years and updated if required.