

# Cultural Competency

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**Everyone deserves a  
suitable, affordable home!**

**[www.flhousing.org](http://www.flhousing.org)**

# Goals for Today



Learn what cultural competency is



Come away with one practice you can integrate immediately

**We are serving the most vulnerable,  
therefore we must provide quality,  
culturally competent services.**

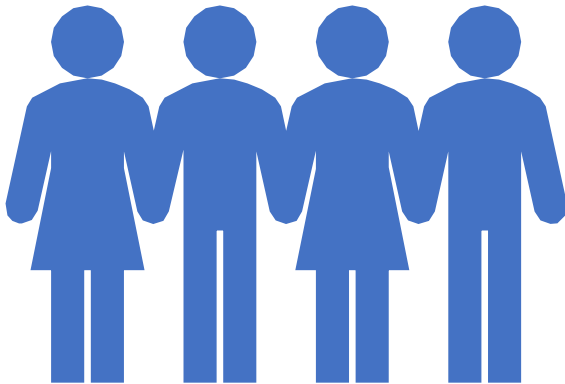


# Definition

...the process by which individuals and systems **respond respectfully** and **effectively** to people of all cultures, language, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, **affirms, and values** the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and **preserves** the dignity of each.



# SAMHSA's Definition



- The ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, helps to ensure the needs of all community members are addressed.
- “Culture” can also refer to such characteristics as age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, income level, education, geographical location, or profession.



# Levels of Cultural Competence

Destructiveness

Incapacity

Blindness

Pre-  
Competence

Competence

Proficiency/  
Inclusion

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# **Destructiveness**

**Attitudes, policies, and practices  
intentionally destructive to other cultures**

# **Incapacity**

**The lack of capacity of systems and organizations to respond effectively to the needs, interests, and preferences of culturally and linguistically diverse groups**

**ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY DISMANTLE  
SYSTEMIC RACISM**

**BY PRETENDING RACISM DOESN'T  
EXIST**

memegenerator

**Blindness**

A philosophy of viewing and treating  
all people as the same

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# **Pre-Competence**

**A level of awareness within systems or organizations of their strengths and areas for growth to respond effectively to culturally and linguistically diverse populations**

# Competence

Acceptance and respect for differences;  
expansion of knowledge; hiring a  
diverse and unbiased staff



Cultural  
Destructiveness



Cultural  
Incapacity



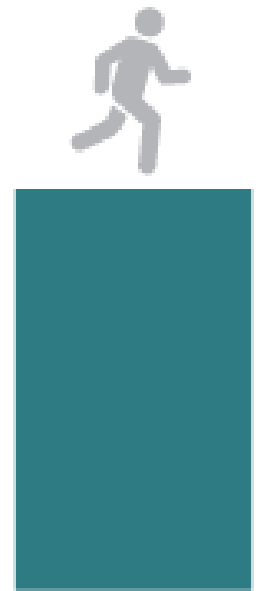
Cultural  
Blindness



Cultural  
Pre-competence



Cultural  
Competence



Cultural  
Proficiency

## Proficiency (Inclusion)

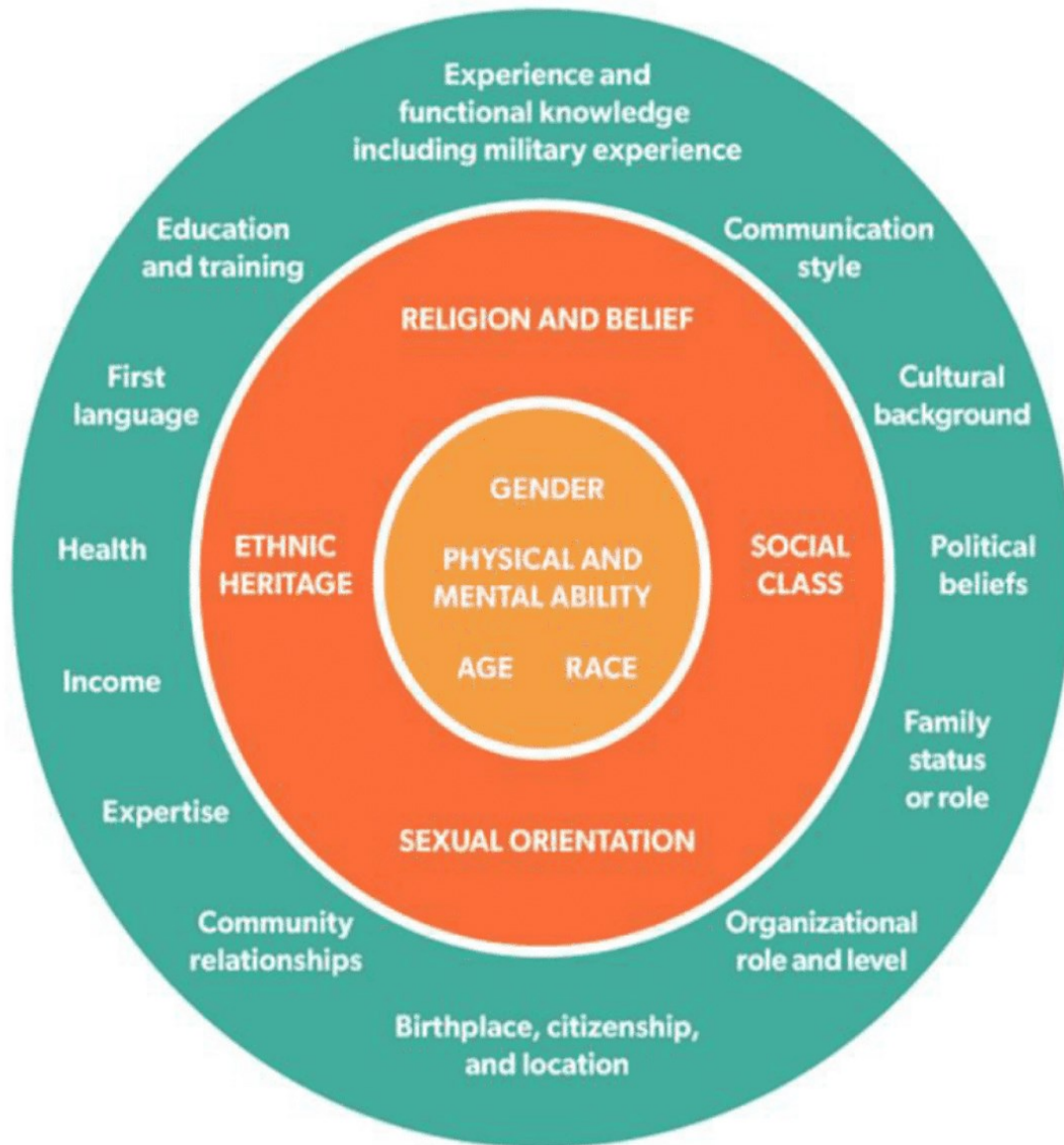
Actively seeking ways to include cultures other than one's own because there's an understanding of the value of diversity

