

The Arc of Bristol County, Inc.  
**Cultural Competence and Diversity Plan**  
2025

**1. PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE OR STATEMENT ON INTENT:** It is the intent of The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility that its employees behave in a manner representative of their ethical and/or moral commitment to provide quality services to its recipients.

**2. POLICY:** To maintain a written Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan that describes how the linguistic and cultural needs of our recipients are met. It is our policy to effectively provide services to recipients of all cultures, age, races, gender, sexual orientation, socio economic status, languages, ethnic backgrounds, spiritual beliefs and religions in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms, and respects the worth of the individuals and protects and preserves the dignity of each person. The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility adheres to the equal employment opportunity policy and non-discrimination practices.

**3. PROCEDURE:** The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility policy is implemented by the following plan and practices:

- a. Recognize, value, affirm and respect the worth of each individual recipient and family and protect and preserve the dignity of each.
- b. Utilize appropriate resources to ensure linguistic needs of the recipient and family are met.
- c. Assess recipient and family acculturation to aid in matching families with appropriate community based resources and provide appropriate health and rehabilitation education.
- d. Utilize culture-specific information provided in training and/or employee orientation to assist in identifying and determining the cause of culture-based issues and miscommunication and to resolve them.
- e. The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility ensures non-discriminatory and respectful services to recipients and families by employing both internal and external cultural competency practices. Ongoing improvement and widespread dissemination of these efforts evidences The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility's commitment to the provision of culturally appropriate services and care. As a human services organization accommodates, facilitates, treats, and assists recipients with a wide variety of disabilities from mental and physical disabilities to those recipients with medical diagnosis and disorders.

## **Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan**

Cultural competence is an integral part of The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility. Those employed by The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility who are in direct contact with recipients and families will demonstrate the following:

- a. All employees, recipients, and families have access to The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan, as the essential plan elements are included in employee materials and on our website at [arcnbc.org](http://arcnbc.org). It is also available separately upon request;
- b. Acceptance and respect for differences;
- c. Careful attention to dynamics of difference;
- d. Continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources;
- e. Training is based upon the following learning techniques:
  - Assessment and awareness of personal biases, values and expectations
  - Content on general culture-specific attributes (family structures, person first language, language use for various groups, and recipients with a wide variety of physical and linguistic abilities).

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) maintains a database of a wide range of resources on cultural and linguistic competence (e.g. demographic information, policies, practices, articles, books, research initiatives and findings, curricula, multimedia materials and websites, etc.) The NCCC uses specific review criteria for the inclusion of these resources. As part of the NCCC's web-based technical assistance, a selection searchable bibliography of these resources is made available online.

## **Internal Cultural Competency and Diversity Practices**

- a. The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility seeks staff members that are committed to their community, represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, and can communicate in cross-cultural situations. Discrimination is not tolerated, and employees will conduct services in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms, and respects the worth of the individual and protects and preserves the dignity of each person.
- b. When necessary and requested, translation services to recipients will be provided. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, treatment plans, evaluation, or other documents shared with family. If a person supported needs interpretive services, The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility will utilize an employee who is fluent in said language or use a qualified translator/interpreter.
- c. The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility provides training that is comprehensive, behaviorally and theoretically based, and is provided at the time of new hire orientation and again annually. Characteristics of the training include:

- Employees are notified of their responsibilities pertaining to delivering culturally competent care and may obtain a copy of the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan on the website or by request.
- The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility will provide interpreter services to recipients and families as necessary when requested to ensure availability of effective communication regarding treatment, medical history, or health education. Interpreters are available when technical, medical, or treatment information is to be discussed or where use of a family member or friend as an interpreter is inappropriate.
- The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility utilizes and has informal relationships with a wide variety of traditional and nontraditional organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for recipients and families (e.g., Rainbow Alliance, NAACP, Human Rights Committee, International Institute, etc.)

*March 2025 statement: "The Arc of Bristol County d/b/a proAbility is committed to advocating for equality, social justice, and the unique needs of each individual. We are dedicated to fostering a workplace that is inclusive, accessible, supportive, and free from discrimination or prejudice. We actively recognize and celebrate the diverse experiences and perspectives of all.*

*We strive to continuously learn, grow, and implement positive change by listening, evolving our practices, expanding opportunity, and championing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our goal is to ensure that every employee and stakeholder feels heard, valued, and empowered to thrive in our community."*