



STUDENT/VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: This handbook is a general guide to TACL's Regulations, Policies & Procedures, Mission Statement and benefits. It does not constitute an employment agreement, override TACL's policies & procedures, nor does it confer any special rights or guarantee continued employment. The employer can make changes to this handbook at any time.

Revised February 2026

Welcome to the Trail Association for Community Living, also known as “TACL”. We assist and support adults with diverse needs along with their families, to be part of a **welcoming inclusive community** where all are encouraged to reach their full potential.

We are privileged that you are interested in joining the TACL community through volunteering. Our volunteers are of all ages and come from all walks of life and backgrounds. They have many different reasons for getting involved. Some have relatives or friends who use or have used our services. Some are newly retired or new to the community and are looking for a meaningful way to meet people and make a contribution. Some are interested in working in the community living field and some are required hours for an educational program. Whatever the reason, all are united by a common wish to help build a more inclusive community, by making a contribution that is meaningful, valued and lasting.

Volunteers are invaluable to TACL. Without you we could not offer a full range of programs and services to the many people who depend on them. Every year volunteer hours, provided by individuals, groups, and corporations, contribute to the operation of our organization. With your generous donation of time and effort, you are helping to ensure worth and dignity to many members of our community.

We have developed this handbook to help you have a successful volunteer or practicum experience with us. It has important information you need to know. The first part has general information about our organization - it explains who we are, where we have come from, what we do, and what we believe in. The second part has specific information about volunteering with TACL, including policies that apply to you as a volunteer or practicum student. Please read it and keep it on hand for future reference. Ask questions if you are unclear about anything, or want to make suggestions for ways to improve it.

We hope you find your volunteering experience with us enriching, enjoyable and fun.

Nancy Gurr
Executive Director
Trail Association for Community Living

TACL Mission and Vision:

Our Mission: *“to remove barriers and create a community where everyone can thrive.”*

Our Vision: *“is of an inclusive community where individuals of all abilities have equal opportunities to belong and succeed.”*

Do you have a hobby or interest you would like to share?
Do you want to get involved in the programs we offer?
Do you have time on your hands?
Do we have an offer for you — Volunteer
It'll be one of the most fulfilling things you have ever done.
Our volunteers make a difference.



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Three need to know TACL Polices attached: For all other Policies and Procedures please review full Manual:

2.15 - Lines of Communication

1.11 - Complaint Management

4.2 - Incident Reporting



TACL HISTORY

Trail Association for Community Living (TACL) has been providing support and services to people with diverse needs for over 70 years. In the early 1950's many families from the Kootenay's had children with diverse needs living in Institution's throughout the province. There was a strong belief that these children could learn and live in their own community and the long distance made it very difficult for families to visit. These were driving forces behind building a facility closer to home. The Kootenay Society for Handicapped Children was founded by Dr. W. J. Endicott, a member of the Trail community as well as families and volunteers to run a school for children with disabilities. The Society continued to grow and change and was soon providing support and education as "The Maple School".

Over the years, The Maple School transitioned from the "classroom" to a "sheltered workshop" for adults. The classroom moved into Sunningdale School and continued with Katie Shaw who was a pioneer for establishing equality of living for individuals with disabilities.

During the 1980's the workshop relocated to the downtown area and was renamed Trail Contracting Services. Portland House, with support from the Kiwanis, opened as a home to provide life skills training for individuals to live in the community. Soon after, Willow Place in Warfield opened its doors as a group home. The "group home" era of the organization officially began. The Trail Association for Community Living over the years has since opened three more homes and continues to grow.

TACL purchased property on Riverside Avenue and it was named the Trail Association Activity Center (TAAC) providing a home for TACL's Day Program, Child and Youth programs and community support services we provide. We continued to grow and Career Development Services came under our umbrella providing employment services in the greater Trail area.

The Community Inclusion Centre (CIC), a community space for groups and individuals to come together, was purchased in December 2017. The CIC provides employment services through WorkBC program and in the winter months hosts the LaNina Cold Weather Shelter. In early 2018, the community was in need of an organization to take over the Youth Centre. TACL was quick to action and took over March 2018. Also, in 2018 Rossland Avenue House opened as one of the community's first cluster house.