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# VALUE DIVERSITY

## The Diversity Wheel



Typically **more visible**  
**core** diversity  
dimensions

Typically **less visible**  
**core** diversity  
dimensions

**Secondary**  
diversity dimensions



## **Our attitudes**

**Our attitudes towards our clients play an enormous role in how we see and treat them; and the lengths we will or will not go to advocate for them.**



# What are some cultural factors we need to be aware of?

(Ourselves and our clients)

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Race/ethnicity

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Religion

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Physical/mental ability

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Military Experience

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Gender Identity

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Sexual Orientation

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Trauma

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Systemic barriers

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Etc.

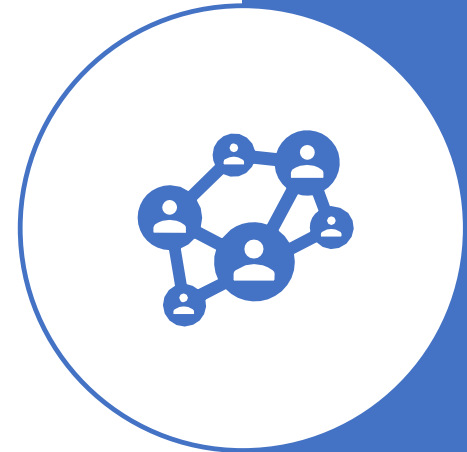
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# Privilege

Privilege operates on personal, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels and gives advantages, favors, and benefits to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of target groups.



# In the United States

**White**

**Able-bodied**

**Heterosexual**

**Males**

**Christian**

**Middle or  
upper class**

**English-  
speaking**

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**Most people in the U.S. believe that poor people are poor because of their own deficiencies rather than inequitable access to services and opportunities.**

Let's look at Racial  
Inequity



**African Americans make up 40 percent of the homeless population despite only representing 13 percent of the general population.**

**-National Alliance to End Homelessness**

# Why?

**The effects of long-standing discrimination linger and perpetuate disparities in poverty, housing, criminal justice, and health care, among other areas.**

The background of the slide features several thin, curved lines in the top-left and bottom-right corners. These lines are a mix of solid and dashed styles, creating a modern, abstract design.

## Poverty (NAEH)

**Deep poverty is a strong predictor of homelessness.**

**African Americans live in poverty at 2.5 times the rate of Whites.**





## **Rental Housing Discrimination (NAEH)**

**Black families are more likely to live in areas of concentrated poverty.**

**A HUD study found that people of color were often shown fewer rental units, offered higher rents, and denied more leases than Whites.**

A blue speech bubble with a tail pointing towards the bottom left, containing the word 'Incarceration' in white. The background features several thin, curved lines in black and grey, some solid and some dashed, creating a sense of motion or flow.

# Incarceration

- In 2014, African Americans constituted 2.3 million, or 34%, of the total 6.8 million correctional population.
- African Americans are incarcerated at more than 5 times the rate of whites.
- The imprisonment rate for African American women is twice that of white women.
- Though African Americans and Hispanics make up approximately 32% of the US population, they comprised 56% of all incarcerated people in 2015.

