



NAMI LORAIN COUNTY'S STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At NAMI Lorain County, we believe a diverse, inclusive and equitable organization is one where all employees, volunteers and members — regardless of gender, race, gender identity, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, education, physical, mental, or cognitive ability; veteran status or other dimension of diversity — feel valued and respected. We are committed to providing informed, authentic leadership for cultural equity and to modeling diversity and inclusion for NAMI Lorain County.

NAMI Lorain County defines diversity, equity, and inclusion as follows:

Diversity: Diversity is representation of our varied identities and differences including, but not limited to: race, gender and gender identity, age; physical, mental, or cognitive ability; sexual orientation, national origin, socio-economic status, marital status, religion, and veteran status.

Equity: We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all community members to access, or be employed by, our organization free of discrimination. This includes an expectation that all individuals will be treated with dignity and respect and will have equal opportunities to flourish as the result of equivalent access to information, resources, and programming.

Inclusion: We are committed to ensuring that NAMI Lorain County is an organization that engages with diversity in ways that encourage inclusive interaction: where differences are welcomed, and individuals feel a sense of belonging. All individuals and groups interacting with or employed by NAMI Lorain County should feel valued, respected, and able to collaborate or participate in services, programming, or employment free of barriers, intolerance, or discrimination.

We shall:

- See diversity, inclusion and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our staff and the NAMI Lorain County members we serve.
- Identify and dismantle inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services and continually update and report organizational progress.
- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness.
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work and how to address them in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Practice and encourage transparent communication.
- Lead with respect and tolerance. We expect all leaders and employees to embrace this notion and to express it in workplace interactions and through everyday practice. We are committed to a non-discriminatory approach and to providing equal opportunity for employment, participation and advancement in all programs and worksites.

VISION

As an organization, we are making new investments and commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion. Through our work, we will:

- Model diversity and inclusion for the community we serve.
- Establish processes and policies that enable diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Create and maintain a positive work environment that reflects our commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Encourage participation by all staff and members so that all voices are heard and valued.
- Live up to our stated and aspirational organizational values.
- Leverage DEI to achieve our mission. We will lead by example and help set goals and expectations that influence workplace interactions, everyday practice and long-term outcomes for NAMI Lorain County.

OUR APPROACH

In partnership with the Executive Director, Executive leaders, the Board, and the Staff, we are designing a strategic, comprehensive and systematic approach to cultural transformation.

Our efforts include:

- Building a solid foundation and an organizational structure that supports DEI.
- Defining diversity, equity and inclusion for our organization and using our shared language to advance our understanding.
- Assessing current status and planning for a desired future.
- Enabling training and development that enhances our capacity to interact effectively with colleagues and members of our surrounding communities.
- Investing in and designing activities that advance DEI.
- Launching and prioritizing targeted efforts and initiatives that support DEI.
- Ensuring periodic updates and reporting our progress.

NAMI LORAIN COUNTY'S POLICY ON DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

NAMI Lorain County shall actively recruit, engage and serve members from every race, culture, ethnicity, age, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and physical, mental, or cognitive ability; and shall not discriminate in the requirements for membership, provision of service or support or in its policies or actions.

The NAMI Lorain County Board of Directors will regularly review their own composition and membership demographics compared to those of the country using national census data, in order to aspire towards reflecting that composition. In keeping with NAMI Lorain County's values regarding non-discrimination and with applicable federal law, NAMI Lorain County shall include in bylaws, operating policies and procedures, and other relevant policy documents, explicit statements that require the organization to embrace the broadest possible definition of inclusion and nondiscrimination.

NAMI Lorain County shall collect a baseline of members' voluntarily supplied demographic information. Systems shall be put in place to protect the confidentiality of this information; demographic information will only be reported in the aggregate.

NAMI Lorain County will reach out to and welcome the community at large through our recruitment, marketing, public education and awareness activities. NAMI Lorain County will strive to support recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive membership and leadership.

Whenever there is a demand and the interests of members can best be served by support through groups sharing some affinity, including, but not limited to, lived experience or primary language, NAMI Lorain County shall move beyond its baseline.