TACL is committed to providing quality service and support to individuals and their families and advocates for these people to enhance quality of life, community acceptance and understanding.

ABOUT THE TRAIL ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

The Trail Association for Community Living is a non-profit organization providing supports and services to individuals with diverse needs in the Trail area through an array of programs; community support, supported employment, advocacy, residential, recreational/cultural and life skills support. TACL is committed to providing quality service and support to these individuals through encouragement to maximize their strengths while living and working within the community. The Association advocates on behalf of individuals to enhance quality of life, public understanding and community acceptance.

Our Board and Management are comprised of individuals with diverse administrative skills, legal expertise, human resources knowledge and financial expertise. In addition, some board members are self-advocates or family or friends of people with diverse needs.

TACL provides accountable and cost effective services in a flexible manner. We believe in a team approach where every person's voice has the right to be heard. We are an ever- evolving organization committed to change and staying abreast of the latest trends and opportunities in our field.

A welcoming inclusive community is one that believes:

- a) Every person is valued
- b) Every person has a need for love, friendship, and belonging to ensure their well-being and a meaningful life
- c) Every person is entitled to acceptance and respect
- d) Every person has the right to reach their potential
- e) In promoting creativity, flexibility and choice as a means of developing personal and community growth
- f) With every right there is an inherent responsibility.
- g) With every opportunity there is an inherent risk.
- h) In ensuring for all, full accessibility to information, services and resources
- i) Growing and learning are part of the personal responsibilities



WHO WE ARE AND THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE

The Trail Association for Community Living is a non-profit, direct service and advocacy organization comprised of individuals who live with diverse needs, their families, friends, professionals, business people and others from our community.

The Trail Association for Community Living provides the following support services:

- ❑ Residential Settings
- ❑ Life Skills
- ❑ Recreational Opportunities
- ❑ Community Support/ Outreach
- ❑ Advocacy
- ❑ Family Support
- ❑ Employment Services
- ❑ Career Development Services
- ❑ Self-Advocate Groups
- ❑ Peer Support Groups
- ❑ Social Enterprises
- ❑ Reaching Home
- ❑ La Nina Shelter
- ❑ Goal Setting and budgeting
- ❑ Trail Youth Centre

**For more information
visit: www.taclkootenays.com**



FUNDING SOURCES:

TACL is a non-profit, charitable association. TACL primarily receives funding from Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), a crown corporation of the British Columbia Government as well as BC Housing and WorkBC. In order to enhance and expand services, TACL also applies for grants and holds fundraising events on a regular basis. Although TACL does not solicit donations, they are always appreciated.

OUR SERVICE PRINCIPLES:

1. We will create services consistent with the needs of individuals. We will create opportunities for those in the individual's personal network to assist the person to define their support needs.
2. We will create an environment where staff members see their role as supporting the needs and aspirations of the individual. We will empower staff teams to be cohesive, highly motivated, focused, trained and committed to the Mission of the Association.
3. We will integrate individuals into the larger community.



Trail Association for Community Living: Getting in Touch With Us

Program and Office Phone Numbers

You can call TACL between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Administration Office	1565B Bay Ave. Trail	(250) 368-3503
Trail Assn. Activity Centre	1769 Riverside Ave. Trail	(250) 368-3504
Community Support	Community Based	(250) 512-9224
Career Development Services	1565 Bay Ave. Trail	(250) 364-1104
Community Inclusion Centre	1458 Bay Avenue, Trail	(250) 368-3391
Trail Youth Centre	1696 Second Ave Trail	(250) 368-3095

Residential Phone Numbers/Addresses

The phone will be answered at any time of day at the houses and you are welcome to call. Staff members are more than willing to help you in any way they can.

