

RUNNING HEAD: RELATIONSHIP OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Relationship Between an Organization's Aspiration for a Culture of Diversity and Inclusion,  
its Documents and Policy, and Employee Experience

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this research study is to identify the relationship between an organization's aspiration for a culture of diversity and inclusion, its documents and policy, and employee experience. Through analyzing the documents and policies of a small nonprofit organization and comparing the results of an employee survey focused on questions related to the current culture of diversity and inclusion in the organization it is the intent to identify any gaps that exist between these components. Research has shown that organizations that have a successful culture of diversity and inclusion have better outcomes, including increased employee engagement, retention, and increased work performance, not only for the employee, but for the organization as well.

*Keywords:* Diversity, Inclusion, relationship, employee experience

## The Relationship between an Organization's Aspirations for a Culture of Diversity and Inclusion, its Documents and Policy, and Employee Experience

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research study is to identify the relationship between a small nonprofit organization's aspiration for a culture of diversity and inclusion, its documents and policies, and employee experience. There is limited literature that addresses the gaps in an organization's status of diversity and inclusion and how to obtain that culture, specifically in small nonprofit organizations. There is, however, a growing amount of literature on the benefits to for profit and nonprofit organizations of having and purposefully creating a culture of diversity and inclusion. The benefits range from group work performance improvement, retention, increased employee engagement, and emotional commitment to the organization resulting in individual improved work performance, and a deeper sense of belonging (Henao et. Al, 2021). The importance of this research is that it can create an opportunity to take the data obtained from the research to help the organization to identify the gaps in its approach, to identify best strategies for moving toward a desired culture of diversity and inclusion.

The area of research on diversity and inclusivity related to the benefits for the employee and organization is still new, compared to other areas of leadership and management style. Much of the interest began as a result of federal laws related to diversity and inclusivity, and equal opportunity employment in the United States. There is still much needed research and study to be done on inclusivity and diversity in the workplace, and how to create that culture. There are few leadership approaches to diversity and inclusion, however there are other disciplines of theory that apply to this subject. The Cognitive Diversity Hypothesis is once such theory. The cognitive diversity hypothesis suggests that multiple perspectives stemming from

the cultural differences between group or organizational members result in creative problem solving and innovation (Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007). Another theory is Similarity-Attraction Paradigm. Attitudes and beliefs are common antecedents to interpersonal attraction. However, other traits such as race, age, sex, and socioeconomic status can serve as signals to reveal deep-level traits about ourselves. For example, numerous studies investigating job-seeker behaviors have shown that individuals are more attracted to companies whose recruitment literature includes statements and images that reflect their own identity group. One study showed that companies perceived to value diversity based on their recruitment literature are more attractive to racial minorities and women compared to Whites (Perkins et al., 2000). The hypothesis for this body of research is if gaps exist within this organization between their aspiration for a culture of diversity and inclusion, their documents and policies, and the employee experience based upon the survey, they will have a platform to begin building the culture they desire. In doing so, the organization will benefit from what research shows a culture of diversity and inclusion supports, which is employee engagement, retention, return on investment of new hires, and improved job performance related to a feeling of belonging, value, and appreciation (Brimhall, 2019).

### Literature Review

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) have been the subject of many research articles, organizational strategic plans, and recruitment and retention efforts. Key national and international events, politics, and changes in legislature to protect the rights of minorities and at-risk groups have increased over the past decade. These events and political changes have created an area of research related to diversity and inclusivity in the workplace, protection of employee rights, and the benefits of having an organizational culture that is founded on principles of D&I.

The articles in this literature review are based on organizations that already have a culture of D&I embedded in their organization and the outcomes of their research show the benefits to the employee, the organization, or both, when D&I are a part of an organization's mission and culture. The theory under consideration for this research is to examine a small nonprofit organization to identify what is the relationship between the organizations goals and aspirations of diversity and inclusivity, their written policy and documents, and employee experience. For the purpose of this literature review, inclusion is defined as a feeling of belonging and acceptance for one's unique qualities and characteristics, feeling valued and welcomed within the organization as an important member (Henao et al., 2021). It is also defined in terms of the extent to which individuals are allowed to participate and are enabled to contribute fully, and the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in the work system (Vohra & Chari, 2015). Diversity is defined as consisting of visible and non-visible differences which include factors such as gender, age, background, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation, personality, and workstyle (Ohemeng & McGrandle, 2021). As Dr. Joseph Petner states "the idea of belonging and membership, being part of a community, is a basic human need. It's one of the principles of our democratic society... to include everyone is to open up those possibilities for learning and appreciating our humanity" (Vohar & Chari, 2015).

Shifting demographics mean organizations must find effective, culturally appropriate ways to meet the needs of clients and employees. By 2050 half of the US population will be of non-European origin, and about 4.5% currently identify as gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, or queer/questioning (Henao et al., 2021). There has been a shift in the paradigm from companies considering a D&I culture because of legal or federal requirements to choosing to be purposeful in their goal or mission to create a culture of diversity and inclusion. Being able to

recognize and promote uniqueness of different groups of a diverse workforce is not only acknowledged as instrumental in improving performance, but also an imperative that organizations can no longer choose to ignore (Vohra & Chari, 2015). Thomas et al (2021), identifies that a relationship exists between an organizations culture of D&I and potential employees that seek out a company because of their focus on inclusivity within their teams, and the large role this plays in the company's identity. Brimhall (2019) states that when organizations create a climate for inclusion and employees have a shared perception of the extent that the organization helps members feel valued for their individual or unique personal characteristics, may be an ideal way to invite and channel diversity into the workplace.

Review of literature related to companies and organizations that have a culture of purposeful D&I show that there is a relationship between diversity and inclusion in the workplace and perceived benefits to the employee and the organization. D&I education that addresses perceptual filters, including prejudice, stereotyping, bias in hiring practices, employee well-being, and team-member satisfaction can lead to higher employee performance and sense of belonging (Henaio et al., 2021). Brimhall (2019) studied the relationship between an organization's climate of inclusion and how it is positively associated with affective commitment, defined as emotional attachment to the organization, and how this can improve employee performance. Specifically in non-profit organizations employee commitment is a key factor for increasing performance. Brimhall examined the hypothesis that a climate for inclusion where employees feel valued for their personal uniqueness may promote the fulfillment of employee's need for esteem, approval, and affiliation. The more an employee is emotionally attached to the organizations mission and goals (inclusion) the more willing they are to increase their effort toward their work, which ultimately increases their work performance. Brimhall

(2019) concluded that when employee needs for approval and esteem are met, it allows for greater social identification in the organization, and more specifically, a climate of inclusion may be a key factor in helping leaders increase employee commitment and performance in diverse non-profit work contexts (Brimhall, 2019). Thomas et al (2021), researched an organization whose mission and values were based on diversity and inclusion, specifically related to people with disabilities. Their study was guided by the question of what are the overarching attitudes, values, and approaches, taken by the organization in their efforts to be inclusive and diverse. They also explored the question of how the company extends this feeling of wellbeing and support through all levels and departments of the company. They discovered through previous studies, that companies with diversity benefited in several ways, including increased profitability, a competitive advantage in recruiting qualified employees, a more inclusive work culture, and greater ability awareness. The research by Thomas et al (2019) also revealed the benefits such as diversification of work settings leads to a more positive inclusive work environment and improved morale for all employees. An inclusive culture is found to be a force in the retention of employees, particularly those that find value in the work of the company (Thomas et al., 2019). Inclusion is about achieving a balance between feeling appreciated for unique characteristics and a sense of belonging as an important member of the organization. Creating a climate of inclusion means creating an environment that recognizes each individual talents and encouraging a sense of commonality and belonging (Brimhall, 2019). Employee attendance in D&I trainings have shown a correlation that an increase in employee perception of feeling included in the organization may be related not only to the trainings, but to the level of involvement of front-line leaders who show support for D&I training (Heno et al., 2021). Research shows that educating front line leaders to support D&I should be a strategic imperative,

as employees working under a less than committed manager are far less likely to feel welcomed and included, and more likely to leave the organization. Leaders must implement and model D&I behaviors and best practices (Henaio et al., 2021).

