



Guide for Recruitment and Hiring Processes

There are several equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) hiring practices that can be implemented in the workplace to create well-functioning, safe workplaces where *all* workers can belong and thrive. This Guide for Recruitment and Hiring Processes has been developed to support Practice Groups to implement some of the EDI considerations when contracting midwives or hiring administrative staff. For the purposes of this guide, the term “hiring” will be used to describe the process as it applies to all employees or independent contractors. While this policy suite is intended to aid the EDI process, it is not a substitute for research, learning, accountability, and due diligence. Practice groups are encouraged to continually learn and adapt the policies herein to meet their community needs.

Whilst it is important to strive to diversify the workplace and to have a position statement that reflects the organization’s commitments to racial justice and EDI, it is equally, if not more important to have policies and procedures to prevent or mitigate systemic bias, racism and oppression which create unsafe work environments. It is imperative that workplaces apply an anti-racist and intersectional analysis to review the policies and procedures in place to identify systemic inequities and achieve equity and racial justice in the organization.

For support, contact the AOM’s [Health-Care Equity, Quality and Human Rights](#) department.

Definitions

“Anti-racism” refers to ‘a systematic method of analysis and a proactive course of action’. The approach recognizes the existence of racism, including systemic racism, and actively seeks to identify, reduce, and remove the racially inequitable outcomes and power imbalances between groups and the structures that sustain these inequities.

“Discrimination” involves the unequal treatment of individuals based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, or other Protected Grounds.

“Employer” means a person who employs one or more Workers or contracts for the services of one or more Workers.

“Racial justice” is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all... goes beyond ‘anti-racism’... [and is] the ‘presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures’.

“Protected Grounds” means any Protected Grounds as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code (“Code”) as may be amended from time to time, including race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability.



“Worker” refers to all Workers in a Workplace, including employees and independent contractors. This includes Partners, associates, supervised and mentored midwives, full-time, part-time, temporary, probationary, casual and contract Workers, volunteers, and students.

“Workplace” includes any setting where a Worker is working on behalf of the Practice Group. For greater clarity, this includes, but is not limited to, a client’s home, the midwifery clinic, other community settings, telephone, email, social media, etc.

Recruitment and Hiring Checklist

This checklist is intended to support midwifery Workplaces (hereafter referred to as “Practice Groups”) to engage in equitable recruitment and hiring processes. This hiring process has been broken down into four stages: drafting the job description and posting the position, reviewing the applications, interviewing and selecting candidates, and onboarding the new hire.

Job Description and Posting

- Provide an overview of the Practice Group’s commitments to anti-racism and equity work. Candidates with a passion to uphold such commitments will want to see how the Practice Group is moving beyond words and actioning anti-racism and equity.
- Incorporate principles of EDI into the roles, responsibilities and qualifications sections of the job description.
- Include a statement in the job posting regarding the Practice Group’s commitment to EDI in the recruitment and hiring process (see Appendix 1: EDI Statement).
- Use gender-inclusive language unless gendered language is necessary or most appropriate in that specific context.
- Avoid stating or implying the ideal candidate is a “native English speaker”. Midwives who speak English as a second language are just as equipped to provide quality midwifery care.
- Ensure the job posting is inclusive in practice, rather than simply claiming to prioritize inclusion. For example, does the posting invite people with diverse lived experiences to see themselves working and thriving in the Practice Group or does it emphasize a desire to have people with similar interests and hobbies apply? This requires reflection on what steps have been taken to ensure the work environment is indeed inclusive (see the AOM’s [Anti-Racism Self-Assessment Tool](#) and [Anti-Racism Practice Group Assessment Tool](#)).
- Advertise benefits such as parental leave, mental health programs and health insurance.



- Advertise job opportunities through diverse channels including, the AOM's Midwifery Memo, IBPOC-specific job boards (e.g., [Alliance for Healthier Communities](#), [Indigenous Link - Job Board](#) and [Community Outreach](#)), and alternate platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.

