



## Community Action Association of Pennsylvania (CAAP)

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

#### **STATEMENT**

Community Action Association of Pennsylvania (CAAP) understands that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are critical to the work of Community Action Agencies to effectively address the issues of poverty.

At CAAP, we value diversity among all individuals. We recognize the need for diversity, equity, and inclusion and to eliminate and reduce discrimination within the workplace and the state of Pennsylvania. We are an organization that supports the safety, authenticity, and dignity of all human beings that we engage with as an association and look to influence others to do the same within Community Action and the community at large.

**We are committed to being intentional in fostering diversity with equity and inclusion, and rooting this in our decision-making through transformative DEI work. We are committed to evolving from “We do not discriminate” to “We are taking action to end disparities.”**

CAAP's efforts to value the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion are a cornerstone to our process as a means to seek to include various representations of staff, clients, customers, leaders, new hires, interns, volunteers, and Community Action Agencies. CAAP uses practices that engage and involve individuals by recognizing their strengths, perspectives, and knowledge that each individual offers because of, but not limited to:

- Ability Differences or Disabilities
- Age or Generational Differences
- Assigned Sex at Birth
- Culture or National Origin
- Demographic Location
- Education
- Ethnicity
- Gender, Gender Identity, or Gender Expression
- Personality
- Race
- Religion
- Sexuality, Sexual Orientation, or Romantic Orientation
- Socioeconomic Status or Class

It is essential that all stakeholders feel empowered, valued, and respected to reach their highest potential and cultivate a sense of belonging and dignity.

This policy and statement are written to show and hold ourselves accountable to a dedication to moving forward in transformative work such as workplace culture, uplifting voices, and demonstrating progress in our communities. These actions are for all to grow, learn, be accepted, and continue exemplifying our core values.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**DIVERSITY:** respecting and acknowledging the representation of different and unique identities, characteristics, experiences, and perspectives related to the lived human experience. Recognizing such human qualities means seeing the differences between ourselves and the outside groups with which we are associated. These qualities include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, sex or gender, gender identity or expression, sexual or romantic orientation, marital status, military service, and veteran status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, family structure, political affiliations, experiences, and ability differences. Diversity is a means to recognize individuals' differences and lived experiences that help navigate them through their own lives and communities.

Historically Marginalized Communities- This will be a term used within this policy to identify several populations that are excluded from mainstream or dominant social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life, such as, but not limited to; People with Disabilities; Brown, Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color (BIPOC); Families and individuals in poverty or lower-income standards; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Asexual (LGBTQA+) individuals; and those of different ages and generations.

**EQUITY:** acknowledging that not everyone begins with the same social or economic place. Achieving equity requires identifying and reducing barriers to access and opportunity that prevent fair and full participation. This action gives everyone what they need to succeed by increasing access, resources, and opportunities for all, especially for the underrepresented and historically disadvantaged. Equity is a means to provide the resources, opportunities, advocacy, or support by confronting the systemic and social injustices that create limitations and barriers for individuals.

We also acknowledge there is unfair treatment and judgment to individuals who are or have been affected by social and economic drawbacks. We will uplift all individuals with fair treatment and nonjudgmental communication to help provide best practices regardless for those who have been affected by these difficulties including, but not limited to;

- Those who have been or are currently incarcerated.
- Those who have been or are currently dealing with drug and/or alcohol substance usage.
- Those who are homeless.

**INCLUSION:** welcomes culture and authentically brings excluded individuals or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making. The action is by sharing power and ensuring equal access to opportunities and resources. Inclusion is about inviting notable differences, and celebrating that everyone is valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential. CAAP honors and accepts the abilities, backgrounds, experiences, and wisdom that every individual brings with them to feel valued. Inclusion is a means to provide equal space, voices, and existence within CAAP and the communities.

## **IMPACT AND GOALS**

The goals and outcomes of this policy are to help provide a framework for CAAP around the dedicated work of DEI to achieve a more significant impact and understanding within Community Action Agencies and the state at large. The immediate goals of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure that CAAP represents and upholds industry-standard best practices.
- To influence and set a standard where Community Action Agencies are welcoming and inclusive to all.
- Be intentional about speaking and highlighting DEI as core to creating solutions to effectively address the issues of poverty.