When discussing diversity as consisting of visible and non-visible differences which include factors such as gender, age, background, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, personality, and workstyle, we must look at two different types of diversity: passive and active. When differentiating between passive and active diversity, Ohemeng & McGrandle (2021) describe passive diversity as being concerned with the bureaucracy of having the same demographic origins (gender, race, income, class, religion, etc.) as the population it serves. Active representation is identified when individuals are expected to press for the interests and desires of those they are presumed to represent. Passive diversity representation is about demographics, and active diversity representation means pushing for representation of diverse values, opinions, and needs, which forms the basis of diversity management and inclusion (Ohemeng & McGrandle, 2021). Modern organizations now recognize the critical need to adopt, invest and implement diversity as a corporate strategy for talent management. Workplace diversity is a concept that denotes the differences between people working in or for an organization and can also mean the differences among individuals and their beliefs about how they identify themselves, as well as how others distinguish them in that organization (Cletus et al., 2018). These characteristics typically encompass demographics such as gender, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, geographic location, religious or political beliefs.

The literature supports the benefits to employees and organizations that focus on, and embed, diversity and inclusion into their culture and mission. According to Cletus et al (2018),

the potential benefits of diversity can result in increased creativity, productivity, and profit maximization, as well as the infusion of novel ideas, attitudes, and skills. Their findings also reveal that diversity can be a crucial link between corporate mission or vision and the overall performance (Cletus et al., 2018). Brimhall (2019) concludes that workplace inclusion helps increase nonprofit employee's identification with, and emotional attachment to, the organization, which then enhance the effort employees put toward their work and overall perceived work group performance. Effective management of diversity has been attributed to reducing discrimination and improving employee morale, increased organizational attractiveness, attracting highly qualified minority employees, improved job satisfaction, and overall improvement in organizational performance (Ohemeng & McGrandle, 2021). Organizations committed to investment in D&I education, can increase engagement, satisfaction, and revenues over those that expend fewer resources (Henaio et al., 2021). It is clear through literature review of studies done on organizations with existing cultures or missions of D&I, that these organizations experience multiple benefits of employee engagement, retention, work performance and organizational benefits of overall organizational performance, increased revenue, recruitment of educated and quality employees, and a more satisfied workforce that feels valued and appreciated.

It was identified there are gaps within the literature as they do not address or study any organizations that do not currently support or have D&I as a part of the organizational culture or mission, the documentation of such organizations or the employee experience. The literature would propose that if D&I were initiated within an organization currently lacking this culture that the benefits identified in the literature would develop, but there is no suggested methodology in how to implement D&I into the culture of an organization currently lacking this training.

Most of the methods in the literature review are dependent on employee survey, with minimal direct contact or interview of employees. There was no literature identified that discussed the occurrence or outcomes of an organization that implemented D&I and the employee perception or experience prior to implementation and the employee experience post implementation of D&I training within the organization. There was also a lack of review in organizational policies or documents in the research related to each organizations culture of D&I to support that the commitment was embedded in their culture. The studies were based on larger organizations, most with over 10,000 employees. This researcher will focus on a small nonprofit organization with fewer than 200 employees. The research question of what the relationship between the organizations goals and aspirations of diversity and inclusivity is, their written policies and documents, and employee experience, will be ascertained through review of documents and policies, as well as an employee survey. The goal of the employee survey is to learn about the employee experience within the organization, their understanding of the organizations culture, and their understanding of the D&I written text, documents, or policies within the organization. This study may contribute to research on this topic by identifying the gaps the organization has in their aspirations and goals to create a culture of diversity and inclusivity, and what is needed to achieve that if gaps are identified.

#### Framework for Analysis

The theories referred to for this study were Cognitive Diversity Hypothesis and Similarity-Attraction Paradigm. The cognitive diversity hypothesis suggests that multiple perspectives stemming from the cultural differences between group or organizational members result in creative problem solving and innovation (Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007). Similarity-Attraction Paradigm shows that attitudes and beliefs are common factors in interpersonal

attraction, such as race, age, sex, and socioeconomic status. Numerous studies investigating job-seeker behaviors have shown that individuals are more attracted to companies whose recruitment literature includes statements and images that reflect their own identity group. One study showed that companies perceived to value diversity based on their recruitment literature are more attractive to racial minorities and women compared to Whites (Perkins et al, 2000). The evaluation criteria for this study was an employee survey with questions related to the employee experience in the organization as it relates to diversity and inclusion. The data from the study will be collected to determine if there are gaps identified between the organization's aspirations for a culture of diversity and inclusion and the employee experience.

### Methods

This study explores the relationship between the organization's aspirations for a culture of diversity and inclusion, its documents and policy, and employee experience. This is a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis using review of documents and policies, as well as self-report survey.

#### *Participants*

The participants are current employees of the organization aged 18 and older. The participation in the research survey was voluntary and not a condition of employment. Participants had the right to refuse to answer any or all questions once they consented to participate in the survey. Participants were not compensated in any way for participating in the research survey. Participants were informed that the survey was anonymous, and the data was aggregated into categories, so no personal identifying information was obtainable. They were

informed the intent of the survey was to use the data to assist the organization in identifying areas of improvement needed to move forward in creating a culture of diversity and inclusion.

#### *Procedure and Materials*

Participants were recruited by using the organization's employee email distribution list, excluding those under age 18. Eligible employees received an email with the consent (Appendix A) to participate explaining the study and purpose for the research. Once the employee consented to participate, they were provided with a link that took them to the survey (Appendix B) where their responses were anonymous. The survey included 11 questions related to diversity and inclusion, as well as employee demographic data to assist in identifying current diversity status among the employees of the organization.

This study included an examination of the organization's documents and policies related to diversity and inclusion that are accessible to employees. The materials analyzed included the organizations website and online recruitment materials, onboarding and orientation materials, any policies related to diversity or inclusion, reporting practice and policy for concerns related to safety or bias in the workplace, as well as the employee handbook.

The data obtained from the review of materials and employee survey were analyzed to identify participant demographics and beliefs about the organization's culture related to diversity and inclusion. Relationships amongst these beliefs were also reviewed.

#### Results

Forty-two employees responded to the survey (Appendix C). Of these 42 participants, 31 identified as female, eight identified as male, one identified as non-binary, and two preferred not to answer. Out of total participants, five identified as Protestant, five as Roman Catholic, one as Jewish, one as Buddhist, five as Atheist, six as Agnostic, nine preferred not to answer, and six

identified as other. In terms of sexual orientation, 31 identified as heterosexual, one as bisexual, four as gay/lesbian, three as asexual, one as pansexual, and two as prefer not to say. None of the participants considered themselves to have a disability, however, three preferred not to say.