Forrest Place	491 Forrest Drive Warfield	(250) 368-3511
Alpha House	1681 Bay Ave. Trail	(250) 368-9145
Fruitvale House	1889 Columbia Gardens Road Fruitvale	(250) 367-2174
Willow Place	355 Willow Dr. Trail	(250) 364-2033
Duncan House	21 Duncan Avenue Fruitvale	(250) 368-1437
Rossland Avenue House	93 Rossland Ave. Trail	(250) 364-1975
Raven House	132 Reservoir Rd	(250) 512-0833

Management Phone Numbers

	<u>Weekday</u>	<u>After Hours</u>
Nancy Gurr – Executive Director	250-368-3503 Ext 1	250- 368-7309
Tracy Fischer - Financial Manager	250-368-3503 Ext 3	250- 231-5349
Sheila Adcock – Contract Manager	250-364-1104	250-368-7390
Shane Granger -Quality Assurance Coordinator	250-368-3503 Ext 5	250-231-7088
Cindy Cook - Admin. Assistant/Payroll.	250-368-3503 Ext 4	
Erin Thoma - Admin Assistant	250-364-1104	
Kaitlynn Fischer -Residential manager	250-368-3503 Ext 6	
Emily Pascuzzo – Admin. Asst.	250-368-3503 Ext 8	

Diversity:

The Trail Association for Community Living welcomes and values diversity. Some of the ways we do this are by including the perspectives of many people in our decision-making; having staff and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community; training staff, caregivers and volunteers in culturally competent service delivery; creating an organization that is free of discrimination and harassment; and ensuring equitable access to our services for all.

See page 19 Cultural Diversity plan

The Volunteer Relationship:

Volunteers are a vital part of the Trail Association for Community Living (TACL). Providing meaningful volunteer opportunities is an important way to help build and sustain our capacity to fulfill our mission. We work hard to create a good match between you as a volunteer or practicum student, and the tasks to be done.

This way we maximize your student/volunteer experience by also supporting staff as well as persons served. As a student/volunteer at TACL you'll join a team of over 100 staff and other Volunteers who respond to the ongoing needs of the adults and children/youth and families we support. We recognize and appreciate your skills and commitment of time. Your contribution helps us to meet our commitment to provide care, support, advocacy and education for those we support. It can also provide you with meaningful experience, skill development and social connections. The student/volunteer relationship includes rights and responsibilities.

As a student/volunteer, you have the right to:

- ◆ Be given an assignment that is meaningful, challenging and rewarding, and allows opportunities for personal growth and development;
- ◆ Be treated with respect and consideration;
- ◆ Volunteer in a safe and positive environment;
- ◆ Receive appropriate information, training, orientation, support, and supervision; and be recognized for your contributions.

We expect that you in turn will:

- ◆ Perform your duties with energy, enthusiasm and a positive attitude;
- ◆ Volunteer as scheduled or give advance notice;
- ◆ Be willing to learn and work as part of a team;
- ◆ Treat persons served, their families, staff and other volunteers with dignity and respect;
- ◆ Be accountable for your involvement;
- ◆ Adhere to TACL policies and procedures, including our Code of Ethics; and Confidentiality
- ◆ Support the mission and values of TACL.

VOLUNTEERING BENEFITS PERSONS SERVED

Your involvement enriches the lives of the individuals in ways no one else can. Through you,

Persons served can:

- o Be included in their community.
 - o Develop a new interest or awaken an old one.
 - o Take part in a community activity.
 - o Learn a new skill.
 - o Know the joy of friendship.
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What Students/Volunteers do at TACL:

Students/Volunteers work in many areas of our organization. Some help out at our residential homes by supporting person served to learn something new like using the computer or going out to a movie. Students/Volunteers are needed to organize and run celebrations such as Community Living Day or our End of Summer Family Picnic, and fundraising activities like our multicultural dinner. There are also opportunities in our office, our Employment Services – CDS and helping with newsletters or photocopying. Students/Volunteers do not replace staff, but they add to the quality of support available for persons served and add to all the extras that make TACL such a special part of the Trail and surrounding community. Some of the activities you may be included in are field trips, reading to an individual, recreational outings, or a special event; as well, supervisors are always open to ideas about new activities. As a volunteer you would not be permitted to administer medications or to assist a person served out in the community independently or with their personal care.

Student/Volunteer Selection Process:

It's important that our students/volunteers understand and support our vision and mission, and are able and willing to use them in the work environment here at TACL. We take the time to get to know you before committing to a student/volunteer relationship. Our selection process helps us do that.

