Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter

Building an equitable workplace for all



rmwb.ca/WIC
inclusion@rmwb.ca

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Acknowledgments

The Workplace Inclusion Charter is the work of many. We thank everyone who contributed to the Charter with special thanks to:

The Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter was developed by the Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality (RACIDE), local advocates, community organizations, Municipal and Provincial partners, employer groups, and businesses.

RACIDE would like to thank the following organizations for their support in developing and expanding the charter:

- *Alberta Human Rights Commission*
- *Advisory Committee on Aging*
- *Coalitions Creating Equity*
- *Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce*
- *Fort McMurray Economic Development and Tourism*
- *Fort McMurray Public School Board*
- *Government of Alberta*
- *Newcomer Interagency Network*
- *Poverty Reduction Network*
- *Regional Inclusive Committee*
- *St. Aidan's Society*
- *Markaz Ul Islam*
- *Northern Alberta Development Council*
- *The Autism Society of the RMWB*
- *Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo*
- *Waypoints*

We acknowledge that we live, learn, work and play on Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional meeting grounds and gathering places of Cree, Dene, and Métis peoples.

A special thanks to the Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP) for sharing their Bow Valley Workplace Inclusion Charter resources, templates, and learnings. This document is largely based on the Bow Valley example.

Alberta Canada Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund



Introduction

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is one of the most diverse regions in Canada. According to the Statistics Canada 2021 Census, visible minorities make up 26.79% of the population in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo, immigrants represent 21%, and approximately 148 languages are spoken by residents. The region is also home to residents of diverse religions, ages, gender identities and gender expressions, sexual orientations, disabilities, and socioeconomic statuses. This is reflected in the workplace, making it imperative that businesses and industry ensure that inclusive and equitable policies and procedures are in place to support employees and clients alike, and that the environment is safe and accessible for all.

Research consistently indicates that inclusive and equitable businesses perform better in terms of innovation, retention, productivity, and customer experience.[1]

[1] Prime and Salib 2014; Deloitte 2013; Hunt, Layton, and Prince 2015



The Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter supports employers in creating more inclusive workplaces for their employees and their clients through:

- **A declaration of principles**
- **A list of commitments**
- **Tools and resources to support implementation**
- **Recognition**

The Charter commitments are based on local and national research and best practices in fostering diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. The commitments are designed to be flexible for businesses of all sizes, simple to implement, and cost effective. Support is available throughout the implementation process.

Charter signatories who complete a series of commitments will be publicly recognized for their efforts by the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, the Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism and the Wood Buffalo Immigration Partnership, along with additional marketing assets.

The Wood Buffalo Immigration Partnership, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Equity and Inclusion Office, and supporting community organizations and partners look forward to working with you to foster more equitable workplaces for the region's residents and to recognize you for those efforts.

If you have any questions or would like further support in implementing the Charter, please contact us at inclusion@rmwb.ca

Benefits

The Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter supports businesses in becoming more inclusive. This has many benefits including improving employee attraction and retention, increasing productivity and financial returns, customer experience and being better able to tap into underserved markets.

Productivity

- Improved productivity and stronger business performance, (Prime & Salib 2014; Deloitte 2013; and Hunt, Layton, & Prince 2015)
- **83%** increase in the ability to innovate, (Deloitte 2013)
- High feelings of belonging, which are associated with feelings of inclusion, correspond with 50% less turnover, a 56% performance increase, and a 75% decrease in the use of sick days (BetterUp, 2021)

Customer Service

- Employees are **31%** more likely to be responsive to customer needs, (Deloitte 2013)
- Better able to tap into the purchasing power of target consumer groups, (McKinsey 2013)
    - **80%** *of consumer purchases are made by women, (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)*
    - *Lesbian and gay household incomes are* **80%** *higher than average, (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015).*
    - *Customers prefer dealing with staff their own age so hiring older workers especially since the population is aging is important, (Conference Board of Canada, 2007).*
- Social responsibility is increasingly important for businesses and affects decisions made by job seekers, consumers, and community members, (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015).
    - *Businesses that implement the Workplace Inclusion Charter commitments receive public recognition as an Inclusion Champion.*

Attraction and Retention

- Increased ability to attract talent and fill labour shortages, (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015)
    - *A 2016 study found that LGBTQ2S+ respondents felt more comfortable applying for jobs at an organization that publicized LGBTQ2S+ related policies like anti-discrimination policies and transition guidelines (Lee, 2016).*
- Increased retention rates and employee satisfaction, (Hunt, Layton, Prince 2015).
    - *By strengthening feelings of being included in only* ***10%*** *of employees, a business can increase work attendance by almost one day per year per employee, (Deloitte 2013)*
    - *Hiring older workers can save employers time and money as older workers tend to stay at a job longer, (Conference Board of Canada, 2007)*

Team Work

- 42% increase in team collaboration when employees feel included and that the employer is supportive and committed to diversity, (Deloitte 2013).

Financial Returns

- Businesses that rank in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are **35%** more likely to have financial returns higher than the average in their industry, (Hunt et al 2015).

The Need

Research conducted in Wood Buffalo as part of the development of the Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan 2017-2022, showed that discrimination, including in the workplace, was the No. 1 challenge reported by residents.

Some of the other major barriers cited weren't enough education about and awareness of diversity issues, and lack of inclusive and accessible spaces. Initiatives and strategies identified by community organizations and public survey respondents included education and awareness, diversity and inclusion training, and inclusive hiring practices.

