

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

POLICY MANUAL

Section	Employment
Policy Number	AE-2408-01
Policy Title	Diversity in the Workplace

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To promote and maintain an organizational environment and workplace culture which embraces and supports equity, diversity, and inclusion.

A diverse workforce and organizational culture will contribute to better decisions, innovations, skills and creativity. Inclusion will foster a sense of belonging and commitment to the Fire Service. Through equity, individual differences can bring different perspectives to the decision-making process for the betterment of Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue (“Department”) and our community.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (“District”) is committed to fostering an organizational and workplace culture and environment which embraces workforce equity, diversity, and inclusion across all areas and throughout all levels of the organization. By including and supporting all employees and volunteers, the Department will be better prepared to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow and the District will better reflect and engage with the community we serve and protect.

The District is committed to a fair and equitable advisory body appointment process that achieves representation on standing and select committees of the Board of Trustees which reflect the diversity of our community.

This policy is a commitment to opportunity, capability, and human rights.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all employees of the Department including supervisors and managers. For purposes of this policy employees are defined to include excluded staff, unionized career members, paid-on-call members, casual employees and volunteers.

This policy also applies to appointments of volunteer members to standing and select committees established by the District's Board of Trustees.

DEFINITIONS

“Diversity” within the context of this policy means, but is not limited to, age, ancestry, colour, economic status, family status, family responsibility, gender, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sexual orientation and transgender status.

“Equity” within the context of this policy means removing systemic barriers and inequitable practices creating clear career pathways in workforce for employees and opportunities to participate for volunteers. Equity is not equality.

“Inclusion” within the context of this policy means fostering a culture where everyone is free to be their whole self which enable all members, whether from a majority or minority group(s) to contribute and feel welcomed, respected and valued.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees, members of the Board of Trustees, and appointed members to board committees are expected to conduct themselves within the spirit and intent of this policy and contribute towards a safe, welcoming, and inclusive work environment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Persons involved in a complaint under this policy shall ensure that the matter is kept confidential in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Allegations that workplace practices, standards or operational guidelines are contrary to the spirit or intent of this policy will be investigated by the Fire Chief and reported to the Corporate Administrator. Any changes of an operational nature may be made by the Fire Chief. Outside professional consultants may be engaged with the consent of the Board of Trustees.

Allegations by an individual of discrimination, unrelated to the employment or intended employment of the person making the complaint, shall be investigated as outlined in Policy Number AE-2401-01 Respectful Workplace.

Any unwarranted breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action against those responsible. Information is only released on a need to know basis.

Documentation pertaining to a complaint will only be released when the law requires the release of the information.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Trustees will:

- a) ensure that diversity is meaningfully considered in appointment of public members to standing and select committees;
- b) ensure that diversity is meaningfully considered in senior management hiring decisions including the Corporate Administrator and Fire Chief positions;
- c) take a leadership role in providing appropriate training for management and employees to foster an organizational environment and workplace culture which embraces and supports equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- d) give advice on this policy that addresses and resolves issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion; and
- e) if circumstances require, determine if an external third-part professional should be called upon to assist in resolving matter(s) being investigated.

Managers and Supervisors are expected to:

- a) ensure the principles of the policy are reflected in the execution of duties, operational guidelines and practices within their area of responsibility;
- b) ensuring workforce diversity is meaningfully considered in all recruitment actions and decisions;
- c) where practical apply flexible and supportive approaches to workplace conditions and career pathways;
- d) ensure available career pathways have equitable access to enable all employees to fulfill their professional potential in their work for Salt spring Island Fire Rescue;
- e) support and empower all employees to do their best by being their whole selves at the workplace;
- f) commit to modelling and sponsoring positive inclusive leadership traits and practices;
- g) regularly communicate and support this policy by ensuring all persons, under their supervision are provided with a copy of the policy including knowledge of their rights and responsibilities; and
- h) take action and actively participate as needed, in the resolution and investigation of a complaint and implement remedies as required.

Employees and all persons to whom this policy applies are expected to:

- a) contribute to a respectful, safe and supportive work environment by modelling behavior consistent with this policy;
- b) working collaboratively to recognize and appreciate equity, diversity and inclusion; and
- c) identify and constructively address any form of discrimination in the workplace.

ANNUAL REVIEW

This policy statement will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. Staff are directed to provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees concurrent with the annual review of this policy

BOARD DISCRETION

The provisions set out in this policy are subject to revision from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

WorkSafe BC OHS Policy D3-115-2, Employer Duties – Workplace Bullying and Harassment

Human Rights Code [RSBC 1996] Chapter 210

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 165

Policy Number AE-2401-01 Respective Workplace

APPROVALS

Approval date:	16 November 2020	Approved by:	Board of Trustees
1. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
2. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
3. Amendment date:		Approved by:	