



Diversity and Inclusion Guide to Terminology

“Language is power, life and the instrument of culture, the instrument of domination and liberation.” – Angela Carter

The use of inclusive language helps further our social and cultural diversity in our communities. By using inclusive language, our neighbours feel welcome and part of something! The language we use can build strong communities or fracture them. The choice is ours!

This guide is meant to help people in Region of Queens further their knowledge of inclusive language. This list is not an exhaustive list of inclusive language, but one meant to be a starting point to make us more aware of the words we use.

A Few Guiding Principles

- *Use person-centered language*- Use words that respect and acknowledge an individual as a whole person who is an expert in their own life, health, and needs. This means focusing on the person, not their disability, condition, or diagnosis.
- *In-Group vs. Out-Group Language*- Remember and respect that people who belong to a group 'in-group' may use words that are not appropriate for those who do not belong to a group 'out-group'. For example, a group may have reclaimed a once-derogatory term for their own use. That same term, may be deeply offensive when used by someone outside of that group.
- *Anticipate Diversity*- When speaking, writing, or communicating in any way, plan for the most diverse group of people possible and prepare your communication accordingly.
- *Descriptors* – Avoid describing a person by their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or age, unless the descriptor plays a relevant part in the story.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

General Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

Ally – An individual who is not necessarily a member of a particular group, but supports that group's human rights and promotes equality and inclusion in various ways.

Barrier – A physical or societal structure, design, practice that stops a person from accessing a service or community life.

Bias – A preference for or against something or someone. Can be conscious or unconscious (implicit bias).

Cultural Appropriation – The unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption (by a member of a dominant group) of cultural elements (of a non-dominant group) for one's own use, commodification, or profit; usually without respect for its original culture value. Examples of this include the use of symbols, art, language, and customs. For example, using another's cultural symbols as part of a Halloween costume, like Indigenous headdress, turbans or hijabs; or the mass production of art by large companies rather than artists themselves, like dream catchers.

Discrimination – The denial of equitable treatment, rights, and opportunities of an individual or group based on their differences from the dominant group. This could include differences in race, nationality, sexual orientation, mental and physical ability, religion, beliefs, age, etc.

Diversity – Any identifying factor that can be used to show the differences in groups and people. This includes psychological, physical, and social differences. A diverse group, community, or organization contains a variety of people with differing social and cultural traits.

Dominant Group – This is the groups in a society with the most power, privilege, and social status. Attributes of this group are accepted as the 'norm' by which other groups are measured or compared. This may not necessarily be the group with the most people (majority group).

Equity – Fair treatment of all people that accounts for individual, specific needs, barriers, and accommodations to ensure that all involved have equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of society and benefit from them.

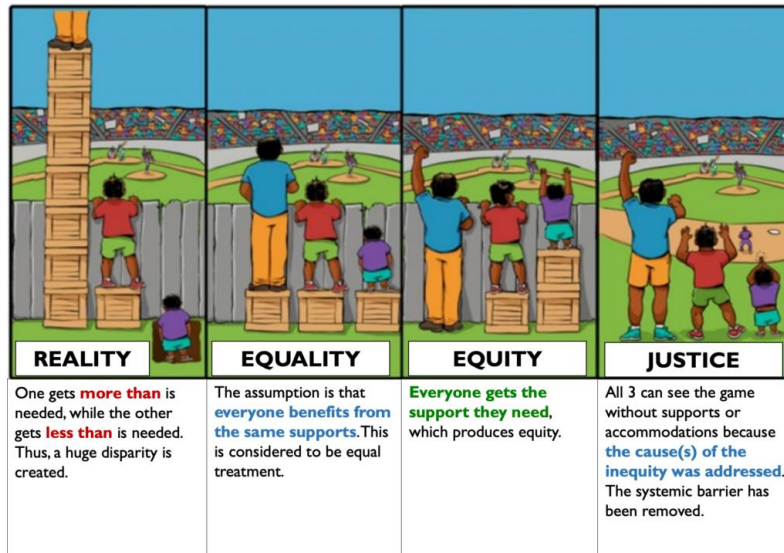
Equity acknowledges that there are historically underrepresented/underserved/marginalized populations and that fairness within these unbalanced conditions is needed.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

The photo below shows the difference between reality, equality, equity, and justice. Equity operates within the systemic and social barriers in place to ensure that regardless of those barriers, all people have what they need.