Thirty-six of the 42 participants identified as White/Caucasian, while four preferred not to say, and two identified as other.

Analysis of the survey questions revealed that 62% of participants agreed they could comfortably talk about their social or cultural background in the workplace, 19% somewhat agreed, 7% responded as neutral, 10% somewhat disagreed, and 2% disagreed. In response to the statement “inclusivity is one of our most important values in this organization”, 51% agreed, 22% somewhat agreed, 12% responded as neutral, 12% somewhat disagreed, and 2% disagreed. Forty-eight percent agreed that employees can communicate concerns safely in the organization, 19% somewhat agreed, 12% were neutral, 19% somewhat disagreed, and 2% disagreed. In terms of identifying who they can report safety concerns to within the organization, 86% responded affirmatively, while 14% stated they did not know who to report concerns to. In identifying the need for further employee training on diversity and inclusion 50% agreed the organization could benefit, 21% somewhat agreed, 19% were neutral, 10% somewhat disagreed, and no one disagreed. Forty-eight percent of participants felt that employee’s different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences were appreciated within the organization, 40% somewhat agreed, 7% neutral, 2% somewhat disagreed, and 2% disagreed. In response to the statement “There is diversity among the people a job candidate will meet/see on their first visit to the organization”, 21% agreed, 24% somewhat agreed, 24% were neutral, 21% somewhat disagree, and 10% disagreed. Sixty percent of respondents agreed that the organization fosters a workplace allowing employees to be themselves without fear, 31% somewhat agreed, 5% were neutral, 5%

somewhat disagreed, and no one disagreed. Forty-eight percent of participants agreed that the organizations policy or procedures encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion, 24% somewhat agree, 17% neutral, 10% somewhat disagree, and 2% disagree. In referring to the location and ease of obtaining documents and policies related to diversity and inclusion, only 12% agreed, 21% somewhat agreed, 29% were neutral, 21% somewhat disagreed, and 17% disagreed. In response to a question related to their awareness and understanding of how to report any incident of discrimination or bias, 40% agreed they were aware of how to report, 26% somewhat agreed, 12% were neutral, 12% somewhat disagreed, and 10% disagreed.

Of the people who responded “disagreed” with the statement that they can comfortably discuss their social and cultural background in the workplace, the majority answered that they would “prefer not to say” regarding sexual orientation. On the statement of “in this organization, employees appreciate others whose backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences are different from their own, of those that answered disagreed or somewhat disagree, 3% identified as a sexual orientation other than heterosexual, and 3% identified ethnicity prefer not to say. Of the 42 participants in the study, 31 were female. Of those 31 females, 28 (more than half of the respondents) were heterosexual who also identified as White/Caucasian. Furthermore, it was determined that the majority of the “agree” responses to all questions in the survey were answered by this same group of 28 participants. The majority of “somewhat disagree” or “disagree” responses for all survey questions came from those who demographically identified as a minority group within the organization or had chosen to answer, “prefer not to say”. In the demographic portion of the survey, it is noted that 6 of the participants chose “prefer not to say” for ethnicity/race, 15 participants chose “prefer not to say” for religious affiliation, three

participants chose “prefer not to say” for disability, two chose “prefer not to say” for gender identity, and two chose “prefer not to say” for sexual orientation.

The organization’s documents and policies related to diversity and inclusion, for which employees have access, are all located within the employee handbook. The documents and policies do not specifically address or discuss diversity and inclusion, but address topics such as equal opportunity employment, antiharassment, discrimination, bullying, and safe reporting. There were three policies identified: the Equal Employment Opportunity and Mutual Respect Policy, the Anti-Harassment Policy, and the Report Safe Procedure information (Appendix D).

The equal employment opportunity and mutual respect policy (p.13) outlines the organizations efforts to “create a professional environment of mutual respect, regardless of background, interests, culture, or lifestyle.” They state they are committed to equal employment opportunity, which to the organization means “treating all employees and applicants for employment equally without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), gender, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.” The policy refers to religious observances and that the organization will “endeavor to accommodate sincere religious beliefs of its employees to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the community’s operations.” This policy does state that every supervisor and manager, as well as each employee, share responsibility in upholding this policy by his or her personal actions. The policy also states that if the employee feels he or she, or another employee, have been subject to discrimination or harassment, he or she should

immediately bring this matter to the attention of his or her immediate supervisor, human resources, or any other member of management with whom he or she feels comfortable.

The anti-harassment policy outlines that the organization's goal is to create a work environment where all employees feel respected, find meaningful work, and feel safe. The organization defines harassment as "conduct or behavior, which is offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with employee's work performance" (p.15). They also state they believe that each employee has the right to be free from discrimination, violence, and harassment. Their list of protected groups from harassment include the same categories as listed in the equal employment opportunity and mutual respect policy. The anti-harassment policy does state this covers all harassment, whether verbal, physical, or arising out of the "work environment created, in the office, at work assignments out of the office, or sponsored social functions." The anti-harassment policy does separate sexual harassment and bullying, with further definitions and quantifiers (p. 16).

Furthermore, per the policy, managers, supervisors, and employees must immediately inform their direct supervisor, human resources, or the executive director if any behavior that violates this policy is reported to them or they witness it. In the employee handbook (p. 19), there is a Report Safe- Anonymous and Confidential Hotline listed with the website, phone number, and email for any employee, regardless of position, to report issues such as "fraud, unethical conduct, regulatory compliance issues, resident abuse or inappropriate or illegal conduct". Review of the organization's website, under employment recruitment and marketing materials, there is no visible diversity shown in the photographs amongst those selected to represent the organization. On the website, the organization has a paragraph that defines the philosophy of inclusion as "Welcoming people. All people". The website states they are

thoughtful and intentional in developing the community to welcome the broadest spectrum of people.

### Discussion

In evaluating the organization's aspirations for a culture of diversity and inclusion, its documents and policies, and employee experience, there were gaps identified between where the organization wants to be as a culture, and how they currently represent, and support, diversity and inclusion.

The demographics of those that participated in the survey infer a lack of diversity in the organization. Of total participants, the majority identified as white, heterosexual females. One could infer that the statements of "agree" from this majority group of 28 white, heterosexual females could be related to the fact that these participants represent the majority, and therefore, see themselves represented widely throughout the organization. Thus, they feel more included than those who identify as a minority demographic. In the responses to demographics where participants indicated "prefer not to say", this suggests the participants did not feel comfortable disclosing this information in a survey related to the organization. Responses to question five indicate most participants feel the organization would benefit from more employee trainings related to diversity and inclusion. This would indicate that employees feel that there is a lack of education and training with regard to diversity and inclusion within the organization.

When answering questions related to the documents and policies regarding diversity and inclusion, access to those documents and policies, as well as procedures for reporting discrimination and/or bias in the workplace, there were mixed responses. Most responses related to the statement "the organization's policies or procedures encourage diversity, equity and inclusion" were "agree". However, when asked to respond to question 10, related to employees

knowing where to access these policies or documents, 67% of participants answered a combination of “neutral”, “somewhat disagree” and “disagree”. So, although 72% of the participants feel there is documentation and policy related to diversity and inclusion, 67% percent feel uncertain of where or how to access those documents.

