



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

### PURPOSE AND POLICY

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy is intended to provide a framework to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion at all levels within Voices for Georgia's Children (Voices), including within the Board of Directors, the team, and in the work that Voices does. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal and equitable opportunity for employment and advancement in all areas of our organization as reflected in the Nondiscrimination Policy included in our employee handbook.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At Voices for Georgia's Children, equity is an approach that ensures everyone has meaningful access to the opportunities needed to thrive, especially the children of our state. It is foundational to achieving diversity and inclusion in our work to advance laws, policies and actions that improve children's lives and in our workplace. Equity is crucial to realizing the positive outcomes in child well-being that every child deserves. It recognizes that children do not all start from the same place because individual and structural advantages and barriers exist. Equity is a process that acknowledges uneven starting places and seeks to correct these imbalances to ensure that children and adults, who have been marginalized and are furthest from opportunities, can have their needs met holistically, and can contribute, grow, and develop. Being equity-focused helps us to avoid blind spots that lead to flawed strategies and creates powerful opportunities to deepen our impact on child well-being and advance the public good.

Unlike equity, diversity and inclusion are both outcomes. When our efforts to achieve equity are successful, we will proactively engage a more diverse (e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, education, geography, and economic or societal status) group of people with our organization and our work on behalf of children. We believe that we can better achieve our mission by drawing on the skills, talents, and perspectives of a broad and diverse range of people, and that the diversity of viewpoints that comes from different life experiences and cultural backgrounds strengthens organizational deliberations and decision-making.

Inclusion among a diverse group means each person is and feels valued and welcomed. Voices strives to build an inclusive culture that celebrates differences and ensures that all stakeholders are engaged and invested in the organization's mission and work. Because inclusion is not a natural consequence of diversity, Voices is committed to exploring and addressing potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness. We believe children benefit from having people that share their lived experiences in positions of influence and impact.

### ***In Our Work***

At Voices for Georgia's Children, we envision a state where all children thrive. Our vision requires us to name disparities in child wellbeing and identify their causes. We prioritize equity in child wellbeing outcomes, and with data and community experience, we challenge assumptions about systemic and structural drivers of those outcomes. We ensure the broadest possible diversity of perspectives in our partnerships, forums, programs, and coalitions that inform our work and develop and promote our policy priorities. We are committed to the following practices:

- Generate, disaggregate, analyze, and share quantitative and qualitative data to identify and rectify sources of inequities in child wellbeing
- Provide the necessary context for quantitative and qualitative data to support greater understanding of systemic and structural drivers of outcome
- Advocate for public and private-sector policies that promote diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Challenge systems and policies that create inequities, oppression, and disparities
- Engage all stakeholders, particularly those impacted by our work

### ***In Our Workplace***

Voices maintains a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace so that all employees and volunteers are and feel valued and respected. We expect all employees to model professionalism and fairness in communicating and behaving in a respectful manner. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and ensure that all voices are valued and heard. We are committed to the following practices:

- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission
- Acknowledge and remove any inequities within our policies, practices, systems, programs, and services
- Demonstrate humility and sensitivity in our pursuit of cultural competency throughout our organization
- Develop a system for being intentional and conscious of bias during the hiring, promotion, evaluation, training, benefits, and separation processes.
- Create transparency in our HR policies and practices to include a salary range for all job descriptions and external postings

- Expand targeted recruitment to underrepresented groups to create a pipeline that supports our diversity goals for board and staff
- Commit to achieving and maintaining diversity in leadership within our board, staff, and advisory bodies, and to have our board and staff reflect the diverse demographic make-up of the state of Georgia
- Practice and encourage transparent communication in all interactions

## **REVIEW & ENDORSEMENT**

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and practices are endorsed by the Board of Directors, reviewed, and assessed annually by the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors and codified in the bylaws of the organization.