## **POLICY**

CAAP identifies that the Agency holds our staff, interns, board members, volunteers, donors, community members, and all other associates as individuals who are dedicated to making a continuous effort toward nurturing a diverse, equitable, inclusive environment and community.

We recognize our privileges and commit to using them as a way to celebrate narratives, stories, and experiences of all races, genders, sexualities, abilities, economic situations, and all forms of intersecting experiences and identities. Our purpose is to ensure that all employees, interns, and job applicants of Community Action Agencies are given equal opportunities and represented by all society's identities, cultures, and characteristics. All employees of CAAP will be valued, respected, appreciated, and able to give their best as a result of the quality of our DEI efforts. We hold ourselves accountable and justifiable to foster an inclusive community and workplace reflective of the full range of intersectionality rooted in history and lived human experiences.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equity, equality, and fairness to all in our employment and not provide less favorable services or treatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions), gender identity or expression (including, but not limited to, transgender, agender and nonbinary identities), sexual and romantic orientation, uniform service member status, military service and veteran status, marital status, age, protected medical condition, genetic information, physical or mental disability, family structure, or any other category that is a protected status in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws. We are opposed to any and all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, whether they are part-time, full-time, seasonal, or temporary, will be treated fairly, with respect and dignity by all members of CAAP and by those who are associated with CAAP. When selecting candidates for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit, it will be based on their aptitude and ability. All employees will be

given assistance, accommodation, and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilize their unique talents. The skills of employees and resources of our organization will be fully utilized, and we will maximize the efficiency of our whole workforce.

All employees of CAAP will be held accountable to the standards of DEI, which are reflected in our commitments and requirements listed below. Employees are to act in a respectful manner and appropriate communication standards when addressing the state network of Community Action Agencies and the community at large. This is to uphold that all people do not just feel welcomed, but belong and are included in CAAP's effort to be recognized by Pennsylvania's policy-setting and legislative groups as the authority on issues of poverty, self-sufficiency, and community development, exemplifying our core values.

## **COMMITMENTS**

CAAP is committed to the following:

- To increase the representation and voices of marginalized communities as employees, guests, Community Action Agencies, administrators, and board members.
- To regularly review our employees and organizational practices and procedures to maintain fairness and accountability and promote safe, welcoming, affirming, and inclusive spaces.
- Identifying and overcoming barriers for those in marginalized communities; to provide equitable access regardless of their actual or perceived identity.
- We will network with local schools, community services, nonprofits, or other community entities that have underrepresented people or populations to provide our services as a resource and in greater need of support.
- Educate Community Action Agencies for those who are living within marginalized communities related to education, career, or supportive services and help those agencies to find solutions and or remove barriers to services.
- All employees are committed to excellence in communication and customer service creating a welcoming environment, and uplifting all Community Action Agencies, participants, and customers.
- To partner with regional organizations that empower underrepresented and marginalized communities across the state.
- To improve accessibility and increase opportunities for individuals with a difference in abilities, such as physical or mental, through education, employment, and volunteerism.
- To develop sustained professional working relationships with individuals of marginalized communities from across our state.
- To annually share measurable data of our progress in reference to DEI.
- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognized and valued by management, coworkers, and the Agency.
- To create a working environment that holds employees accountable to promote and treat all people with dignity and respect.

- To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to follow disciplinary action against those that breach this policy.
- To make trainings, initiatives, and progression opportunities available to all staff around DEI.
- To promote equality, fairness, and accountability in the workplace, which CAAP believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns to apply corrective measures.
- CAAP will inform all employees that a Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness, inclusion, and acceptance in the workplace.
- This policy will be showcased to funding agencies, stakeholders, customers, learners, and job applicants.
- Our policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion are continually promoted in the workplace.