When reviewing the organizations documents and policies, there were no documents or policies identified that were specifically related to or focused on diversity or inclusion or specifically expressed support of, or awareness of diversity or inclusion. This included the employee handbook, orientation, and onboarding materials. The documents examined referred to equal opportunity employment and covered the legal protected classes by law. Their anti-harassment policy again only covered the list of protected classes by law. The documents did address safe reporting, who and where to report concerns related to discrimination, as well as the organizations statement on no tolerance for “any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or violence” (Appendix D). The organization has a specific policy that explains the procedure for reporting incidents of “discrimination, harassment, or bullying” by “anyone, including supervisors, co-workers, customers, or visitors”. As survey results show, the participants were uncertain what documents the organization had related to diversity and inclusion, and where to access them. This is identified as a gap in the organization’s aspirations for a culture of diversity and inclusion from the standpoint of documents and policies to support and represent diversity and inclusion as a priority for the organization’s culture. The organizations website lacks any form of visible diversity in marketing photographs, with all chosen representatives being young, white employees. There were no photos on the website that indicated the organization employs a visibly diverse staff, or that a candidate who identifies as a minority demographic would recognize themselves in the employee population based on the website’s recruitment page.

There is a brief statement and a quote regarding inclusivity but it doesn't clearly identify the organizations aspirations around inclusion. Overall, the survey, review of documents, and website revealed a gap in information or resources to support the organizations aspirations of being a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Some shortcomings of this study include a low number of participants in the employee survey. This is related to limited access to the organizations email account. Not all employees receive an organization email address upon hire. Only directors, supervisors, managers, and some smaller departments such as facilities and nurses in the organization receive the organizations email. There are approximately 200 employees in the organization. Out of that 200, only 101 employees had access to the organizations email. This limited the number of possible participants and resulted in a participant group consisting mostly of directors, managers, and supervisors. The other limitation was the lack of response or identification of diversity within the organization through the survey demographic identifiers.

#### Conclusions/Recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to identify the relationship between a small nonprofit organization's aspiration for a culture of diversity and inclusion, its documents and policies, and employee experience. The review of literature revealed that organizations who embrace and intentionally create diversity and inclusion as part of the organization's culture show benefits to the employee and the organization. These include group performance improvement, retention, increased employee engagement, and emotional commitment to the organization, resulting in individual improved work performance, and a deeper sense of belonging (Henao et al., 2021).

The outcome of the research study for this organization identified gaps between the organizations aspirations for a culture of diversity and inclusion, and where the organization's culture currently stands based on review of documents, policies, and employee experience using the survey created for this study. The significance of this research is that it's methods and approach in identifying the gaps in the organization's culture of diversity and inclusion can be applied to other small, non-profit organizations to research their status and identify gaps.

Recommendations going forward for research in this organization would be to provide the survey to all employees over the age of 18, and to ensure access for all employees through an organization email account. It is also recommended to add a question pertaining to role within the organization. This would enable the organization to identify if there are differing views related to the organization's culture of diversity and inclusion based on management versus frontline employee roles. This would help the organization identify where there is a need for education, ongoing discussion, and training opportunities.

Further recommendations would include creating documents and policies that specifically relate to, and clearly state, the organizations culture of diversity and inclusion. Adding these documents to orientation and onboarding materials, as well as the employee handbook will support their aspiration for a culture of diversity and inclusion and will be easily accessible to employees. Again, prior research shows jobseekers are more attracted to companies whose recruitment literature (including marketing and website materials) includes statements and images that reflect their own identity group and gravitate to organizations that are perceived to value diversity based on their recruitment literature (Perkins et al., 2000). This organization should update the website to include a stronger statement on diversity and inclusion, as well as

include images of employees that represent a visible diversity among their employee demographics.

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## Appendix A

**Informed Consent Agreement**

**Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in this Survey.**

**Consent Form Key Information:** This is a graduate research study focused on identify potential gaps within organizational culture related to diversity and inclusivity within the workplace, the current policy and documentation, and the employee experience. If you consent to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in the following way:

- By clicking the link you consent to participate in an anonymous survey related to diversity and inclusivity related to the organization
- This survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes

**Purpose of the research study:** The purpose of the study is to identify potential gaps within the organization related to diversity and inclusion and to determine ways to improve culture, education and training related to diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

**What you will do in the study:** As a participant in the study, you will be asked to participate in a 10-question survey. Participants will be asked questions related your knowledge as to specific topics or information related to the organization in relation to diversity and inclusivity. This is an anonymous survey which is strictly volunteer and not a condition of your employment. Demographic information is requested but is optional and does not require you to answer.

**Risks:** The risks of participating in this study are minimal. You will not be asked any questions regarding your specific job, work performance, or evaluations. The questions you will be asked are related to organizational culture and experience only.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. The study may help us to understand where gaps exist in understanding, education or training in the organizations culture related to diversity and inclusivity.

**Confidentiality:** Your personal data will not be disclosed. No personally identifying factors will be included in the research or disclosed in the final paper or project. The information that you give in the survey will be handled confidentially. Your name and other information that could be used to identify you will not be collected or linked to the survey data.

**Voluntary participation:** Your participation in the study is completely voluntary.

**Right to withdraw from the study:** You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**How to withdraw from the study:** If you want to withdraw from the study, simply do not answer the link to the survey and do not complete the survey.

**Payment:** You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

**Using data beyond this study:** The data collected in this study will be used to help determine gaps within the organization's culture related to diversity and inclusivity. This data may be used to inform organizational leadership on the need for future education and training, policy or procedure, and onboarding material to support diversity and inclusivity in the organization's culture. You may request a written copy of a summary of final results by contacting Carolyn O'Driscoll.

**If you have questions about the study, contact:**

Carolyn O'Driscoll, Graduate Student Researcher  
Granite State College

[codriscoll47@gmail.com](mailto:codriscoll47@gmail.com)

603-770-9701

Dr. Kathleen Norris, Professor, Faculty Advisor

Granite State College

603-481-2848

[k.norris@granite.edu](mailto:k.norris@granite.edu)

**Agreement:**

By clicking on the attached survey link you acknowledge that you agree to participate in the research study described above.

**Granite State College IRB has approved solicitation of participants for this study.**

**IRB Project #202103co370**

## Appendix B

## Research Survey Questions:

All answers to the survey questions/statements will be rated on a scale of:

1. Agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Each question in the actual survey will have a radio button to select after each answer option.

All questions are optional, and you may decline to answer any question.

1. Employees can comfortably talk about their social or cultural background in the workplace.
2. Inclusivity is one of our most important values in this organization.
3. Employees can communicate concerns safely in the organization and understand who they can report safety concerns to.
4. This company could benefit from more employee trainings to improve its efforts to become more diverse and inclusive.
5. In this organization, employees appreciate others whose backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences are different from their own.
6. There is diversity among the people a job candidate will meet/see on their first visit to the company.
7. This organization fosters a workplace that allows employees to be themselves at work without fear.
8. The organizations policies or procedures encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion.
9. Documents and policy related to diversity and inclusion are easy to locate and employees are informed on where to locate them.
10. Employees are aware of and understand the procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination and/or bias in the workplace.

