



CULTURAL COMPETENCE PLAN

Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC) is a faith-based, not-for-profit ministry founded and sponsored by the North and South Carolina Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Behind the LSC brand are two parent corporations, Lutheran Services for the Aging (LSA) and Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas (LFS).

LSA was founded in 1960 as North Carolina Lutheran Homes. In the early years, its Board of Trustees consisted of nine white male Lutheran pastors (this was prior to the ordination of female pastors) and nine middle-to-older-age Lutheran laypeople. It should be noted that in an era when laywomen generally did not serve on boards, the LSA board had one laywoman on its initial Board of Trustees and has a history of being inclusive of women, although there was no parity in the numbers between male and female in those early years.

LSA ministries were located in communities that generally reflected the German/European heritage of the Lutheran Church. For its first 25 years, LSA served almost exclusively Lutherans, so the vast majority of the people it served were Anglo-Americans. In the early 1980s, LSA opened its doors to all who needed its services. The population became slightly more diverse.

Change came more rapidly in 2001 when LSA leased to purchase an old, for-profit nursing home in the heavily African American area of east Winston-Salem. Lutheran Home – Winston-Salem served 100% indigent residents, with the majority of residents being persons of color.

While LSA had addressed diversity over the years, the Winston project opened eyes and provided opportunities to improve multi-culturalism, including:

- Active involvement with the N. C. Synod's African Descent Strategy Team from its inception in 2003 to the present;
- Recruitment of a high quality, high functioning Board of Trustees, including women and minorities proportional to society;
- Diversity training for senior teammates and supervisory teammates;
- Multi-cultural photographs and stories in all publications;
- A broad, inclusive mission statement;
- Organizational values that speak to diversity;
- Intolerance of racism and a Guaranteed Fair Treatment Process to address any issues;
- Creation of a diversity education program shared with all new teammates;

- In 2006, LSA purchased copies of the Raleigh News and Observer insert entitled “The Ghosts of 1898,” about the Wilmington, North Carolina race riot. The insert was purchased and distributed to each LSA teammate;
- Trinity Glen was built to replace the old Lutheran Home – Winston-Salem. Trinity Glen is a beautiful community nursing home and community center in the heart of the heavily African American, economically depressed east Winston area.

Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas began in 1976 as part of the Lutheran Children’s Home of the South and was incorporated as a separate entity in 1980. Times had changed to some extent, so LFS really started as a multi-cultural organization. Its first board consisted of fourteen members: six were white male Lutheran pastors, eight were white laypeople, four were male, and four were female. From the beginning, LFS served a multicultural population, including foster children, children living in group homes, and refugees. These individuals were served by a similarly multicultural staff. Former and long-term LFS presidents Bill Brittain and Suzanne Gibson-Wise were always strong proponents of diversity and multiculturalism. LFS has utilized an online diversity training program for all new teammates and annual education.

The 2011 affiliation of LFS and LSA created a new brand, Lutheran Services Carolinas. LSC has continued the ministry’s multi-cultural journey:

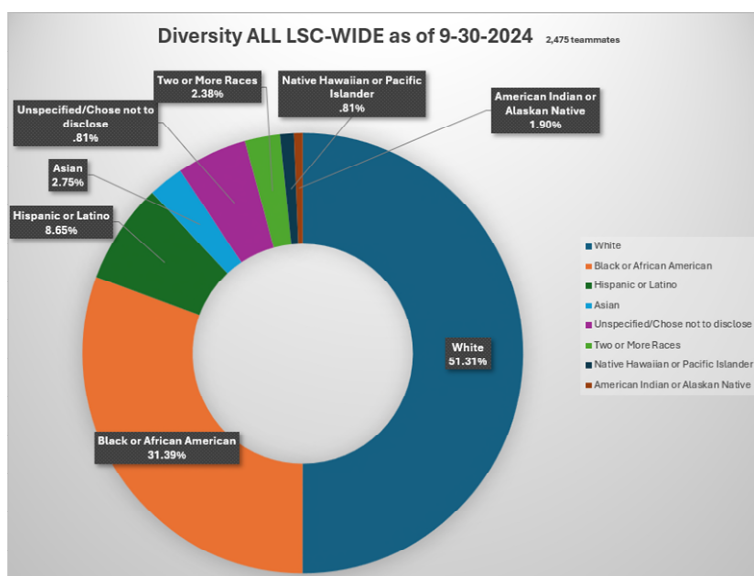
- President Ted Goins co-sponsored the successful immigration reform resolution adopted by the N. C. Synod on May 31, 2013. He penned a June 18, 2013, guest editorial in The State newspaper (Columbia, S. C.) in support of immigration reform.
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services National Grassroots Director Folabi Olagbaju partnered with LSC teammates at the N. C. and S. C. Synod Assemblies in June 2013.
- The teammate health insurance program was revised to include domestic partnership benefits in 2013. LSC’s bereavement policy was also updated to include domestic partnerships.
- LSC completes an organization-wide teammate engagement survey through the University of Texas to solicit the opinions and suggestions of all teammates annually.
- LSC hosted a 2-day consultation on June 13 and 14, 2013, with ELCA Director of Racial Justice Ministries Judith Roberts and ELCA Director of African Descent Strategies Albert Starr. The consultation included a tour of LSC, a roundtable with LSC leadership, meetings with Bishops Yoos and Bolick, a meeting with the CEOs (or a representative) from all the Lutheran institutions in North and South Carolina, dinner and discussion with the N. C. Synod African Descent Strategy Team, and dinner and discussion with the African Descent Strategy Team from St. John’s Lutheran, Salisbury.
- LSC instituted organization-wide diversity training for all teammates.
- An LSC teammate sits on the ELCA Appalachian Strategy Team.
- On April 5, 2017, at the Senior Leadership Team Retreat, teammates participated in a poverty simulation exercise. In 2017, LSC, with LSA and LIRS, was awarded the Annual Humanitarian Award by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.
- On October 26, 2017, Pastor John Unger (Lutheran pastor, West Virginia State Senator, and Kettering Foundation Fellow) facilitated a Salisbury, NC community-wide forum on Safety and Justice. Utilizing the process developed by Kettering’s

National Issues Forum Institute, the well-attended event allowed the community to discuss safety and justice and how to have difficult conversations.

- After attending the Salisbury, NC, community-wide forum on Safety and Justice, the LSC leadership team followed the same process to discuss racial issues after reading the book *Trouble I've Seen* by Drew Hart.
- Continued participation with the NC Lutheran Synod's African Descent Strategy Team. The latest initiative is developing trainers to share a program on Developing Culturally Sensitive Leaders for rostered leaders across the synod. LSC will be able to utilize this across the organization.
- LSC teammates participated in a two-day training provided by the Racial Equity Institute. This program will be repeated in Salisbury, and Trinity Oaks will be a future sponsor.
- Approximately 35 LSC senior leaders viewed and discussed the film *Emmanuel* on 12-6-2019.
- Trinity Oaks is a SAGE-certified (LGBT Elders) campus.
- LSC teammates hosted the N. C. Synod's Racial Justice Network Art as Liberation Week in October 2020.
- LSC hosted a virtual forum for African American women in leadership in February 2021.
- LSC was awarded a grant to work with a diversity coach to help teammates understand the racial needs of our clients to improve placement stability in foster care and provide nurturing, affirming homes in our adult residential programs.
- LSC hosted an agency-wide Juneteenth celebration on Zoom in June 2021 and 2022.
- LSC boards approved a Justice value on 6-17-21.
- November 2021 Board retreat featured Karen McNary with Brownicity to review and discuss the organizational diversity culture of LSC, based on individually completed assessments from the board and leadership.
- LSC CEO has partnered with a coach, a thirty-year-old female African American Lutheran pastor, since 2020.
- In 2022, LSC Board Chair and LSC CEO attended the virtual Reimagining Diversity program sponsored by Lutheran Services in America.
- The LSC New Americans Program continues to expand, opening offices in Asheville, Salisbury, NC, and Myrtle Beach, SC.
- In 2023, Dr. Tom Hanchett presented to LSC teammates on Racial Segregation for Black History Month.
- Trinity Oaks leadership attends a monthly breakfast at Livingstone College, a primarily black college, to partner with them and other community leaders.
- LSC hosted a SLT presentation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion led by Terry Phillips in 2023 and 2024.
- At 45% persons of color, the LSC Board has made great strides in promoting board diversity.
- LSC employs people and seeks volunteers to translate and extend a warm welcome to refugees. LSC served 3,766 refugees/immigrants last fiscal year. This is an increase from the 3,473 LSC welcomed the previous year. All of LSC learns from exposure to the rich diversity of cultures that this program encompasses.