It includes:

- Completion of an application
- Interview with the Executive Director, Program Manager or Residential Manager or designate
- Criminal record check for adults (19 or over)
- Consent of parent or guardian for youth under 19
- Two or three references - one personal, one professional, and one volunteer- related.

We also encourage you to get to know us before applying or committing to a student/volunteer relationship. Check out our website at www.taalkootenays.com, talk to people who already volunteer with us, read our newsletter, review our student/volunteer job description, or spend time observing in our programs. These are all ways you can learn more about us before making a commitment.

Once you have completed the selection process, we will let you know whether we can offer you an opportunity that will work for both of us.

Student/Volunteer Placement Process:

Matching you with an appropriate set of tasks and requirements in a particular event or program is important – both so that we can make the best use of your talents, and so that you will have the most rewarding experience. Our program manager and supervisors are responsible for this matching process. They will work with you individually to ensure that the opportunity we offer you is the best match. Factors that they consider include:

- Your interests and goals;
 - Your skills, talents and experience;
 - Your availability (days/evenings/weekdays/weekends)
 - Positions that are available and suitable for students/volunteers
 - The program needs and needs of persons served as identified by the Program Manager and Supervisor's.
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Practicum Student Placements:

We work with interested students and their academic institution to develop a mutually agreed-upon placement that will enable the student to fulfill his or her practicum requirements. This helps us by enhancing our services and developing potential future employees, and helps the student's skill and professional development at the same time. Practicum placement students must satisfy academic requirements as well meet an identified need at TACL. Steps for student placement include:

1. Students or their Educational Institution contacts Erin Thoma, Admin. Asst. to request practicum placement.
2. Program manager identifies and develops a suitable placement opportunity.
3. Academic institution provides relevant documents in terms of placement expectations, requirements of the practicum supervisor and insurance.
4. Interested student forwards a completed volunteer application form and resume, including References, completed Criminal Record Check, and TB Test Results
5. Program manager and/or assigned supervisor interview the student.
6. Supervisor and student arrange a schedule that includes ongoing tasks, training, supervision, and support during the placement as well as reporting to the academic institution.

Orientation and Training:

We provide orientation for all new volunteers and practicum students. Orientation sessions are scheduled as needed, and you can contact the appropriate Supervisor to schedule your orientation. Depending on where you will be volunteering, you may also require training specific to the program, site, event and/or person served. We will arrange this training after your orientation session. Some examples of specific training include learning about alternative ways to communicate with persons served, such as sign language, or learning how to use special equipment and any Health and Safety concerns that you need to be aware of. In addition to this training, TACL has a training calendar posted on our website of events you might find helpful and interesting. We will continue to assess the suitability of the match between you and the placement during the orientation and training period. This gives us both a chance to make changes if needed.

PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS

1. Treat everyone with respect.
 2. No pictures are to be taken of persons served TACL supports without authorization from staff in charge and supervisor.
 3. Confidentiality: Information should not be discussed with family, community or friends. For assignments use only the persons served first name.
 4. Transportation to and from placement will not be provided. Persons on placement are not permitted to drive TACL vehicles.
 5. Dress code: Persons served are very impressionable therefore TACL would like to present you as a role model. A conservative style of dress is preferred as outlined in the attached dress code policy.
 6. Do not give out your telephone number or take anyone else's. Do not make after hours plans or commitments with persons served.
 7. Only volunteers/students that have arranged to be here will be accepted. You will not be allowed to bring along friends or relatives.
 8. Placements are to be treated like a job. They help develop good work ethics and help to obtain work experience in a field of interest to you. Courtesy would dictate that you let the
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association know when you will be unable to attend.

9. Check with staff with regard to the meaning of “Universal Precautions”. This is a very important health issue, review this with site supervisor.

Scheduling and Changes:

Once you have successfully completed your orientation and any required training, you will be assigned your volunteer or practicum times and provided with a schedule. Make sure that you sign in and out and record your hours every shift. Each program will let you know where the sign in sheet is kept. It is also a good idea to keep a record of your time.

Our staff and persons served rely on you to honour and fulfill your assigned time. Just because it is a practicum/volunteer position, does not mean the work you do is not needed or appreciated. Coming in late or not showing up can result in inconvenience or disappointment for the persons served or for other volunteers or staff who were counting on you. If you are unable to come, for any reason, it is very important that you notify the program supervisor as soon as possible.

