

Council Policy – Equal Employment Opportunity

Responsible Directorate	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Business Unit/s	Human Resources
Responsible Officer	Manager Human Resources
Affected Business Unit/s	All

Objective

The Shire recognises their legal obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, in relation to anti-discrimination legislation and ensures that all employment practices will follow the criteria for providing employment opportunities that are based solely on the principle of merit and equity.

The Shire prohibits discrimination of any type and ensures equal opportunities to employees and applicants without regard to race, age, sex, marital status, pregnancy, political conviction, religious conviction, impairment, family responsibilities or family status, sexual orientation, gender history or any other characteristic covered by law.

Scope

This policy applies to all elected members, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and all employees at the Shire, and where relevant, those performing work (paid and unpaid) for the Shire, including but not limited to direct employees, contractors, labour hire, volunteers and those performing work through a third party.

Policy Statement

Council and the Shire affirm its commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity (EEO).

The Shire's commitment

EEO at the Shire means the Shire will ensure that all policies, procedures, and actions reflect and value the social and cultural diversity within the Shire and the community it serves through:

- Structured recruitment and selection policies that are designed to select the best candidate based solely on qualifications, skills, competency and experience.
- The implementation and constant monitoring of EEO policies to ensure that social and cultural backgrounds of all members of the organisation and customers are recognised and respected.
- Learning and development opportunities are linked to the future needs of the Shire.

- The adherence to the Shire's organisational values that support our commitment to respect, fairness, dignity, diversity, and equity.
- Implementation and constant monitoring of a zero-tolerance approach, identifying the responsibilities of all contractors, employees, managers, directors, the CEO and elected members of their rights and responsibilities in respect of EEO.
- Provision of equal employment opportunity by making decisions concerning all members of the organisation based on merit and fairness only.
- The requirement that all employees are required to participate in EEO training and managers, line supervisors, directors and the CEO receive formal training on managing EEO complaints and understanding the Shire's grievance management process.
- The implementation of a structured grievance management process, by which all EEO complaints are investigated.
- Provide an enjoyable, challenging, involving and harmonious working environment for all members of the organisation where each can progress to the extent of their ability based solely on merit.

The Shire is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity. The Shire acknowledges and celebrates diversity and commits to actively and flexibly seeking to appoint and accommodate the unique needs of many different employees.

The Shire is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of direct and indirect discrimination and providing an environment where all employees are treated in a fair and equitable manner in all decisions and processes. This includes providing equal access to improving the skills and competency levels of all employees, so they have equal access to further employment opportunities or career path progression.

Environment

The Shire recognises that when discrimination occurs in the workplace, job satisfaction, morale and productivity suffer. A healthy and safe work environment free from discrimination is a primary objective of the Shire.

Diversity

The Shire appreciates the inherent value in a diverse workforce. Diversity may result from a range of factors including origin, age, gender, race, cultural heritage, religion, lifestyle, education, physical ability, appearance, language, or other factors.

Awareness

Upon appointment, all employees are to be given a copy of this policy. It is also readily accessible electronically on the Shire's website and intranet.

Monitoring

Employment related practices are to be periodically reviewed in accordance with this policy, with consideration of practices covering:

- Recruitment,
- Conditions of employment,
- Appointment, promotion, and transfer; and
- Training and development.

Lodging a complaint

Any member of the organisation who feels that they have being discriminated against, or witnessed a fellow member being discriminated against, is expected to report the alleged behaviour as follows:

Employees will be required to immediately report any such behaviour to their line supervisor or manager. In the case that the alleged behaviour is in respect of their direct line supervisor, the employee should advise their director, or a member of the Human Resources Team.

Elected members will be required to immediately report any such behaviour to the Shire President. In the case that the alleged behaviour is in respect of the Shire President, the elected member should report the behaviour to the Deputy President.

Consequences of breaching EEO

Any breach of equal employment and anti-discrimination legislation by an employee of the Shire will be a serious breach, and the individual concerned will be required to participate in the Shire's performance counselling process. The outcome of a breach may result in the employee facing disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any breach of equal employment legislation by a contractor of the Shire will be a serious breach, and the contractor will be required to explain their actions to the CEO. The outcome of a breach may result in the contractor providing a written apology or the contract being terminated for breach of conditions.

Any breach of equal employment legislation by an elected member of the Shire will be a serious breach, and as such the elected member may be required to participate in disciplinary action.

Responsibilities

The Human Resources Team will be responsible for:

- The collection, analysis, reporting and maintenance of EEO statistics.
- The writing, distribution, and maintenance of this policy and the EEO Management Plan in accordance with the relevant legislation.

- The provision of up to date and relevant EEO information to management.
- Design, distribution, analysis, and reporting of employee survey data.
- Educating employees at all levels on their EEO rights and responsibilities.
- Championing a zero-tolerance policy on any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
- Providing support and advice on EEO matters.

Definitions

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics.

Relevant policies/documents

Code of Conduct for Employees

Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

CEO Directive – Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

CEO Directive – Employee Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

CEO Directive – Grievance Investigation and Resolution

Relevant legislation/local laws

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Section 5.40 of the Local Government Act 1995

Gender Reassignment Act 2000

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)

Australian Human Rights Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Office use only

Relevant delegations	Nil		
Council adoption	Date	13 December 2022	Resolution # 171/2022
Reviewed/modified	Date		Resolution #
Next review due	Date	2024	