



# What Is an Inclusive Workplace Policy?

**A company's culture is defined by its workplace policy.**

## What Is an Inclusive Workplace Policy?

Your written workplace policy will depend on the size of your company and the scope of your intentions.

An inclusive workplace policy does not have to be complicated. Of course, if you operate a multinational company or report to a Board of Directors, your policy is likely to be somewhat more complex and extensive. Nevertheless, an inclusive workplace policy need not be complicated.

## What does an inclusive workplace policy do?

An inclusive workplace policy is a framework that fosters employee engagement by standardizing employment conditions. It also enables your company to create its own organizational culture.

## Why does my company need an inclusive workplace policy?

Diversity and inclusion have become major business issues.

The benefits of inclusion include:

- Improved employee engagement
- More effective market presence
- Enhanced public image

These benefits are outcomes of your organizational culture. They also stem from meeting the needs of all employees more effectively. [Read more at tool (icon #6) Hiring with Efficiency.]

Once an organization has stepped up its recruitment efforts by accessing the largely untouched talent pool of people with

disabilities, the next step is to retain qualified employees in order to increase the sustainable benefits that employees bring to the organization.

(Read more in Tool #7: Maintaining Successful Employment.)

Policy effectiveness is measured in terms of outcomes. This means that when a policy is implemented as intended, it helps foster a work environment in which no employee is excluded, marginalized, treated unfairly or prevented from accessing any resources, responsibilities, opportunities or employment benefits, regardless of any reasons or arguments that may be advanced to the contrary.

**An inclusive workplace policy is designed to guide management's and employees' conduct in accordance with your company's performance objectives.**



HireForTalent.ca

HIRE for TALENT has made every effort to use the most respectful words possible while writing these materials. We realize, however, that the most appropriate terminology may change over time. We developed these materials with the intent to respect the dignity and inherent rights of all individuals.



# What Is an Inclusive Workplace Policy?

## What are the components of a workplace policy addressing diversity and inclusion?

Generally, an inclusive workplace policy includes guidelines setting out a company's commitment in the following areas:

- Making reasonable efforts to guarantee employees' and customers' dignity, confidentiality, independence, integration and equal opportunities
- Striving to communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take their disabilities into account
- Providing assistive devices as needed
- Making people with disabilities and their service animals or support persons feel welcome in the workplace

- Making accommodations as needed
- Providing accessibility training to company staff as needed
- Receiving and accepting notices of temporary disruption
- Establishing a process for receiving and responding to feedback

**NOTE:** Management practices are crucial to ensuring that policies are implemented meaningfully, rather than merely paying lip service to the importance of inclusion.

The **Canadian Human Rights Commission** has developed an easy-to-read guide for employers: *A Place for All: A Guide to Creating an Inclusive Workplace*, 2006. The guide is designed to help employers understand their legal obligations regarding the duty to accommodate, as well as to put together effective workplace accommodation policies and procedures

### [EXAMPLE] Diversity and Inclusive Workplace Policy: **Social Sustainability**

Workplace modifications and adjustments are designed to ensure equal opportunities for all employees so they may participate in the workplace and in other related activities without discrimination.

Our Company also recognizes that candidates and/or employees may request accommodations in order to participate or perform to the best of their abilities. As per regional labour standards and national human rights guidelines, reasonable workplace accommodations and adjustments will be granted.

HR Council.ca

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, in Allstream Corporate Policy, 2014

AODA Regulation: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, in Allstream Accessible Customer Service Plan, 2014

Inclusive Policies & Practices: What Do We Know? Burton Blatt Institute, Syracuse University, 2012 in collaboration with CAES-S.McE, Alberta.

Canadian Human Rights Commission, *A Place for All: A Guide to Creating an Inclusive Workplace*, 2006.



HireForTalent.ca

HIRE for TALENT has made every effort to use the most respectful words possible while writing these materials. We realize, however, that the most appropriate terminology may change over time. We developed these materials with the intent to respect the dignity and inherent rights of all individuals.