



# FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION:

Advancing Equity, Diversity and  
Inclusion at the  
Hamilton Police Service  
2021- 2025



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Hamilton Police Service (HPS) would like to acknowledge that it is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. HPS honours with gratitude this sacred land which, from time immemorial, has been and is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The release of this strategic plan could not have been made possible without invaluable feedback from the Hamilton Police Service membership across the organization, the Diversity and Inclusion Internal Support Network (D&I ISN) and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) HPS Volunteers. Thank you for sharing your voice and commitment to transformative change on our EDI journey. HPS is grateful to the Hamilton Police Association for their continued support in our shared EDI journey. We express appreciation to our partner the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion in guiding the Service in its EDI work.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE



Our world is changing and policing needs to change alongside it. When I was appointed Chief in May 2021, I made a commitment to providing excellence in public safety to the diverse communities we serve.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is fundamental to making sure everyone inside and outside our organization receives fair treatment and opportunities.

Last year, we launched an internal diversity and inclusion survey with our members. It was clear from the findings that we needed to make changes to some things we do. The findings of the survey are embedded in this EDI strategic plan and have helped set our directions and priorities for the next five years.

As we move forward, we will be sharing our progress and success in building a stronger, more inclusive organization. This work is important and necessary. We believe by focussing our work internally, we will be better able to serve everyone in our community.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*From Strategy to Action: Advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the Hamilton Police Service* describes the strategic plan for the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) from 2021 to 2025. In 2021, in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), the Service, engaged membership in a Diversity Census and Inclusion Survey – the “Diversity Meter”. Based on this evidence, CCDI made a number of recommendations to the Service to enhance its EDI efforts. To assess each recommendation, EDI HPS volunteers within the organization came together for an EDI strategic planning day to provide their feedback. The Service has listened closely to the findings of both of these initiatives which have informed the formulation of this EDI strategic plan.

This strategy includes a background, vision, mission, guiding principles for best practice, 4 areas of focus, 14 priorities and 40 strategic calls to action.

The guiding principles that will inform best practices in EDI implementation are: equity, diversity, inclusion, human rights, collective responsibility and continuous improvement.

The first area of focus is *Foundation – Drive the Strategy* and relates to the priorities of leadership accountability, EDI governance and sustainability of resources. The second area of focus, *Policy Cohesion*, concentrates on analysis of policies and procedures, data collection and the effective communication of EDI processes. *Training Programs* is the third area of focus which aims to develop an EDI training framework and implement organizational-wide, senior leader, manager and supervisor specific training. The final focus area *People – Attract and Retain* relates to diversifying our workforce, career advancement and promotion, recruitment and hiring and mentorship programs.

In fulfilling the vision, mission and implementation of this strategic plan, the Chief is accountable and will report annually on the progress in advancing EDI within HPS.





# BACKGROUND

In August 2020, HPS partnered with CCDI to conduct a diversity and inclusion audit (Diversity Meter Survey) to better understand the equity, diversity and inclusion needs of our membership and develop, and improve specific programs, policies and practices to support all members. The survey was administered in January 2021 and all members were invited to participate. The Service also committed to furthering EDI through the creation of an EDI Specialist role in October 2020, with the Specialist hired and starting in February 2021. These actions have all contributed to introducing an EDI lens to the organization<sup>1</sup>.

The results and recommendations of the Diversity Meter Survey were compiled by CCDI (“the findings”) and presented to the Chief and Deputies in June 2021. Shortly thereafter the results and recommendations were shared with HPS Senior Command and key stakeholders including the Hamilton Police Association, the Diversity and Inclusion Internal Support Network (D&I ISN), and the 2S and LGBTQIA ISN. Members (employees) engaged in Information Sessions from July 2021 to September 2021 to gauge understanding and to provide an opportunity to ask questions regarding the findings. Based on this engagement and ongoing dialogue, a need was identified to prioritize and explore how conducive each recommendation made by CCDI was to the HPS context. As such, an EDI strategic planning day was held on February 28, 2022 whereby EDI HPS Volunteers engaged in five focus groups to discuss each strategic area.

The recommendations in the Diversity Meter and the findings of the EDI strategic planning Day have formed the evidence needed to set the foundation for this EDI strategic plan. What has emerged as

central to these outcomes is EDI at Hamilton Police is a people-centric approach, working to ensure that inclusivity is further nurtured and that the diversity of voices, alongside equitable practice, will contribute to the long-term success of the Service.

