



# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Plan

Prepared By: DEIB Strategy Committee

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## Introduction

Family Transition Place (FTP) is committed to creating a comprehensive and intentional approach to fostering a diverse, equitable, inclusive and belonging environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

**DEIB Vision:** A place of belonging, free from barriers and discrimination, where all are safe and empowered.

**DEIB Mission:** We commit to our colleagues, clients, and community partners to nurture open and meaningful dialogues that challenge our norms, assumptions and biases; to foster an environment of respect, equity and compassion that honours individuals across all social locations.

**At Family Transition Place, DEIB—Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging—is more than just a set of principles; it is the foundation of how we serve, support, and empower every individual who walks through our doors.**

**Diversity** means recognizing, respecting, and valuing the differences among those we serve and the staff and volunteers who support them. This includes—but is not limited to—differences in race, skin tone, culture, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, language, education, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and lived experience. We understand that each person's journey and experiences are shaped by intersecting identities, and we embrace the richness that this diversity brings to our community.

**Equity** means providing each individual with the specific support, resources, and opportunities they need to overcome barriers and achieve safety and stability. We understand that not everyone starts from the same place or faces the same challenges—so we don't offer one-size-fits-all solutions. We acknowledge the systemic inequalities that may have contributed to people's situations and are working to correct them through equitable care for all.

**Inclusion** is the intentional act of ensuring that each individual—regardless of their background or identity—is respected, heard, and fully welcomed into our space. It means designing our programs, policies, and spaces in ways that reflect and accommodate diverse experiences and perspectives. Inclusion also extends to our staff and volunteers, creating a culture where everyone's voice is valued and everyone has a role in shaping our mission.

**Belonging** is the deep sense of being accepted and valued just as you are. For the individuals we serve, staff and volunteers, this means feeling emotionally and physically safe—free from judgment, discrimination, or isolation. It means knowing that you are not just allowed to be here, but that you *matter* here. Belonging is what transforms our space from a temporary place of safety into a community of healing, dignity, and hope.

*Diversity is a fact. Equity is a choice. Inclusion is an action. Belonging is an outcome.* A. Chan



**By living out DEIB in our daily work, we strive to create a healing and empowering space where every person can thrive.**

The multi-year DEIB strategy plan outlines short term goals, long term goals, timeframes, measures and resources.

The strategy plan uses the **DRIVE** framework for long-term goals:

- **Directional:** moves the organization toward the general intention of the vision statement
- **Reasonable:** practical and obtainable, not extreme, or unrealistic
- **Inspiring:** provide management challenges and positive motivation
- **Visible:** the goal is easy to visualize
- **Eventual:** will be fulfilled at a certain date

And the **SMART** framework for short-term goals:

- **Specific,** well defined, clear to anyone with basic knowledge of the subject
- **Measurable** - the metrics are clear
- **Achievable,** attainable, meant to inspire motivation
- **Relevant,** aligns with the broader business goals
- **Time-bound** - timely, within a specific timeframe.

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## Background

- **History:** In 2016, FTP formed an Accessibility and Diversity Committee. In 2018, our Values Committee was formed. In 2020, the name of the Accessibility and Diversity committee changed to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility). In 2023, after receiving a grant to focus on building our DEIB initiatives, our DEIB Strategic Plan was developed and our DEIB Strategy Committee was formed. The IDEA Committee was merged into it to streamline efforts.
- **Annual Review Process:** The DEIB Strategy Committee will compile documented evaluation of the effectiveness of the DEIB plan on an annual basis using multiple resources.

Client and staff survey feedback is reviewed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of DEIB factors. The updated DEIB Strategy Plan is documented in a Word document, which tracks actions, timeframes, responsibilities, outcomes and effectiveness.

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## Feedback Mechanisms

### Client Surveys

- **Added Accessibility-Specific Questions:** Highlight key areas such as: Environment, Buildings, Transportation, Finances, Information, Communication and Attitude accessibility.
- **Added DEIB specific Question:** To determine if they feel comfortable discussing their race, nationality, gender, identity, or disability with staff.

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- **Open-Ended Questions:** Capture additional insights by asking, “Were there any challenges or barriers to your service at FTP?”
- **Annual Review:** Feedback is compiled by HR & Quality Assurance and shared with the DEIB Strategy Committee and department Supervisors/Directors.
- **Results of the 82 client surveys received in 2025:**
  - 77% indicated that they felt comfortable discussing their race, nationality, gender, identity, or disability with staff.
  - 76% indicated the FTP building and environment were accessible to them (physical space, air quality, lighting, noise level, etc.).
  - 100% indicated the FTP services are easy to access (transportation, cost to attend, technology, etc).
  - 100% indicated that FTP provides information and communication in a way that is easy to understand.

