

Policy and Procedure
BUNCOMBE COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES/DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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| Title: Cultural Competency | Policy #: 1001.84 | Revision #: 6 |
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| Category & Subcategory: | Administrative Policy and Procedure | Original Effective Date: | 12/11/07 | This Revision Effective Date: | 6/2022 |
| Persons Affected | The Buncombe County Health and Human Services Department of Health workforce | | | | |
| Approval By/ Date |  Health Director | 06.07.2022 Date | _____ Chair, HHS Board | | _____ Date |

| 1.0 Revision History | Date of Revision | Summary of Changes | Section |
|----------------------|------------------|---|---|
| | 6/26/12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changed agency name Removed education and training header Added Legal/Guidance section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout 6.0 7.0 |
| | 7/23/14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edits for readability Diverse groups added to reflect Title VI, WIC and Buncombe County Personnel Ordinance Added CLAS standards as guide for practice and service delivery Added CLAS and legal authority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout 6.2.8 6.2 7.0 |
| | 2/2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changed agency name to Buncombe County Health and Human Services Department of Health (BCHHS-DH) Added Workforce definition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout 4.5 |
| | 10/2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10/31/17 Archived Policy. Added content to Workforce Development Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archived Policy |
| | 3/2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy was reinstated and edited for clarity Edited workforce definition Clarification on responsibilities Updated Legal Authority/Guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entire policy 4.5 5.0 7.0 |
| | 6/2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converted to Board policy Added HHS Board Chair signature Changed Number from 1000.84 to 1001.84 Updated definition of Workforce Update to Legal Authority link | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Header Header Header 4.0 7.10 |

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define and identify components of cultural competency, ensure that steps are taken to maintain cultural competency and inclusion within the organization, and ensure that all staff are effectively communicating with and being respectful of those different from one’s own race, ethnicity, gender, and cultural beliefs.

3.0 Policy

It is the policy of the Buncombe County Health and Human Services Department of Health (BCHHS-DH) to ensure that the workforce is culturally competent in all aspects of public health, including communication, delivery of care, treatment, and the development of health education materials. The use of National CLAS standards provides a guide to promote health equity, improve quality and help eliminate health care disparities in the community and our organization.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 **Culture:** The way of life of a people and their learned behavior, patterns, attitudes, and material things. Culture is not innate, but learned: the various facets of a culture are interrelated. Culture includes the ideas, customs, skills, art, lifestyle of a given people at a given time. It includes values and assumptions outside of our awareness and evokes deep feelings. We see the world via our own “cultural filters” which includes beliefs, preferences, verbal and non-verbal communication styles, and relationship patterns.
- 4.2 **Cultural competence:** A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or group to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. A **culturally competent organization** has the capacity to bring into its system many different behaviors, attitudes, and work effectively in cross-cultural settings to produce better outcomes.

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- 4.3 **Organizational culture:** The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an organization or institution.
- 4.4 **National CLAS Standards:** The National CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards) in Health Care are intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities by establishing a blueprint for health and health care organizations.
- 4.5 **Workforce:** Employees, volunteers, contract staff, and other persons whose conduct, in the performance of work for Buncombe County, is managed by Buncombe County. The County’s management of these persons may include training and development, direction of work activities, provision of resources, and policy oversight..

5.0 Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Health Director is responsible to support implementation, workforce understanding, and compliance with this policy. Responsibility may be delegated to management other personnel.
- 5.2 Supervisory staff is responsible assuring that staff are training and developing program-specific procedures which ensure that staff deliver services that reflect culturally competent knowledge and practice.
- 5.3 BCHHS-DH workforce is responsible to comply with this policy and procedure.

6.0 Procedure

- 6.1 New BCHHS-DH employees will receive cultural competency training as part of new employee orientation, and staff will participate in an annual review and update training on Cultural Competency.
- 6.2 BCHHS-DH staff and leadership will utilize the CLAS Standards as a guide for best practice for quality service delivery, strategic governance and leadership, language assistance, and continuous quality improvement.
- 6.3 BCHHS-DH staff will observe the following principles to aid in achieving a culturally competent workforce and organization:
 - 6.3.1 Recognize the power and influence of culture.
 - 6.3.2 Understand how our personal backgrounds affect our responses to others.
 - 6.3.3 Do not assume that all members of cultural groups share the same beliefs and practices.
 - 6.3.4 Acknowledge how past experiences affect present interactions.
 - 6.3.5 Build on the strengths and resources of each culture in an organization.
 - 6.3.6 Allocate resources for leadership and staff development in the area of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and understanding. Programs are encouraged to arrange in-service education and to make staff aware of educational opportunities.
 - 6.3.7 Actively addressing and eliminating institutional discrimination in policies and practices.
 - 6.3.8 Recognize that an organization has all types of diversity. However, some types of diversity have a larger impact on an organization than others because they have historical significance. These types of diversity are associated with a history of inequity and injustice where not every person or group has been treated equally because of them. These types of diversity include, but are not limited to: race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, spiritual beliefs and practices, physical and mental ability, age, language, education, family/parental status, health status, style, skills and talents, customs, ideas, military experience, national, regional, or other geographical area, ownership of property, work experience, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, or income derived from a public assistance program.

7.0 Legal Authority/Guidance

- 7.1 Equal Opportunity Employment Commission Laws, Regulation, Guidance and MOUs; www.eeoc.gov
- 7.2 Title VII - 42 U.S. Section 2000e. The part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. Amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act.
- 7.3 Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- 7.4 The Equal Pay Act of 1963
- 7.5 Section 501 and 505 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/6Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- 7.7 Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
- 7.8 The Age Discrimination Act of 1967
- 7.9 All provisions required by the implementing regulations of the Department of Agriculture; Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines, 7 CFR Part 15 and FNS Directives and Guidelines
- 7.10 Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards (CLAS)
<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards>
- 7.11 Buncombe County Personnel Ordinance, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy