



Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan

Introduction:

The Arc of Amador and Calaveras believes it is imperative that our leadership and staff members develop a basic understanding of the major values and beliefs of the people we serve and other stakeholders, especially those who may come from different cultural or spiritual backgrounds. To this end, enhanced education and training – specifically considering the following areas: culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status and language – will be provided to all employees and board members to assist us in developing a greater awareness and sensitivity specific to the diversity of our service delivery areas. Attendance at cultural competency and diversity training will continue to be documented and included in personnel files and/or training records.

The Arc of Amador and Calaveras, “The Arc”, is committed to establishing multicultural principles and practices throughout its organizational system(s) of services and programs as it works towards the critical goal of developing a culturally competent service system. The Arc’s cultural competency and diversity plan addresses how it will respond to the diversity of its stakeholders as well as how the knowledge, skills, and behaviors will enable personnel to work effectively cross culturally by understanding, appreciating, and respecting differences and similarities in beliefs, values, and practices within and between cultures. The plan is also made available to the public via our website: www.arcofamador.org

Scope:

Cultural competence is an integral part of The Arc. The Arc demonstrates an awareness of, respect for, and attention to the diversity of the people with whom it interacts (persons served, personnel, families/caregivers, and other stakeholders) that are reflected in attitudes, organizational structures, policies, and services. Those employed by The Arc who are in direct contact with persons served, personnel, other stakeholders, and families will demonstrate:

- Recognize, value, affirm, and respect the worth of each individual client and family and protect and preserve the dignity of each based on consideration of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status and language.

- Utilize appropriate resources to ensure person centered needs of the persons served and family, are met.
- Assess and be aware of the diversity of The Arc persons served, personnel, families/caregivers, and other stakeholders to aid in matching The Arcs community with appropriate area based resources and provide appropriate 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.

The Arc ensures non-discriminatory and respectful services to people with whom it interacts by employing both internal and external cultural competency practices. Ongoing improvement and widespread dissemination of these efforts evidences The Arc's commitment to the provision of culturally appropriate programs and services. The Arc accommodates and assists people with a wide variety of developmental disabilities.

All employees, clients and families have access to The Arc of Amador and Calaveras's Competency Plan, as the essential plan element materials are available on our website at www.arcofamador.org.

Internal Cultural Competency Practices

The Arc seeks staff that is committed to their community, represents a variety of cultural backgrounds, and is capable of communicating in cross-cultural situations. Discrimination is not tolerated and employees will conduct programs and services in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms and respects the worth of the individual and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

When necessary and requested, The Arc will research resources (through and provided by VMRC) available to provide interpreter services to clients and families to ensure availability of effective communication regarding Individual Services Plans or other documents shared with the person served.

Comprehensive, behaviorally and theoretically based cultural competency training and education is identified and at times offered. Characteristics of the training include:

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



Training is 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 people with a wide variety of physical and linguistic disabilities).

Specific training resources identified include:

- National Center for Cultural Competence: **nccc.georgetown.edu**
- Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: **www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov**
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: **<http://www.hrsa.gov/culturalcompetence/index.html>**

External Cultural Competency Practices

When necessary and requested, The Arc will research resources (through and provided by VMRC) available to provide interpreter services to clients and families to ensure availability of effective communication regarding Individual Services Plans or other documents shared with the person served.

The Arc utilizes and has informal relationships with a wide variety of traditional and nontraditional organization to enhance program and service delivery and to maximize resources for clients and families. These include:

- Various physicians and family medicine practices through Amador and Calaveras counties, and the region.
- SELPA CAC (Special Education Local Plan Area Community Advisory Committee) Amador County office of Educations & Calaveras County office of Education.
- Amador County Department of Health and Human Services
- Calaveras County Department of Health and Human Services.
- Mind Matters.

The Arc has also established relationships in the community to create a rapport that builds and facilitates acceptance of The Arcs programs and services. These include, but are not limited to:

- Jackson Rancheria
- Italian Benevolent Society
- MACT Medical and Dental
- ACTC – Amador County Transportation Commission
- SSTAC – Amador County Social Service Transportation Advisory Council
- Jackson Rotary Club
- Amador County Chamber of Commerce
- Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce
- Amador County Department of Health and Human Services



- Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne County IL/SL Provider Network group
- Lions Club of Jackson
- American Legion, Jackson
- First Five (Amador and Calaveras)
- City of Sutter Creek
- City of San Andreas
- Knights of Columbus, Amador
- Knights of Columbus, Calaveras
- Amador Council of Tourism (ACT)
- Amador County Health Care Coalition
- Calaveras County Health Care Coalition