These commitments act as a guide, standards, and obligations of CAAP's mission, vision, and values to ensure the association and those adopting this policy are treated in an understanding of safety, inclusion, authenticity, respect, and dignity. The commitments can be and are subject to change as needed through recommendations by the Directors of CAAP and the CEO.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

CAAP establishes the following requirements:

- Establish and maintain an internal DEI committee that will meet regularly to start initiatives within the Agency. This committee depends on allowing other voices within the Agency to speak up about what is needed to help foster inclusion to promote acceptance and fairness within and in the community of CAAP.
- The DEI committee will meet regularly and be facilitated by the Director of Workplace Culture and will include discussions and workshops to further the organization's efforts, skills, and knowledge.
- All employees of CAAP will be given Human Humility, Human Competency, or DEI-related training throughout the year. These trainings are intended to be independent learning and self-education opportunities.
- This policy must be reviewed and updated, when necessary, at least every two years by the CEO and/ or the Board of Directors.
- The Director of Workplace Culture will develop a DEI Training that corresponds to this policy that all employees, interns, staff, and volunteers will take at least every two years. This training will also be used as part of the onboarding process for all new hires and provided to them within the first year of hire.
- All employees and board members must sign an acknowledgment of the DEI Policy as stated.
- Feedback and assessment regarding the policy, training, and committee will be reviewed at least once a year with an evaluation process, as we understand that

societal change and DEI work are lifetime commitments and cannot be accomplished in a few or yearly trainings.

- The Director of Workplace Culture will be CAAP's change management designee helping CAAP staff transform how we move forward with this new policy.
- CAAP will attend other local and state meetings related to DEI to further accomplish strategies set forth in their goals.
- CAAP will be a catalyst in bringing about changes in our communities that lead to better lives and strengthens communities.
- All CAAP members are required to obtain a total of 6 hours of DEI training yearly not provided by their own modules.

These requirements are the action steps needed to move CAAP forward in ensuring the agency and everyone involved are treated with an understanding of safety, authenticity, respect, and dignity they deserve. The actions hold all members and employees accountable for upholding and fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive space. The requirements can be subject to change as needed through recommendations by the Director of Workplace Culture, the Directors team, and the CEO.

## **POLICY VIOLATIONS**

CAAP is dedicated to maintaining a safe, anti-discriminatory, and accountable workplace that can promote a fair and equal workplace based on integrity and ethics. We understand that people may be unaware of specific forms of social injustices and societal changes. However, we expect all people under the employment of CAAP, including employees, staff, management, volunteers, interns, and all other third parties to follow the DEI policy and the initiatives set forth with an open mind and in good faith.

Violation of this policy, statement, commitments, and requirements that follow, including any improper retaliatory conduct for addressing discrimination or injustices within the workplace, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

All potential situations, based on discrimination, injustices, or unfair treatment by co-workers, or other employees of CAAP should be reported immediately to the Director of Workplace Culture or the appropriate member of the Board of Directors. The report may be over the phone, in person, or by email. Reports of discrimination or violation of this policy may be maintained confidential to the extent that maintaining confidentiality does not impede CAAP's ability to investigate and respond to the complaints. All complaints will be promptly investigated. All employees must cooperate with all investigations. No employee will be subjected to retaliation, intimidation, or disciplinary action as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this policy.

If the Agency determines, after an appropriate good faith investigation, that someone either in the Agency or a third party outside of the Agency has violated this policy, the Agency will take quick and proper corrective action.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

The field of diversity, equity, and inclusion is constantly changing, including the dialogue and communication that surround the words we use to explain a broad form of experiences. This section of the policy is to help provide individuals with an understanding and introduction to the need for common vocabulary to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Depending on lived experiences, words might hold different meanings for different people. Therefore, this terminology section aims to be used as a guide to understand social constructs of change and promoting dialogue around diversity, equity, and inclusion. The list provided is not meant to be exhaustive since language is continuously evolving; however, it is only a starting point for learning more about the diversity and variation of a human's experience. The main goal is to provide a basic framework for this conversation.

