

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE, HUMILITY AND DIVERSITY PLAN 2023

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This plan was reviewed and updated in May 2023. Updates include:

- Adding “humility” to the name of the plan, and shifting the highest level of emphasis as an organization from COMPETENCE to HUMILITY. This requires a shift from focussing on building skills and knowledge for cross cultural relationships, to engaging in processes of critical self-reflection, personal growth and reducing negative power relationships
- Increasing the emphasis and intentionality of addressing indigenous cultural competence and humility in recognition of the important of reconciliation related to the systemic cultural damage and power imbalances inherent in health and social services in Canada. To facilitate this Island Community Services has adopted the PHAC Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Road Map as a framework for staff training.

### PURPOSE

- Island Community Services is committed to respecting cultural practices and ensuring cultural safety. Being culturally competent enables us to provide equitable, individually focused services. Being culturally humble enables us to reduce the power imbalances that have been inherent in the European dominant health and social service systems in Canada.
- Embracing diversity in the workplace makes for better creativity, acceptance, tolerance, and innovation. It also broadens the range of knowledge, skills, and abilities of our staff members. Better program decisions can be made based on culturally diverse perspectives. As an agency, our focus on cultural competency and diversity will

enable us to improve our ability to provide culturally sensitive services to the individuals we serve.

- Island Community Services demonstrates an awareness of, respect for, and attention to the diversity of the people with whom it interacts (persons served, personnel, families/caregivers, volunteers and other stakeholders) that are reflected in attitudes, organizational structures, policies and services. Cultural awareness, humility and activities are incorporated into service planning as guided by those served. Staff will demonstrate respect for unique culture and heritage, and understand their own culture and its impact on others. As part of the service intake process individuals are invited to share their cultural customs, beliefs, behaviours or traditions.
- Employees are encouraged and supported to assume an attitude of cultural humility, where they have a curiosity in learning about the cultures of others and self-reflection about their own cultural identity and how it may impact her work.
- The plan identifies where barriers may exist and how they may be addressed. The plan is to be linked with other Island Community Services plans including the strategic plan, the accessibility plan and the business performance goals and objectives.
- The plan aims to assist the creation of a climate of respect, inclusion and acceptance of all people who access services, are employed and volunteer, with whom Island Community Services partners in the geographical area we serve. Island Community services considers the following factors in the development of this plan: heritage, race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, criminal status or income.

**Community demographics and the people served by Island Community**

**Services:** The communities of Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands continue to grow in diversity and multiculturalism. As part of the Cultural Competence, Humility and Diversity Plan, Island Community Services commits to making continued and meaningful efforts to develop relationships with local Indigenous communities of the Wsanec and Hul'qumi'num speaking peoples. Island Community Services strives to respect individual rights and respectfully supports individuals to self-identify as Indigenous if they choose.

Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands have a large and active community of individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

and trans, queer and questioning, intersex, asexual or agender, and/or two-spirit (LGBTQIA2S+). Island Community Services serve many LGBTQIA2S+ individuals across program areas and strive to be welcoming and inclusive of individuals who may have reluctance to access mainstream social services.

Families who access services at Island Community Services have a rich diversity of cultures – whether this be ethnicity, language, gender, family composition, spirituality, religion or other practices or beliefs. Each individual is respected for their culture.

Island Community Services has adopted the approach to promote Cultural Safety used by the First Nations Health Authority. The cornerstone of this approach is a commitment to building cultural humility.

*“When health care professionals engage with First Nations peoples from a place of cultural humility, they are helping to create a safer health care environment where individuals and families feel respected. First Nations peoples are therefore more likely to access care when they need it and access care that is appropriate to their wellness beliefs, goals and needs.”*

## **TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Cultural Humility** Cultural humility is a **process** of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves acknowledging oneself as a life long learner when it comes to understanding personal culture and another’s experience. Cultural Humility extends beyond and deeper than Cultural Competence in the pursuit of Cultural Safety.

**Cultural Competence** is the **ability** of individuals and systems to engage respectfully and effectively with people of all cultures, classes, races, disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, faiths and religions, economic, social and linguistic backgrounds in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families, communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

**Cultural Safety** is an **outcome** based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the service system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving services.