Many Indigenous respondents (**15%**) reported experiencing racism and specifically requested more inclusive hiring practices (**7%**). Religious minorities also cited high levels of discrimination in workplaces and in hiring practices (**17%**) and **23%** of 2SLGBTQ+ respondents reported experiencing homophobia and/or transphobia. These numbers are not surprising and are consistent with national research studies.

According to a 2015 study by Randstad, the largest staffing and human resources consulting company in Canada and the second-largest in the world:

- **1 out of 5** Canadians reported gender discrimination in the workplace.
- **49%** of all complaints opened by the Alberta Human Rights Commission were on the grounds of physical and/or mental disability.
- **26%** reported age-based discrimination.
- **17%** experienced racial discrimination.
- **16%** reported discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- **16%** said they've been discriminated against because of their religion.

Studies in Canada and the United States consistently find evidence of discrimination in hiring procedures:

- **40%** of Employers are 40% more likely to interview a job applicant with an English-sounding name despite identical education, skills and experience. (Stats. CAN 2020)
- **25%** Black candidates received callbacks when they used an Anglo name on their resumes compared with **10%** when they used their own names.

According to Statistics Canada :

- **44% of sexual minorities in Canada** reported experiencing inappropriate behaviours at work. (2018)
- **46%** of individuals reporting discrimination said that their experience was in the workplace. (2019)
- **25 % of women experienced sexual misconduct in the workplace (2020)**

Recognition

The Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter outlines a list of commitments for participating employers. Work your way through the commitments and receive recognition for each level achieved! Recognition includes an annual news release and a place on RMWB website as a "Inclusion Champion", as well as similar marketing assets from partner organization's websites, and a certificate formally presented by the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, the Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism and the Local Immigration Partnership during an award ceremony.

GOLD INCLUSION CHAMPION

- Complete 5 Training Commitments
- Complete all 5 Policy Commitments
- Complete all 4 Human Resource Commitments
- Complete all 4 Support Commitments
- Complete all 3 Inclusive Spaces Commitments

SILVER INCLUSION CHAMPION

- Complete 3 Training Commitments
- Complete 4 Policy Commitments
- Complete 2 Human Resource Commitments
- Complete 3 Support Commitments
- Complete 2 Inclusive Spaces Commitments



BRONZE INCLUSION CHAMPION

- Complete 2 Training Commitments
- Complete 2 Policy Commitments
- Complete 1 Human Resource Commitment
- Complete 2 Support Commitments
- Complete 2 Inclusive Spaces Commitments



WORKPLACE INCLUSION SIGNATORY

- Complete 2 Training Commitments
- Complete 1 Policy Commitments
- Complete 1 Human Resource Commitment
- Complete 1 Support Commitment
- Complete 1 Inclusive Space Commitment

Process

As you continue to implement further commitments your business will be recognized for its efforts and achievement of further levels under the Charter.

DECLARATION

- Declare your intent and commit to complete the minimum level of commitments.
- Sign the declaration form and return it to inclusion@rmwb.ca
- Announce commitment to your staff and to the community. A sample press release and employee memo are enclosed.

IMPLEMENT

- Complete an assessment tool provided to understand the state of diversity of your organization in relation to the charter commitments.
- With the support of the Inclusion Coaches, develop an action plan to tackle the charter commitments including prioritizing commitments and assigning specific employees to oversee the implementation of each commitment.
- Connect with Inclusion Coaches for support, clarification, or additional resources.
- Provide evidence of commitments implemented to Inclusion Coaches.

CELEBRATE

- The RMWB will issue an annual media release recognizing the efforts of the signatories.
- Your business will be recognized on the RMWB Website as a "Workplace Inclusion champion".
- The Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, the Fort McMurray Economic Development and Tourism, and the Wood Buffalo Local Immigration Partnership will present your business with a certificate during an annual award ceremony.
- You will receive an electronic badge related to your completed level of commitment.

Commitments

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

1. ***Cultural Awareness:*** At least 15% of current staff has or will receive Cultural Awareness training.
2. ***Islamic Cultural Awareness***: At least 15% of current staff has or will receive Islamic Awareness training.
3. ***2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion Training:*** At least 15% of current staff have or will receive 2SLGBTQ+ Awareness training.
4. ***Indigenous Awareness Training:*** At least 15 % of current staff has or will receive Indigenous Awareness Training, Truth and Reconciliation Workshops, or the Blanket Exercise.
5. ***Accessibility and Age-Friendly Awareness:*** At least 15% of current staff has or will receive Accessibility Training or Age-Friendly Workplace Training.
6. ***Neurodiversity in the Workplace:*** At least 15% of current staff has or will receive Neurodiversity in the Workplace Training.
7. **Poverty Simulation:** At least 15% of current staff has or will take a Poverty Simulation Exercise.
8. **Addressing Domestic Violence as a Workplace Hazard:** Local educational resource is shared with **all** staff and at least 15% of current staff will receive training to recognize the signs of violence.
9. ***Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace:*** One Human Resources representative and one Leadership representatives has or will receive training on Workplace Sexual Harassment.

INCLUSIVE SPACES

10 . ***Quiet Room:*** A space for meditation and prayer is provided for employees up to the point of undue hardship.