### ***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion***

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are more than words, more than accomplishing a particular goal, and more than an idea. Diversity is the realization of difference and injustice, the unfairness of oppression, and understanding power and privilege. Inclusion balances the desire to create equal opportunity from those who actively or passively exclude different people. Equity is the action and acknowledgment that helps create a diverse community that is more robust, more affluent, and more sustainable. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion create excellence.

We welcome all employees, staff, management, volunteers, interns, and all other third parties to CAAP to unite in dialogue by discussing ideas and considerations. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion create a form of empathy, compassion, understanding, and acceptance. Having an open mind to understanding another person or group of people is a journey we take together to recognize the roots of our identities and experiences, which shows how we are affected and shaped by society and cultural norms. In all its forms, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are necessary to advance our understanding of the environment and reach solutions that allow CAAP to serve all human beings effectively.

**Ableism:** A system of superiority and discrimination that provides or denies resources, Agency, and dignity based on one's abilities (mental/intellectual, emotional, and physical). Ableism depends on a binary and benefits non-disabled people at the expense of disabled people. Like other forms of oppression, ableism operates on individual, institutional and cultural level.

**Ally:** Someone who supports a group other than one's own (in terms of multiple identities such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.). An ally acknowledges oppression and actively commits to reducing their complicity, investing in strengthening their knowledge and awareness of oppression.

**Bias:** A form of prejudice that results from our need to classify individuals into categories quickly.

**Bigot:** A person who is obstinately devoted to their own opinions and prejudices and is intolerant towards other diverse social groups.

**BIPOC:** An acronym used to refer to black, Indigenous, and people of color. It is based on the recognition of collective experiences of systemic racism. As with any other identity term, it is up to individuals to use it as an identifier.

**Classism:** A hierarchical system that provides or denies resources, Agency, and dignity based on one's perceived socioeconomic class (poor/working class, middle/upper class, upper class, etc.).

**Colonization:** Emma LaRocque has defined colonization as a "form of invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of peoples...The result of such incursion is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants. This is often legalized after the fact...The long-term result of such massive dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized". Colonization provides colonizers with political power and control, economic gain through the exploitation of peoples and resources, and social power with the dominance of colonizer cultural practices and beliefs. Colonization is an ongoing process that provides political/economic/social benefits to the colonizers of lands.

**Color Blind:** The belief that everyone should be treated "equally" without respect to societal, economic, historical, racial, or other differences. No differences are seen or acknowledged; everyone is the same.

**Consent:** There are many different definitions and models of consent that consider the particular wants, needs, and communication styles of those who practice it. At CAAP, we define consent as a mutual, emotional, physical, and psychological understanding between people(s) without the force of any kind. When engaging intimately with other individuals, consent is necessary to ensure that everybody involved is aware and interested in what is happening. Consent is based on communication, not assumptions.

**Cultural Appropriation:** The non-consensual/misappropriate use of cultural elements for commodification or profit purposes – including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. – often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the context of its original culture.

**Decolonize:** The active and intentional process of unlearning values, beliefs, and conceptions that have caused physical, emotional, or mental harm to people through colonization. It requires a recognition of systems of oppression.

**Disability:** Physical or mental impairment that affects a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Discrimination:** The unequal treatment of members of various groups, based on conscious or unconscious prejudice, favors one group over others on differences of race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, language, age, national identity, and other categories.



**Gender-based violence:** Violence rooted in gender-based oppression and power inequalities based on gender identity, perceived gender identity, or gender expressions, such as sexism, cissexism, misogyny, and transmisogyny. Any interpersonal, institutional, or systemic act of violence (physical, sexual, economic, emotional, spiritual, social) devalues and reinforces expected entitlement to women, girls, transgender, Two-Spirit, genderqueer non-binary, and gender non-conforming bodies and lives.

**Heteropatriarchy:** A colonial construct and concept that defines both masculinity and femininity in narrow and limiting ways to maintain a binary distinction between male and female, dominant and subordinate. It operates from the assertion that the earth is inherently female and therefore seen as inherently subservient/available to consume and utilize. Heteropatriarchy serves to naturalize all other social hierarchies, such as white supremacy and settler colonialism. When colonists first came to this land, they saw the necessity of instilling patriarchy in Native communities. They realized that indigenous peoples would not accept colonial domination if their societies were not structured based on the social hierarchy.