This strategic plan is supported in advancing EDI by a number of related initiatives already underway and several of which have already been met, including the following:

### **In setting the Foundation – Drive the Strategy:**

- Two dedicated resources of an EDI Specialist and a 2S and LGBTQIA Liaison Officer have been established
- The governance structures for both the Diversity and Inclusion and the 2S and LGBTQIA ISNs have been developed and both groups are fully operational
- The Women of HPS Internal Support Network (WHPS-ISN) is currently setting its Terms of Reference
- Members across the organization have engaged in organizational EDI sharing by learning about the 2021 Diversity Meter results

### **In terms of Policy Cohesion:**

- A new “Workplace Harassment, Discrimination and Violence” policy was created and reviewed by the EDI Specialist
- The “Family Status Accommodation” and “Remote Work Arrangement” policies have been developed and implemented
- A new “Internal Support Network” policy has been created by the EDI Specialist and the Sergeant of Policy Development.

<sup>1</sup>The June 2020 Bergman Report to the HPSB also reinforced the need to embed EDI within HPS.



### **In terms of Training Programs:**

- Beginning in January 2021, all members have access to CCDI's Knowledge Repository, an online tool with a vast array of EDI related self-paced training
- Beginning in September 2021, all members of the Service have access to training on EDI basics, bias and discrimination
- Beginning in September 2021, all members of the Service have access to training with respect to 2S and LGBTQIA
- HPS partnered with EGALE, Canada's leading organization for 2S and LGBTQIA people and issues, to provide training to Senior Leaders on workplace inclusion for gender diversity and sexual diversity
- Senior leaders have all participated in a executive boot camp training provided by CCDI on unconscious and conscious bias
- 327 members have participated in HPS's 2S and LGBTQIA Lived Experience Speaker Series, while 140 have participated in HPS's Indigenous Lived Experience Speaker Series
- KLAE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consulting, Training and Coaching has been retained to train senior leadership in May 2022 on developing empathy, understanding anti-black racism, systemic barriers, and the historical challenges of race in Canada
- HPS Officers are being trained in Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE Project), which provides training on peer intervention, with the aim of creating a police culture in which officers intervene as necessary

to: prevent misconduct, avoid police mistakes and promote officer health and wellness. The training was developed by The Georgetown Law Centre for Innovations in Community Safety in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd.

- Key stakeholders within HPS have participated in the Arbinger Institute training, which focuses on creating conditions for organizational change by starting with individual mindset change; providing tools for fostering belonging, self-awareness and accountability
- The Legacy of Hope Foundation exhibits which aim to increase HPS awareness about challenges facing Indigenous peoples, including the history and impacts of the residential school system, are on loan to the Service for one year and members across the organization have opportunities to engage with the exhibits

In addition to this, in 2021, the Service began acknowledging, recognizing and celebrating a diverse range of days of significance, both internally and externally, reflective of Hamilton's diversity communities we serve. Noteworthy, is the fact that in 2021, HPS along with Hamilton Police Service Board (HPSB) made the decision to commemorate Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30, and in honour of Black History Month 2022, for the first time, a month long weekly program was set in place for membership learning and engagement. Finally, to begin the process of alignment with HPS's overall organizational strategic direction and overarching mission and vision, the EDI Specialist was engaged to review the 2023- 2026 strategic plan member survey.

# VISION AND MISSION

## **Vision**

Hamilton Police Service is committed to building and cultivating an equitable, diverse and inclusive (EDI) organization, fostering a culture of belonging and empathy that deeply values human rights and dignity for all.

## **Mission**

To successfully integrate and embed EDI within the organization by advancing structural, individual and cultural transformative change in key areas of focus including HPS EDI governance, policy cohesion, training and attracting and retaining talent.







# GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BEST PRACTICE



HPS's strategic plan implementation will be guided and defined by the following principles for excellence in EDI best practice.



## **Equity:**

By advancing equity, HPS commits to the fair treatment, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of diverse groups. HPS acknowledges that systemic inequities and barriers have prevented the provision of equitable opportunities and optimal outcomes to all groups. By advancing equity, HPS recognizes that unlike equality, equity often requires different treatments and approaches to overcome pre-existing barriers to ensure access is more equalized.



## **Diversity:**

Diversity describes the existence of difference within any collection of people. In discussions of social equity, diversity addresses differences in social group membership related, for example, to race, Indigenous identity, class, gender identity or expression, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, and religion. Discussions about diversity linked to access, and equity require knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary experiences of oppression and exclusion. Diversity should be understood as uniting rather than dividing. By fostering and integrating diversity, HPS values the spectrum of human difference while recognizing individual uniqueness, and striving for a workforce reflective of more diverse representation<sup>2</sup>.



