



CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY PLAN

Culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior, which includes but is not limited to – thought, communication, languages, beliefs, values, practices, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious, social or political group; the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) recognizes that Cultural Competence is a key principle that must be integrated within all aspects of service delivery process. The agency will attempt to respond effectively to the needs of all persons served and their families, stakeholders, employees, the community, from culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

GOALS:

1. Improve communication to and from stakeholders, employees, community, persons served, served for whom cultural/linguistic issues are present.
2. Improve employees' understanding and sensitivity to cultural diversity within the agency and with persons served.
3. Improve services and outcomes for persons served.

PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE OR STATEMENT ON INTENT: It is the intent of JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF WASHTENAW COUNTY that its employees behave in a manner representative of its ethical and/or moral commitment to provide quality services to its persons served.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) to maintain a written Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan that describes how the linguistic and cultural needs of our persons served are met. It is our policy to effectively provide services to persons served of all cultures, age, races, gender, sexual orientation, socio economic status, languages, ethnic backgrounds, spiritual beliefs and religions in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms, and respects the worth of the individuals and protects and preserves the dignity of each person. JFS adheres to the equal employment opportunity policy and non-discrimination practices.

PROCEDURE: JFS policy is implemented by the following plan and practices.



I. Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan

Introduction:

Cultural competence is an integral part of JFS. Those employed by JFS who are in direct contact with persons served (clients) and families will demonstrate the following:

- Recognize, value, affirm and respect the worth of each individual recipient and family and protect and preserve the dignity of each client.
- Utilize appropriate resources to ensure linguistic needs of the recipient and family are met.
- Assess recipient and family acculturation to aid in matching families with appropriate community based resources and provide appropriate health and rehabilitation education.
- 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 them.

JFS ensures non-discriminatory and respectful services to persons served and families by employing both internal and external cultural competency practices. Ongoing improvement and widespread dissemination of these efforts evidences JFS's commitment to the provision of culturally appropriate services and care. JFS, as a behavioral health practice, accommodates, facilitates, treats, and assists persons served with a wide variety of disabilities from mental and physical disabilities to those persons served with medical diagnosis and disorders.

Key areas of focus:

1. Commitment to Cultural Competency
2. Strategies and Efforts for Reducing Racial, Ethnic, Cultural, and Linguistic Mental Health Disparities
3. Culturally Competent Training Activities
4. Language Capacity
5. Adaptation of Services

All employees, persons served, and families have access to the JFS Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan, as the essential plan elements are included in employee materials and on our website at www.jfsannarbor.org. It is also available separately upon request.

II. Internal Cultural Competency and Diversity Practices

(1) JFS seeks staff members that are committed to their community, 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 individual and protects and preserves the dignity of each person.

(2) When necessary and requested, translation services to persons served will be provided. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, treatment plans, evaluation, or other documents shared with family. If a client is in need of interpretive services, JFS makes appropriate arrangements for these services. If a client has a limited English language proficiency, JFS has a paid or a volunteer professional who will assist with interpretations.

JFS has also has paid and volunteer interpreters who can be contacted to assist in the areas of speech and hearing impaired. The contact information can be found with the Human Resources Department and the office of The Clinical Director of JFS.

(3) JFS provides trainings. Comprehensive, behaviorally and theoretically based cultural competency trainings are offered as needed. Characteristics of the training include:

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

Trainings are based upon the following learning techniques:

- Assessment and awareness of personal biases, values and expectations.
- Content on general culture-specific attributes (family structures, language use for various groups, and persons served with a wide variety of physical and linguistic disabilities).

Specific trainings identified include:

- JFS Cultural Diversity Training
- JFS Cultural Competency Training
- JFS Cultural Humility Training

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) maintains a database of a wide range of resources on cultural and linguistic competence (e.g. demographic information, policies, practices, articles, books, research initiatives and findings, curricula, multimedia materials and websites, etc.) The NCCC uses specific review criteria for the inclusion of these resources. As part of the NCCC's web-based technical assistance, a selection searchable bibliography of these resources is made available online.



Online resource database to be used for self-study:

<https://www.4.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/app/resources/index.cfm>

III. External Cultural Competency Practices

Employees are 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.jfsannarbor.org.

JFS will provide interpreter services to persons served and families as necessary when requested to ensure availability of effective communication regarding treatment, medical history, or health education. Interpreters are available when technical, medical, or treatment information is to be discussed or where use of a family member or friend, as interpreter is inappropriate.

JFS utilizes and has informal relationships with a wide variety of traditional and nontraditional organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for persons served and families. These include:

- Adult Learning Collaborative Board (ALCB)
- Washtenaw County Transportation Coordinating Council
- Aging Services Sector
- Great Start (Success by Six)
- Washtenaw Alliance for Children and Youth
- Washtenaw Literacy Coalition
- Share Network
- Food Gatherers
- FEMA
- Human Services Coordinating Council
- Washtenaw Human Services Emergency Response
- Washtenaw Health Initiative
- Washtenaw Housing Alliance
- Jewish Community Council