

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services
(CCDCFS)
Policy Statement**

Policy Chapter: Client Rights
Policy Number: 7.06.05
Policy Name: Non-Discrimination Policy: Youth and Families

Original Effective Date: 03/01/2017
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Current Revision Date: 06/01/2021
Approved By: Cynthia G. Weiskittel

PURPOSE: To ensure all children/youth and families (including all birth, foster/adoptive and kinship care families) served by the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS), and its contracted providers and community partners are provided a safe, healthy and accepting environment in which to grow and thrive without discrimination.

SCOPE: This policy applies to CCDCFS staff, contracted providers, and community partners.

POLICY

- A. CCDCFS values diversity in all forms and the inclusion of all voices at the table. We know that with this diversity come new ideas and perspectives leading to more effective resolutions to the challenges faced by our children and families. We also support cooperation with our partner organizations in an effort to accomplish these ends.

- B. CCDCFS prohibits discrimination, harassment and bullying against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religion, gender, sexual or affectional orientation, gender identity or expression, appearance, matriculation, political affiliation, marital status, veteran's status or any other characteristic protected by law (including but not limited to compliance with the US Department of Health and Human Services Non-Discrimination Policy., U.S. Law [Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. section 2000 a 1-2], the Multiethnic Placement Act 42 U.S.C.A.1996, as amended (MEPA), The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (5101:2-42-48 to 5101:2-42-58 of the Administrative Code), 25 U.S.C.A. 1091, as amended, and the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997). CCDCFS expects that its employees, volunteers, members, and other constituents of the Division, when and wherever those individuals are conducting CCDCFS business or participating in CCDCFS events or activities, shall maintain an environment free of discrimination, including harassment, bullying or retaliation.

- C. CCDCFS opposes any discrimination in the matter of adoption, child custody and visitation, and foster care and shall take a leadership role against any such discrimination.
- D. CCDCFS provides educational and informational resources to address the needs of all children/youth, individuals, and families (including all birth, foster/adoptive and kinship care families). These resources are located on the CCDCFS intranet, through the North Central Ohio Regional Training Center (NCORTC) <http://ocwtp.net/NCORTC.html> and on our Just In Time Training website at <http://www.jitcuyahoga.org/>
- E. All children/youth, individuals and families (birth, foster/adoptive and kinship care families) receive confidential and appropriate services, regardless of their status as a protected class.

PROCEDURES

- A. CCDCFS and its contracted providers and community partners must provide services based on principles of sound professional practice and not based on societal, institutional or personal bias.
- B. CCDCFS provides an open and encouraging application process for all prospective foster/adoptive kinship parents.
- C. All areas of CCDCFS, its contracted providers, community partners' facilities, placements and programs must be free of discrimination of any kind including, harassment, bullying, taunting, excessive teasing, verbal abuse, threats or acts of violence and retaliation. Services are focused on meeting the diverse needs of children/youth, individuals, families and prospective foster/adoptive/kinship parents.

SEE ALSO

Ohio Administrative Code, <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/>
 Ohio Revised Code, <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/>

US Department of Health and Human Services Non-Discrimination Policy
 [42 USC; Section 2000, a. - 1 & 2 (Civil Rights Act of 1964)]

Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Policies and Procedures Manual

Policy 6.01.09 – Non-Discrimination in the Placement of Children / MEPA
 Policy 6.02.01 – Foster and Adoptive Recruitment
 Policy 7.06.01 – Agency Civil Rights Plan, Clients' Civil Rights and Complaint Procedures

Additional Resources – CCDCFS LGBTQ Practice Guide