



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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Authorised By	John Scarce	General Manager		20 April 2023

Document Revision History	
Date adopted by Council:	18 April 2023
Minute Number:	56/04/23
Revision Number:	
Review Date:	See item 8 of this Policy
Date adopted by Council:	
Minute Number:	
Next Review:	
Revision Number:	
Review Date:	
Date adopted by Council:	
Minute Number:	

April 2023

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1. Policy Scope

This policy applies to full-time, part-time, casual, temporary, fixed-term and maximum-term Council employees and includes apprentices, trainees, labour hire employees, student on work experience, volunteers, Councillors and potential applicants for employment at Murrumbidgee Council.

2. Definitions

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) means that all persons, regardless of protected attributes i.e gender, race, color, age, marital or parental status, sexual preference, disability or religious belief, have the right to be given fair consideration for a job, or job related benefits, such as higher duties, training and development opportunities. That all employment and promotion decisions are made on merit.

Merit means assessing each person's skills and abilities against the needs of the job, and disregarding unlawful personal characteristics that are irrelevant to the job. Merit recognises experience gained both inside and outside formal employment.

Discrimination is the unfair or less favourable treatment of employees or job applications based on actual or assumed interpretations of their, or an associate's, protected attributes.

Protected attributes include:

- Gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or inter sex status
- Pregnancy
- Breastfeeding
- Race or ethno-religious background
- Marital or domestic status
- Disability, including infectious diseases
- Homosexuality and transgender
- Gender
- Age
- Carer's responsibilities
- Non-English speaking background

3. Policy Objective

Everyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, marital or parental status, sexual preference, disability or cultural background and beliefs, among other attributes, have the right to be given fair consideration for employment or employee related benefits.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Murrumbidgee Council has a workplace which provides equality of opportunity and makes employment decisions which are free from unlawful discrimination.

4. Policy Statement

The EEO Policy is a commitment by Murrumbidgee Council to create a workplace that is fair and inclusive, and to build a workforce which reflects the diversity of the Murrumbidgee Council community.

Council recognises that in order to be successful, it must attract and retain a variety of people with diverse skills, experience or backgrounds. Council's commitment and awareness of diversity is reflected in its values, policies and practices.

Council acknowledge and are committed to fostering good internal and external relationships by ensuring that the diversity and equal employment opportunity that exists among the workforce, clients and the community is safeguarded and acknowledged.

The principles of EEO and underpinning legislation will ensure that people are selected for positions on merit, as well as being provided with equitable access to employment, professional development and workplace participation.

The EEO provides the framework for Council to achieve:

- A skilled workforce that reflects the diversity of the local community and leads to continuous improvement in service delivery
- A workplace free from discrimination and harassment
- A work environment that values and utilises the contributions of workers with diverse skills, backgrounds and experiences through improved awareness of the benefits of workforce diversity and successful management of diversity
- Awareness for all workers of their rights and responsibilities with regard to fairness, equality and respect for all of diversity
- Its core staff values of Trust, Honesty, Teamwork and Respect

5. Complaints Management

Complaints relating to the EEO Policy will be referred to the People and Culture Officer to action in accordance with provisions of the Local Government (State) Award 2020.

6. Responsibilities

General Manager

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Ensure appropriate systems, processes, policies and procedures are in place to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination or harassment in employment
- Ensure all staff comply with Council's EEO policy, and within legal obligations, under relevant legislation

Directors, Managers and Supervisors

It is the responsibility of Directors, Managers and Supervisors to:

- There is acceptance of differences, ensuring all workers are treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- Ensuring all decisions relating to appointment and career development through yearly performance appraisals are made without regard to any matters other than the individual's inherent ability to carry out the job
- Reasonable accommodations are considered and provided where necessary
- Inappropriate attitudes or behaviors are confronted. Council will treat seriously any instance of inappropriate behaviour
- Promote and ensure compliance with equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation, policies and associated procedures
- Report any allegations or breaches to the General Manager or the People and Culture Officer

Council Employees

It is the responsibility of Council employees to:

- At all times behave in a manner which is consistent with Council's Values and Code of Conduct
- Comply with the terms of the EEO Policy
- Respect individual differences and contributions to a workplace that are fair and equitable
- Notify their supervisor and/or the People and Culture Officer of any allegations or breaches

People and Culture Officer

It is the responsibility of the People and Culture Officer to:

- Review and update Council's EEO Policy, ensuring it complies with relevant legislation
- Provide advice, training and support to all Council's employees
- Ensure recruitment and selection practices, and access to training and internal progression opportunities, are conducted in accordance with the principles of equal employment opportunity and relevant policies, procedures and legislation
- Ensure systems and processes are being complied with for detecting and responding to reports of discrimination or harassment.

