

## **YWCA Halifax Commitments and Expectations on Trans Inclusion**

YWCA Halifax recognizes that trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities are impacted severely by gender-based violence, and face significant barriers to safety, health, rights, and well-being. We recognize that we, as a service providing organization, have a responsibility to provide inclusive and affirming services to trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities, and that this responsibility extends to both each and every one of our team members, as well as our organization as a whole.

We acknowledge that we are imperfect, and that we will make mistakes throughout this work. We commit to learning from our mistakes and putting in the necessary time and energy to learn and change practices, procedures, and policies to further our commitment to trans inclusion.

We recognize that trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse liberation is fundamentally connected to, and inseparable from, the liberation of women (cis or trans), anti-racism, dismantling colonialism and supporting those most impacted by violence. We are committed to an intersectional approach in all aspects of our work.

### **YWCA Halifax is committed to:**

- Embedding trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse inclusion in every aspect of our work, as a core value and practice of our organization.
- Working in solidarity with trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities to advocate for our mutual and collective liberation, and towards a world in which our safety, rights, and health are fully protected.
- Continuing our own learning, unlearning and growth, across our staff team, volunteers, board members and with our partner organizations.
- Continuously reviewing our policies, practices and procedures to ensure they align with our values and our commitment to trans inclusion.
- Continuing to build relationships of trust and reciprocity with 2SLGBTQ+, trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities, community leaders and organizations.

### **Our expectations, for ourselves, our staff and our volunteers:**

- Create space for trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities to access gendered and non-gendered programming that best meets their needs, at their discretion, wherever and whenever possible.
- Model best practices with regards to pronouns, including by disclosing their own pronouns, and providing opportunities for program participants and others interacting with the YWCA Halifax team to disclose their own pronouns. YWCA Halifax staff are expected to respect the chosen names and pronouns of all people.
- Review and adjust practices and procedures across their respective programs and departments, to ensure proactive inclusion of trans people, and to ensure that trans experiences are factored into program design and delivery.

- Identify and respond to situations of transphobia, transmisogyny and cissexism as they arise, with any and all audiences they encounter in their official capacity as employees or members of YWCA Halifax.

### **Our Vision for Trans Inclusion at YWCA Halifax**

- Trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse people are well-represented within our staff, board of directors and volunteer teams.
- Trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse people are guaranteed a fully inclusive and affirming experience, to the greatest extent possible, whenever interacting with YWCA Halifax team members, and when accessing services or programs through YWCA Halifax.
- Our programs and services are reflective of the unique needs of trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities.
- YWCA Halifax is recognized as trans inclusive by members of our local trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities.

### **How our work began**

- YWCA Halifax formed a Trans Inclusion Committee (TIC) in January 2020 to coordinate and strengthen our efforts on trans inclusion. The TIC has worked internally to build capacity, amend policies, and otherwise improve YWCA Halifax's inclusion of trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities.
- In 2020, YWCA Halifax, through the Trans Inclusion Committee, retained a consulting firm with expertise in trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse inclusion to support YWCA Halifax's efforts on trans inclusion. In 2020 and 2021, a series of capacity building sessions were hosted with all members of the YWCA Halifax staff team. These sessions were followed by multiple in-depth conversations across different YWCA teams to build capacity, increase confidence, and develop concrete skills to more effectively support trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities.
- YWCA Halifax has also developed a new onboarding process that emphasizes our commitment to trans inclusion, through a trans inclusion training video, and a series of resources made available to both incoming and current staff members, to facilitate their continued growth and skill development on trans inclusion.
- We have also begun a process to review eligibility criteria for gender-based programs, to ensure inclusivity of trans, non-binary, Two Spirit and gender diverse participants, alongside a review of our policies and procedures, and our website, to ensure our commitment to trans inclusion is woven through all aspects of our work.

Our work has just begun, and we acknowledge that we must take the necessary time to build trusting relationships with trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities. We are committed to continuing to build our capacity on trans inclusion, within our collective understanding that we cannot purport to support those impacted by gender-based violence, if we are not intentionally and comprehensively inclusive of trans, Two Spirit and gender diverse communities.

## Acknowledgement & agreement

### Commitments and expectations on trans inclusion

I, (Employee Name) \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and understand the **Commitments and Expectations on Trans Inclusion** of YWCA Halifax. Further, I agree to adhere to these commitments and expectations and will ensure that employees working under my direction adhere to the same.

I understand that these commitments form an important part of how YWCA Halifax interprets its HR Anti-Oppression Policy (please refer to the *Human Resources Policies and Operating Procedures Manual*).

*Please sign and return this page to your Manager/ Human Resources Coordinator*

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	