

North Los Angeles County Regional Center (“NLACRC”)  
**Board of Trustees**

**Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity**

Societal inequity does exist, and therefore, inequity is reflected historically in systems and institutions, including the regional center system. This policy will address the structural gaps in representation, cultivate an environment where all identities are valued and respected, and to provide resources that educate and explore different points of view. NLACRC is committed to identifying the opportunities for change with an enhanced focus on equity, being solution-focused and future-facing, and bringing awareness to different cultures and identities throughout our entire community.

**Vision Statement**

NLACRC affirms and celebrates the inclusion, equity and diversity for all staff, people served, their families, and communities that we support and represent. NLACRC’s vision is to empower people with developmental disabilities to have opportunities to achieve their fullest potential in all aspects of life and to embrace and showcase differences.

**Mission Statement**

NLACRC will be a regional center in the community that brings together perspectives of all positions and roles within the community and to share thoughts and suggest actions that foster inclusion, advance equity, and promote diversity.

**Definitions**

- A. Inclusion means the active practice of creating spaces where all people feel embraced, affirmed, seen, valued, connected, and respected.
- B. Equity means the provision of opportunities and access to services and supports based on need through eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of communities and individuals most impacted by systemic oppression.
- C. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, color, language, religion, sex, including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and related medical conditions, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, age, medical condition, genetic characteristic, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, marital status, registered domestic partner status, and sexual orientation.

## Purpose of Policy

- A. *Internal Purpose:* This policy will help provide structure and ongoing organizational commitment to inclusion, equity and diversity for all NLACRC staff. An inclusive, equitable, and diverse workplace refers to a workplace in which all individuals, including staff and individuals served feel seen, valued, respected, and engaged not regardless of – but with consideration and appreciation for differences. NLACRC commits to accountability and transparency through policy and advances the priority for increasing service access and equity for underserved communities.
- B. *External Purpose:* This policy guides how NLACRC collaborates with people served, their families, board members, service providers, community-based organizations, legislators, stakeholders, and the community-at-large. This policy provides accountability and transparency through policy and advances the priority for increasing services access and equity for underserved communities with a specific focus on the strengths and resilience of people served by NLACRC. This purpose recognizes a need for specific action to dismantle and protect against any form of institutional or systemic racism or oppression.

## Policy Objectives

The overarching objective of this policy is to foster an organizational culture that reflects intentional support of inclusion, equity, and diversity efforts. NLACRC will advance Inclusion, Equity & Diversity and provide support and guidance for implementing changes in the following ways:

- A. Facilitate continuous learning and training opportunities for current staff, new staff, board members and service providers
  - i. At least one required learning/training opportunity focused on inclusion, equity and diversity will be provided quarterly for all NLACRC staff and offered to service providers that interface with consumers, including members of the Vendor Advisory Committee.
  - ii. Topics identified for learning/training opportunities will be diverse, multicultural, and intended to meet pressing current needs, as determined through the NLACRC strategic plan, town halls, public surveys, meetings, and ongoing solicitation of community feedback.
- B. Develop, and implement a strategic plan to achieve the areas identified in the policy
  - i. NLACRC will provide quarterly status reports & annual updates of the strategic plan with attention to current best practices and identified metrics.

C. Align objectives outlined above with all current and future organizational policy development

- i. Examine congruence between inclusion, equity and diversity activities and efforts with existing and emerging policy across the organization.

## **Service Access and Equity**

NLACRC is committed to increasing service access and equity for underserved communities. Inequities impact people served by regional center, their families, and other stakeholders. Therefore, NLACRC will implement specific and measurable strategies for inclusion to ensure everyone is welcome and represented. Training, Education, and Awareness will be implemented to ensure people served are fully aware of all service options and experience true person-centered planning. NLACRC will ensure all information and communications are equally and meaningfully available. NLACRC values family connections and relationships that can help connect people to services and supports. Outreach, including local grassroots outreach, is a priority for NLACRC to ensure all people served are aware of the regional center services and supports. NLACRC will analyze and review Purchase of Service expenditure data by ethnicity, age, location, and by living situation and employ strategies to address differences. All metrics related to service access and equity, will be specific and measurable, and align with NLACRC's strategic planning strategies.

## **Equal Opportunity & Appreciation for Differences**

NLACRC values and embraces the diversity of our workforce. We are committed to diversity and inclusion at NLACRC because we understand that each of our employees are unique. As an equal opportunity employer, NLACRC is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace and does not discriminate against employees or job applicants on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, color, language, religion, sex, including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and related medical conditions, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, age, medical condition, genetic characteristic, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, marital status, registered domestic partner status, sexual orientation, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

## **NLACRC Staff Professional Conduct**

All NLACRC employees deserve to be treated with dignity and respect at work by their co-workers, supervisors, and managers. NLACRC employees are responsible for their behavior at work. All employees are expected to exhibit professional and respectful conduct towards their

co-workers, supervisors, and managers during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events. All employees are required to abide by NLACRC's policies that prohibit discrimination, harassment and retaliation based on an employee's protected characteristics, and to attend and complete ongoing diversity awareness and anti-harassment training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.

### **Recruitment, Hiring, Promotion, and Retention**

NLACRC is committed to hire, promote, and retain the best qualified individuals. As part of that commitment, NLACRC will strive to hire and promote diverse individuals throughout the organization, including leadership positions that can influence change, and policy. NLACRC is committed to maintaining a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities and consumers we serve.

### **Corrective and Remedial Action**

Any employee who violates NLACRC's policies against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and/or engages in inappropriate conduct or behavior, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination, harassment or retaliation that violates NLACRC's should seek assistance from a supervisor or an HR representative. NLACRC employees can also contact Human Resources for alternative reporting options with a third-party entity.

### **Other Relevant NLACRC Organizational Policies**

NLACRC has additional organizational policies that support our efforts for inclusion, equity, and diversity:

- **Recruitment and Selection Policy:** NLACRC seeks to recruit and hire the best-qualified applicants and comply with all applicable employment laws, Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) rules, and agency policies and procedures. NLACRC is committed to building a diverse staff that is reflective of our community and to provide equal employment opportunities to all qualified applicants, employees, consumers, and stakeholders.

- **Unlawful Harassment and Retaliation Policy:** NLACRC is committed to providing a workplace that is free from unlawful harassment or intimidation. The purpose of this policy is to set expectations of behaviors that are aligned with NLACRC's values and support positive working relationships and a professional work environment.
- **Whistleblower Policy - NLACRC Employees and Board Members:** This Policy provides a guide to assist any NLACRC employee or board member who wishes to report any perceived improper regional center activity and/or improper vendor/contractor activity and be protected from retaliation when doing so.
- **Whistleblower Policy - NLACRC Vendors, Contractors and Others:** This Policy provides a guide to assist any NLACRC vendor, contractor, consumer or their family, or other individual who wishes to report any perceived improper regional center activity and/or improper vendor/contractor activity and be protected from retaliation when doing so.