

HOW TO:

**CREATE A
DIVERSITY,
EQUITY &
INCLUSION
STATEMENT**

**A FREE RESOURCE FOR
YOUR CLUB, PROGRAM &
LEAGUES**



**ONTARIO
Volleyball**

“ONTARIO VOLLEYBALL IS COMMITTED TO FOSTERING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE GAME. WE CELEBRATE EVERY RACE, AGE, DISABILITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND IN OUR PROVINCE, TO UNITE AS ONE COMMUNITY.

WE BELIEVE MEANINGFUL ACTION CAN POSITIVELY AFFECT IMPORTANT CHANGE IN OUR SPORT AND CARRY OVER INTO OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.”

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A MESSAGE FROM ONTARIO VOLLEYBALL

It is important for Ontario Volleyball (OVA) affiliates, programs and clubs to have diversity, equity and inclusion as essential parts of their values and culture. Bringing together varied life experiences and perspectives adds significant value to a community. Prioritizing DE&I will improve creativity, community and productivity. It will lead to a better global understanding and provide more dynamic insights. Creating and sharing a DEI statement or philosophy further establishes an organization's values and identity. This guide will help you develop your DEI statement, as it provides general information and steps to writing an impactful and practical statement. If you already have a DEI statement, you can use this guide to review and revise it, if necessary.



WHY HAVE A DEI STATEMENT?

- Share best practices throughout your, club, league or program
- Ensure volunteers, parents, staff and athletes are aware of the inclusion statement and the goals of the organization
- Send a welcoming message to families of all backgrounds
- Create an accountability standard for all coaches and leagues participants
- Make parents aware of inclusion as an important policy in your community • Create an outlet to better understand and appreciate individual differences

WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE IN YOUR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT?

If written with intention, DEI statements can and should serve a real purpose. There are three key elements found in effective statements: value, plausibility and accountability. In a few short sentences, you should publicly share your organization's promise and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. It is important that your statement be short, specific and relevant as possible so that readers can quickly commit it to memory and repeat it to others. A clear and concise DEI statement is a great way for coaches and volunteers to measure the quality of their work as leaders and hold themselves accountable. "Is what I'm doing inclusive of every participant and family despite race, sexual orientation, ability or talent level?" If yes— keep going, but if

not—it might be time to change. This is a simple decision to make when you are engaged and on board with a resourceful inclusion statement



HOW THE OVA DEFINES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess. These dimensions can include but are not limited to ethnicity, nationality, culture, ability, birth sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, immigration status, socioeconomic status, geographic region in which you live, and many other qualities. These different qualities and life experiences, among many others, contribute to diversity of thought and approach which can enhance innovation, creative problem solving, and service delivery.

Inclusion is about the collective. It is about creating an equitable environment and a culture that embraces, respects, accepts and values difference.

Equality is about fairness, equality of access, recognizing inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of our sport to ensure that it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is about capturing the uniqueness of the individual; and creating an environment that values and respects individuals for their talents, skills and abilities to the benefit of the collective.

EXAMPLES OF DEI STATEMENTS IN SPORT:

- “As a sport community, we share a commitment to ensuring a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment throughout our sport system. We believe that quality sport experiences are those where all individuals feel welcomed, accepted and respected.”
- Parasport Canada
- “Soccer is a sport that should lead the way against discrimination. We welcome any and all who want to play and it is our responsibility to ensure those values are reflected on and off the pitch”
- Ontario Soccer
- “We support any teammates, coach or fan who brings heart, energy and passion to the rink. We believe all hockey programs – from professionals to youth organizations – should provide a safe, positive and inclusive environment for players and families regardless of race, colour, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, disability, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.”
- The NHL



TIPS

Make it Short and Sweet

Remember, this is a statement, not an essay. Try to sum up your statement in two or three sentences. A concise inclusion statement is more memorable and effective. Less is more.

Make Sure You Test It

Share the DEI statement to your members and partners prior to making it public and ask for their feedback. Create and stick to a timeline to measure your effectiveness.

Make it Meaningful

Make sure to write policies and procedures to enforce your strategies to make it meaningful. You must follow up to your inclusion statement with action. This can't simply be just words. By doing this, coaches, parents, athletes and volunteers will be more invested in it because they helped form and uphold your league's policy.

Revisit it Often

It is common that a DEI statement is written and then forgotten about. Your statement should be an important representation of your organization/program's culture. Continuously placing focus on diversity, equity and inclusion is not always an easy process. It will take time and effort, but it is a significant component of any successful organization. These values should be woven into the fabric of the daily operations of your programs. Your organization should create and fully embrace a DEI philosophy. Make sure to share your statement and communicate it to all volunteers, staff, parents, players and supporters.



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