

West Neighbourhood House	
Policy Title:	Equity Policy
Approved by:	West Neighbourhood House Board of Directors
Approval date:	March 2007
Revision dates:	April 2012 / January 2017 / November 2021 / April 2026

Policy Statement

West Neighbourhood House is committed to creating an equitable organization in which everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect. This policy is intended to ensure that equity, inclusion and respect are key values driving all aspects of our work in a manner that is consistent with the Vision, Mission, and Values of West Neighbourhood House.

West Neighbourhood House recognizes that discrimination can have a direct impact on the health and well-being of those who experience it. West Neighbourhood House acknowledges a responsibility within the organization and the community to respond to discrimination, whether intentional or not.

As an organization, West Neighbourhood House acknowledges the existence of racism in our community and the barriers created by systemic racism for many of the communities we serve. West Neighbourhood House specifically acknowledges anti-Black racism and strives to redress the harms done by anti-Black racism and all forms of racist and oppressive behaviours across the organization. West Neighbourhood House also recognizes and supports the spirit of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada concerning Indigenous people and of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) National Inquiry.

West Neighbourhood House also recognizes that the diversity of our staff, volunteers, and students is a source of tremendous strength and knowledge essential to delivering effective services to and with the diverse population in our community

West Neighbourhood House prohibits harassment and protects the right to be free of discrimination and hate activity based on age, ancestry, citizenship, creed (religion), colour, disability, ethnic origin, linguistic background, family status, gender identity, level of literacy, marital status, place of origin, membership in a union or staff association, political affiliation, race, economic status, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristics by or within the organization. Discrimination prohibited by West Neighbourhood House policies, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the City of Toronto’s Human Rights and Harassment Policy and Hate Activity Policy is not permitted. Delivery of appropriate, directed services to individuals or groups with particular needs, is allowed as long as it is in accordance with West Neighbourhood House Policies and applicable legislation.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with all other applicable West Neighbourhood House policies, including but not limited to: [Respectful Workplace Policy](#), [Workplace Harassment Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and the [Recruitment and Hiring Policy](#).

Applicability

- All Staff
- Program Participants
- Volunteers
- Student Placements
- Individuals and Community Groups who utilize West Neighbourhood House space
- Contractors

Definitions

Equity

The process of creating fair, just, and inclusive outcomes by recognizing that individuals have different starting points and needs.

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, family status, disability, sex or other personal characteristics.

General Principles

To meet its legal, professional, social and moral/ethical obligations towards equity, West Neighbourhood House shall:

- **Be accountable to our communities regarding equity.**
West Neighbourhood House shall include equity considerations in the annual Planning Cycle and explicitly considers equity in decision-making, priority-setting, partnership development, training, program planning and resource allocation. West Neighbourhood House shall engage diverse viewpoints within the organization, including but not exclusively through the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, and in the communities we serve and seek to serve.
- **Provide an environment that is accessible, welcoming, safe and free of stigma and discrimination for all our stakeholders, recognizing those stakeholders who identify themselves as members of a group having historically experienced discrimination and oppression.**
West Neighbourhood House will ensure that our policies, programs, practices and performances correspond to and reflect this environment. West Neighbourhood House shall promote this environment through targeted stakeholder outreach, multiple forms of communication, education and appropriate responses to complaints or concerns.

- **Recognize and support the achievement of equity as an important outcome of the services we provide.**

West Neighbourhood House shall foster and monitor equity in our responsiveness to our community, including collection, monitoring and analysis of race-based data and data that tracks other potential forms of inequity or oppression (provided that West Neighbourhood House has consent to do so).

- **Ongoing evaluation of how we hire, train, retain, and provide growth opportunities for staff.**

West Neighbourhood House shall ensure that equity and diversity are reflected and considered throughout all aspects and levels of the organization. To evaluate this, we shall collect, monitor and analyze race-based data and data about other forms of inequity/oppression of staff, with their consent and disclosure. This information will be used to inform future training, professional development and human resources policies and procedures that promote fair hiring practices.

- **Provide diversity, equity and inclusion training** to new staff, students, volunteers and participants when starting at West Neighbourhood House with regular refreshers and deeper level training periodically.

- **Receive, investigate and address complaints.**

Complaints regarding equity and discrimination may be submitted through the process outlined in the [Complaints Policy](#).

Responsibilities

- **The Board of Directors** is accountable to the larger community for ensuring that the Equity Policy and Procedures are followed in the work of West Neighbourhood House. The Board is responsible for the overall development and implementation of this Equity Policy.

The Board will include equity considerations in its recruitment, selection, support and evaluation of the Executive Director. The Board is also responsible for recruiting and retaining a diverse Board of Directors with a commitment to equity.

- **The Executive Director** is responsible for allocating adequate resources to ensure that Equity Policy and Procedures are followed in the work of West Neighbourhood House. The Executive Director is also responsible for ensuring ongoing review and continued development of policies affecting equity in all aspects of West Neighbourhood House operations.
- **The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee** is responsible for promoting equity, reviewing policies and practices, and acting as a reference group for questions and issues.
- **Supervisors** are responsible for adhering to equitable employment policies and procedures and working with their teams to ensure that equity goals are reflected in all aspects of program delivery. They are also responsible for working with other staff, students and

volunteers of West Neighbourhood House and partner organizations to ensure equitable relations with communities that experience discrimination.

- **All staff** are responsible for promoting equity and for actively addressing discrimination, intentional or not, by co-workers, program participants, students, volunteers and other community members.
- **Students, volunteers, program participants and other community members** will be supported and encouraged to promote equity and to address discrimination appropriately.

Related Legislation and Policies

West Neighbourhood House recognizes, fully supports, and adheres to the:

- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [City of Toronto's Human Rights and Harassment Policy and Hate Activity Policy](#)

Acknowledgement of Policy

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Equity Policy and/or have had it explained to me.

I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by this policy and related policies of West Neighbourhood House as a condition of my employment.

Date: _____

Name of Employee/Volunteer: _____

Signature: _____