As a general rule, our students/volunteers are active, that is, they fulfill a commitment on a regular basis.

Sometimes, people take a leave from volunteering, if they are ill or away. If you need to request a leave, change your schedule, or request a different placement, please discuss with your program supervisor, preferably at least a month in advance of any actual change. If you get reassigned to a different program or event, we will go through the same process of matching, orientation, and providing any specific training required.

Supporting and Recognizing Our Students/Volunteers:

All students/volunteers are supervised by a Program Supervisor. They provide ongoing support, supervision, follow up and all performance reviews. The volunteer plan is developed by you and the supervisor to support your experience.

Student/Volunteer Evaluation Process:

Evaluation is an important tool to stay on top of how things are going and to give both program supervisors and student/volunteers an opportunity to identify any issues and make changes as needed. The supervisor will conduct a review with you shortly after you have been accepted, to ensure that you have received proper orientation and training, and that an appropriate match has been made between you and the opportunity or position. Within the first month, we will ask you to participate in an initial evaluation of your placement, then a six month formal evaluation will be conducted. Thereafter evaluations will be done yearly. The evaluation process consists of a short survey completed separately by you and your supervisor and, in some program areas, a brief meeting with the program supervisor. This is an opportunity to provide feedback to each other and to mutually develop goals or changes for the future. After each evaluation, we will review your student/volunteer plan together and revise it as needed. You can also ask for an evaluation of your involvement at any time.

The evaluation process may be a little different for practicum students, depending on the evaluation requirements of the academic institution involved. We will work with the student and the institution to ensure that these requirements, and our own, are both met.

Many volunteers and students request references for their volunteer work at TACL. We are happy to provide these. We base them on the feedback evaluations, and only provide them with your authorization.

Code of Ethics and General Conduct:

All staff and students/volunteers of TACL are required to follow our Volunteer Agreement. It articulates the general rules of conduct necessary to provide a high standard of service. Key elements include respectful treatment of persons served and others, confidentiality, conflict of interest, conflict resolution and prevention of abuse and neglect. You will review the agreement and sign a copy at your orientation session. It is vital that you are familiar with it, and follow it in all your dealings with persons served, families, staff and other volunteers. Breaking the agreement is grounds for immediate dismissal from your volunteer or practicum placement at TACL.

In some areas covered by the Volunteer Agreement, TACL also has additional policy and in some cases forms to be signed. We will review these with you at the orientation session.

Here are some general conduct guidelines to remember:

- Treat others in a respectful and professional way. Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Treat all personal information about Persons served - written, verbal, electronic, photographic and video- as private and confidential. Do not share it with anyone outside TACL, except as provided for in the confidentiality policy.
- If you have a complaint or concern about your volunteer involvement, address it quickly with the appropriate person as per TACL Policy included in this booklet. Take it to your program supervisor if you cannot resolve it yourself. Avoid gossip or talking about others when they are not present.
- Do not conduct independent business on TACL premises, or use your TACL connections for your personal or business gain. This includes solicitation of staff, other volunteers, or persons served without the direct permission of the Executive Director.
- Do not talk with the media about TACL, or your work here, without permission from the Executive Director. Refer any media requests to her.
- Dress appropriately for your position – you should be comfortable and professional.
- Do not smoke at any TACL property. Do not come under the influence of, or in possession of, alcohol, or any illegal drugs.
- Do not accept money or gifts from **ANY** person served or families.

The Disciplinary Process:

Most of our volunteers and students have a very positive experience at TACL, and move on to other opportunities having made a positive contribution and gained useful experience. In some cases, we have volunteers who have been with us for many years. Occasionally, we may run into a problem with the performance or actions of a volunteer. If this happens we implement disciplinary measures, starting with a corrective discussion and if necessary progressing to a meeting to discuss concerns and possibly conflict resolution. If the situation cannot be resolved, we may have to ask the volunteer to resign, or terminate the volunteer relationship with him or her. Examples of times when it is necessary to end the relationship with TACL are mistreatment of a person served, breaking confidentiality rules or other actions that threaten the well-being of TACL or the persons served.