11. ***Accessibility Checks***: Complete an accessibility inspection and create an action plan to address the findings. Complete monthly inspections of all accessibility features.

12. ***Inclusive Washrooms:*** All washrooms regardless of gender designation are equipped with hygiene disposal units and change tables (only required for public washrooms). Single-stall washrooms are available whenever operationally possible and are gender neutral.

HUMAN RESOURCES

13. ***Inclusive Job Postings:*** Job postings refrain from requiring non-essential qualifications or information about the country in which work experience was gained; use gender neutral and inclusive language and encourages candidates with disabilities to apply for the job.

14. ***Job Posting Diverse Channel Dispersion:*** Use different job boards to attract diverse talent, and build partnerships with community organizations that offer employment support services or that can disseminate the job opportunity with their clients.

15. ***Complaint Procedure:*** Implement a complaint procedure for addressing violence, harassment and discrimination that allows for bypassing immediate supervisors.

16. ***Inclusive Hiring Panels:*** Individuals sitting on hiring panels complete unconscious bias training, and whenever operationally possible, the interview panel includes individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, personalities, and ideas.

POLIICIES AND GUIDELINES

17. ***Anti-Discrimination Policy and Complaint Procedure:*** Implement a policy outlining the protected grounds.

18. ***Inclusive Washroom Policy:*** Policy that outlines the rights of individuals to use the washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity or gender expression.

19. ***Breastfeeding Policies:*** Implement a policy that outline the right to breastfeed while accessing services, and that support breastfeeding during work hours.

20. ***Inclusive Forms:*** All forms are easy to read, use simplified language, refrain from requesting non-essential information, and use gender-neutral language.

21. ***Diverse Representation Guidelines:*** Guidelines outline requirements for diverse representation in all visual marketing and promotion.

SUPPORTS

22. ***Onboarding:*** Diversity, Equity and Inclusion organizational values , resources and trainings available are communicated to new hires.

23. ***Employee Resource Groups:*** Staff are made aware of the benefits of forming employee resource groups (ERGs) and are supported in doing so.

24. ***Discounts:*** Prices for services offered to the public include a sliding scale or discount for seniors, youth, and those living in poverty.

25. ***Mentorship:*** Mentorship and/or apprenticeship opportunities are available for under-represented groups such as youth, women, Indigenous peoples, etc.

Declaration

Declaration of Commitment to the Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter

VISION

Wood Buffalo employers are leaders in creating a welcoming and inclusive community. Wood Buffalo residents feel respected, valued, and supported to participate, succeed, and stay in the workplace and the community. Employers recognize and value diversity, encourage mutual respect and understanding, uphold human rights, and support inclusive and equitable workplace practices.

PRINCIPLES

- Diversity (including but not limited to race, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, and sexual orientation) contributes to the strength and prosperity of our business and our community.
- Everybody has the right to a safe and respectful work environment.
- Everybody deserves to access goods, services, accommodation, and facilities without discrimination, harassment, or fear.
- Employers play a key role in reducing inequality in our community and integration barriers for residents.

ENDORSEMENT

On behalf of, _____ *,I/we the undersigned endorse the spirit of the Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter and commit to carry out a minimum of six commitments as per the Workplace Inclusion Signatory Champion guidelines and to share this commitment throughout the organization.*

_____ _____

SIGNED

Name, Title Date

_____ _____

Name, Title Date



Resources

WORKPLACE INCLUSION CHARTER RESOURCE GUIDE

The following resources have been designed by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and the Bow Valley Immigration Partnership, in collaboration with local social profit organizations and employer groups. Please contact us at **inclusion@rmwb.ca** for one-on-one support, clarification, or more resources.

Promotion

PRESS RELEASE SAMPLE

Note: The following template provides a basic example and suggested information to share with local media once the declaration of commitment to the Charter has been signed. The language herein may also be used for internal announcements. Please personalize the template to avoid having all signatories using the same message.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[COMPANY NAME] *champions workplace inclusion*
Fort McMurray, Alberta

[BUSINESS NAME], a [DESCRIBE COMPANY HERE], announced this week a plan to strengthen its commitment to diversity and inclusion through a partnership with local service providers. As one of the first organizations to endorse the new Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter, [COMPANY NAME], plans to lead by example to build a culture of inclusion throughout the region.

The Charter outlines targeted actions employers agree to take paired with appropriate resources and support. Developed by a partnership of service providers and employers, the charter includes 25 commitments that have been identified as key for integration and inclusion in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo. [COMPANY NAME] recognizes the benefits of implementing the Charter commitments including improving employee attraction and retention, increasing productivity and financial returns, enhancing customer experience and being better able to tap into underserved markets.

[TITLE, NAME] says endorsing the Charter is a step forward in the company's inclusion efforts.

" [QUOTE HERE] ."

ABOUT [BUSINESS NAME]

[BIO]

###

For more information on the Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter, please visit www.rmwb.ca/WIC

MEDIA INQUIRIES

[INSERT CONTACT NAME + INFORMATION]

INTERNAL MEMO SAMPLE

Note: The following template provides a basic example and suggested information to share with company managers once the declaration of commitment to the Charter has been signed. Please personalize the template to avoid having all signatories using the same message. **SUBJECT**

Dear Valued Employees,

As you know, [COMPANY NAME] is proud of our diverse team. Our colleagues and community of Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo is rich in diversity offering a variety of skills, ideas, and perspectives and in doing so help our business to perform better.

