

To: Board of Commissioners
From: CSWD's JEDI Committee (Ali Nasab, Alise Certa, Anna Gonzalez, Amy Jewell, Becky Johnston, Gabriella Stevens, Jack Tyndall, Kat Moody)
Date: May 16, 2024
RE: Declaration of Inclusion

CSWD held an all-staff training from Abundant Sun, which was an excellent kick off for conversations regarding dignity and respect at work. Following that training in 2021, CSWD staff formed a *Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee*. The Committee meets monthly and is doing great work to ensure that CSWD is a municipal organization that is welcoming to all. Below is a timeline of some of the work that has been done to move our JEDI Committee work forward.

JEDI WORK SUMMARIZED BY YEAR

2022

- CSWD staff forms JEDI Committee
- Presentation by Kim Nolan, Director of the Dignity Foundation to assist with educating JEDI Committee members on starting committees, goal setting, and mission.
- The Vermont League of Cities and Towns held a *Declaration of Inclusion in Vermont* webinar with the goal of each Vermont Municipality adopting and implement a Declaration of Inclusion. CSWD's Board unanimously approved the Declaration of Inclusion, listed below.
BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Chittenden Solid Waste District hereby Approves the Declaration of Inclusion as written and presented.
The Chittenden Solid Waste District condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community. As a municipality, we formally condemn all discrimination in all of its forms, commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community, and strive to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment. CSWD is an organization where all individuals feel a sense of belonging and can express their opinions.
- Definitions, and mission finalized. (attached)
- All Staff Meeting to introduce JEDI Committee and initiatives and solicit feedback from staff.
- Extensive Survey to learn more about staff's knowledge and experiences. Survey questions focused on belonging and inclusion and the importance of JEDI. The results overwhelmingly showed CSWD employees are thoughtful, inclusive, and welcoming.

2023

- Research upcoming projects
- Several staff members attended JEDI training.
- Added Monthly Tuesday "Ted Talks" to educate staff.

- AmeriCorps Vista Volunteer Anna Gonzalez joined staff to assist with ongoing projects.
- Began Pictograph project specifically designed for Drop-Off Center customers. Coordinated and met with the Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services to review layout, images and to better communicate with our customers.
- Started weekly education e-mails to staff on various JEDI related topics including information on featured holidays and celebrations.
- Developing Community partnerships by attending JEDI committees in other cities/towns
- Implemented Anonymous hiring practices to include removal of demographic information in hopes of avoiding possible bias and discrimination.

2024

- Established goals for 2024 to center around education and accessibility.
- Invited Executive Director to JEDI meeting to discuss projects and moving forward in 2024.
- Report to the Board on prior work being done, include monthly information in the Board packet program updates.
- Monthly book club selection books (part of the Wellness program) now include JEDI focused selections.
- Some Committee members attended the Vermont Business for Social Responsibility JEDI training Series, which include information on Unconscious Bias, Microaggressions, Class & Classism, and Power Dynamics.



Chittenden Solid Waste District

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Definitions

Justice:

Dismantling barriers to resources and opportunities in society so that all individuals & communities can live a full & dignified life. These barriers are essentially the “isms” in society: racism, classism, sexism, etc.

Equity:

Equity in the workplace refers to fair treatment in access, opportunity and advancement for all individuals. Work in this area includes identifying and working to eliminate barriers to fair treatment for disadvantaged groups with an understanding that the societal systems in which we currently work are not equitable and that those inequities are reflected in our organizations.

Diversity:

The similarities and differences among individuals accounting for all aspects of their personality and individual identity, which includes age, disability, ethnicity, national origin, family status, sex, gender identity or expression, generation, language, life experiences, neurodiversity (range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits), organizational function and level, physical traits, race/color, religion, belief and spirituality, sexual orientation, veteran status.

Inclusion: *Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.* —Vernā Myers

Inclusion describes the extent to which each person in an organization feels welcomed, respected, supported and valued as a team member. Inclusion is a two-way accountability; each person must grant and accept inclusion from others.

JEDI Committee Mission Statement

CSWD is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

CSWD recognizes that our most valuable asset is our employees. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and CSWD's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

CSWD's diversity initiatives are applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of diversity equity that encourages and enforces:

- Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees.
- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives.
- Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs.
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for the diversity.

All employees of CSWD have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events. All employees are also required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.

Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with the company's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor or an HR representative.

Declaration of Inclusion

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As a municipality, we formally condemn all discrimination in all of its forms, commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community, and strive to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment.

CSWD is an organization where all individuals feel a sense of belonging and can express their opinions.

By the Chittenden Solid Waste District Board of Commissioners on May 25, 2022.