

**TOWN OF SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT
RESOLUTION AFFIRMING HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUSION, AND COMMUNITY
COMMITMENT**

Drafted: 20th day of April, 2026

WHEREAS, the Town of Shaftsbury recognizes that our community is composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and life experiences; and

WHEREAS, all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights, as affirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and such rights are inherent and not granted by governments; and

WHEREAS, the Select Board previously adopted a Declaration of Inclusion on February 6, 2023, condemning discrimination in all its forms and committing to fair and equal treatment for all; and

WHEREAS, the Town has affirmed its commitment to protecting constitutional and human rights, including due process and equal protection, regardless of citizenship status, national origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, the Town seeks to create an environment in which every resident feels safe, respected, and included, and has equitable access to town services, public spaces, and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Town acknowledges the concerns of its residents regarding human rights conditions and the ethical implications of governmental actions at all levels; and

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes the existence and vulnerability of stateless individuals and affirms that no person should live without rights, recognition, or a sense of belonging.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Select Board of the Town of Shaftsbury hereby affirms its commitment to the following principles:

1. Commitment to Equality and Inclusion

The Town condemns all forms of discrimination and pledges to foster a community in which all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

2. Rights-Based Governance

The Town will strive to incorporate human rights principles—including participation, accountability, and non-discrimination—into its policies, services, and decision-making processes.

3. Access and Opportunity

The Town will endeavor to ensure that all residents are welcomed and have equitable access to municipal services, public spaces, and civic participation.

4. Protection of Fundamental Rights

The Town affirms the importance of fundamental human rights, including access to housing, healthcare, education, environmental safety, and equal protection under the law.

5. Community Safety and Belonging

The Town commits to ensuring that all residents, regardless of background or status, may live in safety and with full recognition of their humanity and rights.

6. Ethical Governance Commitment

To the extent consistent with its authority, fiduciary responsibilities, and administrative capacity, the Town will strive to ensure that its actions, policies, and procedures do not support or enable violations of human rights, including genocide or the denial of basic rights.

7. Recognition of Stateless Persons

The Town affirms that stateless individuals are members of the human community and supports efforts to promote their dignity, inclusion, and access to essential services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Shaftsbury encourages all residents, organizations, and institutions within the community to uphold these principles and to treat one another with respect and compassion in daily life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution reaffirms the Town's ongoing commitment to building an inclusive, just, and equitable community for all.

A reaffirmation of this Resolution will occur annually at the Select Board's Reorganizational Meeting.

An annual assessment of any implementation of commitments within this Resolution, including, but not limited to, quasi-judicial boards, including actions of the Development Review Board, any major fiscal changes, and other legal proceedings, will take place at the next meeting of the Board following the Reorganization Meeting.