### Staff Surveys

- **Revised Through a DEIB Lens:** Questions were updated to ensure accessibility and inclusiveness, with focus areas on: Individual Needs, Team Dynamics, FTP Spaces & Service Delivery and Leadership & Community.
- **Feedback Analysis:** Collected by HR and Quality Assurance every two years, shared with the Executive Director, and broken down by department to be shared with Leadership for actionable follow-up.

### Board Surveys

- **Revised Through a DEIB Lens:** Questions were updated with focus areas on: board composition, core values of belonging, dignity and justice through our recruitment processes, and board culture.
- **Feedback Analysis:** Collected by Quality Assurance annually, shared with Board and Governance Chairs for actionable follow-up.

### Complaint Mechanisms for all stakeholders:

- Complaint policy on web site <https://familytransitionplace.ca/contact/complaint-policy/>
- Staff complaint process
- Client complaint process – posted throughout building

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### Multi-year DEIB strategy plan was created in 2023 to run through 2026.

**Goal 1:** Creating opportunities where we can nurture open and meaningful dialogues that challenge our norms, assumptions, and biases

#### Effectiveness/Notes:

- Staff led DEIB learnings and discussions twice a month at Agency Connections Meetings

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- Connections meeting DEIB training from University of Guelph students
- Internal Communication Policy edited to include wording on opinions and feedback
- DEIB discussions have been built into Peer Support and Team meetings
- DEIB activities and learnings at bi-annual All Staff meetings
- Sought feedback at All Staff – DEIB Committee to revise process in 2026
- Trainings and discussions have been effective

**Goal 2:** Perform a review of FTP’s documents to identify and remove barriers and potentially discriminatory practices

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Website has been revamped to remove barriers and has designated space under the ‘About’ tab for Equity and Social Responsibility. In this section, we added our apology statement as well as our DEIB journey
- Any new policies, or policies reviewed, are being done through a DEIB lens
- Ongoing, continual process with new policies or website updates
- Process has been effective

**Goal 3:** Assess and identify baseline inclusion skills and provide the needed learning resources (what inclusion means and its place at FTP)

Effectiveness/Notes:

- DEIB reflection at All Staff with recommendations on where we are and where we want to go moving forward
- Run to the Monster sessions provided a baseline of learnings for staff, and the recorded trainings are provided to new staff
- Provided learning resources through employee led trainings at twice-monthly Connections meetings
- This will be ongoing, as we will always provide learnings in DEIB
- This has been effective – employees noted during the reflection that they enjoyed the learning sessions and learned from the trainings.

**Goal 4:** Assess and identify FTP-relevant EDI learning needs (through an annual staff survey) and provide the resources to address them (e.g., specific diversities)

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Post Run to the Monster survey
- Question has been included in All Staff evaluations on DEIB learning needs
- Continue to look for opportunities to embed DEIB questions in other surveys that go to staff (rather than a separate DEIB survey)
- Surveys happen every two years, and we did not have a staff survey in 2025

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**Goal 5:** Create a framework through which we acknowledge and honour multiple faith-based and cultural practices for staff and clients

Effectiveness/Notes:

- 2024 Culture survey completed. Survey showed that employees want to acknowledge events/celebrations vs. actively celebrating
- Initiated a Culture Table display but there wasn't interest in keeping it going.
- This is ongoing to support all staff cultural practices.
- This has not been effective
- Currently looking at new ideas and staff are encouraged to engage in process

**Goal 6:** Develop an external communication strategy (i.e., website, social media, newsletters) that demonstrates EDI work at FTP

Effectiveness/Notes:

- As a part of our overall agency Communications Strategy, internal and external communication materials are developed with a DEIB lens to ensure our marketing materials continue to represent the diverse experiences of the individuals we serve.
- Website now shows our DEIB journey
- <https://familytransitionplace.ca/about/equity-and-social-responsibility/our-deib-journey/>
- This will be updated on an ongoing basis
- Updated agency brochure with diverse imagery and content
- Increased representation in marketing materials is effective

**Goal 7:** Identify service gaps and create collaborations with organizations that have expertise in providing cultural/diversity appropriate services

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Sought feedback from teams and developed document with the identified service gaps
- Sub-committee formed to work through identified gaps
- Working on developing relationship with DCAFS staff through meetings/initiatives
- Research student from Humber Polytechnic Research Analyst Program completed a 12-week DEIB Research Project and Report - Understanding Current State of Service Delivery Through A DEIB Lens At Family Transition Place. This included sessions with staff, client, community and surveys relating to barriers to service.
- Effective and ongoing

**Goal 8:** Review and rewrite client and staff surveys to reflect values and inclusion work

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Staff and Client surveys were reviewed, and questions were added to include a DEIB and accessibility lens
- Client surveys have been rolled out and uploaded to the website
- New staff survey will be used in 2026

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- Effectiveness to be determined

