



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 lay people. It should be noted that in an era when lay women generally did not serve on boards, the LSA board had one lay woman 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 staff and supervisory staff;
- 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 employees;

- 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 employee;
- 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 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 lay people, four male and four female. From the beginning, LFS served a multi-cultural population including foster children, children living in group homes, and refugees. These individuals were served by a similarly multi-cultural staff. Former and long-term LFS presidents Bill Brittain and Suzanne Gibson-Wise were always strong proponents of diversity and multi-culturalism. LFS has utilized an online diversity training program for all new staff and for 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:

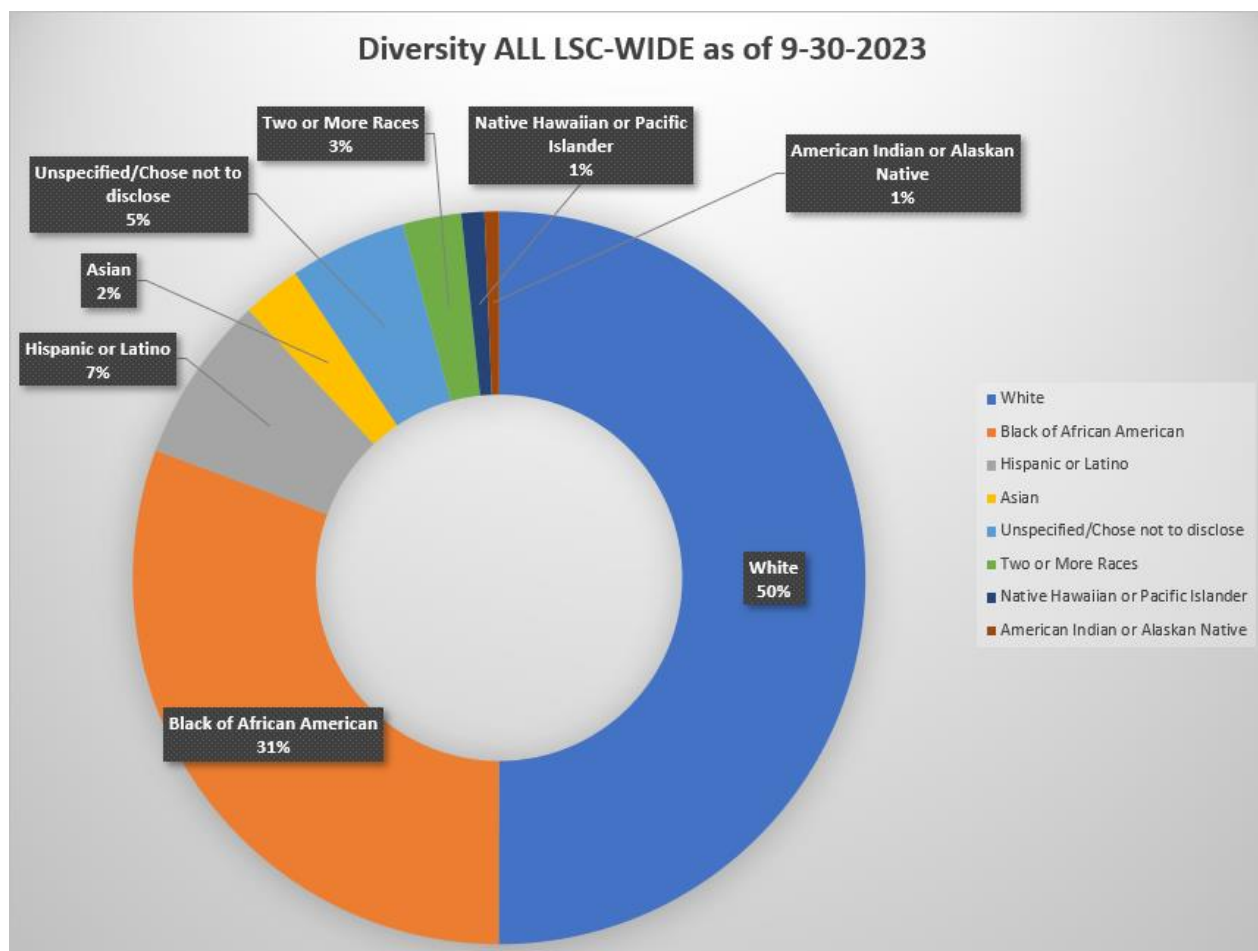
- President Ted Goins co-sponsored the successful immigration reform resolution adopted by the N. C. Synod on May 31, 2013, and penned a June 18, 2013 guest editorial in The State newspaper (Columbia, S. C.) in support of immigration reform.
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services National Grassroots Director Folabi Olagbaju partnered with LSC staff at the N. C. and S. C. Synod Assemblies in June 2013.
- Employee health insurance program was revised to include domestic partnership benefits in 2013. LSC’s bereavement policy was also updated to include domestic partnership.
- LSC completes an organization-wide staff engagement survey through the University of Texas to solicit the opinions and suggestions of all staff members, biennially.
- 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 staff, 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 ECLA Appalachian Strategy Team.
- On April 5, 2017, at the Senior Leadership Team Retreat, staff participated in a poverty simulation exercise. In 2017, LSC with LSA and LIRS was awarded the Annual Humanitarian Award by Ahmaddiya 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 staff 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 staff 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 board and leadership.
- LSC CEO has partnered with a coach who is 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.
- LSC New Americans Program continues to expand and opens offices in Asheville and Salisbury, NC and Myrtle Beach, SC.
- In 2023, Dr. Tom Hanchett presented to LSC staff 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.
- 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 welcomed 3,473 last fiscal year. This is a huge increase from the 748 LSC welcomed the previous year. All of LSC learns from exposure to the rich diversity of cultures that this program encompasses.