7. References

- *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)*

- *Equal Employment Opportunity Act (Commonwealth Authorities) 1987*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Murrumbidgee Council Code of Conduct*
- *Murrumbidgee Council Staff Education and Training Policy*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)*

8. Policy Review

This Policy:

- To be reviewed within the first year of the new Council term;
- May be reviewed and amended at any time at Council's discretion (or if legislative or State Government policy changes occur).



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

Objective

To demonstrate Murrumbidgee Council's commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity (EEO) and coordinate and manage EEO practices within Council.

Strategies to deliver EEO practices in this Management Plan are:

- Communication and awareness training
- Compliant recruitment, selection and appointment processes
- Promotion of workforce diversity
- Fair and equitable employment practices
- Review and evaluation of EEO practices

1. Communication and Awareness Training

Objective:	All employees are aware of EEO principles, their rights, and responsibilities	
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>All employees are informed, trained, and accountable for EEO</i>
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>EEO principles are communicated to the community</i>

Actions	Responsibility	Partnership	Target Date	Performance Measure
All new employees are trained in EEO during induction	Employees and People and Culture Officer	People and Culture Officer	Within 1 week of employee commencing work	All new employees have participated in EEO Training
EEO Policy and Management Plan provided to all new starters	People and Culture Officer	People and Culture Officer	Prior to commencement	EEO Policy and Management Plan are provided to all new starters prior to commencement
Develop and implement EEO questionnaire to be completed by new starters	People and Culture Officer	People and Culture Officer	May 2023	Questionnaire developed and implemented
Inform all employees of the EEO Policy, rights, responsibilities and Management Plan	People and Culture Officer Management Consultative Committee		Ongoing	All employees complete compulsory training annually
Employees can participate in decisions regarding EEO via Consultative Committee	People and Culture Officer Consultative Committee		Ongoing	Consultative Committee consulted on relevant EEO issues
Include EEO responsibilities in job descriptions	People and Culture Officer		Ongoing	EEO responsibilities included in all job descriptions

2. Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Processes

Objective:	Recruitment, selection and appointment processes are non-discriminatory	
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Recruitment practices are in accordance with EEO principles</i>
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Selection and appointment of employees is based on merit.</i>

Actions	Responsibility	Partnership	Target Date	Performance Measure
Recruitment practices are reviewed to ensure EEO compliance	People and Culture Officer		In line with Policy review cycle	Review conducted
All employees who participate in selection panels must have completed EEO training	People and Culture Officer		Prior to participating in recruitment process	All panel members have completed
EEO principles to be followed in all aspects of the employment process, including shortlisting, interviews, referee checking and pre-employment medicals	People and Culture Officer		At all times during the recruitment process	All panel members have completed EEO training
Advised position follow EEO principles	People and Culture Officer		When advertising positions	All position advertisements comply with EEO principles
Position descriptions follow EEO principles	People and Culture Officer		Upon review of positions description	All positions comply with EEO principles
Career development opportunities are offered in accordance with EEO principles	People and Culture Officer			EEO principles are complied with

3. Workforce Diversity

Objective:	To provide the opportunity for diversity in the workforce	
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>To develop practices to encourage diversity in the workforce</i>
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>To improve access and participation in the workforce for targeted groups</i>

Actions	Responsibility	Partnership	Target Date	Performance Measure
Provide work experience opportunities to improve employment prospects for EEO target groups	People and Culture Officer	Managers/Supervisor	Ongoing	Work experience provided for target groups
Provide traineeships and apprenticeships for EEO target groups	People and Culture Officer	People and Culture	Ongoing	Traineeships and apprenticeships are provided

4. Employment Practices

Objective:	Employment practices are fair, equitable and non-discriminatory	
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>EEO principles are incorporated into employment practices</i>
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Discrimination, bullying and harassment not tolerated in the workplace</i>

Actions	Responsibility	Partnership	Target Date	Performance Measure
All employment related policies, practices and training are compliant with EEO	People and Culture Officer		Ongoing	Polices comply with EEO principles
Family and carer responsibilities are recognised in accordance with legislation	Managers/Supervisors	People and Culture Officer	Ongoing	Family and carer responsibilities are recognised when appropriate with employee and operational needs

5. Implementation and Evaluation

Objective:	EEO Management Plan is implemented, regularly reviews and evaluated	
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>EEO practices are implemented, reviewed and evaluated</i>
	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>EEO Policy and Management Plan are reviewed and evaluated</i>

Actions	Responsibility	Partnership	Target Date	Performance Measure
Collect and record statistics and other information to develop EEO programs and monitor effectiveness	People and Culture Officer		Annual	Data collected and reported to Executive Meeting
Annually review the EEO Management Plan	People and Culture Officer	Consultative Committee	In line with the Policy review process	Executive Meeting
Report annually on EEO Management Plan, and measure against objectives	People and Culture Officer	Managers	Annual	
Seek advice from all employees as part of the review process	Consultative Committee			