Please answer the following demographic questions:

**Gender Identification:**

Male  
Female  
Non-binary  
Transgender  
Other  
Prefer not to answer

**Religious Affiliation:**

Protestant  
Roman Catholic  
Mormon  
Orthodox Greek  
Jewish  
Muslim  
Buddhist  
Hindu  
Atheist  
Agnostic  
Other  
Prefer not to answer

**Sexual Orientation:**

Asexual  
Bisexual  
Gay/Lesbian  
Heterosexual/Straight  
Pansexual  
Queer  
Sexual orientation not listed here  
Prefer not to answer

**Disability Status:** Would you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes  
No  
Prefer not to answer

**Ethnicity/Race:**

Hispanic/Latino  
White/Caucasian  
Black/African American  
Native American/American Indian  
Asian/Pacific Islander  
Other  
Prefer not to answer

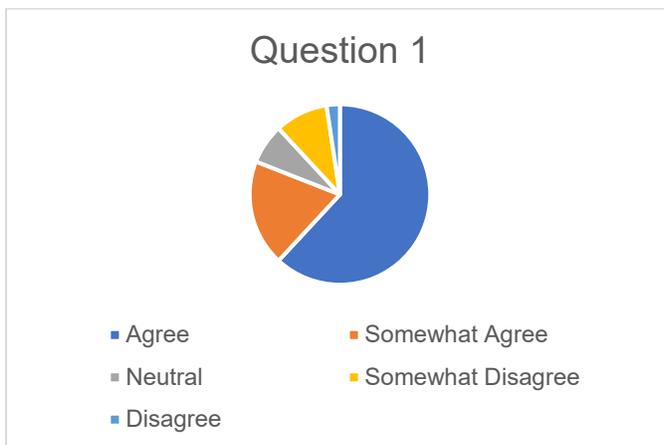
Appendix C

Survey Results

1.

Employees can comfortably talk about their social or cultural background in the workplace.

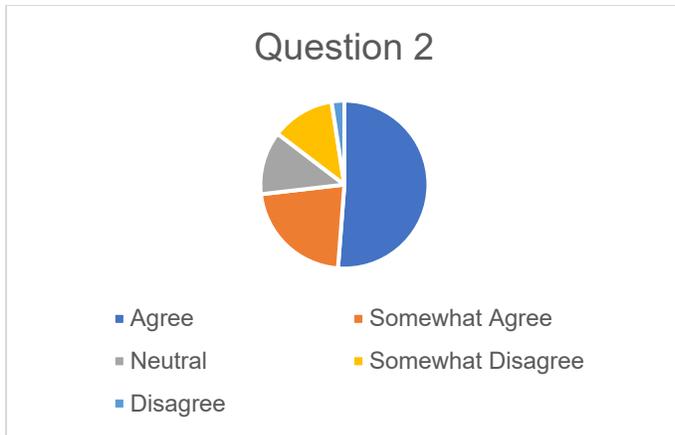
Agree	26
Somewhat Agree	8
Neutral	3
Somewhat Disagree	4
Disagree	1



2.

Inclusivity is one of our most important values in this organization.

Agree	21
Somewhat Agree	9
Neutral	5
Somewhat Disagree	5
Disagree	1



3. Employees can communicate concerns safely in the organization.

Agree	20
Somewhat Agree	8
Neutral	5
Somewhat Disagree	8
Disagree	1



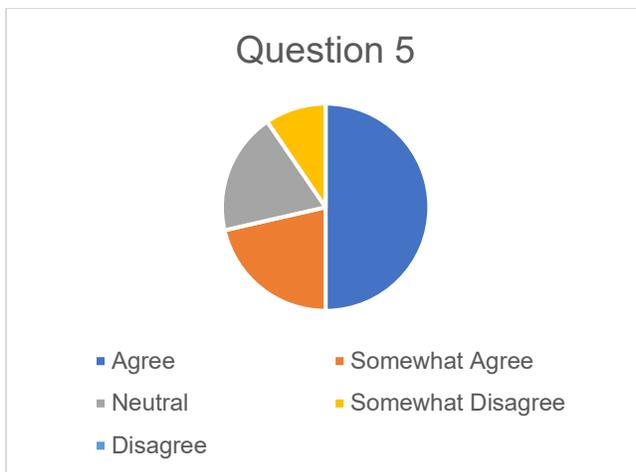
4. Employees understand who they can report safety concerns to.

Yes	36
No	6



5. This organization could benefit from more employee trainings to improve its efforts to become more diverse and inclusive.

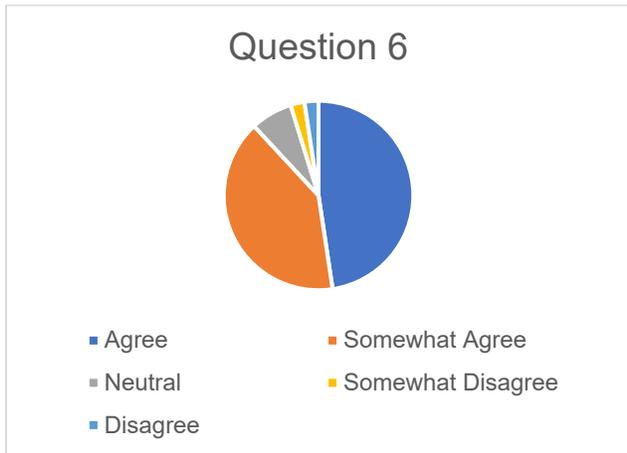
Agree	21
Somewhat Agree	9
Neutral	8
Somewhat Disagree	4
Disagree	0



6. In this organization, employees appreciate others whose backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences are different from their own.

Agree	20
Somewhat Agree	17

Neutral	3
Somewhat Disagree	1
Disagree	1



7.  
There is diversity among the people a job candidate will meet/see on their first visit to the organization.

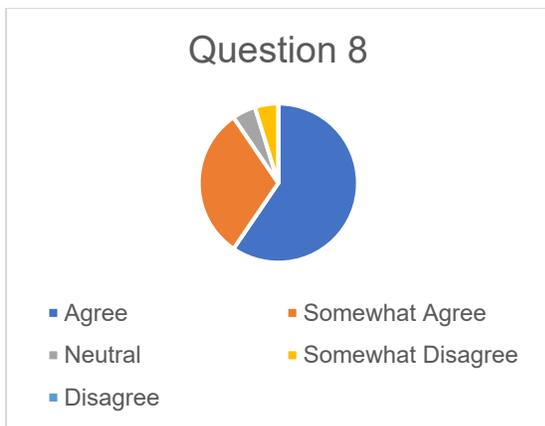
Agree	9
Somewhat Agree	10
Neutral	10
Somewhat Disagree	9
Disagree	4



8.

This organization fosters a workplace that allows employees to be themselves at work without fear.

