



THE MUNICIPALITY OF DIGBY EQUITY & ANTI-RACISM PLAN

Approved March 2025

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Acknowledgment

The Municipality of Digby acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship, first signed by the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, Peskotomuhkatiyik, and the British Crown in 1726. These treaties did not implicate or affirm the surrender or transfer of land to the British, but recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey title and set the rules for what was to be a long-standing relationship between nations, initially preventing war and facilitating trade. We recognize that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to each other and this land.

We also recognize the 400+ year history of communities of African descent and the 52 African Nova Scotian communities throughout the region today.

Nova Scotia is home to many diverse communities that have shaped and enriched the province. We acknowledge that many people living in Nova Scotia have intersecting identities which may expose them to more than one form of discrimination.

Executive Summary

Commitment

The Municipality of Digby is committed to addressing systemic barriers, promoting diversity, and creating opportunities for all residents.

Key Objectives

- **Provide Ongoing Training & Educational Opportunities:** Deliver continued training and learning opportunities that provide practical skills for municipal staff and leadership to combat racism as well as increase awareness and the understanding of racial and cultural issues.
- **Promoting Equity in Public Services and Policies:** Review existing policies, programs, and services to identify and address disparities affecting marginalized groups. The plan will ensure that municipal services are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of our community.
- **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships with local organizations, and individuals representing marginalized communities to ensure that their voices are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes.

The Municipality of Digby will actively support initiatives that encourage a more inclusive and equitable community.

Summary

Our province is on a journey to become more inclusive and equitable. Municipalities and Villages were mandated by the province to develop and implement equity and anti-racism plans by April 1, 2025, as stipulated by the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act. The Act recognized that systemic hate, inequity, and racism can be caused by government and public bodies through policies, practices, and procedures that appear neutral but have the effect of disadvantaging underrepresented and underserved groups.

The Municipality of Digby recognizes that the path to equity and anti-racism is an ongoing process that requires commitment, action, and collaboration at all levels. This plan sets a foundation for a long-term journey toward a more inclusive, and vibrant community for all residents. Our long-term goal for the Equity and Anti-Racism Plan is to foster a municipality where every resident has equal opportunities for success and access to services.

Message from Warden

“As the Warden of the Municipality of Digby, I am proud to present our Equity and Anti-Racism Plan, a pivotal step in our ongoing commitment to creating a community where all individuals are empowered.

This plan is not just a document; it is a call to action. It reflects our collective responsibility to foster inclusion at every level of our community.

While we acknowledge the work that remains, we are dedicated to making meaningful change through education, open dialogue, and continued collaboration.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Gregory". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linda Gregory
Warden, Municipality of Digby

Background

Communities

The Municipality of Digby acknowledges that our community includes individuals and groups who have historically been underserved and underrepresented. This includes, but is not limited to, the Bear River First Nation, Hassett, Southville, Danvers, Weymouth Falls, Acaciaville,

Jordantown, and Digby. Our community also includes youth, newcomers, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with disabilities, minority faith-based groups, and persons who are neurodivergent.

We recognize the unique challenges faced by these communities, and we are committed to fostering inclusivity, equity, and accessibility for all residents. We want to foster a community where every individual is heard, valued, and supported in their pursuit of well-being and opportunity.

Collaboration

The Municipality of Digby has partnered with the Village of Freeport, Village of Westport, Village of Tiverton, and Village of Weymouth to develop and implement an Equity and Anti-Racism Plan.

Through joint efforts, the Municipality of Digby and Villages will work together to reach the key objectives to establish an equitable and just environment for all. The plan reflects a shared commitment across the Digby Area.

Community Engagement

The Municipality of Digby conducted an engagement survey to gather feedback and input from marginalized communities. The survey opened December 20, 2024, and closed January 31, 2025 (open for 42 days). The survey was shared widely amongst the public; it was available to complete online, in-person, or over the phone. There were 16 responses.

This initiative sought to understand these community's perspectives and experiences to guide future efforts in promoting inclusivity and fairness within the municipality. These findings will help guide our efforts in addressing inequality and ensuring a more inclusive environment.

Action Plan

Over the next three years, the Municipality of Digby will commit to the following actions:

Implement Regular Training Sessions to Educate Employees and Elected Officials

- a. Schedule foundational Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) training for municipal staff/elected officials and follow-up with regular workshops, lunch & learns, etc.
- b. Create a supportive work environment and use inclusive language that recognizes the intersectionality of identities (i.e., race, gender, class).

- c. Plan EDI training designed for the human resources framework to ensure fairness and impartiality when recruiting staff or volunteers.

Improve Internal Governance & Tools

- a. Ensure that equity and anti-racism are embedded in the mission and values of the Municipality of Digby.
- b. Improve and develop by-laws, policies, services and forms with EDI considerations.
- c. Network with other municipal offices to share best practices and resources on racial equity and anti-racism strategies, creating a collective impact across regions.

Develop A Network of Agencies and Organizations

- a. Develop and facilitate relationships with groups, agencies, and organizations active in EDI work. Members of the public can reach out to the Equity & Anti-Racism Coordinator to make a presentation to Council or to submit a letter or material.
- b. Share information, opportunities, and resources with local community organizations and businesses that will advance and support their EDI initiatives in our communities.
- c. Meet with local organizations and individuals representing marginalized communities on a periodic basis to ensure that their voices are heard consistently.

Measuring Success

Here are some strategies that the Municipality of Digby will use to measure success:

- **Number of Anti-Racism Initiatives:** Track the number of programs, policies, and initiatives developed and implemented that directly address equity and anti-racism. This will include training opportunities, educational events, or community outreach.
- **Partnership Evaluations:** Conduct recurring check-ins between the Municipality of Digby and the villages to assess how well our collaboration is functioning and whether resources and efforts are being effectively disseminated across the district.
- **Cultural Events and Celebrations:** Keep track of the number and impact of cultural events, such as festivals or awareness days, that highlight diversity and inclusion. Success will be gauged by growing participation and recognition of these events over time.

Monitoring & Communication

The Municipality of Digby's Equity & Anti-Racism Coordinator will communicate with the Villages on a regular basis so the group can stay updated on the latest achievements, issues, and action plans for each unit.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) will play a fundamental role in overseeing the implementation and progress of the Municipality of Digby's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan. The CAO will ensure that the plan is integrated into the municipality's policies, programs, and services. This includes overseeing the equity training, monitoring the effectiveness of initiatives, and ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately to support the goals of the plan.

Additionally, the CAO will regularly meet with the Equity & Anti-Racism Coordinator for updates and will report on the progress of the plan to Council, and work to implement the plan across all departments.

Members of the public can consult with the Equity & Anti-Racism Coordinator if needed. A record of concerns or comments will be kept so that this data can be considered when updating the plan every three years.

Any member of the public can make a request to the Equity & Anti-Racism Coordinator to make a presentation to Council or to submit a letter or material for review.

Conclusion

The Municipality of Digby's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan marks an important commitment to confronting discrimination and building a more inclusive community.

Through ongoing dialogue, education, and tangible actions, the Municipality of Digby will establish its foundation and ongoing commitment to equity and anti-racism, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, feels valued, supported, and empowered.

Continued collaboration with community members, stakeholders, and leaders will be essential to this ever-growing plan, making Digby a place where all individuals can thrive.