One of the most important things we can do is help foster an inclusive environment for our employees and clients to thrive in. [COMPANY NAME] has strengthened its commitment to diversity and inclusion by endorsing the Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter. As one of the first organizations to endorse the new Wood Buffalo Workplace Inclusion Charter, [COMPANY NAME], plans to lead by example to build a culture of inclusion throughout the region.

The Charter, a project of the Regional Advisory Committee for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality, outlines targeted actions employers agree to take paired with appropriate resources and support. Developed by a partnership of service providers and employers, the charter includes 25 commitments that have been identified as key for integration and inclusion in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo. [COMPANY NAME] recognizes the benefits of implementing the Charter commitments including improving employee attraction and retention, increasing productivity and financial returns, enhancing customer experience and being better able to tap into underserved markets.

As part of our commitments, it is important that your department take the following steps:
[LIST THE STEPS THIS DEPARTMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDER THE CHARTER].

To learn more about the Charter or for support in facilitating implementation, please visit rmwb.ca/WIC

Please share this message with supervisors in your department.

Thank you for your valued work and commitment to ensuring an inclusive, equitable, and productive workplace for all.

Sincerely,
[CONTACT INFORMATION]

Training Connections

Indigenous Awareness, Truth & Reconciliation Workshops, and/or Blanket Exercise[2]

- Indigenous Cultural Inclusion Training: Pawâmiw Creative
  Location: Fort McMurray
  jes@pawamiwcreative.ca

- Cultural Sensitivity Workshops: Nisto Consulting
  Location: Fort McMurray
  holly.fortier@shaw.ca

- Missing, Murder & Exploited Indigenous Peoples: Stephanie Harpe
  Location: Fort McMurray
  steph_harpe@yahoo.ca

- Indigenous Learning Series: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo,
  Location: Online
  https://www.rmwb.ca/en/truth-and-reconciliation/indigenous-learning-series.aspx

- Indigenous Canada
  Location: Online
  www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada

2SLGBTQ+ Inclusivity Training

- Pride YMM
  Location: Fort McMurray
  info@prideymm.com

Islamic Cultural Awareness Training

- Islamic Cultural Awareness Training : Markaz Ul Islam
  Location: Fort McMurray
  amurad@markazlislam.com

- *Islamic Awareness Training: Fort McMurray Public School Board*
  Location: Fort McMurray
  islamicawarenesstraining@gmail.com

Training Connections

Cultural Awareness Training

- Cultural Awareness Training : Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
  Location: Fort McMurray
  www.mcawb.org

Accessibility & Age-Friendly Awareness

- St. Aidan's Society: Age Sensitivity Training
  Location: Fort McMurray
  https://staidanssociety.ca/community-initiatives/

Poverty Simulation

- Make the Month: Wood Buffalo Poverty Reduction Network
  Location: Online
  https://www.makethemonthwb.ca/

Neurodiversity in the Workplace

- Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo: Education Inclusion Program
  Location: Fort McMurray
  community@autismrmwb.org

- Autism and Neurodiversity in the Workplace
  Location: Online (free and self-paced)
  https://circa.educ.ubc.ca/autism-in-the-workplace/

Addressing Domestic Violence as a Workplace Hazard

- Alberta Council of Women's Shelters
  Location: Online
  https://acws.ca/workplace-training/

Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

- Waypoints
  Location: Training will be provided as part of the Human Resources Workshop Series for HR and Leadership representatives signatories.

Inclusive Spaces

QUIET ROOM

Prayer and/or meditation are an important part of most religious and spiritual traditions. Many faith groups consider prayer obligatory and, for some, it is performed at specific times during the day and/or week. Under Alberta Human Rights Legislation, individuals have the right to follow and practice their religious beliefs. This protection includes employment and accessing goods, services, accommodation or public facilities. Accommodating employees' and clients/visitors should be made up to the point of undue hardship. As such, employers should accommodate employees requesting a short prayer break; a dedicated room for prayer and/or meditation is recommended. This ensures that the room is available when needed and can be used by people of diverse beliefs. A space may not need to be dedicated but rather made available as requested by employees.

CRITERIA FOR QUIET ROOMS INCLUDE:

- Auditory and visual privacy, apart from the rest of the facility
- Located as close as possible to washroom facilities (to accommodate washing requirements)
- Conducive to quiet contemplation
- Free of religious images and symbols
- Shoe rack and chair to facilitate removal of shoes near entry
- Chairs and/or benches
- Clear floor space is available

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

- Prayer mats and meditation cushions
- Religious literature, electronic candles, and other necessary items
- Nature elements such as plants, water features, etc.
- Whenever possible, appropriate ventilation system to remove the odour of incense used in some practices or smoke from smudging
- Small, unobtrusive arrow to indicate Qibla (direction of Mecca)

GUIDELINES FOR ROOM USE:

- We govern our quiet room according to the principles of love and respect for others
- Please remove all footwear before entering
- Please refrain from all conversation
- Please limit any reading of scripture or praying out loud to short verses out of respect for others using the space
- Eating food is prohibited
- Cell phone use is prohibited

RESOURCES

- www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Documents/ReligiousBeliefs.pdf
- www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Documents/Bull_DutytoAccom_web.pdf

ACCESIBILITY CHECKS

Complete an accessibility inspection using the resources provided:

Monthly checks must be conducted of all accessibility features, including but not limited to automatic doors, access buttons, elevators, seating in waiting and line-up areas, accessible washrooms cubicles with sturdy grab bars, ample lighting, website aids, and entry points clear of debris such as snow and ice.