- To continue LSC’s awareness and education on diversity and inclusion, current articles, books, Power Point slides, etc. were shared all year with the board, Diversity Council members, and LSC senior leaders.

LSC monitors employee diversity through its payroll software system and reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Below is LSC’s diversity numbers as of 9.30.23.



In order for Lutheran Services Carolinas to fully realize its mission, vision, and values, 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 to adapt diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities serviced.
- 3) The above incorporated in all aspects of policy-making, administration, practice and service delivery, and to 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 populations served. LSC understands the importance of having staff to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of our clients. LSC New Americans Program staff represents 12 different ethnicities and speaks 17 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

which can be understood by the majority of its clients 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 staff. 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, staff openings are posted in a variety of places, some of which may include SC and NC Department of Employment Security Commission, [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com), AmeriCorps, and an array of community groups with emphasis on the Latino/Hispanic communities and universities. LSC has specifically started a program to recruit internationally. To date we have offered approximately 40 positions through this program. LSC continues to monitor its level of diversity as an employer using the annual EEOC Employer Information Report. There is a written policy on culture competence, and through existing policies initial cultural diversity training for all staff is mandated and cultural competency is addressed in performance evaluation plans for staff members. 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 staff; 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 staff members 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 seems 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 percent racial diversity on the Board. The board maintained 45% racial diversity on the Board.

- Maintain racial diversity of staff of at least 35 percent persons of color. LSC has 45% racial diversity of those teammates reporting ethnicity. LSC continues to promote diversity through its program to recruit internationally for nurses.
- Improve racial diversity of senior leadership and LSC Administrative Office team from 12 percent. LSC senior leadership and the LSC Administrative Office increased their racial diversity to 16%.
- 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.
- Ensure that at least 1 out of every 4 AITs is a person of color. This past year 1 out of 1 AITs were persons 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 6% are persons of color up from 2% last year.
- Provide on-going cultural competency training to staff. 1076 senior services teammates completed LSC's Diversity Training on Relias. Other programs had specific training in diversity around populations they serve. For example, foster care trained in the Recruitment of LGBTQ+ and Affirming Families in Foster Care, LGBTQI+. 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. LSC's senior services changed over its electronic record system and was able to maintain some demographic information. LSC's child and family services was not able to switch electronic medical records this year. The plan is to switch electronic medical records in 2024. Demographic information for FY 2023 is below.
- LSC CEO partners with a coach who is a thirty-year-old female African American Lutheran pastor. Third year.
- LSC staff participated in the N.C. Synod's They Are Us book study; LSC was lifted up for its work with refugees and with LIRS.
- LSC opened New Americans Program offices in Salisbury, NC and Myrtle Beach, SC to serve refugees from around the world.