Self-Advocacy:

Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself and your rights. Self-advocates are people with diverse needs who are communicating about their needs and rights, and making their own decisions and choices about their lives. Supporting self-advocacy is one of the most important things we do at TACL. We support persons served to self-advocate, and encourage families to support the development of self-advocacy as well. We actively facilitate person served participation in their own planning and have an active Self-Advocates Group. As a member of our team of staff and students/volunteers, we expect you to support and encourage the participation of self-advocates in whatever program, event or activities you are involved in. This might mean supporting self-advocates who are going to public meetings, making presentations or teaching others about rights and responsibilities. A Self-Advocacy meeting for everyone is held every 6 weeks.

Health and Safety:

As a volunteer, you have a right to a safe environment, and the responsibility to help keep it that way. TACL has a strong commitment to health and safety, including comprehensive safety procedures and an Occupational Health & Safety Committee. We have regular safety inspections and the local Fire Department and Licensing Authorities review our safety plans where appropriate.

We are committed to providing staff and volunteers with the proper tools and equipment, purchasing necessary safety equipment, providing insurance coverage, and defining important safety rules. Your program supervisor will inform you of specific safety rules in your volunteer area(s). You can also help assure your own safety by being health and safety conscious at all times and using common sense to protect yourself and others from illness and injury.

Here are some important things to be aware of:

- Participate in regular fire and emergency drills if they happen when you are volunteering.
- Don't come to your volunteer commitment if you are sick.
- Be alert around electrical equipment. Report any problems immediately to your program supervisor or other available staff.
- Know the location of the exits closest to you. Learn where the fire alarms are located and how to activate them. Learn the sound of the fire alarm.
- Review the TACL Emergency Preparedness Manual and know your responsibilities in the event of an emergency.
- Immediately report any incidents including abuse, accidents, injuries and property damage, to your supervisor.
- Submit any concerns or questions about safety to the supervisor.
- Know the location of the first aid kits and emergency supplies for your program.

TACL has an emergency preparedness program in place. This includes a manual and as well as planned and unplanned drills. It is important for you to review health and safety policies that are relevant to your volunteer/practicum involvement, especially the policies on reporting abuse and neglect and safeguarding the health, safety and well-being of all persons served.

Student/Volunteer Job Description:

Key Objective:

To provide practicum/volunteer support to children /youth and adults with diverse needs and their families. Students/Volunteers fulfill many vital functions at TACL. This includes members of the Board of Directors, or board committees, they may assist staff teams with providing support to our persons served, office work, or fundraising.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To maintain confidentiality
- To support the mission and vision of our Association
- To function as part of team providing services in a variety of ways to individuals with diverse needs
- Willingness to participate in ongoing training and supervision by the program supervisor.
- To maintain required records

Qualifications and Skills Required:

- Minimum age of 19. Exceptions can occur for those under this age at the discretion of the Executive Director/designate (eg. high school work experiences)
- Must complete volunteer screening process which includes application, provision of references and a Criminal Record Check. Some programs may require more information to complete application process.
- Knowledgeable about the Community living Sector or have a sincere interest in learning about the sector.
- Capability to work as a team member must be able to commit to scheduled times.
- Good listening and interpersonal skills
- Knowledge of community resources

Student/Volunteer Rights:

Each and every student/volunteer has the right to:

- Be treated as a coworker
 - Know as much as possible about the society they are servicing, its policies and programs
 - A suitable assignment with consideration given to preference, experience and education
 - Effective and sufficient training for the position
 - Continuing education
 - Take part in planning and feeling free to make suggestions
 - Recognition
 - Sound guidance and direction
 - Apply for a change in volunteer positions within the Association
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TRAIL ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY PLAN



DEFINITION: Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures.

Cultural competence comprises four components:



- Awareness of one's own cultural worldview,
- Attitude towards cultural differences,
- Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and
- Cross-cultural skills. Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures

The Trail Association for Community Living recognizes that our community is growing and becoming richly culturally diverse. This recognition includes gender, race/ethnicity, family status, age, mental/physical abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, language, socioeconomic status and occupational focus. We work to maintain an environment that is supportive of these elements by promoting inclusion within the organization and the communities we serve. TACL continually focuses on respectful and responsive to the beliefs, practices and cultural and linguistic needs of diverse individuals with whom we interact, including but not limited to; persons served, personnel, families/caregivers, and volunteers.