## **Inclusion:**

By fostering a climate of inclusion, HPS intentionally and with ongoing effort, strives to create conditions whereby traditionally excluded individuals and groups are engaged in processes, activities and decisions, empowering full participation of all, in all aspects of the work of the organization. In cultivating an inclusive climate, HPS commits to understanding intersectionality and embracing a sense of safety and belonging for all. HPS is dedicated to ensuring people feel safe, feel welcomed, valued and a sense of belonging.

<sup>2</sup>McGill University, 'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion', *McGill Skillsets Unlock Your Potential, Unknown, 2022*, <https://www.mcgill.ca/skillsets/framework/equity-diversity-inclusion>



**Human Rights:**

By upholding the fundamental human rights of every person within HPS regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity and gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, age, political beliefs, and any other protected grounds, HPS commits to dignity for all.



**Collective Responsibility:**

By building individual and organizational capacity at every level of the organization, including senior institutional level accountability and unit level accountability, HPS members share a collective responsibility in advancing EDI.



**Continuous Improvement:**

By continuing to monitor and assess progress, collect data, and evaluate strategic initiatives HPS commits to informing evidence-based EDI planning and decision-making for continuous growth and improvement.



# STRATEGIC PLAN

The EDI strategic plan is internally-focused and outlines a five-year road map of directions the Service is taking to advance equity, diversity and inclusion within the organization. We believe by focusing inwardly we simultaneously enhance our service to the community.



Hamilton Police Service's EDI strategic plan includes 4 areas of focus, 14 key priorities and 40 strategic calls to action:

## 1. AREA OF FOCUS: FOUNDATION – DRIVE THE STRATEGY

### **Priority 1: Leadership Accountability**

Shifting organizational culture requires EDI cultural competency among senior-level leadership in order to raise awareness and understanding of how to foster a respectful, inclusive and equitable workplace that embraces diversity. Such learning builds the capacity of leaders to gain EDI buy-in, model behaviour while coaching employees and strengthen holding each other accountable while also holding those they supervise in account. Leadership accountability helps to form EDI culture and tone. To ensure EDI is a priority, leadership transparency and promotion of EDI strategic actions is key. Leadership will drive commitment and have the power to bridge any gaps in perceptions of inclusion experiences at HPS.

### **Priority 2: EDI Governance**

Through the development of EDI governance structures, the strategic directions can be managed, monitored, evaluated and also be reported upon for progress updates to the members and the wider public. In particular, ISN governance mechanisms are vital to the success of the workplace as they provide a psychologically safe space for under-represented groups, while at the same time advancing EDI initiatives for organizational success.

### **Priority 3: Sustainability of Resources**

A sustainable long-term investment by HPS in EDI is critical to the success metrics of its strategic actions. Through the allocation of resources and budget HPS is advancing all four areas of focus. By doing so HPS will ultimately reap the benefits of having a workforce rich with diversity and that is reflective of the communities it serves. HPS will benefit from an increasingly supportive workplace where employees feel safe, appreciated and welcomed for their unique talents. Creating these conditions allows for EDI to blossom within HPS culture.

## 2. AREA OF FOCUS: POLICY COHESION

### **Priority 4: Analysis of Policies and Procedures**

Through the development of an EDI Policy Framework all policies within HPS will be analyzed and updated accordingly from an EDI lens. Such a process allows HPS to embed EDI into its policies and practices, thus shaping and shifting individual and organizational behavioural change.

### **Priority 5: Data-Driven Diversity**

Meaningful change requires data-driven EDI evidence-based metrics. Through regular progress reports HPS commits to showcasing where it has achieved its metrics and where it may have fallen short. Data collection is a priority to understand diverse representation; well-being factors of the workplace and to understand, monitor and address the number of incidents of discrimination, bias, and harassment.

### **Priority 6: Communication of EDI Processes**

HPS members across the organization need to feel a sense of empowerment and a sense of confidence on how to seek supports by providing them with the right and effective tools to address EDI matters. Facilitating clear and continuous communication to membership is vital to an EDI people-centric approach.

## 3. AREA OF FOCUS: TRAINING PROGRAMS

### **Priority 7: EDI Training Framework**

The development of a dynamic five-year Training Framework is essential to ensure the delivery and understanding of the following core competencies: systemic inequities, equity, diversity, inclusion, disabilities, anti-racism, inclusive language, having difficult conversations, intersectionality and much more. EDI training is essential to fully internalize EDI principles of practice for all HPS members.

### **Priority 8: Organizational – Wide Training**

By implementing and disseminating EDI training found in the EDI Framework, members across the organization will be empowered with the necessary, skills, knowledge and tools to respond and address EDI issues. HPS commits to continuing to measure members against the skills, knowledge and abilities they have gained. Such training facilitates the creation of spaces where unique perspectives are heard, while encouraging collaboration and innovation. It allows everyone to develop an inclusive mindset and actions.

