THE CULTURAL PROFICIENCY FRAMEWORK

Cultural Proficiency is the policies and practices in an organization or the values and behavior of an individual, that enable the person or institution to engage effectively with people and groups who are different from them. Cultural Proficiency is an inside-out approach that influences how people relate to their colleagues, clients and community. Cultural Proficiency is a lens for examining one's work and one's relationships. The four tools of cultural proficiency are the Elements, the Continuum, the Barriers and the Principles.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS -- *Standards for Planning and Evaluating*

- **Assess Culture:** Identify the cultural groups present in the system
- **Value Diversity:** Develop an appreciation for the differences among and between groups
- **Manage the Dynamics of Difference:**
  Learn to respond appropriately and effectively to the issues that arise in a diverse environment
- **Adapt to Diversity:** Change and adopt new policies and practices that support diversity and inclusion
- **Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge:** Drive the changes into the systems of the organization

CULTURAL PROFICIENCY CONTINUUM

Change Mandated for Tolerance			*Change Chosen for Transformation*		
DESTRUCTION	**INCAPACITY**	**BLINDNESS**	**PRECOMPETENCE**	**COMPETENCE**	**PROFICIENCY**
Eliminate differences The elimination of other people's cultures	*Demean differences* Belief in the superiority of one's culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture	*Dismiss differences* Acting as if the cultural differences you see do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures	*Respond inadequately to the dynamics of difference* Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups	*Engage with differences using the essential elements as standards* Using the five essential elements of cultural proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and organizational practices	*Esteem and learn from differences as a lifelong practice* Knowing how to learn about and from individual and organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments. Advocating for others.

Reactive Behaviors, Shaped by the **BARRIERS**	*Proactive Behaviors, Shaped by the* **PRINCIPLES**
- Unawareness of the need to adapt - Resistance to change - Systems of oppression and privilege - A sense of entitlement	- Culture is a predominant force - People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture - There is diversity within and between cultures - Every group has unique culturally-defined needs - People have personal identities and group identities. - Marginalized populations have to be at least bicultural - Families, as defined by culture, are the primary systems of support - The diverse thought patterns of cultural groups influence how problems are defined and solved. - The absence of cultural competence anywhere is a threat to competent services everywhere