**Heteronormative:** A worldview that frames heterosexuality as the standard sexuality. This is created through redundant representations of heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships in our society. An example of heteronormativity is the assumption that people are heterosexual unless they "come out". Another example is how non-heterosexual relationships are expected to be similar to traditional "heterosexual" relationships (i.e., labeling one partner as the "man" of the relationship, expecting couples to want marriage/children, etc.).

**Homoantagonism:** Active hostility or opposition towards people whose sexuality is not heteronormative. This is often based on the assumption that monogamous relationships between one man and one woman are traditional, superior, and only legitimate forms of sexuality. The language has shifted from the use of "phobia" (as in homophobia) to antagonism to encompass better the violence perpetrated.

**Implicit Bias:** Negative associations expressed automatically that people unknowingly hold and affect our understanding, actions, and decisions, also known as unconscious or hidden bias.

**Institutional Racism:** Institutional racism refers specifically to how institutional policies and practices create different outcomes and opportunities for different groups based on racial discrimination.

**Intersectionality:** A social construct that recognizes the fluid diversity of identities that a person can hold, such as gender, race, class, religion, professional status, marital status, socioeconomic status, etc.

**"Isms":** A way of describing any attitude, action, or institutional structure that oppresses a person or group because of their target group. For example, race (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (e.g., anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobia), etc.

**LGBTQIA:** An inclusive term for those people who are within the umbrella of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual.

**Microaggression:** The verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, insults, or actions, whether intentional or unintentional, communicate hostile, derogatory, or harmful messages to target persons based solely upon discriminatory belief systems.

**Multicultural Competency:** A process of embracing diversity and learning about people from other cultural backgrounds. The critical element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for how others live in and organize the world and an openness to learn from them.

**Misogyny:** The hatred or dislike of women, girls, or femininity; the denigration of women and characteristics deemed feminine. Misogyny functions as an ideology or belief system that has accompanied patriarchal or male-dominated societies for thousands of years and continues to place women and people who identify and express themselves in feminine ways in subordinate positions with limited access to power and decision making. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, violence, and the sexual objectification of women. Though commonly associated with men, misogyny also exists and is practiced by women against other women or even themselves.

**Non-disposability:** The belief and actions that treat all folks as worthy of care, support, community, and accountability. Non-disposability upholds that we are indispensable in the web of humans – we are all needed! This is a lens commonly used by folks in transformative justice and anti-prison work. We all can cause harm, and while we must hold ourselves and others accountable for the harm caused, causing harm doesn't make us bad people.

**Oppression:** The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions and embedded within individual consciousness. In a complex web of relationships and structures, oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice.

**Patriarchy:** Actions and beliefs that prioritize masculinity. Patriarchy is practiced systemically in the ways and methods through which power is distributed in society (jobs and positions of power given to men in government, policy, criminal justice, etc.) while also influencing how we interact with one another interpersonally (gender expectations, sexual dynamics, space-taking, etc.).

**People of Color (POC):** A collective term for men and women of Asian, African, Latinx, and Native American backgrounds, instead of the collective "White."

**Prejudice:** A preconceived judgment or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment and can be rooted in stereotypes that denies the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized.

**Prison industrial complex (PIC):** A term we use to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to

economic, social, and political problems. Through its reach and impact, the PIC helps and maintains the authority of people who get their power through racial, economic, and other privileges. There are many ways this power is collected and maintained through the PIC, including creating mass media images that keep alive stereotypes of people of color, poor people, queer people, immigrants, youth, and other oppressed communities as criminal, delinquent, or deviant.

**Privilege:** Exclusive access or access to material and immaterial resources based on membership to a dominant social group.

**Race:** A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly race), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given time

**"Safe Space":** Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience.

**Social Justice:** Social justice constitutes a form of activism based on principles of equity and inclusion that encompasses a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable, and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their Agency and a sense of social responsibility toward and with others.