- LSC's policies and procedures were updated in April 2024 to include a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy.
- To continue LSC's awareness and education on diversity and inclusion, current articles, books, PowerPoint slides, etc., were shared throughout the year with the board, Diversity Council members, and LSC senior leaders.

LSC monitors teammate diversity through its payroll software system and reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Below is LSC's diversity numbers as of 9.30.24.



In order for Lutheran Services Carolinas to fully realize its mission, vision, and values, the staff is committed to being culturally competent. Historically, LSC has worked to ensure the organization is diverse and free of discrimination through its business practices, ensuring policies and procedures adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and as an Equal Employment Opportunity employer. As an organization, we know that we need to strive not just to be diverse and free of discrimination but to be culturally competent. Therefore, LSC's Board of Trustees has included in the strategic plan the goal to differentiate LSC through diversity and inclusion. LSC's Board of Trustees continued its commitment by adding another value, Justice, to LSC's core values in 2021. Below is a description of this value.

JUSTICE God calls us to "Do Justice," to be in a right relationship with God and with each other. Every person should live free of bias, favoritism, and discrimination. The people of LSC will work to create a just culture throughout the organization and in all the communities we serve.

In order to be culturally competent, there must first be an understanding that cultural competency is a process in which organizations and individuals evolve through different stages of awareness, knowledge, and skills. The National Center for Cultural Competence addresses this concept in the Cultural Competence Continuum with the following stages:

- 1) Cultural destructiveness: characterized by attitudes, policies, structures, and practices within a system or organization that are destructive to a cultural group.

- 2) Cultural incapacity: the lack of capacity of systems and organizations to respond effectively to the needs, interests, and preferences of culturally and linguistically diverse groups.
- 3) Cultural blindness: an expressed philosophy of viewing and treating all people as the same.
- 4) Cultural pre-competence: a level of awareness within systems or organizations of their strengths and areas of growth to respond effectively to culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- 5) Cultural competence: systems and organizations that exemplify cultural competence demonstrate an acceptance and respect for cultural differences.
- 6) Cultural proficiency: systems and organizations hold culture in high esteem; use this as a foundation to guide all their endeavors.

When developing a framework or plan for cultural competency, the guidelines from the National Center for Cultural Competence were reviewed that state that organizations who wish to become culturally competent need:

- 1) A defined set of values and principles and demonstrated behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable the organization to work effectively cross-culturally.
- 2) The capacity to value diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities serviced.
- 3) The above should be incorporated into all aspects of policy-making, administration, practice, and service delivery and systematically involve consumers, families, and communities.

In LSC's mission to serve, clients and residents not only come from a vast array of cultures but may also speak many different languages. To this end, LSC must also strive to be linguistically competent. The National Center for Cultural Competence defines linguistic competence as the capacity of an organization and its personnel to communicate effectively and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences, including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, individuals with disabilities, and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Linguistic competency requires organizational and provider capacity to respond effectively to the health and mental health literacy needs of the populations served. LSC understands the importance of having teammates to meet our clients' cultural and linguistic needs. LSC New Americans Program staff represents 13 different ethnicities and speaks 22 different languages and dialects. When LSC has clients who cannot speak English, documents are translated into their native language, and translators are made available. LSC also maintains client and resident forms and information at a grade level that the majority of its clients can understand, and if they are illiterate, LSC makes every effort to ensure they understand.

LSC has made some positive strides and will continue to work toward becoming more culturally competent to address not only race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation but also socio-economic status, mental health disability, transgender, etc.