This is reflected in our Policies such as Accessibility and No Discrimination, our Practices, and Mission and Vision statements.

In developing Cultural Competency, it is important that all Employees, Volunteers and Board Members are aware of the major components involved.

We work to achieve this by:

Educating and training our staff members on the dynamics of a growing and culturally diverse community. Through this process, we will increase awareness, compassion and the ability to effectively interact with others who are different than ourselves with dignity, respect, patience and understanding.

Embracing diversity in the workplace makes for better creativity, acceptance, tolerance and innovation. It also broadens the knowledge, skills and abilities of our staff members. In addition, by creating a welcoming environment for everyone, we then can provide good services that are also culturally sensitive, to the people we support.

This recognition includes gender, race/ethnicity, family status, age, mental/physical abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, socioeconomic status and occupational focus. We work to maintain an environment that is supportive of these elements by promoting inclusion within the organization and the communities we serve.

- ❖ Awareness is the consciousness of one's personal reactions to people who are different from us.
- ❖ Attitude is being aware of cultural bias and beliefs in general and carefully examining our own beliefs about cultural differences
- ❖ Knowledge in respect to the importance of having our behaviours, consistent with our values and beliefs
- ❖ Skills involve practicing Cultural Competency every day. Communication is the key way people interact and includes gestures and other non-verbal communication, which tends to vary between cultures.
- ❖ TACL is committed to community integration and strives to create a welcoming environment reflecting the diverse communities we serve and ensuring that our services, supports and employment opportunities are open and available to all. We are all respectful of the needs of a diverse community which can help to bring about positive supports and working relationships.



The Plan

Overall Objective/Goal	The Desired Outcome	Applied To	Activities	Responsibility
<p>TACL will have a cultural competency and diversity plan that identifies how the organization will work to achieve and monitor effectiveness of the plan.</p> <p>(CARF standard 1.A.5 a-d)</p>	<p>TACL has an enhanced commitment to having cultural competency inclusive of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, and language.</p>	<p>All-persons served, personnel and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Applying CARF standard 1.A.5 (a-d) in all we do.</p> <p>Implementation of Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan.</p> <p>Diversity goals are tracked and monitored.</p>	<p>Executive Director & Board of Directors.</p>
<p>To create a safe and inclusive environment that fosters respect for, and acknowledgement of different needs and approaches.</p>	<p>To have TACL welcoming and accessible to all.</p> <p>TACL will create a safe and supportive space for the Board of Directors, staff and others to explore diversity issues.</p> <p>Increase the level of staff cultural competence.</p>	<p>All-persons served, personnel and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Annual inspection of facilities to assess accessibility and cultural friendliness.</p> <p>Periodic changes in décor to reflect diversity and cultural friendliness.</p> <p>Provide regular communications about cultural competency.</p> <p>Provide (when possible) diversity training opportunities.</p>	<p>The Executive Director and Board of Directors / TACL plans on creating and developing a Cultural/Diversity Committee composed of members of the Self advocacy group/TACL Staff /Parent Advocate and Mangement Rep October 2023</p>
<p>To adhere to the legal acts that guides all actions of TACL. Specifically, but not limited to the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedom. (1982); the Canadian Multiculturalism Act</p>	<p>All persons served and all staff have a working knowledge of the legal guidance for all our work and actions.</p>	<p>All – Board and Personnel.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Posting of Canadian Charter of Human Rights. 2. Include information of Rights in publications for those served. 3. Establish and monitor client rights concerns and complaints. 	<p>Executive Director/ Quialty Assurance Manager</p>

