



CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY

POLICY AND PLAN

PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, STATEMENT ON INTENT:

It is the intent of OPARC that its employees behave in a manner representative of its ethical codes of conduct and moral commitment to provide quality programs and services for those we serve, their families, our employees, and all stakeholders including but not limited to our funders and business partners.

POLICY:

It is the policy of OPARC to maintain a written Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan that describes how the language and cultural needs of our persons served, their families, our employees and business partners are met. It is OPARC's policy to effectively and respectfully provide services to people of all cultures, ages, races, genders, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, languages, ethnic backgrounds, spiritual and religious beliefs in a manner that recognizes values, affirms, and respects the worth of the individuals and protects and preserves the dignity of each person. OPARC adheres to the equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy and non-discrimination practices.

I. CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY PLAN

Introduction:

Cultural competency is an integral part of OPARC. Employees of OPARC who are in direct contact with persons served and their families, other employees and/or other stakeholders will demonstrate the following:

- Recognize, value, affirm and respect the worth of each individual they come in contact with, and protect and preserve the dignity of each
- Utilize appropriate resources to ensure language needs of persons are met
- Assess resources that match the cultural and diversity needs of each individual
- Utilize culture-specific information provided in training and/or employee orientation to assist in identifying and determining the cause of culture-based issues and miscommunication, and to resolve these issues

OPARC ensures non-discriminatory and respectful services to recipients, their families, other employees and stakeholders by employing both internal and external cultural competency practices. Ongoing improvement and widespread dissemination of these efforts evidences OPARC's commitment to the provision of culturally appropriate services and care. OPARC as a provider of services geared toward advocacy and independence and choice for the persons we serve, accommodates, facilitates, treats, and assists persons of all cultures, ages, races, genders, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, languages, ethnic backgrounds, spiritual and religious beliefs.

All employees, persons served, their families and business partners have access to OPARC's Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan, as the essential plan elements are included in employee materials, client materials, and on our website at www.oparc.org (the link can be found in the gray bar at the bottom of each page). It is also available separately, upon request.

II. INTERNAL CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY PRACTICES

(1) OPARC seeks staff members that are committed to their community and our mission, represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, and are capable of communicating in cross-cultural situations. Discrimination is not tolerated and employees will conduct services in a manner that recognizes values, affirms and respects the worth of the individuals and families we serve, other employees and stakeholders, and protect and preserve the dignity of each person. Attached are OPARC's policies in the Employee Handbook to support this philosophy: Equal Employment Opportunity, Policy Against Harassment, Employee Ethics Policy and Accommodating Employees with Disabilities.

(2) When necessary and requested, translation services for recipients and their families will be provided. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, service plans, evaluations or other documents shared with the person served and the people they choose to share this information with. If a client is in need of interpretive services and OPARC does not have someone available, OPARC will contact the appropriate agency to assist with this translation. If a person is bilingual, OPARC employs a number of individuals who will assist with interpretation. All OPARC programs employ a minimum of one bilingual case manager.

(3) OPARC provides much of its information in alternate format, including bilingual translation, video presentations and group translation services.

(4) OPARC provides training that is comprehensive, behaviorally and theoretically based cultural competency training and education is identified and offered throughout the year. Characteristics of the training include:

- Acceptance and respect for differences
- Careful attention to dynamics of difference
- Continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources

Training is based on the following learning techniques:

- Assessment and awareness of personal biases, values and expectations
- Content on general culture-specific:
 - Language
 - Family structure
 - Variety of physical and intellectual disabilities

Specific trainings identified include:

- Cultural Diversity Training
- Community/Employer/Business Partner Sensitivity and Diversity Training
- CPI (Crisis Intervention)

III. EXTERNAL CULTURAL COMPETENCY PRACTICES

OPARC employees notified of their responsibilities pertaining to delivering culturally competent care and may obtain a copy of the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan on the website: www.oparc.org.

OPARC will provide interpreter services for persons served and their families as necessary, when requested, to ensure availability of effective communication regarding services, history or vocational training. Interpreters are available when technical, medical or service information is to be discussed, as appropriate. The use of a family member or family friend will be used as appropriate.

OPARC utilizes and has informal relationships with a variety of traditional and nontraditional organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for persons served, their families, employees and other stakeholders. These include:

- Regional Centers
- Department of Rehabilitation
- TAY Services
- Local School Districts
- Local Colleges and Universities
- Community Access Center

Stacey Proctor, President/CEO

Date