

Name of Policy:	Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy
Adoption by Council:	9 August 2022
Last Review Date:	August 2023
Review Timeframe:	3 years
Next Scheduled Review Date:	August 2026
Related Legislation:	<i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth); Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW); Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth); Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth); Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth); Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).</i>
Associated Policies/Documents:	Code of Conduct; Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedure; Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure; Privacy Management Plan, Respect, Fair Treatment & Wellbeing @ MidCoast Council (EEO and Wellbeing Management Plan); Bullying Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy; Domestic Violence Support Policy; Flexible Working Framework.
Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy and Performance Manager

1. Policy Objective

1.1. This policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* (**'the Act'**) and supports the Act's objectives to:

- eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital or domestic status and disability in councils, and
- promote equal employment opportunity for women, members of racial minorities and persons with disabilities in councils.

1.2. Through its "Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy", Council will ensure all policies, procedures and practices are free from discrimination and we develop and maintain an organisational culture where we value everyone for who they are and treat them fairly and with dignity and respect.

2. Commencement of Policy

2.1. This policy commenced on 1 July 2022..

3. Coverage

3.1. This policy applies to:

- all staff, job applicants, student placements, contractors, sub-contractors and volunteers and applies at all Council workplaces, including whilst staff are attending after-hours work- related functions, conferences, training etc
- how Council provides services to customers and how it interacts with members of the public.

4. Strategic Plan Link

- 4.1. Section 428 of the *Local Government Act* requires Council to prepare an Annual Report which includes a statement of activities undertaken by the Council to implement its EEO Management Plan.
- 4.2. The inclusion of EEO and diversity strategies in Council's Workforce and EEO Management Plans strengthens understanding of these issues and facilitates the integration of solutions into business practices.

5. Policy Statement

- 5.1. Council is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and to nurturing an inclusive, fair, safe, and healthy working environment.
- 5.2. We will develop and maintain an organisational culture where we value everyone for who they are and treat them fairly with dignity and respect.
- 5.3. All employment practices, including recruitment and selection, training and professional development, promotion and transfer will be based solely on the merit of the individual against specific job requirements. Existing and potential employees will not be discriminated against in their employment on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, pregnancy, marital or domestic status, age, disability, political affiliation or opinion, gender identity, sexual preference, carers responsibility, union affiliation, HIV/Aids status.
- 5.4. Council will implement reasonable adjustments to the workplace where required.

6. Principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and Fair Treatment

- 6.1. Equal Employment Opportunity and Fair Treatment is about:
- fair practices in the workplace
 - management decisions being made without bias
 - recognition of, and respect for, the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers
 - Employment practices which result in staff satisfaction, commitment to the job and the delivery of quality services to customers.
- 6.2. All staff are entitled to:
- recruitment/selection and training/development decisions based on merit.
 - work free from discrimination, bullying and harassment
 - the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised
 - make requests for reasonable flexibility in working arrangements, especially where requested to accommodate their family responsibilities,

disability, religious beliefs or culture.

7. Objectives & Actions

7.1 The objectives of the EEO Management Plan are:

- Be a welcoming employer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Support women in the workforce and increase opportunities for women in leadership
- Be a welcoming and flexible employer for those with a disability
- Nurture and inclusive workplace
- Eliminate bullying from our workplace.

7.2 The following actions will be put in place to achieve these objectives:

Objective 1	Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Be a welcoming employer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Develop an Aboriginal Employment Strategy	X			
	Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training		X		
Objective 2	Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Support women in the workforce and increase opportunities for women in leadership	Develop better parental leave experiences	X			
	Create a permanent EOI link for women looking to return to the workforce	X			
	Use data to track salary information and promotion rates	X			
	Establish a mentoring program aimed at progressing the careers of high-potential female talent		X		
	Promote awareness and use of Council's Flexible Working Framework	X	X	X	X
Objective 3	Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Be a welcoming and flexible employer for those with a disability	Undertake an audit by the Australian National Disability Network on disability access to recruitment processes	X			
	Participate in the Australian Network on Disability's <i>Disability Confident Recruiter</i> program	X			
	Include disability awareness in staff induction	X			
	Explore opportunities for MidCoast Assist participants to sit on recruitment panels for the service		X		

	Explore disability awareness training for front-of-house employees	X			
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Objective 4	Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Nurture an inclusive workplace	Enable management and employee access to courses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creating inclusive culture - employee value proposition - job crafting - manager to coach 	X			
	Continue Council's Enterprise Based Training Scheme	X	X	X	X
	Implement Respect, Fair Treatment & Wellbeing Training for all employees		X		

Objective 5	Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination from our workplace	Implement a bullying, harassment and discrimination prevention policy	X			
	Implement Code of Conduct Training for all employees	X			

8. Key Expectations and Responsibilities

General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that this policy and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy is implemented. • Ensure all employees comply with the requirements of this policy. • Ensure regular reporting and auditing on this policy and the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy • Role model appropriate standards of behaviour. • Support Directors, Managers and Supervisors to lead employees in their understanding of and compliance with all Council policies, procedures and Code of Conduct. • Support employees in the workplace to ensure that employees who raise concerns will have them managed fairly and equitably.
Directors, Managers and Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role model appropriate standards of behaviour. • Take steps to educate and make staff aware of their obligations under this policy and the law. • Demonstrate the principles of equal employment opportunity in all employment related activities. • Intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour. • Act fairly to resolve issues and enforce workplace behavioural standards, making sure relevant parties are heard. • Support staff to resolve complaints informally if appropriate with reference to the MCC Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedure.
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy and the Code of Conduct. • Offer support to people who experience discrimination, bullying or sexual harassment, including providing information about how to make a complaint. • Avoid gossip and respect the confidentiality of grievance handling procedures. • Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect. • Not victimise staff who raise an issue or make a complaint.

Strategy & Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that this policy and the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy is implemented. • Ensure employees comply with the requirements of this policy. • Ensure regular reporting and auditing on this policy and the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and Fair Treatment Policy. • Provide support and procedural advice to employees and Directors, Managers and Supervisors in relation to the resolution of complaints regarding unlawful discrimination and equal employment opportunity. • Ensure matters raised are assessed or investigated without bias and adhere to the principles of fairness, confidentiality and the rights and responsibilities of all parties.
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