**Stereotype:** A form of generalization rooted in blanket beliefs and false assumptions, a product of processes of categorization that can result in a prejudiced attitude, critical judgment, and intentional or unintentional discrimination. Stereotypes are typically negative, based on little information, and do not recognize individualism and personal Agency.

**Structural inequality:** Systemic disadvantage(s) of one social group compared to other groups, rooted, and perpetuated through discriminatory practices (conscious or unconscious) that are reinforced through institutions, ideologies, representations, policies/laws, and practices. When this kind of inequality is related to racial/ethnic discrimination, it is referred to as systemic or structural racism.

**System of Oppression:** Conscious and unconscious, non-random, and organized harassment, discrimination, exploitation, discrimination, prejudice, and other forms of unequal treatment that impact different groups. Sometimes is used to refer to systemic racism.

**Tokenism:** Performative presence without meaningful participation. For example, there is a superficial invitation extended for someone to participate in a specific socially oppressed group however, they realize they are expected to speak for the whole group and are never given a real opportunity to speak for themselves

**White Supremacy:** A power system structured and maintained by persons who classify themselves as White, whether consciously or subconsciously determined and who feel superior to those of other racial/ethnic identities.

The terms contained in this glossary have been reproduced from the following resources:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion [Glossary](#) from The University of Washington
- Anti-Violence Project. [Glossary](#). The University of Victoria.
- Colors of Resistance. [Definitions for the Revolution](#).
- Cram, R. H. (2002). *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*.
- Equity and Inclusion. [Glossary](#). UC Davis.
- Potapchuk, M., Leiderman, S., et al. (2009). [Glossary](#). Center for Assessment and Policy Development.
- Center for Diversity & Inclusion. [Glossary of Bias Terms](#). Washington University in St. Louis.
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. [Glossary of human rights terms](#).

## **LGBTQA+ Terms**

Here are some key terms that relate to the LGBTQ community. Keep in mind that there are many ways to define these common words and phrases. Remember, the only person who has the power to label you, is YOU!

**Affirming:** the unequivocal support for an individual person's gender identity or expression, regardless of the biological sex they were assigned at birth; systemic support that ensures that transgender people and communities are fully represented, included, valued, and honored.

**Agender:** A person who does not identify as having a gender identity that can be categorized as male or female, and sometimes indicates identifying as not having a gender identity.

**Asexual (or ace):** Used to describe people who experience little to no sexual attraction. Many asexual people desire romantic relationships, and romantic orientations are a way for aces to communicate who they prefer to date or form relationships with.

**Binary System:** A binary system is something made up of two opposing parts. Gender (man/woman) and sex (male/female) are examples of binary systems.

**Bisexual:** Used to describe people who have the capacity to form attraction and/or relationships to more than one gender.

**Biological sex** – a person's combination of genitals, chromosomes, and hormones, usually characterized as "male" or "female" based on visual inspection of genitals via ultrasound or at birth. Many assume that a person's gender identity will be congruent with their sex assignment. Everyone has a biological sex.

**Cisgender:** Used to describe people whose gender identity congruent with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Gay:** In the past, only men who are attracted to men have used the word "gay." Now, it is common for "gay" to be used by anyone who is attracted to the same sex or gender.

**Gender:** An idea created by society (a social construct) that tells us what certain genders are typically performed as, based on a group of emotional, behavioral, and cultural characteristics (like how we express our feelings or how we dress). Gender is personal to everyone.

**Gender Expression:** The way in which we present ourselves, behave, or represent who we are, which can include, but is not limited to, physical appearance, clothing, hairstyles, and behavior. These are typically classified as masculinity, femininity, gender natural, or androgynous.

**Genderfluid:** A person whose gender identity or expression shifts between masculine and feminine or falls somewhere along this spectrum.

**Gender Identity:** A person's deep-seated, internal sense of who they are as a gender being- specifically, the gender with which they identify themselves. All people have a gender identity.

