



Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow

1241 Crawford Drive Billings, MT 59102 • (406) 259-5181

120 South Kendrick Avenue • P.O. Box 1387 Glendive, MT 59330 • (406) 948-8500

<http://www.liftt.org>

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY (DIEA) STATEMENT

(Revised and approved by the Board of Directors on August 10, 2024)

Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT) is committed to advancing, building, developing, and supporting a diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible work environment, community, and society that offers equal opportunities and outcomes for all individuals.

Promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DIEA) is an ongoing process of identifying and removing barriers arising from bias, discrimination, racism, and structures that support such attitudes and actions. This commitment extends to individuals with the following characteristics:

- Ethnicity, race, and culture
- Sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression
- Age
- Differences in ability
- Immigration status, nationality, and national origin
- Education and socio-economic status
- Family structure
- Military and veteran status
- Religious and other beliefs
- Membership to local, state, and nationally recognized groups and organizations

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LIFTT is dedicated to:

Supporting team members' and consumers' individual and collective DIEA efforts—LIFTT offers regular training sessions on unconscious bias, cultural competence, and inclusive practices for all employees and volunteers.

Facilitating the exchange of diverse perspectives—LIFTT organizes monthly roundtable discussions where employees and community members can share their experiences and ideas on improving inclusion and accessibility.

Incorporating the value from the numerous views that diverse individuals bring to achieve inclusive excellence—Diverse teams are formed for project planning and implementation to ensure multiple perspectives are considered.

Implementing initiatives that support DIEA in the workplace, community, and society—LIFTT's mentorship program pairs experienced team members with new hires from underrepresented groups to support career development and retention.

Creating a learning environment that welcomes communication of diverse perspectives, experiences, and realities—LIFTT hosts an annual diversity fair where employees and community members can learn about different cultures and experiences through interactive exhibits and presentations.

Conducting outreach and engaging individuals representing marginalized groups—LIFTT partners with local community organizations to reach and support underrepresented populations, such as hosting information sessions at community centers and places of worship.

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Establishing inclusive and equitable practices in the workplace and community—LIFTT has implemented flexible work policies and accommodations for employees with disabilities to ensure everyone can contribute effectively.

Including marginalized individuals and groups in career development and recruiting new and future team members— LIFTT collaborates with universities and job training programs to recruit candidates from diverse backgrounds and offers internships to students from marginalized communities.

Encouraging team members to support diverse perspectives and ideas—LIFTT recognizes and rewards employees who champion DIEA initiatives and contribute to creating an inclusive environment.

Respecting individual cultural and identity-based differences, valuing and acknowledging unique skills and experiences—LIFTT celebrates various cultural holidays and encourages employees to share their traditions and stories.

Pursuing educational and experiential opportunities to develop DIEA— LIFTT provides scholarships for employees to attend conferences and workshops on diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility.

Advocating for DIEA practices in our recruiting, professional development programs, community activities, and systems change advocacy—LIFTT actively participates in local and national advocacy groups to promote policies that support diversity and inclusion in all areas of society.

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Raising awareness and knowledge among all stakeholders about the value of DIEA—LIFTT publishes a newsletter highlighting DIEA efforts, success stories, and upcoming events related to diversity and inclusion.

Definitions & concepts used in this statement:

Diversity—The practice or quality of including or involving people from different backgrounds and differences such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, country of origin, disability, cultural, political, religious, or other group affiliations.

Equity—Practices to prevent prejudice and discrimination against Black, Brown, Indigenous, and marginalized persons and communities, ensuring fair treatment, opportunities, and advancement for all.

Inclusion—Practices that do not exclude anyone and recognize diversity, engage, and facilitate awareness, knowledge, and understanding of how individuals relate to and engage in society.

Belonging—The human emotional need to be accepted by a group, such as family, friends, co-workers, or a community. Belonging is the process of building a foundation through DIEA practices that cultivate engagement and a sense of community among peers and colleagues.

Social Justice—The distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society. It involves treating all people fairly, respecting the rights of marginalized individuals, and distributing resources equitably. LIFTT works towards social justice through systemic change advocacy and collaboration with others to design and continually improve institutions as tools for personal and social development.

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Removal of Barriers:

To make DIEA a reality, LIFTT is committed to identifying and removing barriers that prevent the achievement of diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility. This includes:

Identifying and addressing systemic bias and discrimination in our policies and practices—Regularly reviewing and updating company policies to eliminate language and procedures that may inadvertently exclude or disadvantage certain groups.

Providing resources and support for individuals facing barriers to inclusion—Offering language translation services, assistive technologies, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Creating an open and safe environment for reporting and addressing issues related to discrimination and exclusion— Establishing a confidential reporting system and ensuring prompt, fair, and transparent investigation of all complaints.

Promoting awareness and education on the importance of DIEA among all employees and stakeholders—Conducting workshops, seminars, and training programs focused on DIEA topics and their relevance to LIFTT’s mission.

Engaging with the community to understand and address external barriers—Collaborating with local organizations to identify and address challenges marginalized communities face, such as access to transportation, healthcare, and education.

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Evaluating and measuring progress in DIEA efforts—Implementing metrics and regular assessments to track the effectiveness of DIEA initiatives and making necessary adjustments based on feedback and results.

[About Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow \(LIFTT\):](#)

LIFTT is a Montana 501(c)3 corporation organized as a Center for Independent Living (CIL). With team members based in Billings and Glendive, LIFTT provides people with disabilities with programs and services that help empower them to break down the physical, bureaucratic, and cultural barriers that prevent them from being fully independent participants in their lives and communities throughout 18 counties in southeastern and south-central Montana: Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Rosebud, Stillwater, Treasure, Wibaux, and Yellowstone.

For more information, please visit liftt.org or download our mobile app for your [Apple](#) or [Android](#) Device.

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