Inclusion – The act of creating a culture and environment where any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive environment embraces differences and see them as strengths and offers respect for all people.

Institutional Change – A planned approach to develop and implement inclusive policies, programs, and practices adapted to the needs of a diverse and evolving society.

Intent vs. Impact – Intent is what a person meant to do and impact is the effect it has on somebody else. Regardless of intent, it is necessary to recognize how behaviours, language, actions, etc. affect or influence other people. This is an integral part of creating inclusive environments.

Intergenerational Trauma – The passing down of the negative impacts of historical oppression and its consequences from one generation to the next.

Intersectionality – The connections between our individual identities and how oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, xenophobia etc.) are interconnected and shape individual lives and different experiences of discrimination.

Microaggression - A comment or action that subtly expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.

-phobia – A word ending to indicate fear or hatred of a group. Common examples include

- Islamophobia – Fear or hatred of Muslim people
- Homophobia – Fear or hatred of homosexual people
- Biphobia – Fear or hatred of bisexual people
- Transphobia – Fear or hatred of transgender people

Privilege – Unearned power that gives certain groups or individuals economic, social and political advantages; the unequal distribution of and access to resources, benefits, and status.

Underrepresented/Underserved/Marginalized – Individuals or groups that have been historically or currently are inadequately or insufficiently represented, under-resourced, and/or oppressed due to structural and/or social barriers.

Systemic – Relates to the use of policies, procedures, laws, and directives particularly in a workplace, government, educational institutions, social networks, or any organized institution. For example, systemic barriers, systemic discrimination, systemic racism, etc. all identify that the form of discrimination is an embedded part of the organization.

Ability/Disability

The Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability outline several general principles for The Language of Disability. People-centred language is an important principle here. Instead of using the term 'disabled person', use 'person with a disability'. It shifts the focus to the person and not the disability.

Other things to be aware are of your use of using certain expressions in certain expressions. For example, it is common to say "It's so nice to see you" or "I haven't heard from you in a while" may not be the best choice of expressions in certain circumstances.

Also, use of disability based expressions should be avoided. Common phrases to reconsider are "Are you blind?!" and "Are you deaf?!" Using these expressions, especially with children show a negative association with blindness and deafness.

Ableism – The bias that persons with disabilities are less valuable than others, thus are less worthy of respect and consideration and less able to contribute and participate. Like other forms of bias, ableism can be conscious or unconscious, personal or systemic. Ableism can create significant barriers to opportunities to persons with disabilities and reduces their inclusion in community life.

Accessibility – Ensuring that people with disabilities are able to participate without any barriers, whether it be a physical environment, transportation, reading material, and/or communication technology.

Accommodation/Duty to Accommodate – Making changes to certain rules, standards, policies, workplace cultures, and physical environments to ensure that they do not have a negative effect on a person because of the person's circumstance. Duty to Accommodate is a requirement of the Nova Scotia Human Right's Commission, which outlines a number of protected grounds.

Disability – Any degree of physical or mental impairment as defined and consistent with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.

A natural or acquired characteristic that may prevent someone from fully taking part activities due to societal barriers.

Disability includes physical, intellectual, and learning disabilities, mental health conditions, hearing or vision impairments, drug or alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities and other conditions that can cause any degree of impairment, regardless of cause or duration.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

Universal Design – The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possibly by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. An environment should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it.

Universal Design has 7 principles

1. **Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
2. **Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Use of the design is easy to understand regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
4. **Perceptible Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user regardless of ambient conditions or user's sensory abilities.
5. **Tolerance for Error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. **Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture or mobility.

Indigenous Peoples

The following list includes Mi'kmaw terminology. Appropriate terminology may change from Nation to Nation. The following list was taken from the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia and Unama'ki College resource on Decolonization Learning Journey.

Aboriginal: a legal term defined in the Canadian Constitution. Section 35(2) of the *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982* defines Aboriginal peoples of Canada as Indian, Inuit, and Métis. All Aboriginal peoples are Indigenous, but all Indigenous peoples are not Aboriginal.

