



GUNNEDAH SHIRE COUNCIL

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program aims to ensure that all employees receive fair and equitable treatment in the workplace, by providing an equal chance when applying for employment, training and promotion and in their work conditions.

In particular, EEO Programs address the needs of people who have been disadvantaged in the past, ie people of non-English speaking backgrounds, aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, women and people with disabilities.

EEO Programs also benefit everyone in an organisation by providing a wider range of jobs and training opportunities, better chance to use their skills and qualifications and the opportunity to gain greater career development and achieve job satisfaction.

The main aim of an EEO Program is to increase harmony and efficiency in the workplace, by utilising the talents and skills of the workforce, which can only be achieved by eliminating discrimination.

The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, has outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, sex, marital status, physical impairment, intellectual impairment, homosexuality or age in employment, and in the provision of goods and services. As an employer, Gunnedah Shire Council is bound by this legislation. The implementation of the plan will be monitored and it is important that the EEO Management Plan has the support, cooperation and commitment of all staff.

24 July 2015

Colin Forman

Acting General Manager

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Gunnedah Shire Council is committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of employees are fully utilised and that no employee or job applicant received less favourable treatment on the grounds of race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), sex, marital status, pregnancy, physical and intellectual impairment, homosexuality or age by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. In addition, Council is committed to promoting equal employment opportunity for all employees.

Gunnedah Shire Council will:

1. Fulfill its social responsibility towards employees and the community.
2. Encourage active participation of all employees in the equal opportunity planning and implementation process.
3. Review periodically all selection criteria and procedures to maintain a system where individuals are selected, promoted and treated solely on the basis of their merit and abilities which are appropriate to the job.
4. Seek to give employees equal opportunity and encouragement to progress within the organisation by implementation of the ongoing EEO Management Plan.
5. Distribute and publicise the statement throughout the organisation and elsewhere, as appropriate.
6. Provide, within the Management Plan, to all employees education which may improve their prospects within the organisation and which will enhance employees' understanding of the need for an equal opportunity program.
7. Recognise its legal obligations and subsequent amendments under the:
 - a) Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
 - b) Age Discrimination Act 2004
 - c) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
 - d) Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 - e) Racial Discrimination Act 1975
 - f) Sex Discrimination Act 1984
 - g) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
 - h) Local Government Act 1993

The overall responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and for implementing an ongoing program of action to make the policy fully operative is vested in the General Manager. However, it is the responsibility of all employees to accept their personal involvement in the practical application of this plan. Specific responsibility falls upon management, supervisors and employees professionally involved in recruitment, employee administration and training to ensure that the plan is upheld.

1. COMMUNICATION AND RAISING AWARENESS			
1.1 Objective	To ensure all management and employees understand EEO principles, their responsibilities in relation to them, and the EEO Management Plan and its implementation.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop EEO awareness for all employees by using a selection of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) conducting EEO awareness courses for relevant staff and elected members; b) include segments on EEO in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ employee handbooks. ▪ Incorporating EEO principles in relevant Council policies and publications as appropriate. 2. Identify barriers that affect employees and ensure all staff have equal access to Council information (eg skills, use of visual aids, status/type of job, etc) and opportunities to undertake new tasks/ responsibilities and participate in activities/events. 3. Identify means of internal communication in Council and ensure that all employees have access to relevant information. 4. Review Council literature to ensure it conforms to EEO principles. 5. Ensure that knowledge of EEO is a requirement of all job specifications. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department Department Heads
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Check that awareness raising activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ why EEO is good human resources management; ▪ how EEO relates to the individual worker; ▪ information on the elimination of harassment; ▪ persons responsible for EEO in Council; ▪ what an EEO Management Plan is; and ▪ how employees can be involved in the implementation process. b) Check that all employees receive material on EEO. c) To assess content/knowledge, conduct evaluation at the conclusion of awareness raising/training sessions. 		

1.2 Objective	To ensure that all levels of management personal involved in EEO implementation have a sound understanding of EEO and are aware of their responsibilities under Council’s EEO Policy.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All management/ supervisory staff and personnel with responsibility to implement EEO.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and conduct training/retaining for supervisors on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harassment and dealing with grievances. ▪ Implementing EEO in the workplace. 2. Integrate EEO concepts and case studies into supervisor and management training programs. 3. Ensure regular meetings between senior management and those responsible for implementing the EEO policy to discuss the progress. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department EMT
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Monitor training courses by numbers attending and feedback. b) Examine cases where harassment is given as reason for resignation (from exit questionnaires/interviews). c) Monitor progress to assess understanding of EEO by management/supervisor and progress of EEO implementation. d) Monitor incidents of harassment via statistical reports (see 3.5.2). 		

