

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy (DEI) for VISTO

At VISTO, we are committed to fostering a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of our work. We believe that everyone deserves access to the resources and support they need to thrive, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. This DEI policy outlines our commitment to creating an inclusive, respectful, and equitable environment for all those we serve, our staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

1. Commitment to Diversity

We embrace and celebrate the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of the individuals and communities we serve. We recognize that diversity encompasses race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, abilities, and other identities that make each person unique. Our goal is to create an inclusive food pantry that reflects and respects the diversity of our community.

2. Commitment to Equity

Equity is at the core of our mission. We are committed to providing fair and just access to resources, services, and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their race, identity, or background. We will work to identify and address systemic barriers that disproportionately impact marginalized groups. We believe that true equity goes beyond equality by ensuring that individuals receive the support and resources they need based on their unique circumstances.

3. Commitment to Inclusion

Inclusion means creating an environment where all people feel valued, respected, and supported. We will actively work to ensure that everyone who interacts with our food pantry—whether as a client, volunteer, or staff member—feels welcomed, heard, and empowered. We strive to remove barriers to participation and ensure that our services and programs are accessible to individuals from all walks of life.

4. Inclusive Services

We aim to provide food and services that meet the diverse needs of our community. This includes:

- Offering appropriate food options and meeting the dietary needs of different ethnic, cultural, and religious groups.
- Ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including physical access to our pantry and accommodations for individuals with different needs (e.g., visual or hearing impairments, mobility challenges).

- Providing materials and communication in multiple languages to accommodate non-English-speaking clients, where feasible.
- Ensuring that our facilities are welcoming to people of all gender identities, sexual orientations, and family structures.

5. Staff and Volunteer Training

We are committed to fostering a workplace that promotes inclusion, cultural competency, and sensitivity to the unique challenges faced by marginalized communities. To achieve this, we will:

- Provide ongoing DEI training for all staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand and embrace our values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Encourage open dialogue about DEI topics, helping to create a safe space for conversations about race, identity, privilege, and systemic inequities.
- Ensure that recruitment, hiring, and volunteer opportunities are open to individuals from diverse backgrounds, and we will actively seek to create a workforce and volunteer base that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

6. Equitable Access to Services

We recognize that people face different challenges in accessing food and resources. We are dedicated to:

- Ensuring that no individual is denied access to our services based on race, ethnicity, gender, income, immigration status, or any other factor.
- Offering flexible hours and outreach efforts to reach underserved populations, including individuals who may be homeless, elderly, or otherwise marginalized.
- Collaborating with other community organizations and agencies to better support individuals who face intersecting forms of oppression and inequity.

7. Creating an Inclusive Culture

We believe in building an environment where all voices are heard and respected. We will:

- Encourage the participation of diverse community members in decision-making processes that affect the direction of our organization, services, and programs.
- Regularly assess our practices, policies, and services to ensure that they align with our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Celebrate cultural awareness, holidays, and traditions from various communities to promote understanding and respect.

8. Accountability and Transparency

We are committed to being transparent about our DEI efforts and holding ourselves accountable. To this end:

- We will regularly assess our progress toward creating an inclusive and equitable environment, seeking feedback from staff, volunteers, clients, and the community.
- We will publicly share our DEI goals and progress through our website, reports, and other communication channels.
- We will establish mechanisms for addressing any incidents of discrimination, exclusion, or harassment within our organization or by any staff, volunteers, or clients, and we will take appropriate action to resolve these issues.

9. Addressing Discrimination and Harassment

VISTO has zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or retaliation of any kind. We strive to create an environment where all individuals feel safe and respected. Any behavior or language that is discriminatory, harassing, or harmful to others will not be tolerated. We will take prompt and appropriate action to address such issues if they arise.

10. Ongoing Commitment

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are ongoing priorities for our organization. We understand that creating a truly inclusive and equitable environment requires continual effort, learning, and growth. We are committed to regularly reviewing and updating this policy to ensure that we remain responsive to the needs of the communities we serve and aligned with best practices in DEI.

Contact Information:

For questions or concerns about this policy or if you wish to share feedback, please contact:

VISTO's Executive Director
ed@vistohelps.com
940-668-6403

Acknowledgment:

By engaging with VISTO, all employees, volunteers, and stakeholders acknowledge their understanding and acceptance of this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

This policy aims to foster an environment of transparency and accountability within VISTO. Thank you for your commitment to ethical conduct and the welfare of our community.