Review of Applications

- Use a standardized rubric to evaluate applications that include EDI to avoid implicit bias during initial screening of candidates.
- Avoid over-valuing or de-valuing unpaid experience. Consider both the privilege and the necessity associated with partaking in unpaid work.
- Avoid filtering out candidates based on the country in which they completed their midwifery training (e.g., Canadian midwifery education programs or international training programs) or where they obtained their midwifery work experience. Midwives who are registered with the College of Midwives of Ontario have the knowledge, skills and competencies to practice midwifery. Experience in other parts of the world is valuable when providing effective care, particularly to clients with diverse backgrounds.
- Avoid filtering out candidates based on past work not related to midwifery, but related to other birthwork or sexual and reproductive health as this can bring different perspectives and skills that can improve the quality of midwifery care.
- Ensure the people involved in the application review process have diverse perspectives by including IBPOC and equity-deserving groups on the hiring panel.

Interviews and Selection Process

Conducting effective interviews is an HR skill that requires time and thoughtful attention. Do your best to cultivate an interview atmosphere that allows for genuine and authentic flow of conversation. Interviews can be stressful enough, particularly for candidates and they may be even more stressful for individuals who feel stigmatized or stereotyped due to their race, gender identity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, etc. Consider the Practice Group's [human rights obligations](#) when planning the interview process.

- Communicate clearly to candidates about the process, schedule and expectations, including timeline for interviews, selection, call-backs, reference checks, job offers and when to expect any other follow-up.
- Ask candidates their gender pronouns.
- Ask questions about lived experiences of the candidate that relate to your EDI goals. In doing so, consider how lived experiences of the applicant can add value, particularly in the context



of working with clients who can relate more to a midwife with similar experiences and/or one that can provide respectful and culturally sensitive care (see Appendix 4 for sample EDI interview questions).

- Offer pathways for accommodating candidates during the interview (see Appendix 2 for examples of accommodations that may be used during the hiring process).
- Consider building time (e.g., 30 minutes) into the interview schedule to offer candidates an opportunity to review the interview questions prior to beginning the interview. This enables candidates to formulate a well thought out response and can be particularly helpful for candidates who are neuro-diverse or whose first language is not English. The interview questions do not need to be shared ahead of time; they can be provided on a sheet of paper if in-person, or posted in the chat box for virtual interviews, with a notice to keep questions confidential.
- Show compassion and patience, allow candidates to speak openly and do not interrupt when they are talking. However, interviewers can show appropriate emotion and engagement.
- When needed, repeat the question, or provide clarification to ensure the candidate understands the question.
- Do not make assumptions or ask candidates questions regarding their race, ethnicity or religious beliefs. If candidates mention it themselves in relation to their lived experience and cultural competency, listen and be empathetic.
- Be aware of your unconscious personal biases and avoid stereotyping candidates. For instance, do not make assumptions about a midwife's competency and ability to do their job because they are wearing a hijab or hearing aid.
- Mitigate biases during reference checks by asking focused questions relating to the specific criteria being assessed as opposed to requesting general reference letters. Some examples of this would be to ask questions such as, "Please describe a specific strength the candidate brought to your Workplace. How did they demonstrate compassionate care to clients? Can you describe an instance where a candidate demonstrated interprofessional collaboration?"
- Offer candidates an opportunity to speak with a current or former midwife of the Practice Group to get a sense of the Workplace culture for example. This might be helpful for candidates particularly if an offer is being made, to assist the candidate in determining if the Practice Group is a good fit.

Onboarding



- Develop an orientation booklet or checklist for new hires and ensure this resource is updated regularly.
- Ask the new hire their pronouns.
- Introduce the new hire to the team.
- Hold space for the new hire to share how they learn best and what they need to transition into their new role and the Workplace.
- Prepare your team for onboarding a new hire by explaining their role and responsibilities during onboarding, schedule changes, any hand-off processes etc.
- Assign the new hire a point person(s) to support on-boarding and respond to questions, and schedule regular check-ins with the point person(s) to support transition.
- Ask new hires their dietary preferences/restrictions and any religious/cultural observances to include in their human resource file for reference when planning team events (if applicable).
- Ensure regular check-ins with the new hire to make sure they are adjusting to their role properly and to determine if there are any needs to address in order to help them accomplish their tasks more effectively. For instance, conducting an ergonomics assessment to accommodate office or remote workspace setup.
- Ask the new hire for feedback on the hiring process. This can help you better understand where you can improve next time.

Appendix 1: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement

To create meaningful organizational change in relation to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), initiatives need to tackle all areas of work. Equity requires intentional adjustments in practice and behaviour, which lead to sustainable changes in work culture and within society. Data suggests that Indigenous, Black and racialized groups may be more comfortable applying for jobs that include an EDI statement in the description. Additionally, a firm EDI statement may attract applicants who have similar values, irrespective of their association to an equity-deserving group.

