

# WOODSTOCK POLICE SERVICE BOARD **DIVERSITY PLAN** —



2025 - 2027



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# TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Woodstock Police Service is situated on the traditional territories of the Indigenous Peoples and covered by the Upper Canada Treaties. The Woodstock Police Service Board (WPSB) acknowledges the history of the traditional territory on which the Service stands. We respect the longstanding relationships of the local Indigenous groups, the Haudenosaunee, Lanape, and Anishinaabek of this land and place in Southwestern Ontario. The WPSB recognizes the Indigenous communities in close proximity to the city of Woodstock: Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; Oneida Nation of the Thames; Munsee-Delaware Nation; Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation; and Six Nations of the Grand (which consists of Mohawk, Cayuga, Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida and Tuscarora Nations).



# KEY TERMS

**Accessibility:** A general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment and information) can be accessed, used and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population, by making things more usable and practical for everyone, including older people and families with small children. [1]

**Anti-racism:** An active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism, as well as the oppression and injustice racism causes.[2]

**Discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their race, religion, citizenship, family status, disability, sex, gender, gender identity or other personal characteristics (note: this is not a legal definition).[3]

**Diversity:** The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within an individual, group or organization. Diversity includes such factors as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, educational background and expertise.[4]



[1] "Appendix 1: Glossary of Human Rights Terms," Ontario Human Rights Commission, Accessed June 13, 2024, <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/teaching-human-rights-ontario-guide-ontario-schools/appendix-1-glossary-human-rights-terms>.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.



# KEY TERMS CONTIUED

**Equity:** Fairness, impartiality, even-handed. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals, and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life.[1]

**Inclusion:** Inclusive processes, policies, services, program and practices are accessible to and usable by as many people as possible, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, language, etc. An inclusive environment is open, safe, equitable and respectful. Everyone can enjoy a sense of trust, belonging and involvement, and everyone is encouraged to contribute and participate fully.[2]

**Indigenous:** Indigenous people identify as being descended from the Original Peoples of what is currently known as Canada. In this context, Indigenous peoples include people who may identify as First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and/or Inuit and any related identities.[3]



[1] "Appendix 1: Glossary of Human Rights Terms," Ontario Human Rights Commission, Accessed June 13, 2024, <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/teaching-human-rights-ontario-guide-ontario-schools/appendix-1-glossary-human-rights-terms>.

[2] "Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism," Government of Ontario, Accessed June 13, 2024, <https://www.ontario.ca/document/data-standards-identification-and-monitoring-systemic-racism/glossary>.

[3] Ibid.

# 2022 EMPLOYEE CENSUS

In January 2022, the Woodstock Police Service conducted an employee census. The census was a voluntary, anonymous survey that asked questions about gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation. The purpose of the employee census was to gather information on the demographic profile of our current members. The results from this census provided a necessary baseline required to measure progress in this area and to facilitate future demographic comparisons. The employee census will be conducted every five years.

There was a 66% response rate to the 2022 census of the total 119 sworn and civilian members, as well as cadets, deployed at the time that the census was taken.

## CENSUS HIGHLIGHTS:

- **37%** of sworn members, civilian members, and cadets identified as female.
- **9%** identified as members of racial minority groups.
- **47%** reported a religious affiliation with Christianity, **46%** reported no religious affiliation, and **9%** identified with other religions.
- **93%** identified as heterosexual, while **7%** identified with another sexual orientation.
- The **top seven languages spoken** were English, French, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, and Vietnamese.

# STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Woodstock Police Service Board is committed to fostering a police service that reflects the rich diversity of the community we serve. We believe that a diverse and inclusive police force is essential for building trust, promoting public safety, and upholding the principles of justice and equality for all.

We recognize that our community encompasses individuals from various racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, socioeconomic, gender, sexual orientation, and age backgrounds. It is our fundamental belief that our police service must mirror this diversity to adequately and effectively understand, connect with, and serve every member of our community.