### **Priority 9: Senior Leader Training**

Senior leader training is a priority because of the roles they hold across the organization and their capabilities to translate EDI learning into action and everyday practice. Senior leaders will help foster change by being equipped with the skills to identify systemic inequities within the units they are leading and work with the EDI Unit to begin to address them. By undergoing a cultural competence assessment each senior leader will have the skills needed to effectively work within our diverse environment.

#### **Priority 10: Supervisor Specific Training**

In order to support members across the organization, managers and supervisors will be provided with specific and tailored training to better equip them with the tools to identify the unique needs of employees with various intersectional identities and how to address these specific needs with appropriate supports.

## **4. AREA OF FOCUS: PEOPLE – ATTRACT AND RETAIN**

#### **Priority 11: Diversifying Our Workforce**

HPS is committed to regularly assessing demographic diversity, potential and existing barriers, and potential inequities preventing opportunities for typically underrepresented groups in order to support the diversification of HPS.

#### **Priority 12: Career Advancement and Promotion**

In advancing equitable practice in career advancement and promotion, HPS will review its promotion system and policies, work to minimize bias and communicate effectively with its membership to outline career progression paths. Perceptions in fairness in opportunity is considered a paramount priority.

#### **Priority 13: Recruitment and Hiring**

It is of the utmost importance that HPS be a workplace reflective of the communities it serves. As such, building pathways into communities for the purposes of recruitment is essential and achieving these linkages is a recruitment best practice. HPS equally commits to engaging a diverse hiring panel to mitigate bias and also train those in the hiring process to minimize bias.

#### **Priority 14: Mentorship Programs**

Establishing clear paths to promotion is essential to equitable practice in talent management practices. To facilitate this process mentorship programs and cross training opportunities are considered a key priority to advancing EDI.

These priorities require interdepartmental connectivity, as they are interdependent and will also be supported by corporate communications and data analytics<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>It is important to note that the Diversity Meter Survey goal was to examine diversity and inclusion from within the Service and as such, no questions relating to community were asked of our membership. A decision was thus made in late 2021 not to have a community engagement area of focus in this EDI strategy as there would be no evidence to support its advancement. However, the EDI Strategic Planning day took the opportunity to begin to examine what EDI-related community engagement programs and initiatives could be beneficial to the Service to improve relations with diverse communities. These are now being considered. In addition, within the EDI Strategic Plan areas of focus there are opportunities for community consultation.



# STRATEGIC CALLS TO ACTION

## FOUNDATION – DRIVE THE STRATEGY

Goal: To set the foundation for HPS’s first EDI strategy and begin embedding the vision into organizational culture, driven by leadership accountability and dedicated sustainable resources for strategic implementation.

#	Strategic Action	Timeframe
Leadership Accountability		
1	Engage in organizational EDI sharing by informing members of the 2021 CCDI Diversity Census and Inclusion Survey Results	Summer 2021 to January 2022
2	Establish EDI accountabilities for Senior Leaders	February 2021 - ongoing
3	Conduct a Cultural Competency Assessment of leaders	January to June 2023
EDI Governance		
4	Create an EDI Committee with leadership involvement to manage high-level decision making on EDI strategic implementation and for monitoring progress	May to September 2022
5	Establish Employee Resource Groups (known as Internal Support Networks (ISN) for under-represented groups in order to provide a safe space to discuss and share their challenges and provide feedback on areas improvement.	February 2021 to September 2022
Sustainability of Resources		
6	Provide dedicated resources to EDI implementation	May 2022 - ongoing
7	Build capacity by establishing a group of EDI Champions throughout HPS	Summer 2021 - ongoing

## POLICY COHESION

Goal: To review HPS policies from an EDI lens, bridging gaps, making relevant changes, informed by data and communicating processes to HPS membership.

#	Strategic Action	Timeframe
Analysis of Policies and Procedures		
8	Develop and implement an EDI Framework to review all policies and procedures with an EDI lens. The framework should include a system for periodic review of policies.	June to October 2022
9	Update the policy Equal Opportunity, Anti-Racism & Anti-Discrimination	May to October 2022





