

Veterans Resource Centers of America

Cultural Competency And Diversity Plan

FY 2012

The Veterans Resource Centers of America(VRC) Cultural Competency & Diversity Plan for FY 2012 encompasses the organization as a whole. The plan outlines the organization's Cultural Competency in the following areas: Non-discrimination, Diversity, Accessibility to Services, Training, Culturally Competent Services, Community Outreach, and Evaluation.

The Executive Director administers the plan. Every staff member is responsible for creating a job environment that is conducive to honoring cultural diversity and providing services that are effective across cultural groups.

The Management Team provides primary leadership for developing and implementing the plan. The Executive Director coordinates cultural competency initiatives. The Management Team reviews the Cultural Competency Plan on an annual basis.

Mission

The mission statement of the Organization is as follows:

Veterans Resource Centers of America (VRC) is a community-based organization, serving veterans and non-veterans. Our goal is to support individuals and families as they build better lives for themselves, their families, and our communities. With offices throughout Northern California, Northern Arizona and Northern Nevada, VRC is committed to meeting the needs of disenfranchised citizens by providing comprehensive services, which include but are not limited to transitional housing, employment and training programs, comprehensive case management services, and small business assistance.

The mission of the Cultural Competency Plan and the implementation of this plan is to:

Continuously improve the cultural competence of Veterans Resource Centers of America, its staff members and its services to clients of all racial, ethnic and social backgrounds, including but not limited to gender, sexual orientation, age, spiritual/religious beliefs, and/or physical/mental disability.

Goal

The goal of the organization's Cultural Competency Plan and process is to promote the willingness and ability of all staff members to value the importance and influence of cultural influence and diversity in organizational practices. The process of the organization's Cultural Competency Plan focuses on the delivery of services to the population in the organization's service area that:

- Includes all segments of the client population: individual, family and

- community; and
- Are available, accessible, affordable, acceptable and appropriate.

Objective and Scope

The objective of the organization's Cultural Competency Plan is not intended to be an isolated guideline for staff members. We believe that cultural competency and diversity must be manifested in each area of the organizational process, service delivery, client advocacy, and in business practices and staff recruitment. Promoting competency and valuing cultural differences is an ongoing process of education and awareness.

The percentage of other ethnic groups in the service area is very small. However, VRCOA endeavors to:

- Identify populations served outside the dominant culture;
- Educate staff members on cultural competence and diversity with regard to serving any identified population outside the dominant culture; and
- Seek feedback from clients of any identified population outside the dominant culture regarding their perceptions of the degree of respect and understanding demonstrated for their cultural differences, needs, and preferences.

I. Non-Discrimination

The Organization is committed to equal opportunity, equal treatment, and non-discrimination in all aspects of employment and other activities regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, lifestyle, HIV infection, physical or mental handicap, developmental disability, or membership in any other class protected by local, state, or federal law.

II. VRC Staff Members Diversity

The following table shows the racial/ethnic distribution of the organization's staff, clients, and the general population. It's important to note that there are often different methods for grouping according to race/ ethnicity (e.g., including Latino, "other", or "two or more"). The 2011 Census best represents the client population and the pool from which the Organization draws its staff.

	VRC Staff	Sacramento / Sonoma County Census	California State Census
Population	FY 2012	2011 est.	2011 est.
N =		1,924,221	37,691,912
Gender			
Female		50.9%	50.3%
Male		49.1%	49.7%
Race/Ethnicity			
Caucasian		54.5%	40.0%
African American		8.6%	6.6%
Native American		1.8%	1.7%
Asian		12.2%	13.6%
Hispanic		22.9%	38.1%
Age			
0 - 17		24.3%	24.6%
18 - 64		63.5%	63.7%
65 and Over		12.2%	11.7%

III. Access to Services

Culturally competent access to services can be described along several dimensions: physical access, language access, and cultural access. Each of these is addressed below.

Physical Access. Each site has been assessed for compliance with American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements (see FY2012Accessibility Plan). All of the organization's facilities are easily accessible by public transportation.

Language Access.For those hearing impaired persons interested in having contact with VRC, access is available through the California Relay Service. Their phone number is 1-800-735-2929 (English), 1-800-855-3000 (Spanish).

Cultural Access. To enhance access, the Organization strives to maintain culturally inviting facilityand have culturally relevant entry and waiting areas.

IV. Training

The Organization includes Cultural Competency training as part of a staff member's Staff Development Training Plan. Staff members are also encouraged to attend training opportunities offered in the local area that would address Cultural Competency.

V. Culturally Competent and/or Specific Programs/Services

The Organization will assess the need to develop culturally specific services to address any identified needs of cultural groups within the service area. Between 2010 US Census and 2011 estimate, the VRCOA service area has seen on average a 9.23% **decrease** in Caucasians, 9.88% increase in African-Americans, 92.22% increase in Native Americans, 38.64% increase in Asians, and 30.95% increase in Hispanics.

Population 2011 Census	Caucasian	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic
Sonoma/Sacramento Counties 1,924,221	1,049,342 54.53%	165,810 8.62%	33,716 1.75%	235,429 12.24%	439,925 22.86%
State of California 37,691,912	15,076,765 40.00%	2,487,666 6.60%	640,763 1.70%	5,126,100 13.60%	14,360,618 38.10%
Population 2010 Census	Caucasian	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic
Sonoma/Sacramento Counties 1,902,666	1,186,563 62.36%	154,668 8.13%	20,797 1.09%	221,552 11.64%	426,626 22.42%
State of California 33,871,648	16,610,351 49.04%	2,263,882 6.68%	333,346 0.98%	3,697,513 10.92%	10,966,556 32.38%
Population Increase / Decrease	Caucasian	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic
Sonoma/Sacramento Counties 21,555	-137,221 -11.56%	11,142 7.20%	12,919 62.12%	13,877 6.26%	13,299 3.12%
State of California 3,820,264	-1,533,586 -9.23%	223,784 9.88%	307,417 92.22%	1,428,587 38.64%	3,394,062 30.95%

In terms of general cultural competence, the organization's diagnostic assessments in substance abuse programs include a cultural component to ensure that culture is reviewed prior to diagnosis or formulation of the Individualized Service Plan.

The Organization recognizes that the gender of the client and clinician certainly impacts the therapeutic relationship. The Organization does inquire about client preference for gender when matching client's with clinician during the intake process.

VI. Community Outreach

The Organization assesses the community needs for culturally specific outreach activities. In addition, the Organization continues services in general community settings that are utilized by cultural minorities (e.g., schools, YMCAs, etc.).

VII. Evaluation

The Management Team reviews the implementation of the Cultural Competency Plan on an annual basis and updates the Cultural Competency Plan annually.