RESOURCES

- https://www.edmonton.ca/public-files/assets/document?path=PDF/ChecklistAccessibilityUniversalDesign.pdf
- https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9780778583691
- http://obiaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Accessible-Buildings-Checklist-OBIAA.pdf

INCLUSIVE WASHROOMS

Equal access to washrooms without discrimination, harassment, or abuse is protected under the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act, including the right to access restrooms that best suit one's gender identity and/or gender expression. Inclusive washrooms are safe spaces that anyone can use. They decrease anxiety and fear and there is less chance of harassment or assault, which transgender individuals often experience. Businesses should provide employees with a guideline document that clearly indicates the rights of individuals accessing washrooms. This information should be provided in orientation training for new employees.

Other requirements for inclusive public washrooms include equipping them with change tables and hygiene disposal units. To learn more about inclusive design of washroom facilities, visit: https://www.alberta.ca/system/files/custom_downloaded_images/tr-guide-universal-washroom.pdf

INCLUSIVE WASHROOM GUIDELINES

Note: This template can serve as a quick tool for front line employees if there are questions or concerns about gender-inclusive washrooms. It can be printed and posted at information desks or other appropriate locations that are easily accessible when providing customer service support.

[COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing safe and inclusive access to washrooms facilities for all employees and visitors. Under the Alberta Human Rights Act, all persons are permitted to use the restroom facilities that best correspond to their gender, gender identity, and/or gender expression without recourse or discrimination.

This property has multi- and single-occupant facilities with lockable stalls that provide privacy for all users. Under the Alberta Human Rights Act, any individual has the right to use the facility of their choice, free from harassment of any kind. Those who require greater privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender-inclusive washrooms for any reason may use the single-stall washroom located at [INSERT LOCATION].

[4] Equity and Human Rights Services, Western University. Gender neutral washrooms. Retrieved from http://www.uwo.ca/equit/index.htm

University of Minnesota Transgender Commission (n.d.). Understanding gender neutral Restrooms. Retrieved from: glbta.umn.edu/trans.

Transgender Law Center (2005). Peeing in Peace: A resource Guide for Transgender Activists and Allies. San Fran-cisco, CA. 43 pp.



Inclusive Washroom Signage

WORKPLACE INCLUSION CHARTER WASHROOM TEMPLATES

The following templates may be copied and/or printed as temporary signage and serve as an example for permanent signage that can be implemented in workplaces. These examples indicate what features the facility offers and therefore pictures or icons of other features such as change tables or showers could be added if appropriate.

For other options of inclusive washroom signs please contact the Inclusion Coaches at: inclusion@rmwb.ca and/or Pride YMM at info@prideymm.com or visit their website prideymm.ca

WASHROOM



SINGLE-STALL

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WASHROOM



SINGLE-STALL

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MULTI-STALL

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Policies & Forms

The following policy templates are provided as basic examples and suggest important information to consider including. Different workplaces will have their own format and may edit the templates as they see fit while ensuring that they meet the Charter commitments.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION SAMPLE POLICY

Note: An Anti-Discrimination Policy should clearly state all protected grounds and areas under the Alberta Human Rights Act. Additional information in the workplace policy or procedure documents should outline roles and responsibilities for dealing with discrimination and harassment.

TITLE:
POLICY NUMBER:
EFFECTIVE DATE:

1. Policy Statement: [COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing a safe and respectful workplace for all employees and clients where all individuals are treated with dignity. Everyone has the right to an environment free from harassment and discrimination.
2. Purpose: To provide a safe and respectful workplace free from harassment and discrimination.
3. Background: *The Alberta Human Rights Act* guarantees equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Alberta. The Act prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical and mental disability, age, marital status, family status, source of income, or sexual orientation.

The Act prohibits discrimination in the following areas:

- Statements, publications, notices, signs, symbols, emblems, or other representations that are published, issued or displayed before the public
- Goods, services, accommodation or facilities customarily available to the public
- Tenancy
- Employment practices
- Employment applications or advertisements
- Membership in trade unions, employers' organizations or occupational associations

Harassment occurs when an individual or group is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of the preceding protected grounds regardless of whether the behaviour was intentional or not.

4. Definitions:
   - 4.1 Employee – refers to any individual hired by [COMPANY NAME].
   - 4.2 Visitor – refers to customers, clients, or any individual otherwise accessing [COMPANY NAME]'s services.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION SAMPLE POLICY - Continued

5. Applications:

5.1 [COMPANY NAME] does not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical and mental disability, age, marital status, family status, source of income, or sexual orientation.

5.2 Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated in [COMPANY NAME] include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to any employee's or visitor's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.

5.3 [COMPANY NAME] also will not tolerate the display of racist or offensive signs or images; offensive jokes based on race, gender or other grounds protected under the Act that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; and unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit

5.4 It is [COMPANY NAME]'s policy to promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of discrimination or harassment.

INCLUSIVE WASHROOM SAMPLE POLICY

Note: An Inclusive Washroom Policy should outline the right for individuals to use the washroom that best corresponds with their gender identity and/or gender expression. Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for employees handling complaints regarding the washroom policy as well as other policies and procedures for providing support to transgender employees and visitors.