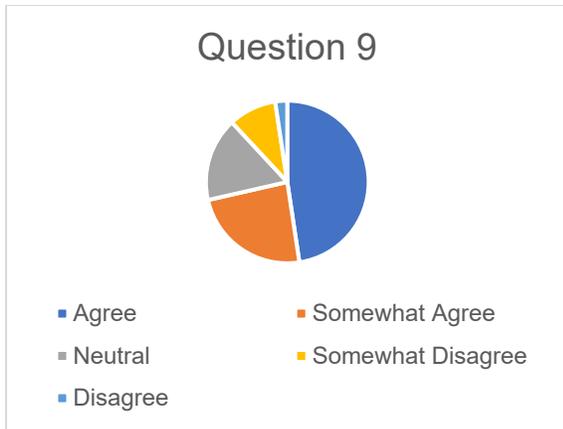
Agree	25
Somewhat Agree	13
Neutral	2
Somewhat Disagree	2
Disagree	0



9.

The organization's policies or procedures encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion.

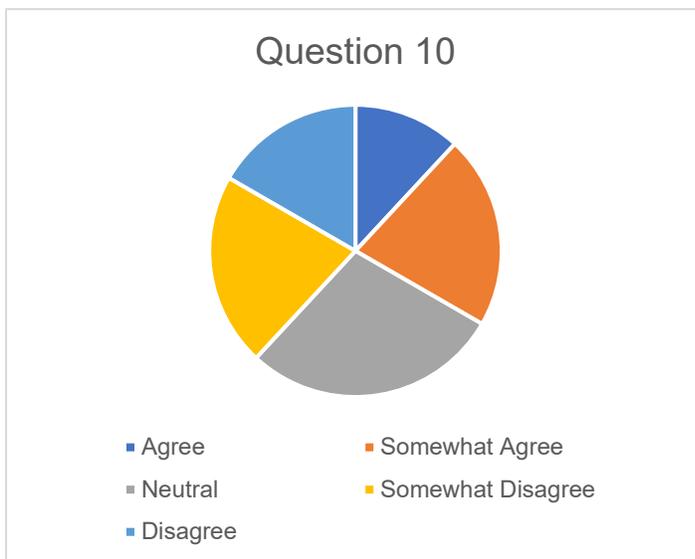
Agree	20
Somewhat Agree	10
Neutral	7
Somewhat Disagree	4
Disagree	1



10.

Documents and policy related to diversity and inclusion are easy to locate and employees are informed on where to locate them.

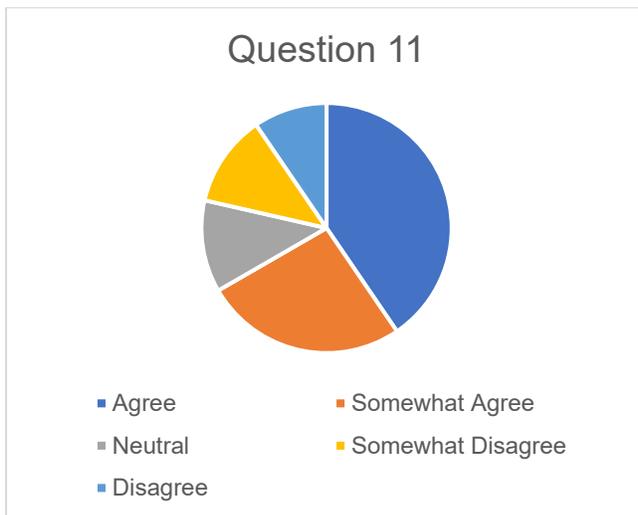
Agree	5
Somewhat Agree	9
Neutral	12
Somewhat Disagree	9
Disagree	7



11.

Employees are aware of and understand the procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination and/or bias in the workplace.

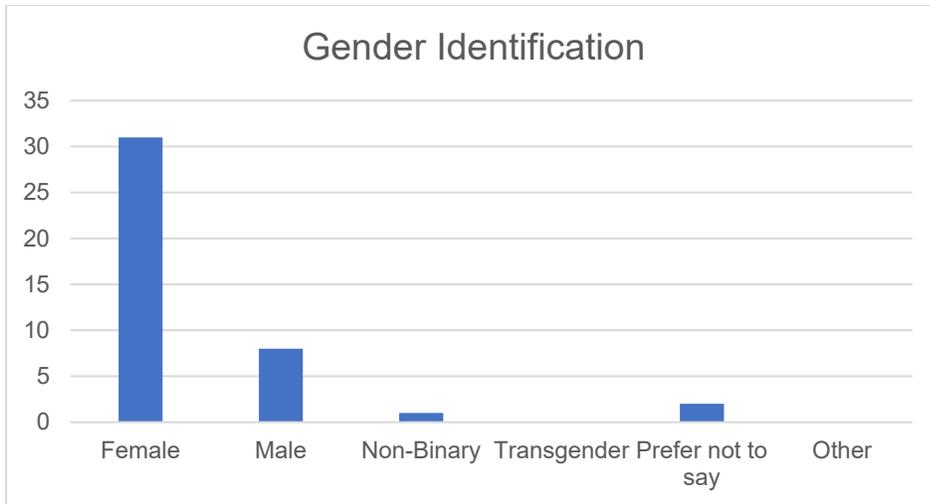
Agree	17
Somewhat Agree	11
Neutral	5
Somewhat Disagree	5
Disagree	4



12.

Gender Identification

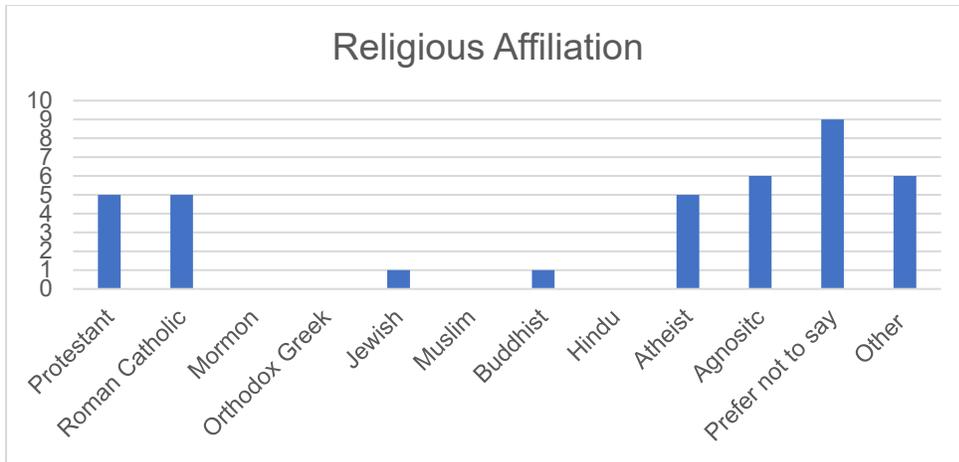
Female	31
Male	8
Non-binary	1
Transgender	0
Prefer not to say	2
Other	0



13.

