



Human Resources Policy No. 03-2022-EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Area: Conduct **Effective Date:** November 24, 2022

Subject: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion **Revision Date:**

1. Policy Statement

The Town of Goderich (the “Town”) and its citizen’s consider Goderich as a diverse and inclusive community that honours, welcomes, and accepts all people. Its citizens deeply value diversity and the personal, cultural, social, and economic benefits it brings to the community. As such, the community of Goderich enables all people to have equal rights, opportunities, and access for their benefit and well-being including, but not limited to, the domains of employment, education, health, accommodation, and leisure. The Town of Goderich and its citizens also recognize the human and economic costs associated with discrimination on the basis of perceived individual or communal differences. As such, the community of Goderich does not condone any form of discrimination or harassment. We endorse and embrace both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Ontario’s Human Rights Code, where the Code prohibits discriminatory practices because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, receipt of public assistance, or disability. The Corporation of the Town of Goderich (“Corporation”) commits to:

- Prescribing equity and exemplifying Goderich as a diverse and inclusive community;
- Learning and honouring the unique histories and lived experiences of all people in our community;
- Removing system barriers to accessibility and access as experiences by our community by listening and responding to the voices of those who are equity-deserving groups.

2. Purpose

Why Equity, Diversity and Inclusion?

- We lower barriers and achieve important benefits. When we encourage the active, equitable and full participation of every person, we are drawing on the diverse life experiences and points of view of individuals. This leads to more innovative solutions.
- When we promote Goderich as a diverse Town that is welcoming of all people, the Town is more attractive to new hires, as a destination for visitors and new residents, and is more competitive in the global marketplace.

- When we respect, value, and nurture diversity, equity and inclusion as an exciting and integral part of our collective experience and identity we can strengthen and create a safe, healthy, and vibrant community. This benefits our society. In order to enjoy the benefits of a diverse community, we need to address barriers that impede equal participation, work toward the elimination of bias, prejudice and discrimination (which can be intentional, unintentional or systemic) and promote diversity, equity and foster inclusion in an equitable manner.

Valuing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- We can pursue more inclusive strategies for members of the community by recognizing and dismantling the barriers and discrimination faced by all people.
- We can maximize the potential of each person by promoting an environment of equitable inclusion within the community and within the Corporation for all people.

3. Scope

3.1 What will the Town of Goderich do?

Recognizing that the Town (including its Boards and Committees) plays a role in leadership and education in the community, the Corporation is committed to:

- promoting the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy both internally and for the community of the Town of Goderich;
- ensuring setting standards for compliance to the policy internally at the organizational level;
- ensuring that external organizations and individuals have access to this policy;
- encouraging and recognizing excellence in corporate and community citizenship in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion;
- encouraging public and private organizations to respect and adhere to the objectives of this policy; and
- leading by example.

3.2 What can organizations in the community do?

Recognizing that the Town, organizations, businesses, and community agencies (including businesses and organizations that provide services, supplies or products, to, or on behalf of the Corporation) set the tone for the community, the Town will do the following and encourage other organizations to do so:

- ensure that this policy is widely communicated and that all Council members, employees, and others to whom the policy applies, understand its intent and value its impact;
- ensure that existing policies and practices, including employment policies, are built upon non-discriminatory practices; that future policies and practices meet the objectives of this policy;

- review current practices to ensure that every person is treated with equity and without discrimination and to eliminate barriers in accessing goods and services;
- seek opportunities to involve and include people of diverse backgrounds in the design, use and evaluation of goods and services;
- provide training and include and involve Council members, employees and volunteers in activities designed to promote awareness, acceptance, celebration of diverse identities, and of fostering empathy and inclusion;
- establish mechanisms to ensure that discrimination and harassment are not encouraged or tolerated under any circumstance;
- monitor organizational compliance with this policy and set standards for compliance; and
- lead by example.

3.3 What can an individual do?

Recognizing that social change begins with individual change, an individual can:

- evaluate one's own actions and preconceived ideas about individuals and groups;
- raise self-awareness, acknowledge one's privilege and use that to become an effective ally to those whose voices are not heard and to equity-deserving groups;
- educate oneself, volunteer one's time, and participate in activities which will broaden one's experience and understanding of diversity;
- encourage and support the development of programs and projects that promote harmony and inclusion;
- advocate both the elimination of discrimination, fostering inclusion and the celebration of diversity within one's own workplace or community;
- challenge discrimination when one experiences it or is aware of its existence; and
- lead by example.

4. Definitions

4.1 Corporation – refers to The Corporation of the Town of Goderich

4.2 Discrimination – Treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit, or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their race, citizenship, gender, family status, disability or other personal characteristics.

4.3 Diversity – It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing the differences along the various dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender expression and gender identity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, physical and invisible disabilities, creed amongst many other dimensions. It is exploring these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It is about embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

- 4.4** Equity – The rights of the individual to an equitable share of the goods and services in society. Equality of treatment will not guarantee equal results, creating equal results sometimes requires treating people differently from each other. Focusing on the results instead of treatment is the concept of equity.
- 4.5** Equity-Deserving Groups - Communities that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, and actively seek social justice and reparation. This marginalization could be created by attitudinal, historic, social, and environmental barriers based on characteristics that are not limited to sex, age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, gender expression, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and creed.
- 4.6** Inclusion – Acknowledging and valuing people’s differences so as to enrich social planning, decision-making, and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive municipality we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and are recognized as valued and contributing members of the society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the mainstream learn from those that are historically and currently excluded and then work together to initiate change.
- 4.7** Privilege – Unearned power, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities that exist for members of the dominant group(s) in society. Can also refer to the relative privilege of one group compared to another group.
- 4.8** Systemic barriers – Obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from full participation in and the benefits of social, economic and political life, they may be hidden or unintentional, but are built into the way society works. Existing policies, practices and procedures, as well as assumptions and stereotypes, reinforce them.
- 4.9** Systemic oppression(s) – Systemic use of power to disempower, marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group or category, often in order to further empower and/or privilege the oppressor.

5. Application

This Policy applies to members of Council, including its Boards and Committees, all Town employees, volunteers (including volunteer fire fighters), and third party contractors.

6. Unionized Employees

This policy is intended to supplement and not supersede any provisions of a Collective Agreement pertaining to managing employee absenteeism. Where there is conflict between

this policy and the Collective Agreement, the provisions of the Collective Agreement shall prevail.

Unionized employees wishing to have union representation present during meetings with Human Resources or management, may make such a request at any time. It is of value to include the union in meetings and assessments where disability issues are impeding attendance, given the multi-party responsibilities related to accommodation issues.