

Municipality of the District of St. Mary's
**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility
Advisory Committee Policy**



1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and govern an *Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee* that will provide meaningful and impactful advice to the Municipal Council related to the equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility of policies, programs, and services provided by the Municipality and to address broad issues of equity, diversity, inclusion anti-hate and accessibility and to develop a Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate and Accessibility Advisory Committee Plan.

2. Scope

The scope of the IDEAA Advisory Committee shall be to review, assess and make recommendations on the operations of the Municipality to become more inclusive, diverse, equitable, welcoming and accessible.

3. Authority

This policy derives its authority from section 44 of the *Accessibility Act* of the Province of Nova Scotia. The responsibility of providing meaningful and impactful advice to the Municipality related to the equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility of policies, programs, and services provided by the Municipality by virtue of being delegated this responsibility from Council.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. *Accessibility* - ensuring the ability for everyone, regardless of disability, to have access, use, and benefit from their environment. It means making sure that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications and to other facilities and services that are open or provided to the public, on an equal basis with others. Accessibility means having the necessary conditions to reduce or eliminate the barriers that hinder the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.
- 4.2. *Anti-Racism* – the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes to political, economic, and social life. This is achieved through the identification and elimination of racism by changing oppressive systems, structures, policies, practices, and attitudes so that historic, current, and future harm can be eliminated and so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.



- 4.3. *Barrier* – anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.
- 4.4. *Disability* – a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society.
- 4.5. *Diversity* - means having a variety of people from a range of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, life experiences, competencies and faiths represented on teams, in workplaces in general and particularly in processes like engagement.
- 4.6. *Equity* – equity recognizes that everyone doesn't begin in the same place in society. Some people face adverse conditions and circumstances making it more challenging with the same effort to achieve the same goals. Equity advocates for those who may have been historically disadvantaged, making it difficult for them to be successful. What is "fair" as it relates to equity isn't a question of what is the same but rather the point from which a person begins. Equity considers historical and other factors in determining that is fair.
- 4.7. *Hate* - provocation, hostility or intolerance by means of threats, harassment, abuse, incitement or intimidation motivated by the actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability or sexual orientation of any person.
- 4.8. *Inclusion* - Inclusion encompasses norms, practices, and intentional actions to promote participation, engagement, empowerment, and a sense of belonging for members of historically underrepresented and underserved groups in all aspects of life. It is about celebrating, valuing, and amplifying perspectives, voices, styles, and identities that have been marginalized by promoting an institutional culture and practices to ensure all can experience a welcoming space of fairness, dignity, and human flourishing.
- 4.9. *Racism* - the discrimination or antagonism by, or the prejudice of, an individual, community or institution against a person or people based on the person's or people's membership or perceived membership in a racial or ethnic group, and having the power to carry out that discrimination, antagonism or prejudice through institutional *policies and practices that shape cultural beliefs and values of a society*.



4.10. *The Committee* – the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee.

4.11. *The Municipality* – the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

5. Membership

5.1. The Committee will have no more than five members.

5.2. The Committee shall be comprised of the following members:

5.2.1. One (1) Municipal Councillor (voting member); and

5.2.2. Up to four (4) members of the public (voting members); and

5.2.3. The Director of Community Development & Recreation (ex-officio).

5.3. At least one half of the members of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee* must be persons with disabilities or representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities as per the *Accessibility Act*.

5.4. At least two members of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee* shall be persons with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members. Individuals shall have strong community knowledge, a solid understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility policies, and practices, as well as the knowledge to understand and respond to discriminatory and racist actions and be comfortable having difficult conversations about such.

5.5. If at any point in time the requirements under section 5.3 or 5.4 are not met, the Committee can continue to operate providing the vacancy is actively being advertised.

5.6. Applications for appointment to the Committee shall be invited by public advertisement and a submission of the completed *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee Application Form* (Appendix A). Members will be appointed at the Annual General Meeting of Council.

5.7. The Committee will be chaired by the appointed member of Council.

5.8. Public members will be appointed to the Committee annually following the Annual General Meeting of Council.



- 5.9. Any member of the committee who meets the membership requirements may re-apply for appointment; there shall be no limit on the number of consecutive terms any members may serve on the Committee.
- 5.10. Municipal staff will act as nonvoting members and will provide administrative support to the Committee including recording minutes and ensuring proper records management.
- 5.11. The committee will consist of voting members who serve without pay.
- 5.12. All committee members are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses for meetings from their place of residence at the set municipal rate and recording requirements as per the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's *Mileage Expense Policy*.