2. CONSULTATION			
2.1 Objective	To ensure the active participation of employees and key stake holders such as professional associations in decision making in the EEO program.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
Diversity Committee	Invite comment and input from Council employees and their representatives regarding implementation of the EEO policy through the Diversity Committee.	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department
EVALUATION	a) Check all staff are aware of the Diversity Committee role in monitoring EEO policy implementation and feedback. b) Review representatives on the Diversity Committee annually to ensure that all work areas within Council are represented, especially staff from EEO target groups. c) Engage stake holders as leveraging suggestions for best practice and sharing our journey.		

3. PERSONNEL, POLICIES AND PRACTICES			
3.1 Objective	Recruitment and Selection		
3.1.1	To ensure all management and employees understand EEO principles, their responsibilities in relation to them, and the EEO Management Plan and its implementation.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
Directors Managers Overseers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review practices and procedures and establish formal policies, where necessary, based on EEO principles, for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job advertisements/where to advertise. ▪ Selection panel membership. ▪ Reviewing applications. ▪ Interviewing. ▪ Placement and induction. ▪ Career path planning. 2. Ensure that advertisements for vacant positions offer potential applicants equal employment opportunities by noting that “Council is an EEO employer” on all advertisements. 3. Removal of gender based languages from advertisements and recruitment correspondence. 4. Ensure that all advertisements are checked prior to publication for adherence to EEO principles. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Check that all relevant specific actions have been completed. b) Set specific strategies to ensure any problems identified are addressed and corrected. c) Evaluate existing and all new policies and procedures for EEO commitment. 		

3.1.2	To ensure that the Selection Panel members are trained to implement the principles of equal employment opportunities in the employment process.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees who are members of Selection Panels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that merit selection training contains a module on EEO principles. 2. Ensure that all employees who participate in a selection panel have attended a relevant training course. 3. Ensure that all selection panels comprise of not less than three members including one female and one male member. 4. A representative of the target group being recruited from is included on the selection panel. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Advisor
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Monitor numbers of employees attending courses provided. b) Monitor the compliance of selection panels in meeting EEO principles. 		

3.1.3	To ensure that Council premises and facilities are accessible to employees with physical disabilities.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
Employees with physical disabilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the level of funding to purchase equipment, including computer related equipment, as the need arises. 2. Assess and make minor work site modifications as required to accommodate the needs for individual employees who have a physical disability. 3. Ensure that employees with disabilities have appropriate access to Council buildings and work stations, as required. 4. Ensure compliance with required actions involving local government in the NDS NSW Plan item 3(a) Employability aimed at enhancing the employment, development and retention of employees with disabilities 	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager
EVALUATION	Progress on modifications, as necessary, be reported to the Diversity Committee.		

3.2 Objective	Appointment, Promotion and Transfer		
3.2.1	To review/implement appointment, promotion and transfer policies and practices to ensure they conform with EEO principles and demonstrate fair practice.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine application forms to ensure language and terminology is non-discriminatory and that the information required is relevant to the position. 2. Work redesign should be examined to ensure it meets the needs of employees and Council, is introduced in a non-discriminatory way and elimination of sex-stereotyped jobs/work areas. 3. Review performance appraisal and job evaluation procedures to ensure that they are non-discriminatory in content. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department Diversity Committee
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Check that all relevant specific actions have been completed. b) Set specific strategies to ensure problems are addressed and corrected. c) Ensure relevant policies are examined for EEO commitment. d) Ensure all appointment, promotion and transfer policies and procedures are documented. 		

3.2.2	To ensure that staff are selected for higher duties based on their skill set and performance.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	Review current policies/guidelines on acting in higher positions. These should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to ensure that arrangements are based on merit or the development needs of employees; ▪ The need to advertise any long term positions and call for expressions of interest. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department
EVALUATION	Monitor acting/relief opportunities in accordance with reviewed policy.		

3.2.3 To encourage the representation of staff in positions in which they are currently under-represented in Council.			
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Groups that are underrepresented such as the following when identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non English speaking background workers ▪ Women ▪ People with limited literacy skills ▪ Indigenous groups ▪ Ethnic groups ▪ Aged workers ▪ Single parents 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify development opportunities for target group members within Council such as indigenous and female employees to participate in annual leadership development programs. This is to facilitate an increase in participation in management and supervisory roles. 2. Identify/review job categories traditionally dominated by target group members to determine if such positions warrant redesign and provide opportunities for these employees. 3. Monitor training/development to ensure that target group members have equal access to skills development and promotion opportunities 4. In Particular for indigenous employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand where Indigenous applicants find out about Council job opportunities and target advertising effectively. ▪ Encourage Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to apply for positions in Gunnedah Council ▪ Be aware that Indigenous applicants may perform differently at interview due to cultural expectations and provide training to Merit Based panels ▪ Managers play a key role in employee retention and engagement, and should see people management as a key responsibility. ▪ Ensure a culturally appropriate induction process and supportive workplace contribute to retention. ▪ Understanding why Indigenous employees leave Gunnedah Council to address any negative workplace factors. 	<p>Immediate Ongoing</p>	<p>Human Resources Department Diversity Committee</p>
EVALUATION	Report of the Diversity Committee on an annual basis.		