To uphold this principle, we are dedicated to implementing and upholding the following core principles:



- 1. Equitable Representation**
- 2. Inclusive Practices**
- 3. Community Engagement**
- 4. Accountability and Transparency**
- 5. Continuous Improvement**

In upholding these principles, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within our police service and beyond. By embracing the richness of our community's diversity, we strengthen our ability to fulfill our mission of serving and protecting all residents with fairness, compassion and integrity.



# EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION

The Woodstock Police Service Board is committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce that reflects the demographics of the community we serve. We will actively seek out candidates from underrepresented groups and create pathways for their inclusion and advancement within our organization.

The Board will make efforts to gather demographic data about the community that we serve including information on race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, and other relevant diversity metrics. The Board will also analyze the aforementioned data to identify areas where the police service may be lacking in diversity representation compared to the community it serves.



# INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

The Woodstock Police Service Board will foster a culture of inclusivity and respect within our police service, where every member is valued for their unique perspectives and experiences. Discrimination, harassment, and bias will not be tolerated in any form, and we will ensure ongoing training and education to promote cultural competency and understanding among our staff.

We will implement recruitment strategies that target underrepresented groups in law enforcement, including minorities, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, and people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

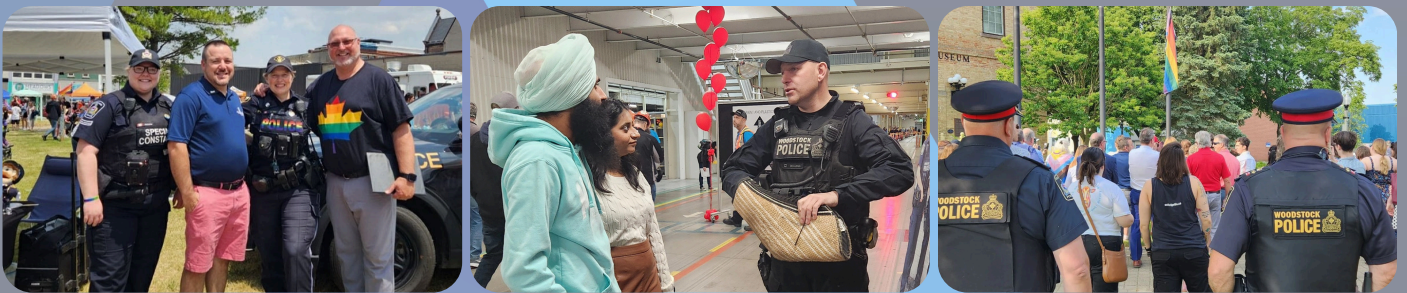
We will review and provide feedback to the Service regarding job descriptions and qualifications to remove any unnecessary barriers to entry for diverse candidates.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Woodstock Police Service Board will actively engage with all segments of our community to build trust, enhance transparency, and foster collaborative relationships. We recognize the importance of listening to the concerns and priorities of marginalized and vulnerable populations and will work to address their needs through inclusive policing strategies. By participating in local events and collaborating with community organizations, we aim to ensure that our approach to policing is reflective of and responsive to the diverse voices within the community. Additionally, we will prioritize training for our officers on cultural competency and implicit bias to better serve all residents.





# ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

The Woodstock Police Service Board will hold itself accountable to the principles of diversity and inclusion by regularly monitoring our progress towards diversity goals, assessing outcomes, and making adjustments as needed. We will provide transparent reporting on our diversity initiatives and outcomes to ensure accountability to the public we serve. This includes sharing updates through public reports and engaging with community stakeholders to ensure our efforts remain meaningful and effective.



# CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS

The Woodstock Police Service Board is committed to ongoing learning and improvement in our diversity and inclusion efforts. We will solicit feedback from stakeholders, evaluate best practices, and adapt our policies and practices to better meet the evolving needs of our diverse community and to identify and eliminate any barriers to diversity and inclusion. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, we aim to create a more inclusive and equitable environment, ensuring that our service evolves in tandem with the changing dynamics of our community.