LSC strives to recruit and develop a diverse Board of Trustees along with recruiting diverse teammates. In 2023, Teammate Services was developed to assist in the recruitment of teammates,

to enhance services to all LSC teammates and to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion. With the development of Teammate Services, LSC has the opportunity to synthesize information from all areas of the organization to better serve LSC's teammates including areas related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. When hiring, teammates openings are posted in a variety of places, some of which may include SC and NC Department of Employment Security Commission, Indeed.com, AmeriCorps, and an array of community groups with emphasis on the Latino/Hispanic communities and universities. LSC continues to monitor its level of diversity as an employer using the annual EEOC Employer Information Report. There is a written policy on cultural competence, and through existing policies, initial cultural diversity training for all teammates is mandated, and cultural competency is addressed in performance evaluation plans for teammates. LSC has also implemented EthicsPoint, an outside, third-party system used to address and monitor complaints and concerns.

Internal committees have been tasked to help address diversity and cultural awareness and competency. The recruitment and retention committee will address cultural and linguistic competency when hiring and retaining teammates; LSC Child and Family leadership team will help assess and address LSC's cultural and linguistic competency in the child and family programs; the Life Enrichment teams for each community help share different cultural programs. A Diversity Council was also created in 2019, headed by the CEO. This created a forum where all teammates can learn what LSC is doing around diversity, ask questions, and provide feedback. The LSC Diversity Council meets quarterly.

LSC continually tries to reach out to culturally diverse community-based agencies with which to collaborate to improve services to the organization's clients. Some agencies that we have collaborated with are The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Charleston Commission for Human Affairs and Racial Conciliation, Jewish Family Services, Gullah Geechee Angel Network, SAGE (Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders), PeeDee Equality, All for Autism, Pride Fest, and Livingstone College.

LSC's diversity path is a journey, not a destination. There is much work to be done. Racism, privilege, and intolerance seem to be on the rise, in part due to the polarization of U. S. society and politics. LSC can be a positive example as a faith-based ministry, as an employer, and as a corporate citizen. It will continue to review its policies and procedures to ensure they are still relevant in ensuring cultural and linguistic competence. Last year, LSC focused on the following objectives as LSC continued to focus on diversity and equality:

- Maintain 35% racial diversity on the Board. The Board maintained 45% racial diversity.
- Maintain racial diversity among teammates, with at least 35% being persons of color. LSC has 48.42% racial diversity among teammates reporting ethnicity. LSC continues to promote diversity through its program to recruit internationally for nurses.
- Improve racial diversity of senior leadership and the LSC Administrative Office team from the current 16% to 20%. LSC senior leadership and the LSC Administrative Office increased their racial diversity to 20.69%.
- Identify and promote diversity and inclusion in LSC publications and social media. Marketing materials have been updated to highlight diversity. Communication materials to donors and stakeholders are reviewed to include diverse photographs and articles.
- Actively participate and promote diversity and inclusion through the Lutheran Church, membership organizations, and local efforts, including active involvement with the NC

Synod's Developing Culturally Sensitive Leaders program and Racial Justice Network. LSC is active in the N.C. Synod's Racial Justice Network and the African Descent Strategy Team. LSC is partnering with its local, state, and national affiliate organizations, from Rotary to the American Health Care Association, to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. Completed third and last monthly session with LSAm Livid Voices Fellowship Mentor Program Participants.

- Ensure that at least 1 out of every 4 AITs is a person of color. This past year, LSC only had one AIT, and she was not a person of color.
- Celebrate diversity and inclusion across LSC. LSC celebrated or lifted up MLK Day, Black History Month, Hispanic History Month, Pride Month, Juneteenth, and World Refugee Day.
- Recruit more diverse residents in senior service communities/programs. LSC's development department is collaborating with IL communities to find ways to present, attend, and sponsor diverse organizations to build relationships in the different minority communities. Trinity Oaks, Salisbury, is SAGE certified. Senior services communities/programs have recruited more diverse residents. Of the residents reporting ethnicity, 7.1% are persons of color, up from 6% last year.
- Beginning in July 2024, LSC new hires have received a virtual orientation that includes a portion on diversity. All Child & Family programs received Cultural Awareness and Humility as a module in Relias, as well as in-person DEI training. Trinity Oaks had training in LGBT Elders as this is part of their SAGE certification.
- Maintain its current level of demographic information as LSC switches electronic medical record systems. Both LSC's senior services and child and family services have switched electronic medical record systems. With the changes, all demographic information was kept at the same or an elevated level.
- LSC CEO partners with a coach, a thirty-one-year-old female African American Lutheran pastor. Fourth year.

