

Equal Opportunity Policy

Policy number	GEN111	Version	1.0
Drafted by	Secretary	Approved by Committee on	09/02/2022
Responsible person	House Manager	Scheduled review date	Jan-2024

INTRODUCTION

Goonawarra Neighbourhood House Inc. recognises that Equal Employment Opportunity is a matter of employment obligation, social justice, and legal responsibility. It also recognises that prohibiting discriminatory policies and procedures is sound management practice.

This policy has been designed to facilitate the creation of a workplace culture that maximises organisational performance through employment decisions. These decisions will be based on real business needs without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions and will ensure that all decisions relating to employment issues are based on merit.

PURPOSE

This policy is designed to ensure that Goonawarra Neighbourhood House Inc. complies with all its obligations under the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation, including but not limited to:

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Cth
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Cth
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Cth
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 Cth
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Cth
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Vic

DEFINITIONS

Discrimination occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with an attribute unfavourably because of that attribute. It can also occur if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practise that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging persons with an attribute; and that is not reasonable.

Equal Opportunity consists of ensuring that all employees are given equal access to training, promotion, appointment, or any other employment-related issue without regard to any factor not related to their competency and ability to perform their duties.

Victimisation means subjecting, or threatening to subject, a person to any detriment because they have:

- asserted their rights under equal opportunity law.
- made a complaint.
- helped someone else make a complaint; or
- refused to do something because it would be discrimination, sexual harassment, or victimisation.

Policies can be established or altered only by the Committee of Management: **Procedures** may be altered by the House Manager.



POLICY

Goonawarra Neighbourhood House Inc. is an equal opportunity employer and will provide equality in employment for all people employed or seeking employment.

Every person will be given a fair and equitable chance to compete for appointment, promotion, or transfer, and to pursue their career as effectively as others.

Employment decisions relating to appointment, promotion and career development will be determined according to individual merit and competence.

Consistent with this, Goonawarra Neighbourhood House Inc. does not condone any form of unlawful discrimination or vilification, including that which relates to:

- gender
- pregnancy
- potential pregnancy
- marital/domestic status
- disability
- race, colour, national extraction, social origin, descent, and ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin
- age
- family responsibilities, family status, status as a parent or carer
- racial classification
- sexuality
- HIV/AIDS vilification
- religious belief or activity
- political belief or activity
- industrial activity
- employer association activity
- trade union activity
- physical features
- breastfeeding
- transsexuality
- transgender
- profession, trade, occupation or calling
- medical record; and

In all cases, no factors other than performance and competence are to be used as the basis for employment, performance assessment, training and development opportunities and promotions.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Discrimination & Harassment

Equal Opportunity Procedures

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RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the **House Manager** to ensure that:

- all staff understand and are committed to the principles and legislation relating to equal opportunity and applying it in the workplace.
- employment decisions relating to appointment, promotion and career development are determined according to individual merit and the individual's inherent ability to carry out the job.
- any matter which does not comply with the principles of equal opportunity is identified and addressed as promptly and sensitively as possible.
- immediate and appropriate steps are taken to minimise or eliminate unlawful harassment, discrimination, and bullying in the workplace; and
- the organisation has a workplace culture that encourages equal opportunity, and
- sets an example by their own behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the **Committee of Management** to ensure that:

- The House Manager is aware of and understands their obligations, responsibilities, and rights concerning equal opportunity.
- ongoing support and guidance are provided to the House Manager concerning equal opportunity principles and practice in the workplace.

It is the responsibility of all **employees, contractors, and volunteers** to ensure that they:

- comply with this policy and treat all colleagues and clients with respect and professionalism without regard to non-relevant criteria or distinctions
- refrain from engaging in discriminatory or harassing behaviour
- inform the House Manager or the Committee of Management if they believe that they (or someone else) have been treated unfairly.

PROCEDURES

Employees who believe they are being treated unfairly because of discrimination should promptly notify the House Manager or the Committee of Management.

Should a complaint of discrimination or harassment be made, it will be investigated in a confidential and procedurally fair manner. If proven, the person responsible will be disciplined. In serious cases, this may involve dismissal or criminal charges.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- GEN 101 Anti-Discrimination Policy
- GEN 114 Sexual Harassment Policy
- GEN 102 Bullying Policy
- GEN 103 Misconduct Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION

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