



## MODEL INCLUSIVENESS POLICY

### POLICY ON INCLUSIVENESS

Date of approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Supersedes: Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Purpose

To define [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_'s position on inclusiveness as it applies to [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_'s standards, practices, communications, documentation and built environment.

#### Scope

This policy applies to the entirety of [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_'s practices, documents, and facilities. \*

#### Audience

The impact of this policy serves all staff, vendors, clients or consumers, contractors, and subcontractors of [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Policy

[NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ welcomes all people and is committed to creating an environment that supports full access and participation for every staff member and consumer. We value the diversity of our community and appreciate the contribution that all individuals can bring based on their diverse abilities, skills, backgrounds, and/or cultures.

It shall be the policy of [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ to strive to develop and continually maintain a culture of inclusion in all of our activities, services, and facilities.

To ensure a sustainable inclusiveness policy [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ will establish an "Inclusiveness Work Group" within 6 months of formalizing this policy, to review and monitor the expectations put forth in the policy. \*

*\*These sections are likely to differ for each workplace and should be altered to accommodate your workplace's specific needs.*

## Definitions

**Accessibility** – providing equitable access to space, information, resources, and opportunities to all individuals. Access for all requires organizations to go beyond compliance with public accommodations and laws (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act) and strive for inclusive design. Accessibility efforts should be continuous with community participation.

**Culture of Inclusion** – an environment in which people with different identities, abilities, and beliefs are equally valued, respected, and always welcomed.<sup>1</sup>

**Diversity** – the practice of bringing people with unique perspectives and life experiences to the decision-making table. This practice focuses on including people with differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, disability, age and political perspective.<sup>2,3</sup>

**Equity** – the fair and just treatment of all members of the community. Equity requires a commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and continuous action and assessment of progress toward achieving these goals.<sup>4</sup>

**Inclusion** – ensuring diverse individuals feel welcomed and can participate fully in all aspects of an organization or program, including the decision-making process. Inclusion is met once your organization, your employees, and your programs are inviting to all people.<sup>2</sup>

## Goals

- Include employees with diverse lived experiences and/or expertise on the planning committee.
- Provide a welcoming environment to all.
- Ensure accessible spaces, in-person and virtual, are appropriately provided and maintained.
- Promote the use of accessible materials (e.g. documents, webpages, trainings).
- Offer multimodal communication – a variety of communication styles.
- Promote respectful communication and cooperation between all employees regardless of diverse perspectives, cultures, etc.
- Provide equitable opportunities for all.
- Represent all groups and employee perspectives in workplace practices and policies.
- Support flexible schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs.

## Training

[NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ will provide this policy to all employees upon hiring and redistribute this policy as updates are made. This will accompany additional accessibility trainings, videos, policies, etc.\* provided by [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_. Training should be “evidence-based” to the extent possible and should represent “applied best practices” as identified by local or national advocacy groups.

*For additional training recommendations, contact your local health department.*

## Maintenance

The “Inclusiveness Work Group” and/or wellness leadership\* at [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ will review and update this policy on an annual basis\*. Additional updates may take place during significant changes within [NAME OF FACILITY/ORGANIZATION] \_\_\_\_\_ including but not limited to remodeling, expansion, new leadership, and state and local laws.

**This Inclusiveness Policy template should be tailored to your company and employees’ needs and should therefore be considered a starting point for setting up your workplace to be as inclusive as possible. It is best practice to consult and include people with disability and other diverse lived experiences and/or expertise on your planning committee.**

*\*These sections are likely to differ for each workplace and should be altered to accommodate your workplace’s specific needs. Delete this note once finalized.*

## Resources

<sup>1</sup>This definition was guided by the Montana Disability and Health Program and its commitment to inclusive design and disability empowerment.

<sup>2</sup>Source: [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Collaborative](#)

<sup>3</sup>Source: [D5: Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in philanthropy](#)

<sup>4</sup>Source: [The institutional Diversity Blog](#)

Much of this policy was adapted from an existing policy created by Lewis and Clark Public Health Department. See the following proclamation made by the Lewis and Clark Public Health Department as an example of how your worksite can write its own Inclusiveness Proclamation.

Based on the needs of your facility/organization, here are some additional resources that can be utilized:

- Contact your local [Center for Independent Living](#) when creating or making changes to your inclusiveness policy.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy (shrm.org)  
<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/policies/pages/diversitypolicy.aspx>
- ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments  
<https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/abouttoolkit.htm>
- Virtual or In-person Inclusive Interdisciplinary Walk/Move Audit Information and support contact the Montana Disability and Health Program, [Mackenzie.Jones@mt.gov](mailto:Mackenzie.Jones@mt.gov).

For more resources or specific questions, please contact:

Jessica Kechely

Nutrition and Physical Activity Program

[Jessica.Kechely@mt.gov](mailto:Jessica.Kechely@mt.gov)

**[NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_**  
**PROCLAMATION**

**Presented By: [NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_ Public Health Inclusiveness  
Committee**

**RECOGNIZING JULY 2020 AS DISABILITY  
HEALTH EQUITY MONTH**

***WHEREAS**, on July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities. This legislation established a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; and*

***WHEREAS**, the ADA has expanded opportunities for Americans with disabilities by reducing barriers and changing perceptions, and increasing full participation in community life.; and*

***WHEREAS**, we of the [NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_ Commission recognize and value the accomplishments and contributions of people with disabilities and the progress that the nation has made since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and*

***WHEREAS** approximately 13.6% of Montanans have some form of disability; and*

***WHEREAS**, disability is a natural part of the human experience that does not diminish an individual's right to live independently, have choice over his or her own life, and fully participate in and contribute to the community through full inclusion; and*

***WHEREAS**, we grow stronger as a community when every person experiences the dignity and freedom of being part of the community; and*

***WHEREAS**, we want to help build a community in which no person is excluded, marginalized, treated unfairly, or prevented from accessing any resource, opportunity, or service;*

***NOW, THEREFORE**, on the 30-year anniversary of the passage of the ADA, we ask that those in county government strive to develop and maintain a culture of disability inclusion in all of our activities, services, facilities, and systems; and*

*We ask employers in [NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_, as they seek to fill positions, to embrace the richness of our community's diversity by considering the talents of all workers, including those with disabilities; and*

*We ask planners and property owners to build communities that are universally accessible, enhancing independence and active living; and*

*We ask everyone to create a better and more inclusive community by celebrating the contributions of individuals with disabilities; and*

*We ask our community to dedicate itself to ensuring that all residents with disabilities can live full lives, with greater opportunities and independence, through advocacy, support, and technological advancements.*

**TOWARD THIS END, the [NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_ Board of Commissioners, do hereby declare JULY 2020 as DISABILITY HEALTH EQUITY AWARENESS MONTH in [NAME OF COUNTY] \_\_\_\_\_.**

Dated this 30<sup>th</sup> day of July 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
[NAME OF COUNTY]

\_\_\_\_\_  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sally Sue, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adam Apple, Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Doe, Member

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
George Glass, Clerk of the Board