

Relevant Definitions and Programs

There are many definitions of cultural competence and related terminology. The Coalition of Latino Executive Directors and Programs has adopted, and offers the following definitions for the purpose of establishing a framework within which to understand and implement the elements of cultural competence in Santa Cruz County.

- ❑ ***Access:*** The promotion and availability of services to individuals and families in the agency's target area.
- ❑ ***Culture:*** Culture is a system of values which motivates individual behavior, social integration, and customs as influenced by one's orientation to life; family structure; race; ethnicity; national origin; language; education; art and music; food; spirituality/beliefs; class/socioeconomic status; acculturation; politics; gender and sexual orientation.
- ❑ ***Multi-Cultural:*** Multi-cultural implies serving several different cultures by way of responding to the many sub-cultures within a population, looking beyond just race and class. Sub-culture is defined as a population within the target group with distinct characteristics and needs.
- ❑ ***Competency:*** A required level of knowledge, skills and experience.
- ❑ ***Cultural Competence:*** A set of skills, knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together within a system or organization/agency that enables that system to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
- ❑ ***Culturally Competent Community Based Organization:*** A community based organization that acknowledges and incorporates at all levels the importance of culture, the dynamics that result from cultural differences, and the expansion of cultural knowledge. Moreover, an organization's ability to adapt their services to meet culturally unique needs, communicate effectively, and work with someone from a particular culture with honor, respect and sufficient knowledge, skills and experience.