



Our Inclusivity Philosophy

The Impetus and Process for the Creation of this Philosophy Statement

A Goal Group was created in September of 2015 by The RiverWoods Exeter Resident Council to look at how to better promote Inclusivity among all of our stakeholders: Residents, Staff, and Board. This group of residents and staff came to believe that “Inclusivity” better defines our challenges than “diversity” as it focuses on our common humanity rather than on our differences

The Inclusivity Goal Group met monthly (except July and August). Discussions were lively as the notion of Inclusivity is complex, complicated, multi-layered and timely. Many people interviewed through the informal research done by the Goal Group thought that RiverWoods is ideal the way it is, while others would like to see people of color, different sexual orientations, and more diverse cultures and backgrounds in our midst.

The Board of Trustees asked the Goal Group to draft a Philosophy of Inclusivity statement for the Board to consider adopting as a formal policy. This assignment was taken up by Howie Ulfelder (last year’s Goal Group Co-Chair), and John Merrifield and Nancy Winterbottom (this year’s Goal Group Co-Chairs). After many iterations, the draft was endorsed by the Goal Group, approved by the Resident Council in November of 2016, and presented to the Board of Trustees at its March of 2017 meeting. The Board asked that the draft be edited for clarity and consistency with our other philosophy statements.

The Inclusivity Goal Group has, or will, reach out to nearby institutions such as SNHU, UNH, Berwick Academy and PEA, has worked with the Education, Library, Music, Art, and other committees to explore how to provide programs and opportunities to learn about this subject, and hopes to sponsor the “Cultural Competence” curriculum endorsed by Leading Age for employees and residents who would like to participate, and is seeking approval from the Resident Council to become an ongoing Committee.



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Approved Unanimously by the RWE Board of Trustees on June 1, 2017

This Philosophy of Inclusivity statement is an elaboration that extends our moral obligation beyond that of the Charitable Intent Philosophy that was approved on June 2, 2016. Today's globalized world is a diverse community, and we are committed to finding ways of more fully mirroring that diversity within all our stakeholder groups—Residents, Staff, and Trustees.

Fulfilling our commitment to Inclusivity means meeting both legal requirements and the moral obligations that are rooted in our founding.

Our Legal Requirements

RiverWoods maintains a non-discriminatory policy consistent with state and federal laws which prohibit discrimination because of a person's race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age, disability or genetic information.

Our Moral Obligation

We define inclusivity as welcoming people of all faiths, races, sex, and cultures. "Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance." (Vernā Myers)

We are thoughtful and intentional in developing our community to welcome the broadest spectrum of people.

We mindfully and consistently cast the widest possible net to expand the pool of potential residents, employees and trustees.

We accept and expect this journey to be challenging and enriching.