1. Policy Statement: [COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere and supportive space for customers, visitors, volunteers, and employees.
2. Purpose: To support gender diverse employees, guests, and residents, parents with young children, people with disabilities who need assistance from an attendant of a different gender, and people who require added privacy for a variety of reasons. This policy will allow individuals to have a safe and accessible facility and the option of using a washroom that best corresponds with their gender identity or gender expression.
3. Background: Equal access to washrooms and facilities without discrimination, harassment, or abuse is protected under *the Alberta Human Rights Ac*t (Bill 7 Amendment) and *the Canadian Human Rights Act* (Bill C-16). Everyone needs a washroom and providing safe and accessible washrooms are important. Gender inclusive washrooms are safer spaces that anyone, regardless of gender identity or gender expression, can use.

4. Definitions:
    - 4.1 Transgender and/or Gender-Diverse – umbrella terms to refer to individuals whose gender identity does not match with the sex they were assigned at birth.
    - 4.2 Employee – refers to any individual hired by [COMPANY NAME].
    - 4.3 Visitor – refers to customers, clients, or any individual otherwise accessing [COMPANY NAME]'s services.

5. Applications:
    - 5.1 Individuals are permitted to use the washroom facilities that best correspond with their gender identity or gender expression.
    - 5.2 Single-stall washrooms are available for anyone to use and are clearly marked with non-gendered signage.
    - 5.3 No individual shall be forced by an employee or visitors to use the single-stall washroom. It is
    - 5.4 the responsibility of individuals requiring greater privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender inclusive washrooms for any reason to instead use a single-stall washroom.
    - 5.5 Employees shall indicate where all washrooms are located regardless of perceived gender identity or gender expression of the individual requesting access.

BREASTFEEDING SAMPLE POLICY

Note: A Breastfeeding Policy should outline the right to breastfeed in public, at work, and when accessing services. Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for providing support to breastfeeding employees.

TITLE:
POLICY NUMBER:
EFFECTIVE DATE:

1. Policy Statement: [COMPANY NAME] is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere and space for breastfeeding customers, visitors, volunteers, and employee.
2. Purpose: To provide the conditions necessary to support and facilitate breastfeeding customers and employees.
3. Background: *The Alberta Human Rights Act* provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in the province. The Act makes it against the law to discriminate against or harass anyone on the basis of gender, which includes pregnancy and breastfeeding. This applies to employment, goods, services, accommodations, or facilities that are customarily available to the public. It is therefore prohibited to discriminate or harass people who are breastfeeding in educational institutions, public places like malls and parks, public transit, stores, restaurants, and when accessing health or recreational facilities.

4. Definitions:
    - 4.1 *Breastfeeding* – includes nursing directly from the breast as well as pumping or expressing milk.
    - 4.2 *Employee* – refers to any individual hired by [COMPANY NAME].
    - 4.3 *Visitor* – refers to customers, clients, or any individual otherwise accessing [COMPANY NAME]'s services.

BREASTFEEDING SAMPLE POLICY - Continued

5. Applications:

Employees

5.1 [COMPANY NAME] supports employees who are breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk.

5.2 The employer shall work with employees who are breastfeeding to determine mutually acceptable conditions (e.g. time, space) that support breastfeeding practices and are compatible with other company policies wherever possible.

Public

5.3 [COMPANY NAME] supports breastfeeding by members of the public when they are visitors.

5.4 Employees, upon request, shall aid visitors who wish to breastfeed by providing a comfortable location whenever possible and where space is available.

5.5 Pursuant with *the Alberta Human Rights Act*, employee will not ask a breastfeeding visitor to leave the premises, cover up, use the restroom, or move to a more discreet area.

5.6 *If another visitor expresses concern about another visitor breastfeeding in public:*

5.6.1. Explain that you are a family friendly business, and it is your policy to support breastfeeding.

5.6.2. Explain that public breastfeeding is a protected right under *the Alberta Human Rights Act.*

5.6.3. Offer to move the concerned visitor to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding visitor.

BREASTFEEDING SAMPLE PROCEDURE

Note: Companies may wish to add additional procedural information for providing support to breastfeeding employees.

TITLE:
POLICY NUMBER:
EFFECTIVE DATE:

1. Breastfeeding Procedure for Employees:

1.1 [COMPANY NAME] will advise and educate all employee regarding the Breastfeeding Policy, compliance, and supportive programming matters.

1.1 A copy of [COMPANY NAME]'s Breastfeeding Policy will be provided to all employees and managers.

1.2 Prior to parental leave, [COMPANY NAME] will provide employees with an educational information handout about breastfeeding and returning to work.

1.3 After employees return to work from parental leave, [COMPANY NAME] will support employees for the complete duration of breastfeeding.

1.4 [COMPANY NAME] will provide information to all employees about supporting a colleague who is breastfeeding.

1.5 [COMPANY NAME] will make available a clean, comfortable, and private space (lactation room) in the workplace for employees who wish to use such a facility to

1.6 breastfeed or express breast milk.

1.6.1. This room will not be a restroom.

1.6.2. The room shall have accessible electrical outlets for an electric breast pump and a sink close by.

1.6.3. Breastfeeding employees should not be disturbed with work issues when using the lactation room.

1.7 At least one month prior to return to work, [COMPANY NAME] employees planning to continue breastfeeding will inform their manager to inform of their intentions. 1.7.1. Manager/supervisors are required to respond to requests from employees in a timely manner and assess the worksite and the employeeâ€™s job responsibilities to identify how the request will be accommodated.