An EDI statement can be a great step towards Workplace diversification. For an EDI statement to be effective, Practice Groups should make active efforts to create and foster an anti-racist, anti-oppressive and culturally safe work environment for all Workers. For tools and resources to create an anti-racist and anti-oppressive work environment, see the AOM's Racial Equity Toolkit webpage.



While it is important to explicitly invite people of Indigenous, Black, racialized and other equity-deserving populations to apply for positions, it is imperative that employers communicate the harm of appropriating a race or culture that is not one's own to claim. The Indigenous Midwifery department at the AOM has written a statement on [Indigenous Self-Identity](#), and the harms that come from non-Indigenous people claiming spaces, funding and positions reserved for Indigenous Peoples. Not all Indigenous people know their family and community history because of displacement resulting from the Indian Residential School system, the Indian Day Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the ongoing Millennial Scoop, for example. For these reasons, Practice Groups should ask applicants to share a bit about themselves if they identify as an Indigenous person, not to validate the merit of their claim, as this is not the role of the Practice Group, but rather to demonstrate that the Practice Group is committed to honouring and supporting sacred birthwork and Indigenous birthworkers.

After using the tools and resources mentioned above, and implementing the necessary steps to create an anti-racist, anti-oppressive and culturally safe work environment, the Practice Group can invite IBPOC and equity-deserving communities to join their Workplace. When developing an EDI statement for a job posting, consider the following:

Assess your Practice Group's *organizational readiness*

It is important that employers meaningfully and reasonably meet the needs of IBPOC and equity-deserving groups. Accordingly, it is important to ensure that your Workplace is indeed inclusive of people with diverse lived experiences and world views, before claiming to be an inclusive Workplace. Organizational readiness refers to the organization's motivation and capacity to engage in change or initiatives. Determining your Practice Group's readiness involves a detailed look into the people, morale, systems, processes and resources currently available, while measuring them against what will be required to make the changes desired. This includes policies to enforce anti-racism and anti-discrimination and to manage incidents of inequity in the Workplace; and systems to monitor and evaluate the Practice Group's actions to ensure accountability. We recommend using the AOM's [Template Anti-Racism Policy](#), [Template Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy](#), [Workplace Harassment Procedure](#) and the [Workplace Violence Procedure](#), the [Anti-Racism Self Assessment Tool](#) and [Anti-Racism Practice Group Assessment Tool](#), and the [National Institute of Health Research's Racial Equity Framework](#) for guidance.

Determine your Workplace's needs and values

EDI statements should be personal to you and your Workplace. Once you have completed the self and Practice Group assessments, you should then determine the needs of your Practice Group regarding EDI recruitment, as well as the values that your Practice Group holds. These should be added to give your statement an element of specificity.



For example: “Our Practice Group respects and honours Indigenous birthwork and would look forward to the opportunity to have an Indigenous midwife to support the community in [insert place here]” OR “We value the skills, experience and knowledge of midwives who hold racialized, disabled and 2SLGBTQQIA+ identities and would like to encourage members from these communities to apply” OR “At [insert Practice Group name here] we believe equity, diversity and inclusion are vital to providing quality care. We prioritize making our work environment a safe, anti-racist, anti-oppressive and culturally sensitive work environment for all IBPOC and equity-deserving groups and take the necessary steps to remain accountable”.

Be familiar with the Code and include relevant Protected Grounds in the statement

When developing your EDI statement, it is good practice to read up on the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#). Not only will it provide you with a background regarding your human rights responsibilities as an employer, but it will also provide you with the list of the Protected Grounds. It is useful to add these grounds in your EDI statement and ensure your processes comply with the Code.

Use an empathetic and relatable tone rather than a generic tone

Researchers from [LinkedIn’s Talent Blog](#) conducted a study comparing two EDI statements: the first being a statement that was formal and generic, and the second being a statement that had an empathetic tone to it. Upon reading the two statements, over two thirds of survey participants noted that they liked the empathetic statement. In comparison, the generic statement received a backing from less than half of the participants. Accordingly, to increase the likelihood of applicants interpreting your EDI statement as sincere, it is recommended to use a tone that is empathetic and not overly formal.