-NAACP

The background features several sets of concentric, curved lines in the top-left and bottom-right corners. These lines are a mix of solid and dashed black lines, creating a sense of motion or orbits. A large blue square is positioned on the left side of the page, containing the text 'Racial Equity'.

# Racial Equity

**Equity is the outcome when race will no longer be a predictor of health, education, income, etc.**

**In the United States lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are **120%** more likely to experience homelessness than their non-LGBTQ peers**

**Up to 40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ**

- 97% of women experiencing homelessness with a mental illness are victims of trauma ***while they are experiencing homelessness***
- Trauma is a strong indicator of how long housing stability will take

# Signs of Trauma Responses - Behavioral

- Blowing up when being corrected
- Fighting when criticized or teased
- Resisting transitions or change
- Very protective of personal space
- Reckless or self-destructive behavior
- Frequently seeking attention
- Reverting to younger behaviors

## Signs of Trauma Responses – Emotional/ Physical

- Nightmares or sleeping problems
- Sensitive to noise or to being touched
- Fear of being separated from family
- Difficulty trusting others
- Feeling very sad, angry, afraid; emotional swings
- Unexplained medical problems



What can  
you do?





# Step 1: Being an Ally



**Educate oneself about oppression;**



**Learn from and listen to people who are targets of oppression;**



**Examine and challenge one's own prejudices, stereotypes, and assumptions;**



**Work through feelings of guilt, shame, and defensiveness to understand what is beneath them and what needs to be healed;**



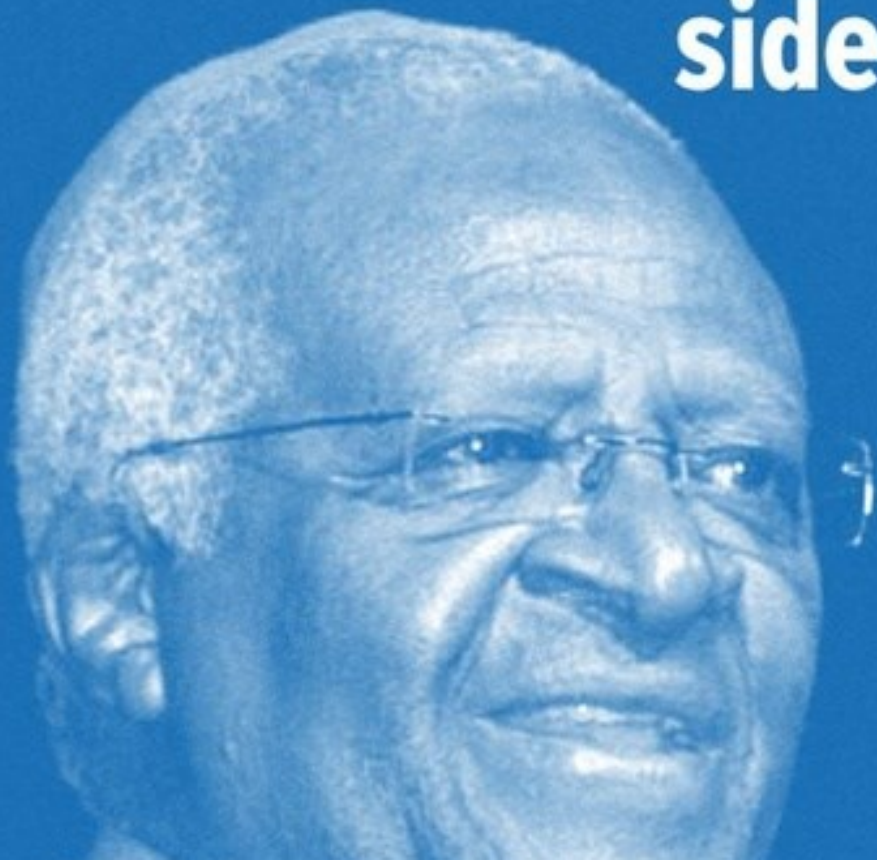
**Learn and practice the skills of challenging oppressive remarks, behaviors, policies, and institutional structures;**



**Act collaboratively with members of the target group to dismantle oppression.**

**“If you are neutral  
in situations of injustice,  
you have chosen the  
side of the oppressor.”**

***—Desmond Tutu***





# Cultural Humility

To practice cultural humility is to maintain a willingness to suspend what you know, or what you think you know, about a person based on generalizations about their culture.



# Three Dimensions of Cultural Humility

- 1) Lifelong learning & critical self-reflection
- 2) Recognizing and challenging power imbalances for respectful partnerships
- 3) Institutional accountability



# Promote in the Workplace



Take a “not knowing” stance



Look at the data on the people  
you serve



Be an ally



Look at policies that may be  
discriminatory



Look at hiring practices

# PRO TIPS

✓ Be open and willing



✓ Actively listen



✓ Educate yourself



✓ Get to know yourself



# Thank you!

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## PAST HOMELESSNESS TRAININGS

Below are the past Homelessness webinar trainings that you may have missed. Click the links below for the webinar recordings and/or PowerPoint presentations for any of the past trainings. For a list of future Florida Housing Coalition trainings, click the button below.

[TRAINING CALENDAR](#)