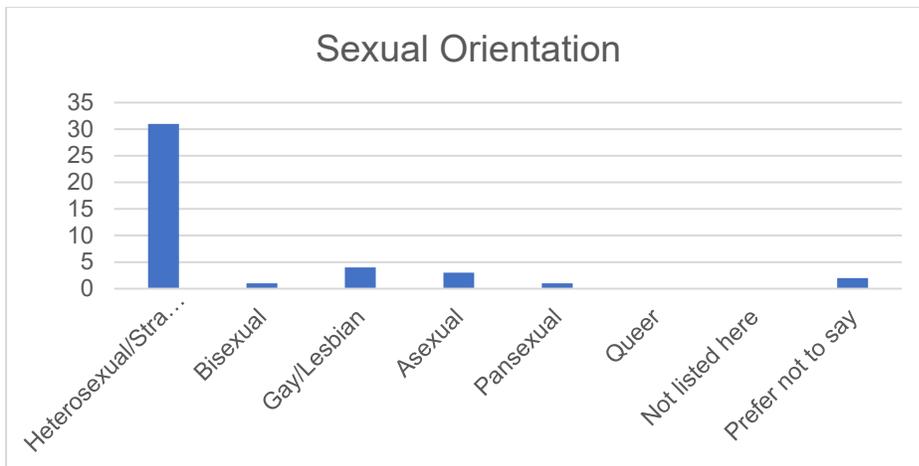
Religious Affiliation

Protestant	5
Roman Catholic	5
Mormon	0
Orthodox Greek	0
Jewish	1
Muslim	0
Buddhist	1
Hindu	0
Athiest	5
Agnostic	6
Prefer not to say	9
Other	6



14. Sexual Orientation

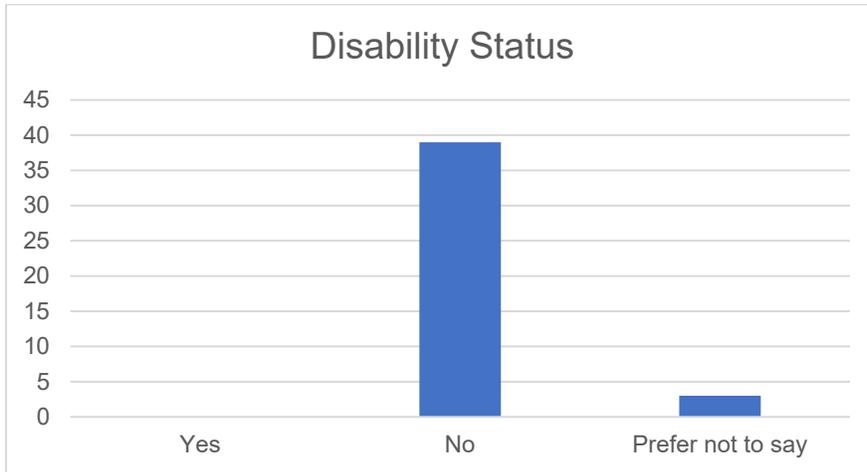
Heterosexual/Straight	31
Bisexual	1
Gay/Lesbian	4
Asexual	3
Pansexual	1
Queer	0
Sexual orientation not listed here	0
Prefer not to say	2



15.

Disability Status: Would you consider yourself to have a disability?

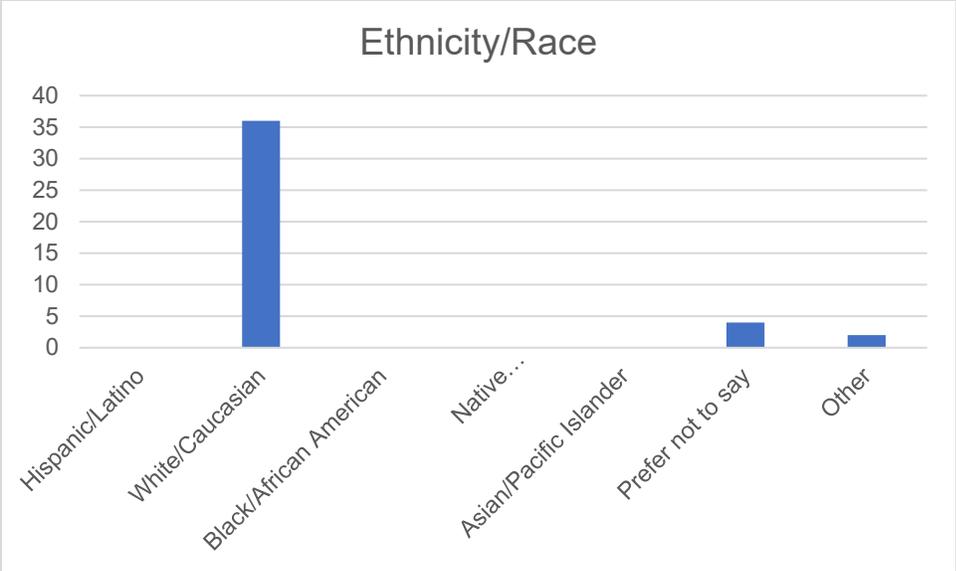
Yes	0
No	39
Prefer not to say	3



16.

Ethnicity/Race

Hispanic/Latino	0
White/Caucasian	36
Black/African American	0
Native American/American Indian	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
Prefer not to say	4
Other	2



## Appendix D

## Organization's Employee Handbook Documents and Policies

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT**

At [organization name redacted], we strive to create a professional environment of mutual respect, regardless of background, interests, culture, or lifestyle. We are committed to equal employment opportunity, which means treating all employees and applicants for employment equally without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), gender, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. To ensure [name redacted] workplace is free of artificial barriers, every supervisor and manager is responsible for assisting in the implementation of this policy, but all employees share in the responsibility for ensuring that, by their personal actions, the policies are effectively adhered to and applied uniformly to everyone.

If you feel that you have been subject to discrimination or harassment in any respect, or if you are aware of conduct that may violate this policy, you should immediately bring the matter to the attention of your immediate supervisor, Human Resources, or any other member of Management with whom you would feel comfortable raising it by following the steps outlined in the complaint reporting procedure in [name redacted] Anti-Harassment Policy in this Handbook. All complaints will be thoroughly investigated and, where appropriate, corrective action will be taken to remedy the situation. Violation of this policy may lead to discipline, up to and including discharge for the first offense, when deemed appropriate by management.

All complaints shall be kept confidential, to the fullest extent possible, while still permitting [name redacted] to conduct a thorough investigation. Employees may raise concerns and make reports or complaints without fear of reprisal. Retaliation against any person who has complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or who has otherwise participated in any investigation of discrimination will not be tolerated. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against employees who raise concerns or report incidents of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including discharge.

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

[name redacted] makes reasonable accommodations for applicants or employees with the known physical or mental disabilities and/or individuals who are affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions, provided the individual is otherwise qualified to perform the essential functions of the job, unless undue hardship would result. A qualified individual with a disability is someone who is able to perform the essential functions of a position with or without reasonable accommodations.

Such individuals are encouraged to discuss their need for a reasonable accommodation with their supervisor or the Human Resources Department. All supervisors who receive a request for an accommodation must immediately report the request to the Human Resources Department, which will assist in the reasonable accommodation process. When medical restrictions prohibit an individual with a known disability or affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions from doing the employee's job, [name redacted] will communicate through interactive dialogue with the employee concerning a reasonable accommodation. It is up to [name redacted] to make the final decision on accommodation.

[name redacted] prohibits discrimination on the basis of mental or physical disability, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Therefore, [name redacted] will not refuse to hire, segregate, or take any other employment action with respect to recruitment, hiring, promotion, renewal of employment, selection for training or apprenticeship, discharge, discipline, tenure or the terms, privileges or conditions of employment on the basis of physical or mental disability, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Further, [name redacted] will not fail or refuse to reinstate an individual affected by disability, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to the individual's original job or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, seniority, and benefits upon the individual signifying his/her intent to return to work or when the need for reasonable accommodation ceases, unless [name redacted] can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on [name redacted]' operations.