Overall Objective/Goal	The Desired Outcome	Applied To	Activities	Responsibility
<p>(1970) and Provincial Acts including the Child and Family Services Act of BC and the Labour Relations Act; United Nations Children’s Bill of Rights.</p>			<p>4. Annual review of personnel management including the implementation of fair hiring practices, assessing the diversity of our staffing. Affirmative action and equal opportunity policies and procedures.</p> <p>5. Develop a human resources strategy to retain and recruit staff who come from culturally diverse background and who are culturally competent and have a working knowledge about diversity.</p>	
<p>TACL will acknowledge the diverse perspectives of children, youth, and families and incorporates these into all programs and services.</p>	<p>Individual cultural differences will be recognized in individual service plans. A diversity lens will be used in our approach that focuses on individual specific needs.</p>	<p>All personnel.</p>	<p>TACL annually monitors the demographics of those served for demographic diversity.</p> <p>In our client feedback questions we will ask if those served felt safe, (comfortable). From this monitoring TACL will identify if there needs to be changes in staffing (to be culturally reflective of the population we serve.) or additional training/education required..</p> <p>All persons served plans/Intake forms addresses and documents cultural variables including culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status and language to address diversity (oppression etc.). TACL seeks advice from community partners/funders strategic planning/ Self advocate group / monthly planning meeting with Persons served /surveys when planning and implementing services.</p>	<p>Executive Director and all Personnel.</p>

Overall Objective/Goal	The Desired Outcome	Applied To	Activities	Responsibility
			<p>TACL will have written policies and procedures reviewed annually that address individual and systemic discrimination/harassment.</p> <p>TACL will (as need is identified) consult with someone with cultural competence expertise to create policies and procedures.</p>	
<p>To be aware of and understand different communication needs for all we serve.</p>	<p>Communication needs for all will be respected with unique needs addressed.</p>	<p>All Personnel</p>	<p>In all publications and development of policies apply awareness of different communication needs. Promotional materials will be culturally appropriate, translated, user/child friendly, easily accessible and be in a variety of formats.</p> <p>Provide regular education on communication barriers and solutions to ensure effective communication.</p> <p>All forms – consent for service, release of information, rights will be translated into other languages as needed, or have access to interpreter services and/or development of visual communications.</p> <p>Key documents will be translated based on changing demographics.</p> <p>Each program will decide which documents need to be translated or modified to meet needs of persons served.</p>	<p>Executive Director and all Personnel.</p>
<p>To provide access to interpreters as required.</p>	<p>A list of available interpreters and the languages</p>	<p>TACL will further develop a protocol on access to use of translation services</p>	<p>Develop a protocol/ November 2023</p>	<p>Executive Director/QA Coordinator</p>

Overall Objective/Goal	The Desired Outcome	Applied To	Activities	Responsibility
	they can communicate in.	for key documents and for persons served.		
To improve interpersonal communications within TACL and Community.	Improvements to our Website. Use Ceridian system to communicate with staff.	Staff, stakeholders and persons served	Provide cultural competency training/education. Development of strategic processes to promote effective communications amongst staff.	Executive Director
To align governance, administrative and program policies and procedures with culturally competent principles and practices.	Completed annual planning	Board and management team	Annual review of governance, human resources and program policies and procedures. Review the strategic plan and revise as needed to reflect TACL's commitment to cultural competency and diversity. Re-enforce of understanding and following our written codes of conduct. In recruitment of board members, the board may choose to recruit members so membership on the Board of Directors reflects/represents the diversity of those served by TACL.	Executive Director and Board of Directors
To create opportunities for increasing personnel knowledge and competency on cultural safety, cultural awareness and diversity of our community.	Personnel that are knowledgeable and able to provide services that consider social, health and economic barriers that can affect one's well being.	For Board of Directors and all Personnel.	TACL will develop a cultural competency training plan using a strength-based approach to increase competencies. TACL will provide annual reinforcement of cultural competency and diversity training through a variety of means such as newsletters and access to publications. Provide during Employee orientation an overview of cultural competency and diversity.	Executive Director and all Personnel

Overall Objective/Goal	The Desired Outcome	Applied To	Activities	Responsibility
			<p>Employees will record cultural competency and diversity workshops attended or sought on performance evaluations.</p> <p>TACL will provide training about cultural competency and diversity at employees' request through professional development days/events/ web - based resourses/strategic planning</p> <p>Provide opportunities for staff to have knowledge of the social determinants of health and social disparities.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for staff to access professional literature that relates to cultural competency and diversity.</p>	