Colonization: the process of settling or establishing control over Indigenous peoples. This process can take the form of early contact and settlement but can also take the form of modern policies and legislation that continues to impose control and regulate the lives of Indigenous peoples.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada: the federal government department responsible for policies pertaining to Indigenous peoples in Canada (formerly known as Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada)

Elder: an influential community member and knowledge holder who is recognized and respected for their teachings, values, and principles.

Elected chief: a chief whose authority to lead comes from an election process under the *Indian Act* system. Elected chiefs and councilors represent their communities and are accountable to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

First Nation: First Nation people are the Aboriginal peoples of Canada who are located south of the Arctic. Individual nations also have terms for themselves as Indigenous people, for example, the Mi'kmaq use the term "L'nuk" or "L'nu."

Hereditary chief: a chief whose authority and title has been passed down through generations or through traditional selection processes. Chiefs on the Mi'kmaq Grand Council are hereditary chiefs.

Indian Act: the principal statute for governing First Nations in Canada. The *Act* does not apply to Inuit or Métis people and communities. The *Indian Act* allows the federal government to administer status, governments, land and money.

Indian: a term not commonly used in modern day Canada. It has largely been replaced by First Nation. The legal definition of Indian as outlined in the *Indian*

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

Act of 1876 is still used in issues pertaining to the law. It is still used to describe Indian status

Indigenous: an inclusive term which is becoming increasingly popular for those who see themselves as Indigenous. It means “of the land” and it not imposed by law or the Government of Canada.

Inuit: a distinct group of Aboriginal Canadians who are neither First Nations, or Métis. In Inuktitut, Inuit means “the People.” Historically the term Eskimo was used to describe the Indigenous peoples of Alaska, Canada, and Greenland; however, Eskimo is seen as demeaning and unacceptable, and has fallen out of use when referring to Arctic and subarctic peoples.

L’nu: or L’nuk, is the term the Mi’kmaq use to describe themselves as Indigenous people. It means “the people.”

Land code: the development and successful implementation of a land code allows a First Nation community can remove themselves the provisions of the *Indian Act* and develop their own laws

Métis: the descendants of Indigenous and European settlers who formed mixed communities around the fur trade. The Métis are recognized as Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The term Métis is viewed differently across the country and its use can be complex and contentious

Mi’kma’ki: the land or territory of the Mi’kmaq. It includes the Atlantic Provinces, some of Maine, and the Gaspé region of Quebec.

Mi’kmaq: an Algonquian Indigenous nation who occupy the territory of Mi’kma’ki (Atlantic Canada and the Gaspé peninsula). This spelling indicates reference to the collective or the plural form. It roughly translates to “family” or “relations.”

Mi’kmaw: the singular form of Mi’kmaq. This spelling can also be used as an adjective where it

precedes a noun (Mi’kmaw people, Mi’kmaw rights).

Reconciliation: the restoration of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada through the establishment and maintenance of mutually respectful relationships.

Reserve: a portion of land owned by the Canadian government that has been set aside for First Nation peoples.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

Self-governance: allows Indigenous nations to build their governance capacity and institutions, and take increased control over law-making authority.

Taxation: the tax system in Canada collects taxes from citizens to support services for all Canadians and to redistribute wealth. More than half of the Indigenous people living in Canada pay tax. Inuit, Métis, non-status Indians, and status Indians who move off reserve, are not exempt from paying tax in Canada.

Treaty: agreements made between two, or possibly even several Nations or governments. Treaties are meant to govern the relationship between parties. Another name for a treaty may be an agreement or covenant.

Two-Eyed Seeing: seeing with a traditional (or Indigenous) eye, while acknowledging and seeing with a “western” eye.

Unama’ki: the Mi’kmaw word for Cape Breton Island. It loosely translates to “Land of Fog.”

Age, Class, Size

Ageism – Prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age. Ageism is generally based in two forms

1. A socially constructed way of thinking about people based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about age/generation.
2. A tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, or those participating/contributing to society are young.

Classism – A set of values, beliefs, and practices that assign value to people according to their socioeconomic status resulting in bias, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination.

Sizeism/Size Discrimination – Discrimination based on a person's size. Sizeism tends to be applied to discrimination based on weight or height. A common form of sizeism is fat shaming, overt stereotyping, and industrial sizeism like clothing size availability.

