

Head Office: 20 Anne St. South, Barrie, ON, L4N 2C6

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING (EDIB) POLICY

Declaration

At CFS Counselling + Wellbeing, we recognize that true equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to achieving our mission and values. We declare our unwavering commitment to:

- **Equity:** Addressing systemic barriers and promoting fairness in all areas of our work, ensuring all individuals have equal opportunities to participate and succeed.
- **Diversity:** Embracing and celebrating the unique backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences of all people within our organization and the broader community.
- **Inclusion:** Actively creating a culture of belonging, where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute fully to the success of our organization.
- **Belonging:** Fostering an environment where individuals feel a deep sense of connection, acceptance, and value, allowing them to bring their full, authentic selves to the organization without fear of exclusion or discrimination.

We acknowledge the historical and ongoing impacts of discrimination, oppression, and marginalization, and we pledge to continuously work toward an environment that fosters dignity and respect for all. This declaration reinforces our responsibility to act as a catalyst for positive change within our organization and the communities we serve. We stand united in our efforts to uphold these principles in all aspects of our operations, governance, and service delivery.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create a framework that promotes equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging within CFS Counselling + Wellbeing. This policy ensures that our practices, programs, and interactions with the community reflect our commitment to providing equal opportunities, celebrating diversity, and fostering an inclusive environment for all. CFS Counselling + Wellbeing is committed to fostering a work environment that is inclusive, equitable, and diverse, where each employee is respected and treated fairly, and every team member has an equal opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization and reach their full potential.

Scope

This policy applies to all current employees (full-time, part-time, contractual, permanent, and contract), students and volunteers of CFS Counselling + Wellbeing. It also extends to our treatment of clients, partners, suppliers, vendors, and job applicants.

Definitions

- **Diversity:** Refers to the differences in the makeup of our employees, including age, racialized identity, colour, national or ethnic origin, family or marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, language, physical and mental ability, genetic characteristics, political affiliation, religion, socioeconomic status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.
- **Equity:** Ensures fair access to all employment opportunities for everyone, regardless of diversity or difference. Equity addresses systemic barriers, historical injustices, and disparities against marginalized groups by ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity and fair treatment.
- **Inclusion:** The process through which the organization builds community, ensuring employees and the broader organization experience the benefits of diversity. It provides everyone with the right to participate fully in our workplace, enabling a sense of belonging.
- **Belonging:** Fosters an environment where individuals feel a deep sense of connection, acceptance, and value, allowing them to bring their full, authentic selves to the organization without fear of exclusion or discrimination.
- **Systemic Barriers:** Refers to policies, practices, or structures that perpetuate inequality and disadvantage certain groups based on their identity or background.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Recognizes the importance of mental health and wellbeing in fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace environment, promoting both individual and collective wellness.
- **Diversity vs. Inclusion vs. Belonging:** Diversity refers to representation across all dimensions of human difference. Inclusion ensures everyone is included, visible, and considered. Belonging means that individuals feel like full members of the community, able to thrive.

Commitments

CFS Counselling + Wellbeing is committed to:

- **Organizational Culture:** Creating and maintaining an inclusive culture where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued. We promote a workplace free from racism, discrimination, harassment, and bias.
- **Hiring and Staffing:** Attracting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve. Recruitment processes will be designed to remove barriers and actively seek diverse candidates. Selection will be based on merit, with clear consideration of diverse skills, experiences, and perspectives.
- **Equity in Employment Practices:** Regularly reviewing and updating employment practices such as recruitment, compensation, professional development, promotions, and training to align with this policy. We ensure our employment practices do not create systemic barriers.
- **Program and Service Delivery:** Developing and delivering programs and services with an equity lens, ensuring all individuals and communities have equitable access. We actively engage and listen to underrepresented groups to shape our programs.



- **Respectful Communication:** Encouraging open, respectful communication at all times. All employees are expected to foster a culture of dignity and respect, while leadership actively discourages and addresses any forms of intimidation, bullying, victimization, or harassment.
- **Training and Education:** Providing ongoing training and educational opportunities for all staff to promote understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- **Metrics for Success:** Establishing measurable goals and regularly assessing our progress in achieving equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging within the organization.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging with the communities we serve to gather feedback and insights to inform our practices and policies.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Ensuring that conflicts are resolved promptly, fairly, and in a manner that respects the dignity of all parties involved.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Promoting mental health and wellbeing through supportive programs, resources, and policies that recognize the importance of mental wellness in the workplace. We encourage open dialogue about mental health and provide access to resources for employees who may need support.

Leadership Responsibilities

Leaders at CFS Counselling + Wellbeing are expected to:

- Promote and uphold equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Ensure adherence to this policy across all levels.
- Take appropriate action to address any forms of discrimination or harassment.

Employee, Student and Volunteer Responsibilities

All employees, students and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat colleagues with dignity and respect at all times.
- Act in accordance with this policy and uphold its principles.
- Identify and report situations or actions that contravene the policy.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

CFS Counselling + Wellbeing is committed to upholding the human rights of all staff and volunteers. Specifically, CFS Counselling+ Wellbeing will ensure that all staff and volunteers have a right to equal treatment without discrimination and the right to freedom from harassment in the workplace under the protected grounds and aspects of employment established by the Ontario Human Rights Code, Section 5(1), (2), which states:

- 5. (1). Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of racialized identity, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, or disability. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, s. 5 (1); 1999, c. 6, s. 28 (5); 2001, c. 32, s. 27 (1); 2005, c. 5, s. 32 (5); 2012, c. 7, s. 4 (1).
- 5. (2). Every person who is an employee has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by the employer or agent of the employer or by another



employee because of racialized identity, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, or disability. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, s. 5 (2); 1999, c. 6, s. 28 (6); 2001, c. 32, s. 27 (1); 2005, c. 5, s. 32 (6); 2012, c. 7, s. 4 (2).

Complaints

It is the expectation of CFS Counselling + Wellbeing that all employees, students and volunteers adhere to this policy. Should any breach occur, employees should report it to the Executive Director immediately. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination as per CFS's HR policy.

Reprisals

Any employee who files a complaint will not be subject to retaliation (direct or indirect). CFS Counselling + Wellbeing acknowledges that any employee who believes their rights have been violated may also file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

Policy Review

CFS Counselling + Wellbeing is committed to regularly reviewing its policies. This policy will be reviewed no less than once every three years to ensure it remains relevant and effective in promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

Approval and Effective Date

This policy was approved by the Executive Director on November 19, 2024 and is effective as of January 16, 2024.