[name redacted] may request documentation from an applicant or an employee's health care provider concerning the need for the requested reasonable accommodation(s), the medical justification for the requested

accommodation(s); a description of the reasonable accommodation(s) that is medically advisable; the date the reasonable accommodation(s) became (or will become) medically advisable; and the probable duration of the reasonable accommodation(s). [name redacted] may deny an accommodation if it imposes an undue hardship.

[name redacted] will permit an employee to utilize Earned Time Off and Short Term Disability, if any, and then take unpaid leave for the period of temporary physical disability resulting from the employee's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. When the employee is physically able to return to work, the employee's original job or a comparable position shall be made available unless business necessity makes this impossible or unreasonable.

The Community respects all recognized forms of religious observances. [name redacted] will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of its employees to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the Community's operations. Employee's whose religious beliefs require particular scheduling needs or exemptions from the dress policy, or any other policy of the Community, are encouraged to discuss the issue with their managers as soon as possible.

Employees with questions or concerns about disability or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions discrimination or harassment or accommodations must report the matter to their supervisors or Human Resources representative, although you are free to discuss your questions or concerns with anyone else as well.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT**

The goal of [name redacted] is to create a work environment where all employees feel respected, find meaningful work, and feel safe. [name redacted] believes that each employee has the right to be free from discrimination, violence, and harassment. Harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment, and harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), gender, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law, whether verbal, physical, or arising out of the work environment created, in the office, at work assignments out of the office, at [name redacted] sponsored social functions, is both unacceptable and illegal, and will not be tolerated by

[name redacted]. All employees should be able to work in an environment free from unlawful discrimination, intimidation and harassment, including sexual harassment and violence.

Harassment refers to conduct or behavior, which is offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with employee's work performance. Examples of harassment include conduct or comments that threaten physical violence; offensive, remarks, gestures, or physical contact; display or circulation of written materials, items or pictures degrading to any gender, racial, ethnic, religious, age, disability or other group listed above; and verbal abuse or insults about, or directed at, any employee, or group of employees because of their relationship in any of the protected groups.

Sexual harassment is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual or otherwise offensive nature, especially where:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment or interfering with an individual's work performance.

Sexual harassment can come from coworkers, supervisors, or any other individual (Residents, vendors, etc.). Both men and women can be victims of sexual harassment.

[name redacted] does not tolerate workplace bullying. [name redacted] defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical, or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. Such behavior violates [name redacted]' Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that when an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant, and will not be given consideration when considering discipline. As in harassment, it is the effect of the behavior on the

individual that is considered. [name redacted] considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- Verbal Bullying: Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or their family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- Physical Bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault, or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property
- Gesture Bullying: Nonverbal threatening gestures; glances that convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion Bullying: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying in the workplace:

- Persistent singling out of one person.
- Shouting or raising voice at an individual in public or in private.
- Using verbal or obscene gestures.
- Not allowing a person to speak or express himself or herself (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
- Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
- Public humiliation in any form.
- Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
- Ignoring or interrupting an individual at meetings.
- Public reprimands.
- Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be substantiated.
- Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.
- Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
- Encouraging others to disregard a supervisor's instructions.
- Manipulating the ability of someone to do their work (e.g., overloading, underloading, withholding information, assigning meaningless tasks, setting deadlines that cannot be met, giving deliberately ambiguous instructions).
- Inflicting menial tasks not in keeping with the normal

responsibilities of the job.

- Taking credit for another person's ideas.
- Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave.
- Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating him or her from work-related activities, such as meetings.
- Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).

**[name redacted] takes allegations of discrimination, harassment, and bullying very seriously. Should you feel that you are being discriminated against, harassed, bullied or you witness discrimination, harassment, or bullying of another employee by anyone (including supervisors, co-workers, customers or visitors), or if you are aware of a violation of this policy, you should do the following:**

- If possible, document or otherwise record each incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or bullying in writing, including the date, time, place, what was said or done, and the surrounding circumstances.
- If you are comfortable doing so, clearly and directly communicate to the offending individual that his/her conduct is unwelcome, and request that the offensive behavior stop.
- At the same time, you should immediately bring the matter to the attention of your supervisor. If your supervisor is somehow involved in the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, or if you are uncomfortable talking to him or her, you should report this matter to any other member of management or directly to Human Resources.
- You may also report incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying directly to Human Resources or management, such as an Executive Officer or supervisor.

Managers and supervisors **must** immediately inform Human Resources or the Executive Director of any incidents that are reported to them or observed that may constitute a violation of this policy.

Complaints will be promptly investigated and acted upon on a case-by-case basis. An employee guilty of discrimination, harassment, or bullying, or

an employee who fails to cooperate in an investigation, will be disciplined, up to and including suspension or termination of employment.

**[name redacted] will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or violence.**

No supervisor or manager has the authority to condition any tangible job benefit on an individual's tolerating or agreeing to any conduct that may violate this policy. If you believe that you have been deprived of any job benefit or that you have been threatened, you should immediately report it to one of the individuals listed above.

[name redacted] prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a good faith complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation. Anyone found to have engaged in retaliation against a person who has registered a complaint under this policy or to have retaliated against anyone for assisting in the investigation of a complaint, will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, suspension or termination of employment from work.

Furthermore, **no** supervisor, manager or officer has the authority to require you to tolerate or agree to **any** conduct that violates this policy in order to receive any job benefit, including compensation, duties, assignments, promotions, etc. Such activities are unlawful and will result in severe discipline, up to and including discharge.

[name redacted] strives to create an environment that is conducive to trust, fun, recognition and personal and professional growth. Individuals should treat each other with respect and dignity.

### **BUSINESS ETHICS**

A successful business is built on a foundation of the highest integrity and strong business ethics. We expect all employees to uphold the highest standards of business ethics in the conduct of all business activities. As a Community, we are committed to compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, and we expect our employees to commit to the same. The Community is committed to the philosophy that communication is key to a productive work environment. Honest, two-way communication between you and your supervisor, and other members of the community, is essential to positive working relationships for both you and the community.

We believe that by practicing this philosophy, which includes addressing all issues face to face and by maintaining an open door communication policy we should be able to address and rectify any concern you may have. If you have a question or a concern as to what the right course of action should be, feel free to ask your supervisor. If you wish to report a violation, unsafe condition or practice, or an illegal act, contact Human Resources, although, in addition, you may discuss such issues with anyone of your choosing.

### **REPORT SAFE - ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING HOTLINE**

We understand that there may an occasion when an employee would prefer to anonymously report issues such as; fraud, unethical conduct, regulatory compliance issues, resident abuse or inappropriate or illegal conduct. With this in mind, the Community has partnered with [Organizations name redacted] to provide a secure and anonymous Report Safe Hotline Service. The Report Safe can be accessed in the following ways:

- **Website:** [redacted provided here]
- **Toll-Free Telephone:** [redacted phone # provided here]
- **E-mail:** [redacted email provided here] (must include company name with report)

Employees of the Community may submit a good faith complaint regarding an ethics violation without fear of dismissal or retaliation of any kind. The Community is committed to achieving compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, accounting standards, accounting controls, and audit practices. The Community's Executive Team will oversee treatment of employee concerns in this area.