Socioeconomic Status – The social standing or class of an individual or group. Socioeconomic status is often measured based on a combination of education, income, and occupation.

Faith and Religion

Antisemitism – Discrimination, hostility, or hatred directed toward Jewish people.

Religious Discrimination/Faithism– Treating a person or group differently because of their particular religion or belief system.

Islamophobia – Discrimination, hostility, or hatred directed toward Muslim people.

Religious Accommodation – Any adjustment to a workplace that allows a person or group to practice their religion or belief system. This could include infrastructure changed (prayer rooms), adjusted work schedules, etc.

Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

The following list of terms is not an exhaustive list of all 2SLGBTQ+ terminology. This list was modeled, and expanded upon the Harvard University Medical School 2SLGBTQ+ Foundational Concepts document.

2SLGBTQ+ - An acronym used to refer to non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender individuals, topics, and communities. The letters stand for

- 2S – Two-Spirit
- L – Lesbian
- G – Gay
- B – Bisexual
- T – Transgender
- Q – Queer

Androgynous – Describes the gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity.

Asexual – Describes an individual with no desire or interest in being sexually active, though may still experience attraction in other ways.

Bisexual – A person who is emotionally, physically, spiritually, and/or sexually attracted to members of one or more gender.

Cisgender – An individual who identifies with their sex and gender assigned at birth. For example, a cisgender woman is a person assigned female at birth who identifies as a woman.

Feminism – Theory and practice that advocates for educational and occupational equity between men and women.

Fluidity – The flexibility in regard to the gender identification or sexual attraction of a person. For example, being gender fluid means that one does not have a set gender or set place on the gender spectrum.

Gay – Refers to an individual who is emotionally, sexually, and/or romantically attracted to members of the same gender.

Gender – the socially constructed ideas about behaviour, actions, and roles of a particular sex.

Gender Binary – The viewpoint that gender consists of only two gender identities, male/female.

Gender Conforming – A gender identity that is consistent with what is culturally associated with a person's sex assigned at birth.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

Gender Dysphoria – The clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one they identify with.

Gender Expression – The external appearance of one's gender identity. This is usually done through behaviour, clothing, haircut, and voice.

Gender Identity – One's concept of self as man, woman, blend of both, as two-spirit, or neither. One's gender identity may not be the same as one's assigned sex.

Gender Transition – The process of changing one's gender expression and/or sex characteristics to align with one's gender identity.

Heterosexism – The assumption that all people are, or should be, heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior or preferable. Heterosexism is often used in less overt or unrecognized acts of discrimination toward 2SLGBTQ+ people

Homosexual – Individuals attracted to individuals of the same sex. This term is generally seen as outdated.

Intersex – A person born with unidentified or misidentified genitals.

Lesbian – A term for a woman who is physically, sexually, and/or emotionally attracted to another woman or female-gendered person.

Misgender – An attribute to a person, intentionally or not, that does not correctly reflect their gender identity.

Misogyny – The hatred, contempt for, or prejudice against women and girls.

Non-Binary – Any gender that falls outside of the binary system or man/woman.

Pronouns – Words that take place of a noun. In English, when referring to people, these pronouns are often associated with a person's gender → he/she, him/her, himself/herself, his/hers.

Assuming a person's pronouns based on their appearance can lead to errors and assumptions. Using the non-gendered they, them, their, themselves until learning one's preferred pronoun is a good practice.

Queer – Used to describe some people whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual. For those who may identify as queer, the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual may be perceived to be too limiting and/or contain cultural connotations the person does not identify with.

Sex – The classification of a person as male, female, or intersex based on their reproductive organs and functions. Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define being male or female.

Sexual Orientation – An individual's physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction.

Sex Reassignment Surgery – The medical procedure altering one's physical appearance to further reflect one's gender identity.

Transgender – An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transgender Man – A person whose gender identity is of a man and was assigned female at birth.

Transgender Woman – A person whose gender identity is of a woman and was assigned male at birth.

Two-Spirit – Refers to a North American Indigenous person who embodies both female and male spirits and whose gender identity, sexual orientation, or spiritual identity is not limited by male/female binary. The term is also used to reflect the complex Indigenous understanding of gender and sexuality and the history of sexual and gender diversity in Indigenous cultures.