6. Qualifications

- 6.1. Preference will be given to applicants with training or experience in matters relating to equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility.
- 6.2. Committee members must be a resident of the Municipality or represent an organization that serves the Municipality.

7. Committee Responsibilities

- 7.1. The committee shall advise Council on what impact the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's policies, programs and services may have on equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-hate and accessibility.
- 7.2. Review of the current policies, bylaws, and practices of the Municipality with an IDEAA lens; and
- 7.3. Review of the current properties and facilities of each local government with an IDEAA lens; and
- 7.4. Review all materials provided to Advisory Committee members along with their own independent research, to prepare for each Committee meeting; and
- 7.5. Be open and objective to all ideas, suggestions, and opportunities, while understanding the importance of community awareness and education throughout the Municipality, focusing on long-term community appreciation of the value and contribution of each citizen and their background, culture, knowledge, and skills; and
- 7.6. Receive presentations, letters, emails, phone calls, and materials from community members and community experts, or community resources where applicable, related to



IDEAA, and seek to incorporate the relevant information and ideas into current and future workplans; and

- 7.7. Carry out a review of provincial and federal legislation to ensure all Committee members are aware of its legal opportunities and constraints and make recommendations for changes to the four local governments where the Advisory Committee feels changes to legislation are needed to support IDEAA within the Municipality and Nova Scotia; and
- 7.8. Where financial resources allow, create, promote, and recommend small grants to community organizations that create, develop, plan, host, or offer programs, services, events, or functions that directly support the goals of IDEAA throughout the Municipality with public awareness and education; and
- 7.9. The committee shall advise council in the preparation, implementation, and effectiveness of its Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate and Accessibility Plan. The plan must include:
 - 7.9.1. A report on measures the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has taken and intends to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers for services and facilities.
 - 7.9.2. Information on procedures the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has in place to assess the following for their effect on individuals:
 - a) Any of its proposed policies, programs, practices and services, and
 - b) Any proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering; and
 - c) Any other prescribed information.
- 7.10. The Committee shall review, identify, advise, and monitor existing and proposed Municipal documents, facilities, and services to promote full participation of all residents and visitors of the Municipality.
- 7.11. The Committee shall advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Plan*.
- 7.12. The Committee shall receive, and review information as directed by Council and its committees, and to make recommendations as requested.
- 7.13. The Committee shall monitor federal and provincial government directives and regulations.



7.14. The committee shall host, as needed, community consultations related to *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility* in the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

8. Rules of Engagement

8.1. The committee shall meet no less than four times per year, or otherwise as required to fulfill the duties as outlined. Meetings of the AAC shall be open to the public as per subject to Section 22 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

8.2. A majority of the voting members of the committee constitutes a quorum.

8.3. The committee may receive presentations from the public upon approval of the chair as per the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's *Presentation to Council Policy*.



SCHEDULE A- POLICY AMMENDMENTS

Version #	Amendment Description	Approved By	Approval Date
1	Policy Adoption	Council	April 16, 2025

Council Meeting – April 16th, 2025

On motion of Councillor _____ and seconded by Councillor _____, Council adopt the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Hate & Accessibility (IDEAA) Advisory Committee Policy and repeal the Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy.

Motion approved.

Jadzja Rudolph.
 Municipal Clerk

April 16th 2025.
 Date





APPENDIX A

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Committee
Application Form

Applicant Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work/Cell Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Occupation: _____

Describe how your experience, community involvement, education, or work that might be helpful to this committee.

Why are you interested in serving on this committee?

What contribution do you believe you can make to this committee?

What past contributions have you made on a similar committee or organization?

What experience do you have in exchanging your views with others and in respecting the skills, abilities, and knowledge of others?



Are you a person with a disability, or do you represent an organization representing people with disabilities?

Yes or No

Note: *At least one half of the members of the advisory committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.*

If you are a person with a disability or represent an organization representing people with disabilities, and you're comfortable, please share what disability/disabilities do you or your organization represent?

Do you have lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members.

Yes or No

Note: *At least two members of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Hate & Accessibility Advisory Committee must be persons with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members.*

If you are a person with a *with lived experiences as a person from an underrepresented or underserved community such as people from different cultural or language backgrounds, people from racialized communities, people of diverse genders and sexual orientations, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, or work directly with such community members* and you're comfortable, please share what disability/disabilities do you or your organization represent?

Applicant Signature

Date

For more information, please contact the Municipal Office at 902-522-2049