Provide an opportunity for applicants to request accommodations (e.g., for disabilities, caring responsibilities, and religious observances)

As described in Appendix 2, providing accommodations during the hiring process can help ease the burden that people with disabilities, caring responsibilities and religious requirements often face when applying and interviewing for jobs. If you have the capacity to make accommodations for such individuals, we recommend highlighting this in your EDI statement. Guidance on accommodation during the hiring process can be found in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2: Accommodation During the Hiring Process

Hiring processes can sometimes create barriers for those with disabilities, as well as those with caring and/or religious responsibilities. These barriers can be discriminatory, but aside from this, they also prevent employers from securing the best talent. To help bridge



the employment gap for candidates with such needs and to create a truly inclusive Workplace, consider the following accommodations during the hiring process.

- Interviewing at times that will not interrupt the candidate's caring responsibilities
- Choosing interview times that don't conflict with major religious holidays or observances (if this is not possible, ensuring that candidates are given flexibility to still attend to their religious needs)
- Opting for remote rather than in-person interviews
- Choosing trauma sensitive interview questions
- Interviewing in spaces that are fully accessible for those with mobility issues or disabilities (e.g., with ramps, rails, elevators, wide doorways and hallways, adapted washrooms, accessible parking etc.)

For information on providing accommodation to Workers with a disability, see the [AOM's Guidance on Accommodations](#).



Appendix 3: Sample EDI Interview Questions

General EDI questions

1. Please share with us what racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to you and what importance you believe it has in the midwifery profession.
2. What is your approach to understanding the perspectives of colleagues and clients with a different world view or culture from your own?
3. What equity, diversity, inclusion and/or cultural sensitivity training have you received and how have you applied what you learned as a midwife?
4. What sort of privileges do you believe that you possess because of your identity and/or lived experience? How do these inform how you interact with people who may not have the same privileges?
5. How have you seen racism or racial bias play out in the lives of clients accessing perinatal care? What systems do you think were contributing to this? What was your response when you witnessed this?
6. What does it mean to have a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion? How have you demonstrated that commitment, and how would you see yourself demonstrating it while working with us?
7. Reflecting on a time(s) when you cared for a client of a different racial, ethnocultural, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, or religious identity from yours, what did you do to ensure that you were able to provide safe, quality care?
8. How would you or have you handle(d) a situation where a colleague is being culturally insensitive, sexist, racist, homophobic, or xenophobic?
9. How would you respond to a colleague who argues that midwifery is a progressive, feminist profession and we do not need to spend energy and resources on addressing racism and discrimination in the profession, as these are not priority concerns?
10. How would you or have you handle(d) a situation where you are called out for a comment or action that was biased, discriminatory or harmful?
11. At [name of Practice Group], we recognize that IBPOC clients may prefer or feel safer with an IBPOC midwife, and we make every effort to accommodate such requests. What are your thoughts regarding this practice?

Questions related to anti-Black racism

1. [Name of Practice Group] has clients from multiple backgrounds in the African, Caribbean, and Black communities. Anti-Black racism has been shown to have an adverse effect on Black maternal health, morbidity, and mortality. How do you or would you work to ensure that you provide culturally safe care to clients from these communities?



2. Black birthing people, statistically, face higher occurrences of health complications in comparison to their white counterparts. Oftentimes, these issues stem from conscious and unconscious biases directed to them by health professionals. As a midwife, how do you go about advocating for your Black clients? Do you have any first-hand experience of doing this that you'd like to share?

Questions related to Indigenous Sovereignty

1. Honouring and upholding Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination is integral to our work as midwives. What does this mean to you and how do you integrate this into your work?
2. When caring for clients who are Indigenous, how do you or have you ensure(d) that you are honouring Indigenous practices and traditions of midwifery in your work?

Questions related to gender and sexuality

1. While many midwifery clients identify as women, birthing people may identify with a variety of gender identities. What steps will you take to ensure clients receive gender-affirming care?
2. Some of our clients belong to the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community or are undertaking surrogacy for those who are. Can you describe working with a client who was a member of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community or was acting as a surrogate for 2SLGBTQQIA+ parents? What steps did you take to ensure they received the best care?

Questions related to disability

1. Our clients have diverse levels and types of physical and mental abilities. Do you have experience working with clients with disabilities? How did you or would you adjust your practice to ensure all their care needs were being met?
2. Describe a time when you worked with someone who had a disability, mental or physical condition, or another situation that impacted them. What appropriate adjustments did you make to enable a conducive working environment for them?