As LSC continues on its journey toward diversity and equality, LSC in the upcoming year will focus on the following:

- Maintain 35 percent racial diversity on the Board.
- Maintain racial diversity of staff of at least 35 percent persons of color.
- Improve racial diversity of senior leadership and LSC Administrative Office team from 12 percent.
- Identify and promote diversity and inclusion in LSC publications and social media.
- Engage in recruitment efforts that include diversity.
- 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.
- Ensure that at least 1 out of every 4 AITs is a person of color.
- Celebrate diversity and inclusion across LSC.
- Recruit more diverse residents in senior service communities/programs.
- Provide on-going cultural competency training to staff.
- Maintain its current level of demographic information as LSC switches electronic medical record systems.
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1/30/24

Child & Family Total Clients Served FY 2022-23

7548

CLIENTS SERVED BY PROGRAM		7548
ACTT Total	63	1%
Adult Residential (NC) Total	64	1%
Home and Community Based Services (NC) Total	14	0%
CTH (SC) Total	57	1%
Disaster Services Total	21	0%
Foster Care Services Total	506	7%
Foster Day Servcies	96	1%
Public Adoption (SNAP) Total	153	2%
Recovery Total	3056	40%
New Americans Program Total	3473	46%
Strengthening Families Total	45	1%

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES			
Clients Served			7548
Gender			
	Female	621	8%
	Male	690	9%
	Other/Not Specified	6237	83%
	Total	7548	100%
Age			
	Birth to 9	230	3%
	10-19	591	8%
	20-29	72	1%
	30-39	76	1%
	40-49	46	1%
	50-59	45	1%
	60-69	29	0%
	70-79	9	0%
	80-89	2	0%
	90+	1	0%
	Other/Not specified (or individual within a family)	6447	85%
	Total	7548	100%
RACE			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	334	4%
	Asian	13	0%
	Black or African American	339	4%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	17	0%
	White	490	6%
	Multi-Racial	38	1%
	Other/Not specified (or individual within a family)	6317	84%
	Total	7548	100%
ETHNICITY			
	Hispanic/Latino	526	7%
	Non Hispanic/Latino	289	4%
	Other/Not specified (or individual within a family)	6733	89%
	Total	7548	100%

Senior Services Clients Served FY 2022-23	3568
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CLIENTS SERVED BY PROGRAM		
Trinity Place Total	192	5%
Trinity Oaks HR Total	225	6%
Trinity Oaks RC Total	275	8%
Trinity Village Total	305	9%
Trinity Ridge Total	265	7%
Trinity Glen Total	195	5%
Trinity Elms HR Total	588	16%
Trinity Elms AL Total	104	3%
Trinity View Total	140	4%
Trinity Grove Total	370	10%
Trinity at Home Total	81	2%
Trinity Elms IL Total	90	3%
Aston Park Total	216	6%
Glenflora Total	104	3%
Trinity Landing IL Total	343	10%
Trinity Living Center Total	65	2%

SENIOR SERVICES			
Clients Served			
Gender			
Female	2530	71%	
Male	691	19%	
Unknown	347	10%	
Total	3568	100%	
0-49	11	0%	
50-59	26	1%	
60-69	436	12%	
70-79	1019	29%	
80-89	1242	35%	
90+	834	23%	
Unknown	0	0%	
Total	3568	100%	
Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaska Native	25	1%	
Black or African American	190	5%	
White	2426	68%	
Hispanic or Latino	0	0%	
Asian	3	0%	
Unknown	924	26%	
Total	3568	100%	