**Diversity** is the range of human characteristics found in any workplace or community. The diversity of identifying characteristics includes race,

culture, language, disability, faith and religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, income, family status, literacy level, educational background, housing, immigration status, personal health behaviours, HIV status, mental health status among many other characteristics. Groups and individuals are both visibly and invisibly different from each other. These differences shape and have significant impact on our experiences and expectations in many given situations.

### **Values and Awareness:**

- Awareness and respect of the wide range of values, beliefs, traditions, customs, communication and parenting styles of different communities
- Awareness of the impact of our own culture and worldviews on interactions with others in cross cultural situations.
- Understanding that cultural differences and contexts over history, and specifically with indigenous peoples, and people of colour often came with oppressive power imbalances that are present this day.
- Awareness that cultural differences exist within different cultural groups.
- Understanding that different cultures have different attitudes about health issues and health seeking behaviours.
- Understanding that differences may impact the provider/receiver relationship.
- Commitment to developing helping relationships that are compatible with the needs, values, and customs of the diverse individuals and families we serve.
- Utilizing cultural information to adapt services (where services are offered, communications, decor, staffing, etc.)
- Reflection on one's own cultural programming when encountering a cross cultural difference.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
To promote the concept of Cultural Humility as the foundation for health and social service delivery.	Island Community Services will be culturally safe in all aspects of its operations	All staff and volunteers	The concept of Cultural Humility will become a standard element of all job descriptions, core training plans, hiring and orientation	All staff	Ongoing
To create a safe and inclusive environment that fosters respect for, and acknowledgement of different needs and approaches.	Island Community Services will work towards having facilities that are welcoming and accessible to all.  Island Community Services commits to safe and supportive spaces for Directors, staff and others to explore diversity issues.	All Island Community Services sites	Annual inspection of facilities to assess and address cultural friendliness  Make periodic changes in decor to reflect diversity and cultural friendliness  Provide regular communications about culture and diversity  Develop mural at Core Inn celebrating indigenous culture	Program Directors and Managers	Annually
To adhere to the legal Acts that guide	All persons served and all staff and volunteers	All Board and staff	Include information on Rights in publications for those served.	Board of Directors and all staff	Annual review of complaints and

<p>and human rights actions of Island Community Services related to inclusiveness and diversity.</p>	<p>have a working knowledge of the legal guidance for all our work and actions.</p>		<p>Establish and monitor client rights concerns and complaints.</p> <p>Annual review of personnel management including the implementation of fair hiring practices, assessing the diversity of our staffing.</p> <p>Island Community Services will develop and implement a human resources strategy to retain and recruit staff from culturally diverse backgrounds who are culturally competent, and have a working knowledge about diversity.</p>		<p>concerns.</p> <p>Annual persons served questionnaires.</p> <p>Annual review of employment hiring policies and practices.</p>
<p>Island Community Services will acknowledge the diverse perspectives of individuals and families and incorporate these</p>	<p>Individual cultural differences will be recognized in individual service plans. A diversity lens will be used in our approach that focuses on individual specific needs.</p>	<p>All board and staff</p>	<p>Annually monitor the demographics of those served for demographic diversity. In our client feedback questions ask if those served felt safe (comfortable). From this monitoring, identify if there need to be changes in staffing (to be culturally reflective of the</p>	<p>Executive Director, Management Team and all staff</p>	<p>Annual demographic report of those served prepared for the annual report</p> <p>Review of participant surveys and exit</p>

into all programs and services.			population we serve).  All service providers will consider cultural variables including heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, criminal status or income in their work with families.		surveys  Review of service plans  Feedback from community partners.
To improve interpersonal communications within Island Community Services.		All staff	Encourage staff to reflect on their own cultural values and beliefs and how those might impact on their work.	Executive Director, Management Team and all staff	
To engage all staff in a training plan to build awareness and action around indigenous reconciliation	Island Community services is active in the process of reconciliation	All staff	<u>PHAC Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Road Map</u> as a framework for staff training.	Program Directors and Managers	annually
To align all agency plans, policies and	All Island Community Services plans, policies and	Board and staff	Annual review and revision of all agency plans, policies and procedures to	Board of Directors Executive Director and Manageme	

<p>procedures with culturally competent principles and practices.</p>	<p>procedures</p>		<p>reflect Island Community Services commitment to cultural competency and diversity.</p> <p>In recruitment of new board members the board may consider recruiting members to reflect / represent the diversity of those served by Island Community Services.</p>	<p>nt Team</p>	
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