3.3 Objective	Training and Staff Development		
3.3.1	To review training/development plan to ensure conformation with EEO principles and to increase staff participation in training plan, with emphasis on EEO target groups.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review annually Council’s Training Plan which provides for training/development, and allocation of resources. ▪ Examine participation of staff. ▪ Implement formal training plan for all Council staff. ▪ Examine in-house and external training courses to ensure they are non-discriminatory and consistent with EEO principles. 2. Employee Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Career path planning and counseling available to all employees. ▪ Availability of training and development courses for all employees that result from competency assessment and performance appraisals. ▪ Promote the availability of tertiary courses, relevant to individual’s needs. ▪ Provide targeted development opportunities for underrepresented minority groups such as indigenous and female employees to facilitate career growth on an annual basis toward areas in management and supervision. 3. Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Check selection of participants for training/development is consistent with EEO principles. 4. Eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure eligibility requirements for training are appropriate. ▪ Ensure nomination and screening procedures for training does not disadvantage any group of employees. ▪ Monitor the participation rates for EEO target groups in training programs. 5. Rehabilitation/Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure procedures for rehabilitation/retraining within Council are administered fairly and do not disadvantage any group. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department

EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Check all relevant specific actions have been completed. b) Set specific strategies to ensure problems are addressed. c) Ensure all new and existing training/development procedures are examined for EEO commitment.
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3.4 Objective	Conditions of Service		
3.4.1	To develop/review conditions of employment to ensure they demonstrate fair practice conforming with EEO principles.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all employees are informed of conditions of employment through written documentation. 2. Ensure the continued development of staff manual detailing, among other things, conditions of employment. 3. Review as required current practices for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allowances and benefits. ▪ Work, health and safety. ▪ Rehabilitation. ▪ Part-time work. ▪ Maternity leave. ▪ Flexible hours/leave arrangements for staff with child care needs. 	Ongoing	Human Resources Department
EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Check that all relevant actions have been completed. b) Set specific strategies to ensure problems are addressed. c) Ensure all existing procedures are examined for EEO commitment. 		

3.5 Objective	Bullying, Harassment and Grievance Procedures		
3.5.1	To further develop, promote and implement an accessible and effective grievance policy and procedure.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all staff are informed of and understand grievance procedures as per the Local Government (State) Award. 2. Ensure appropriate training for all identified Diversity Advisors and Supervisors in grievances to include this responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department Heads Managers Supervisors
EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Monitor utilisation and success rate of grievance handling system. b) Report on grievance action/resolution statistics as requested by the General Manager or Department Heads. 		

3.5.2	To ensure a discrimination and harassment free workplace.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policies or directives are in place that ensure that all employees know that harassment, including that of a sexual, racial or disability nature, is unacceptable and illegal behaviour and that instances of such behaviour may lead to disciplinary and/or legal action. 2. Include information for all staff on types of harassment in appropriate training courses. 	<p>Immediate Ongoing</p>	<p>General Manager Human Resources Manager</p>
EVALUATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human Resources Manager to monitor the extent of grievances related to harassment on a regular basis. 2. Document cases where harassment is given as a reason for resignation. 		

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION			
4.1 Objective	To ensure successful implementation of the EEO Management Plan by the allocation of clear responsibilities and adequate resources.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
Directors Managers Supervisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine which employees should have particular responsibilities in relation to the effective implementation of the Management Plan. Include responsibility for EEO implementation in job descriptions of all Directors, Managers and Supervisors. Selection criteria should also include knowledge of EEO and ability to apply it to staff management. Allocate sufficient staff and other resources to undertake actions outlined in the EEO Management Plan. 	On approval by Council	General Manager
EVALUATION	Report on adequacy of staffing and resources in the EEO Annual Report.		

4.2 Objective	To ensure Council's personnel records system complies with EEO principles.		
TARGET GROUP	SPECIFICATION	TARGET DATES	RESPONSIBILITY
All employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review EEO/privacy considerations in relation to current computerized payroll system including data requirements, address problems which might arise. Ensure confidentiality for access to personnel records. Review personnel system to ensure data required to monitor the EEO plan is included. 	Immediate Ongoing	Human Resources Department
EVALUATION	Review guidelines on an annual basis.		