As LSC continues its journey toward representation and equal opportunity, LSC in the upcoming year will focus on the following:

- Maintain 35% racial variety on the Board.
- Maintain racial variety of teammates of at least 38% persons of color.
- Improve racial variety of senior leadership and the LSC Administrative Office team from the current 20% to 21.5%.
- Actively participate and promote equal opportunities for all through the Lutheran church, membership organizations, and local efforts, including active involvement with the NC Synod's African Descent Strategy Team and Racial Justice Network.
- Celebrate all cultures across LSC.
- Provide ongoing cultural competency training for teammates.
- Work towards recruiting housekeepers, dietary, and PCA to CNAs from other countries through a contract with International ManPower. This type of recruitment is a several-year process.

Child & Family Total Clients Served FY 2023-24

4990

CLIENTS SERVED BY PROGRAM		4990
Residential - Adult Services - NC	69	1%
Residential - Adult Services - SC	41	1%
Residential - Child Services - NC	200	4%
Residential - Child Services - SC	219	4%
Residential - Unaccompanied Child Services - SC	98	2%
Community Based - Adult Services - NC	68	1%
Community Based - Adult Services - SC	233	5%
Community Based - Child Services - NC	73	1%
Community Based - Child Services - SC	334	7%
Community Based - Disaster Services - NC/SC	345	7%
Community Based - New Americans Services NC/SC	3310	66%

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES		4990
Clients Served		
Gender		
Female	1166	23%
Male	1101	22%
Other/Not Specified	2723	55%
Total	4990	100%
Age		
Birth to 9	258	5%
10-19	1056	21%
20-29	201	4%
30-39	321	6%
40-49	195	4%
50-59	144	3%
60-69	146	3%
70-79	63	1%
80-89	14	0%
90+	4	0%
Other/Not specified (or individual within a family)	2588	52%
Total	4990	100%
RACE/ETHNICITY		
Asian/Pacific Islander	97	2%
Black/African-American	951	19%
Hispanic/Latino	934	19%
Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic	64	1%
Native American	7	0%
White/Caucasian	1340	27%
Other/Not Specified (or Individual w/in a Family)	1597	32%
Total	4990	100%
ETHNICITY		
Hispanic/Latino	934	19%
Non Hispanic/Latino	2459	49%
Other/Not specified (or individual within a family)	1597	32%
Total	4990	100%

Senior Services Clients Served FY 2023-24	3694
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CLIENTS SERVED BY PROGRAM			3694
Trinity Place Total	204	6%	
Trinity Oaks HR Total	247	7%	
Trinity Oaks RC Total	236	6%	
Trinity Village Total	405	11%	
Trinity Ridge Total	359	10%	
Trinity Glen Total	288	8%	
Trinity Elms HR Total	383	10%	
Trinity Elms AL Total	99	3%	
Trinity View Total	127	3%	
Trinity Grove Total	289	8%	
Trinity at Home Total	112	3%	
Trinity Elms IL Total	82	2%	
Aston Park Total	320	9%	
Glenflora Total	143	4%	
Trinity Landing IL Total	340	9%	
Trinity Living Center Total	60	2%	

SENIOR SERVICES				3694
Clients Served				
Gender				
	Female	2564	69%	
	Male	1045	28%	
	Unknown	85	2%	
	Total	3694	100%	
Age				
	0-49	5	0%	
	50-59	9	0%	
	60-69	141	4%	
	70-79	929	25%	
	80-89	1668	45%	
	90+	942	26%	
	Unknown	0	0%	
	Total	3694	100%	
Ethnicity				
	American Indian or Alaska Native	45	1%	
	Black or African American	263	7%	
	White	3002	81%	
	Hispanic or Latino	7	0%	
	Asian	8	0%	
	Unknown	369	10%	
	Total	3694	100%	