


<b>Category:</b>		<b>INCA Community Services Agency Policy</b> 
<b>Sub Category:</b>		
<b>Effective Date:</b>	2/28/2017	
<b>Revised Date:</b>		
<b>Forms:</b>	Discrimination Complaint Form	
Responsible: EOO Officer, Management		

## Public Participation Policy

### Purpose/Introduction

INCA Community Services, Inc. is committed to ensuring it serves the communities in which it serves fairly, consistently, and in the most cost-efficient and appropriate manner using available resources. Through public participation INCA is able to assess the quality and reliability of the services offered as well as introduce new and needed services within the scope of the agencies abilities and funding.

### Policy

As part of the Title VI, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action Plan, INCA Community Services is establishing a Public Participation Policy to strengthen the community involvement by the agency, programs, staff members, and the public. This policy serves as a guideline for the agencies participation within the communities and how to actively engage the public sector.

### Public Participation Process

As a public agency, INCA Community Services, Inc. encourages participation, input, and guidance from our communities as well as encourages staff members to participate within the communities at various functions and events.

- The Leadership Team will establish strategies to involve public participation in events. INCA encourages members from the public to participate and volunteer for various activities.
- INCA will seek members from the community to serve on committees and councils within the agency but individuals may request to be considered for positions open and available.
- The Leadership Team is strongly encouraged to present themselves as INCA's representatives within the community.
- All staff representing INCA must uphold the Code of Ethics and other agency policies to the highest regard.
- Employees seeking to explore community opportunities and represent the agency must provide a written statement to the Executive Director who will then approve or deny such requests if it is outside the scope of their job duties.

### Public Participation Outreach Opportunities

- Each program will conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey once a year within a designated month. Also, annually an agency wide survey will be conducted. (see Customer Satisfaction Policy)

- Every three years INCA will conduct a Community Needs Assessment and the public within the counties served will be surveyed.
- Members from the public will be appointed to serve on the Board of Directors, Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Board, Transit Advisory Council, and RSVP Advisory Council.
- Parents or guardians of children participating in the Head Start and Community representatives will be elected to serve on the Head Start Policy Council.
- Head Start Parents are encouraged to actively serve on Local Parent Committees within the Head Start Program.
- JAMM Transit will hold public forums throughout each of the counties yearly and encourage the public to attend.
- JAMM Transit will hold yearly public hearings as mandated by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and CHDO will hold an annual input session throughout each of the counties yearly and encourage the public to attend.
- Board Meetings, Transit Advisory Council Meetings, RSVP Advisory Meetings, and Policy Council meets are all open to the public and will be posted.
- INCA will make every effort to ensure Limited English Proficiency (LEP) participants are equally surveyed and able to attend meetings. (see LEP Policy)

### **Public Presence**

- Designated staff members will attend and actively take part in community meetings including but not limited to Chambers of Commerce, Turning Point Coalitions, City Council Meetings and County Commissioner Meetings.
- Staff members are encouraged to serve on committees and other organizations of their choosing to be actively involved within the community.
- INCA will participate in community events and encourage staff members to volunteer time to their community.
- Programs will post promotional flyers and information throughout the year that focuses on their program. Including but not limited to the following.
  - JAMM Transit - fare rates and hours of operation.
  - Head Start - enrollment opportunities
  - RSVP - volunteer opportunities
  - General - various promotions, fundraising, and other agency projects
- INCA's website will be used to promote programs, services, activities, and events throughout the area. It will also provide accurate and up-to-date information regarding current programs and services to continually educate and advocate to the public on available resources both offered by the agency and within the communities.
- Social media will be:
  - Maintained by designated staff members who will actively promote programs, services, activities, and events
  - Utilized to promote various time relevant agency priorities including but not limited to job opportunities, program promotions, service activities, fundraising, agency publications, and more.
  - Utilized as a communication tool for public seeking additional agency information.
  - Staff will be encouraged to share promotions, photos, and posts to increase community reached.

### **Documentation Required**

The appropriate grant application or program director will maintain information regarding public forums and input sessions which will include proofs of advertisements, agendas, and sign-in sheets.

Newsletters will highlight special participation events and other actions throughout the community.

### **Definitions**

**Public Forum and Input Session** - an open meeting that allows for the discussion of grants, events, and programs within the agency.

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** - a person who has limited English speaking skills. (see LEP Policy)

**Title VI** - was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

**Affirmative Action** - an action or policy favoring those who tend to suffer from discrimination, especially in relation to employment or education; positive discrimination.

**Equal Opportunity** - the policy of treating employees and others without discrimination, especially on the basis of their sex, race, or age.

### **Dissemination of Policy**

The policy will be made available to all employees through the agency's website. The agency will educate and train employees and supervisors regarding the policy and any conduct that could constitute a violation of the policy.