1.8 [COMPANY NAME] will offer support and information by:

1.8.1. Establishing a work schedule and assignment that facilitates an employee's breastfeeding needs.

1.8.2. Set up, as needed, a system/schedule for booking a lactation room (if multiple employees require access to the room).

1.8.3. Refer employees to community resources as needed.

BREASTFEEDING SAMPLE PROCEDURE - Continued

2. Breastfeeding Procedure for Employees:
    - 2.1 [COMPANY NAME] will advise and educate all employees about the Breastfeeding Policy, compliance, and importance of their support in creating a friendly and welcoming environment for visitors.
        - 2.1.1. [COMPANY NAME] will ensure that new employees learn about the Breastfeeding Policy during orientation.
        - 2.1.2. [COMPANY NAME] will ensure that all employees are aware that breastfeeding is a protected human right and that people in Alberta have a right to breastfeed everywhere.
    - 2.2 [COMPANY NAME]'s Breastfeeding Policy will be provided to visitors upon request.
    - 2.3 [COMPANY NAME] will provide information to all employees about how to provide support to a visitor who is breastfeeding.
    - 2.4 [COMPANY NAME] will make available a clean, comfortable, and private space on the premises where visitors can breastfeed if they so choose. This room will not be a restroom.

BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY RESOURCES

POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

- *Rationale:* State why providing support to breastfeeding mothers is important to the organization and its employees.
- *Scope of Support:* Describe how support will be provided.
- *Criteria for Participation:* Define who is eligible to participate in the program, what is required to participate and how to participate (flex time or paid time).
- *Responsibilities:* Outline what area of the organization is responsible for managing the support, the type of support expected from supervisors, and the responsibilities of participating employees.

FOR BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS TRAINING AND SUPPORT:

- Baby-Friendly Initiative of Wood Buffalo: www.babyfriendlywb.ca
- Alberta Health Services: 780-791-6247

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO PROVIDE TO STAFF:

- https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/Pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=hw130471

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES:

- http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/ccdp-chrc/HR21-77-2010-eng.pdf

Breastfeeding is welcome here!



Let us know what we can do to support you.

Baby-Friendly Initiative
WOOD BUFFALO
www.babyfriendlywb.ca

INCLUSIVE FORMS

Audit all forms, applications, and documents to ensure that plain language is used, language is gender neutral and confirm that information collected is essential for your organization to successfully serve clients and employees. Forms should use an easy to read font such as verdana, a font size of at least 12, at minimum 1.5 paragraph spacing, and high contrast between font and background colour.

GENDER-NEUTRAL WRITING RESOURCES

- https://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/en/writing-tips-plus/inclusive-writing-guidelines-resources
- http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/ress_didactiques/Writing-Gender-Neutral_Teaching-Guides.pdf

GENDER INCLUSIVE SURVEY QUESTIONS

- https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0178043#abstract0
- https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2018/adrm/rsm2018-05.pdf
- https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/ask-survey-questions-sexual-orientation-gender-identity/

PLAIN LANGUAGE RESOURCE

- https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/service-experience-digital-delivery/web-content-development-guides/web-style-guide/writing-guide/plain-language

ACCESIBLE FORMS RESOURCE

- https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/home/accessible-government/toolkit

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Adopt a guideline for marketing and promotion that includes specific approaches to diverse representation. This includes monitoring the number of images used in a publication in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, etc. and ensuring a representation that aligns with current community demographics.

- Ensure equal representation of men and women throughout documents.
- Ensure equal representation of individuals who are visible minorities and those who are not visible minorities/white.
- Ensure representation of diverse ages and abilities.
- Actively seek out depictions of individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Actively seek out depictions of families beyond the traditional “nuclear” definition (a family unit that includes a man and a woman who are married with their biological children living in the same residence).
- Avoid consistently depicting men in leadership roles and/or as the active player while women are the passive player in the image.

RESOURCES

- https://rockcontent.com/blog/diversity-marketing/#:~:text=Strategies%20to%20Develop%20Effective%20Diversity%20Marketing%20Campaigns%201,...%207%207.%20Make%20Diversity%20a%20Priority%20
- https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/marketing-and-sales-operations/global-marketing-trends/2022/diversity-and-inclusion-in-marketing.html



Human Resources

INCLUSIVE JOB POSTINGS

Ensure that all job postings only list qualifications that are essential to perform the job, are gender neutral, written in plain language, include the company's commitment to inclusion, and do not require applicants to disclose the country in which they gained work experience. Employers may also wish to broaden their recruitment techniques to reach a more diverse pool of candidates including posting on community boards, informing ethnocultural or Indigenous groups, and connecting with your organization's existing volunteers.

RESOURCES

- https://hirefortalent.ca/toolkit/recruitment
- https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/job-descriptions/2018/5-must-dos-for-writing-inclusive-job-descriptions
- https://guide.hrintervals-intervallesrh.ca/hc/en-ca/articles/4406788505363-Developing-a-job-posting
- https://qz.com/work/1095637/diversity-and-inclusion-a-guide-to-unbiased-hiring-from-quartz-at-work/

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

It is important for employers to provide a clear procedure for employees facing discrimination or other unfair treatment at work. The process should be confidential and flexible enough to bypass an immediate supervisor if the supervisor is the perpetrator or has not adequately addressed the issue. A 'no wrong door' approach is suggested where employees may raise fair treatment issues with human resources, an ombudsman, or management. If an 'open door' or similar policy is already in place, consider how it may be amended to add flexibility for employees to bypass an immediate supervisor in addition to ensuring no retaliation takes place.