**Goal 9:** Seek out two grant opportunities to fund ongoing EDI work/initiatives.

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Applications have been completed for both opportunities – Brampton Caledon Community Foundation for accessibility as well as Hussein Foundation – South Asian Bar Association to provide culturally responsive resources and services to population in Dufferin
- Brampton Caledon Community Foundation grant was successful and paid for the external accessibility audit
- Hussein Foundation grant was unsuccessful
- South Asian Bar Association grant is to be determined
- Partially effective. Will still seek out opportunities to enhance culturally responsive services

**Goal 10:** A diversity of staff that reflects the community FTP serves at all levels of the organization

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Job postings include inclusive language, and we look at posting in a variety of locations.
- Question added to the annual staff satisfaction survey regarding perception / reality of staff diversity
- Inventory of staff spoken languages completed so that we can better serve our community
- Effective

**Goal 11:** Increase participation with provincial groups and stakeholders that are working to break down larger systemic barriers that exist

Effectiveness/Notes:

- Documented number of existing and new memberships
- Continuously working on building relationships with provincial groups and stakeholders that are working to break down larger systemic barriers that exist
- Present and raised GBV issues at both provincial and federal debates
- Effective

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## Trends and Key Learnings

- **Need to concentrate on a few priorities, not a big list.**
- **Need for Staff to Lead.** More engagement is anticipated when staff feel that it is not Leadership driven.
- **GBV Focused Awareness and Training:** Staff feedback indicates a need for ongoing DEIB training focused on how it relates to and can be applied to the GBV work we are doing.

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- **Demographic Insights for Tailored Services:** Optional demographic questions in surveys have provided valuable data, enabling the customization of services to better serve diverse client groups, including newcomers and those with disabilities.
- **Operational Improvements:** Recruitment of more diverse staff with multiple languages, as well as diversity to support our clients, acknowledging that diversity is not always visible.
- **Incorporating Accessibility Intentionally:** Accessibility audit to be added to DEIB workplan annually.

### **Training and Engagement** (clients, staff, board members, volunteers)

- Availability for staff and volunteers to participate in the Run to the Monster Inclusion Challenge Training covering DEIB topics. (staff)
- Connections Meetings (staff)
- Yearly All Staff Meeting
- Team Meetings
- Board training – the staff led monthly topics were brought to the board for discussion/conversation
- Client – information posted around building

### **Policy and Strategy**

- All policies looked at through DEIB lens during scheduled reviews.
- Specific policies, and initiatives aimed at promoting diversity across various dimensions:
  - FTP-OP 1.2 Healthy Relationship Development and Conflict Resolution
  - FTP-OP 1.5 Whistleblower
  - FTP-OP 2.3 Respectful Environment
  - FTP-OP 2.4 Workplace Harassment
  - FTP-OP 2.10 Accessibility Standards
  - FTP-OP 2.14 Competing Rights Situations
  - FTP-OP 3.3 Recruitment and Hiring
  - FTP-OP 4.2 Open Door Policy
  - FTP-PP 4.11 Client Complaint Process
  - FTP-PP 4.13 Gender Diversity Policy
  - FTP-PP 4.17 Supporting Clients with Mental Health Needs
  - FTP-PP 4.18 Services for First Nation, Metis & Inuit Women
  - FTP-PP 4.19 French & Multi Language Services
  - Employee Handbook (pgs. 6, 10, 12, 23)
  - Volunteer Handbook (pgs. 5, 9)
  - Mission, Vision & Values

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- Respect Sign (throughout building)
  - What you can Expect from Family Transition Place (Shelter Clients)
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### Immediate Next Steps

1. **DEIB Committee recruitment:** Less leadership, more staff on the committee. Let staff bring forward ideas that a leadership liaison can bring to the leadership team for approval.
  2. **Conduct Accessibility Review Annually:** Leadership and DEIB Strategy Committee to complete building audit.
  3. **Client and Staff Survey Analysis:** Share collected 2025 survey feedback with relevant departments over the year.
  4. **DEIB Plan Update:** Revise the DEIB plan based on progress, trends, staff feedback and new learnings.
  5. **Grant Application Follow-Up:** Monitor the status of grants for audit recommendations and seek out grant opportunities to fund recommended accessibility renovations.
  6. **Promote Awareness:** Increase visibility of accessibility initiatives through staff training and communication about activities taking place.
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### Reference Documents

1. DEIB Strategy Committee Terms of Reference
  2. Multi-year DEIB strategy plan (2023 – 2026)
  3. Client Survey Data (2025)
  4. Staff Survey Data (2024)
  5. 2025 External Accessibility Audit
  6. Research report - Understanding Current State Of Service Delivery Through A DEIB Lens At Family Transition Place
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FTP remains dedicated to our ongoing efforts to reflect our commitment to fostering a diverse, equitable, inclusive and belonging environment where everyone feels valued and respected

For more information, please visit our DEIB and Accessibility web pages:

<https://familytransitionplace.ca/about/equity-and-social-responsibility/>

<https://familytransitionplace.ca/accessibility/>

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