**Gender Marker:** The marker (M: Male or F: Female) that appears on a person's identity documentation (e.g., birth certificate, driver's license, passport, travel, or work visas, green card, etc.). The gender marker on a transgender person's identity documents will be their sex assigned at birth until they undergo a legal and logistical process to change it, where possible.

**Gender Neutral:** A term that describes something (sometimes a space, such as a bathroom; or an item, such as a clothing) that is not segregated by sex or gender.

**Gender Neutral Language:** Language that does not assume or confer gender. For example, "person" instead of man or woman.

**Genderqueer:** A person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond gender, or is some combination of genders.

**Intersex:** Used to describe people who are born with any of several variations in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals that can't be classified as typically male or female.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is predominantly attracted to other women. Some women prefer the term "gay" – it's all up to you and what fits your identity best.

**Microaggressions:** Small individual acts of hostility or derisions toward transgender or gender non-conforming people, which can sometimes be unintentional.

**Nonbinary:** Used to describe people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as outside of the male-female gender binary. Many other words for identities outside the traditional categories of man and woman may be used, such as genderfluid, genderqueer, polygender, bigender, demi gender, or agender. These identities, while similar, are not necessarily interchangeable or synonymous.

**Pangender:** A person who identifies with all genders.

**Pansexual:** Used to describe people who are attracted to people of any gender or to people regardless of their gender. Some people may use the words bisexual and pansexual interchangeably, and others use only one word exclusively to describe themselves.

**Queer:** An umbrella term used to refer to an identity that expands outside of heterosexuality. Due to its history as a reclaimed slur and use in political movements, queer still holds political significance.

**Questioning:** Used to describe a person who may be processing or questioning their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

**Same Gender Loving:** a label or identity sometimes used by members of the African American/ black community to express an alternative sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent.

**Sexual Orientation:** A person's physical, emotional, and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Everyone has a sexual orientation.

**Romantic Orientation:** A person's desire and fluctuation of their romantic attraction & experiencing no romantic attraction. This could be falling in love, intimacy, non-sexual forms of attraction.

**Transgender (or trans):** An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Many transgender people will transition to align their gender expression with their gender identity; however, you do not have to transition in order to be transgender.

**Transitioning:** The social, legal, and/or medical process a trans person may go through to affirm their gender identity, gender expression, presentation, or sex. This word means many different things to different people, and a person doesn't have to experience all or any of these common transitioning elements to identify as their gender.

**Two-Spirit:** A term created by First Nations/Native American/Indigenous peoples whose sexual orientation and/or gender/sex exists in ways that challenge colonial constructions of a gender binary. This term should not be appropriated to describe people who are not First Nations/Native American/Indigenous members.

The terms contained in this glossary have been reproduced from the following resources:

- The Asexual Visibility & Education Network; [A List of Romantic Orientations](#)
- Trevor Project – Trevor Support Center; [Glossary and Key Terms](#)
- Transgender Tool Kit by Eli.R. Green and Luca Maurer, 2015.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy, describing important information about the standards of DEI to CAAP and understand that I should consult with the Director of Workplace Culture if I have any questions. I have entered employment with CAAP voluntarily, acknowledging that it is for no specified length of time, and I agree to adhere to the DEI Policy written above. I understand that CAAP's DEI policy, commitments, or requirements are intended to explain our action toward respect, dignity, and inclusion for everyone at CAAP.

Since the information, policies, and procedures described here are subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the DEI Policy may occur. I understand that CAAP may change, modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel, in whole or part, any of the published or unpublished DEI policies or practices, with or without notice, at its sole discretion, without giving cause or justification to any employee. The CEO and Director of Workplace Culture shall have sole authority to add, delete or adopt revisions to the policies in this DEI Policy. Any written or oral statement by a supervisor or manager contrary to the DEI policy that is not directly related to approved DEI policy changes or updates is invalid and should not be relied upon by any employee.

I understand and agree that I will read and comply with the information contained in this policy and any revisions, am bound by the provisions contained therein, and my continued employment is conditional on following this and all policies.

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Employee Name (Printed)

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Employee Signature

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Today's Date