INCLUSIVE HIRING PANELS

Research consistently shows that we have biases that we are unaware of and are influenced by our cultural background, environment, and life experiences. Unconscious bias is a mental shortcut based on our social conditioning. It is natural we typically do not realize it is happening. It is important during the hiring process that individuals are aware of their biases, reflect on how they might influence the decision about a candidate, and take steps to mitigate the bias by measuring each candidate independently against the job description and selection criteria. Another important tactic to address biases in the hiring process is to create a diverse panel by inviting panelist with different backgrounds and experiences.

TRAINING

- https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/take-course.html
- https://cfrac.com/training/cfrac-training/
- https://www.catalyst.org/unconscious-bias-inclusion-and-you
-

RESOURCES

- https://qz.com/work/1095637/diversity-and-inclusion-a-guide-to-unbiased-hiring-from-quartz-at-work/
- https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html



Supports

ONBOARDING

By communicating diversity, equity, and inclusion organizational values, resources, and training available to new employees, the organization furthers its commitment as an employer to continue creating an inclusive and psychologically safe workplace.

Include information in the orientation package to help employees find all the resources that will support their participation in the social and economic life of Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo. This strategy might help with retention and build an overall sense of belonging to the region.

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are led by employees on a voluntary basis to support each other, connect, become more engaged employees, and help develop leadership skills. ERGs also often work to address diversity and inclusion issues in the workplace and can be a valuable think-tank for senior leadership, providing unique perspectives and solutions to meet the objectives of the business.

RESOURCES

- https://ccdi.ca/media/1073/20150716-ccdi-report-erg-toolkit.pdf

DISCOUNT/FEE SCALE

Sliding fee scales for goods and services offered to the public are a great way to decrease barriers for those experiencing poverty. Discounts are another option that can also be offered to seniors and students. Implementing these initiatives will help make your business more inclusive for individuals living in diverse socio-economic circumstances.

MENTORSHIP

Implementing a mentorship program can benefit employees and senior leadership in supporting skill development, building confidence, encouraging innovation, increasing employee engagement and job satisfaction, and improving retention rates. Mentorship, particularly for employees from under-represented groups, is essential in developing talent and fostering inclusion at all levels of the organization.

RESOURCES

- https://www.togetherplatform.com/resources/best-practices-for-running-a-mentorship-program
- https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/41809/file-2472371704-pdf/pdf/mentorings-role-in-maximizing-a-diversity.pdf?t=1526031211054
- https://fortune.com/2021/07/12/workplace-diversity-black-latinx-mentorship-sponsorship-pwc/

Appendix A

ALBERTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT
PROTECTED GROUNDS

Race - Includes belonging to a group of people, usually of a common descent, who may share common physical characteristics, such as skin colour.

Religious Beliefs - System of beliefs, worship and conduct (includes native spirituality).

Colour - Colour of a person's skin. Discrimination based on colour may include, but is not limited to, racial slurs, jokes, stereotyping, and verbal and physical harassment.

Gender - The state of being male, female, transgender or two-spirited. The ground of gender also includes pregnancy and sexual harassment.

Gender Identity - Refers to a person's internal, individual experience of gender, which may not coincide with the sex assigned to them at birth. A person may have a sense of being a woman, a man, both, or neither. Gender identity is not the same as sexual orientation, which is also protected under the Act.

Gender Expression - Refers to the varied ways in which a person expresses their gender, which can include a combination of dress, demeanour, social behaviour and other factors.

Physical Disability - Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by injury, birth defect or illness. This includes, but is not limited to, epilepsy; paralysis; amputation; lack of physical coordination; visual, hearing and speech impediments; and physical reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

Mental Disability - Any mental disorder, developmental disorder or learning disorder, regardless of the cause or duration of the disorder.

Age - The Act defines age as 18 years of age or older, which means that individuals 18 and older are protected from age discrimination. However, there are three exceptions specified in the Act that allow for age restrictions: benefits for minors or seniors; seniors-only housing; and age-restricted condominiums, co-operative housing units and mobile home sites, providing the age restrictions were in place before January 1, 2018.

Ancestry - Belonging to a group of people related by a common heritage.

Place of Origin - Includes place of birth and usually refers to a country or province.

Marital Status - The state of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated, or living with a person in a conjugal relationship outside marriage.

Source of Income - Source of income is defined in the Act as lawful source of income. The protected ground of source of income includes any income that attracts a social stigma to its recipients, for example, social assistance, disability pension, and income supplements for seniors. Income that does not result in social stigma would not be included in this ground.

Family Status - The state of being related to another person by blood, marriage or adoption.

Sexual Orientation - This ground includes protection from differential treatment based on a person's actual or presumed sexual orientation, whether gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual or asexual.

Equal Pay – The Act protects Albertans in the area of equal pay. When employees of any gender (female, male, transgender or two-spirited) perform the same or substantially similar work, they must be paid at the same rate.

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of Wood Buffalo