Race, Ethnicity, and National Origin

Anti-Black Racism – Prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping, or discrimination that are directed at people of Black/African descent.

Anti-Racism – The active process of recognizing the existence of racism and actively seeking to identify and remove, prevent, and mitigate racially inequitable outcomes.

Anti-Racist Education – Education based in the idea that race and racial discrimination are embedded within the policies and practices of institutional structures. The goal is to educate people to understand the nature of these barriers and dismantle them.

BIPOC – An acronym which stands for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.

Ethnic Group – Refers to a group of people having a common heritage or ancestry, or a shared historical past, often with identifiable physical, cultural, linguistic, and/or religious characteristics.

Ethnicity – The wide variety of beliefs, behaviours, and traditions held in common by a group of people of a particular linguistic, historical, geographical, religious, and/or racial homogeneity.

Ethnocentrism – The tendency to view others using one's own group and customs as the standard for judgement, and the tendency to see one's group and customs are the best.

Eurocentrism – Assumes the supremacy of Western civilization, specifically Europe and Europeans, in the world culture. Eurocentrism centres history according to European and Western perceptions and experiences.

Race – Refers to a group of people of common ancestry, distinguished from others by physical characteristics.

Racial Bias – A predisposition, prejudice, or generalization about a group or people based on race.

Racial Disparity – The unequal outcomes in comparison of one racial group to another

Racial Disproportionality – The overrepresentation or underrepresentation of a racial group in a particular program or system, compared with their representation in the general population. A common example in Canada is the racial disproportionality of incarcerated Indigenous people.

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com

Racial Equity – The systemic fair treatment of all people resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. In contrast of equality where all are treated the same without regard for racial differences, racial equity is a process of meaningfully and actively engaging with BIPOC employees and communities regarding policies, directives, practices, and procedures.

Racial Profiling – Any action that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place or origin, rather than on reasonable suspicion to single out a person for greater scrutiny or different treatment.

Racialized – Often used similarly as the term “visible minority”. This term is more fluid and acknowledges that race is a social construction that can change over time and place. It can be applied to people who have racial meaning imposed to them as a group that negatively impacts their social, political, and economic life.

Racism – Any action by an individual or institution that treats people differently because of their race or ethnicity.

Visible Minority – A term defined in the *Employment Equity Act* as “persons other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” This term is widely used in human rights legislation. Preferred terms are racialized minority, or people of colour.

Xenophobia – Fear or hatred of strangers or of anything different to oneself.

Used Resources

2017—Inclusive Language Guide.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved May 31, 2021, from <https://observatori382866246.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/inclusive-language-guide-june-13-2017.pdf>

Active Living Alliance For Canadians With A Disability. (n.d.). Active Living Alliance For Canadians With A Disability. Retrieved May 31, 2021, from <https://ala.ca/>

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. (2020). Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Glossary of Terms. https://www.cacp.ca/equity-diversity-inclusion.html?asst_id=2254

CRRF Glossary of Terms. (n.d.). Retrieved May 31, 2021, from <https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/resources/glossary-a-terms-en-gb-1>

DC Fiscal Policy Institute. (2017). DCFPI Style Guide for Inclusive Language. https://www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com/sites/default/files/Using_Person_Centered_Language_Tip_Sheet.pdf

Defining LGBTQ. (n.d.). The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center. <https://gaycenter.org/about/lgbtq/>

Diversity Best Practices. (n.d.). Glossary of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Terms. https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2020/10/dei_glossary_of_inclusive_terms_updated_for_2020_1.pdf

Inclusive Language | Queen's University. (n.d.). <https://www.queensu.ca/styleguide/inclusivelanguage>

Resources for Integrated Care. (n.d.). Using Person-Centered Language. 7.

University of Calgary. (2017). Inclusive Language Guide. 17.

University of Missouri. (n.d.). The Language of Identity: Using inclusive terminology at Mizzou. <https://diversity.missouri.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/inclusive-language.pdf>

Using Person-Centered Language.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved May 31, 2021, from https://www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com/sites/default/files/Using_Person_Centered_Language_Tip_Sheet.pdf

Phone: 902-354-3455

Email: elevy@regionofqueens.com

Web: www.regionofqueens.com