10	Generate a new Workplace Harassment, Discrimination and Violence Policy	February 2022
11	Periodically review the Work Accommodation, Family Status Accommodation and Remote Work Arrangement policies to determine if they comprehensively integrate accommodations and work flexibility supports.	January 2021 to December 2023
12	Based on strategic action #11 above, establish a standard approval process for family accommodation and work flexibility requests to ensure effective management of all requests.	November to December 2021
13	Review existing conflict resolution management system ensuring it has well-defined procedures and reporting hierarchies; make changes accordingly.	September 2022 to March 2023
Communication of EDI Processes		
14	Provide clear communication to members on the process for reporting harassment, discrimination, and related experiences.	September 2022 to June 2023
15	Provide clear communication to membership on the availability of accommodation and work flexibility supports.	September 2022 to June 2023
16	Consider preparing an annual report to all employees on harassment and discrimination with a high-level view of what kind and number of cases have been filed as well as their ultimate outcome in order to facilitate trust and transparency in the system.	January to June 2023
17	Consider establishing an anonymous helpline that allows employees to report on issues of harassment, discrimination and micro-aggressions.	September to December 2023
Data-Driven Diversity		
18	Develop a proposal to establish a system to collect data from all employees on availability and accessibility of physical and mental health supports and work-life flexibility supports.	June 2024 - ongoing
19	Develop a proposal to establish a system to collect data from typically underrepresented groups to understand issues of harassment, discrimination, and bias.	September to December 2023

## TRAINING PROGRAMS

Goal: To increase EDI awareness, develop knowledge, provide tools and grow key behavioural based skills.

#	Strategic Action	Timeframe
EDI Training Framework		
20	Develop and map out a five-year EDI training framework based	May to September 2022
Organizational - Wide Training		
21	Provide organization-wide training on workplace bias, harassment, discrimination and micro-aggressions.	September 2021 to September 2023
22	Provide training on systemic discrimination.	September 2021 to September 2023
23	Provide organization-wide training on EDI fundamentals and unconscious bias.	January 2021 to September 2022
24	Provide organization-wide training on the different forms of disabilities (including mental health) and available supports	September 2024 to September 2025
Senior Leader Training		
25	Provide leaders with training on EDI fundamentals in the workplace	January 2021 to September 2023
26	Provide leaders with training on systemic inequities in the workplace	September 2021 to September 2023
27	Based on Cultural Competency Assessment (found in Foundation - Drive Strategy, action #3), provide additional training to bridge any gaps in learning	September 2023 to December 2025
Supervisor Specific Training		
28	Provide training to all levels of management, and supervisory staff on supporting people with mental health related matters and disabilities.	April 2023 to June 2023

## PEOPLE – ATTRACT AND RETAIN

Goal: To advance equitable practice in recruitment, hiring processes, career path advancement and performance management systems.

#	Strategic Action	Timeframe
Diversifying Our Workforce		
29	Develop a proposal to establish a system and start to collect data on employee demographics to understand the diversity profile of HPS's workforce and regularly assess demographic diversity, potential and existing barriers and potential inequities for typically under-represented groups.	January 2021 to December 2024
30	Integrate EDI into people and performance management systems	January 2023 to December 2024

Career Advancement and Promotion		
31	Review the hiring and promotion system and related policies to identify and address gaps.	January 2023 to December 2024
32	Establish specific career paths with identified transparent objectives and processes for advancement to minimize bias	January 2023 to December 2024
33	Assess current advancement and development practices for bias; assess any channels that may serve as barriers for different demographic populations	January 2023 to December 2024
34	Establish clear communication plans outlining the details of career progression paths	January to February 2025
35	Provide bias and cultural competency training to those involved in promotion decisions.	January 2023 to December 2024
Recruitment and Hiring		
36	Establish pathways into community for the purposes of recruitment and partnership development	May 2022 - ongoing
37	Establish a hiring panel with individuals from diverse groups to mitigate underlying bias in the hiring process.	January to December 2023
38	Provide bias and cultural competency training to those involved in hiring decisions.	January 2023 to March 2023
Mentorship Programs		
39	Establish a mentoring program to assist individuals in receiving clear direction and guidance for career advancement within HPS.	January 2023 to December 2024
40	Offer cross training opportunities for individuals in receiving clear direction and guidance for career advancement within HPS	January 2023 to December 2024

### Evaluation of Strategic Plan

In ensuring a commitment to our EDI guiding principle of continuously improving, the Strategy will include metrics for progress in each year of the Strategy. Year five will include an overall evaluation in order to fully assess lessons learnt, best practices for moving forward, successes and areas where HPS needs to improve. This evaluation will help shape the basis on how and where the organization will continue in its next steps on its EDI journey in 2025. HPS recognizes that EDI related initiatives and work to embed it within the organization will always continue, even outside the scope of this first Strategy. HSP also recognizes that EDI requires adaptability and flexibility to both the internal and external environment and is committed to the aspiration of continuously adapting by having integrating by change management lens to this Plan.





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