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Purpose

HNECC is committed to protecting the rights of workers to achieve their full potential in an environment which values and affirms diversity and is free from discrimination.

The purpose of this policy is to support and facilitate an inclusive environment that embraces all that makes us different and recognises the benefits that these differences make.

Scope

This policy covers all Employees, Contractors and Board Members. It is an expectation that all employees familiarise themselves with this policy.

Policy Statement

HNECC is committed to maintaining a supportive, healthy and productive work environment, free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation and to maintaining appropriate federal legislative commitments.

HNECC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that workers will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect whilst working with the organisation and will take all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise unlawful discrimination of workers in the workplace. We will implement and monitor specific policies, procedures and training programs to help minimise the scope and impact of discriminatory attitudes and practices in the workplace.

HNECC is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity which undertakes to:

- attract, retain and motivate employees from the widest possible pool of talent;
- foster a culture that reflects our values and is open to all;
- improve innovation, creativity and inspire critical thinking;
- create a dynamic environment that leads to higher performance and well-being and greater employee engagement and satisfaction;
- improve the connection between our people and the community we serve; and
- create an environment where workers are able to work effectively, without fear of discrimination.

Discrimination will not be tolerated by HNECC under any circumstances and may in fact be unlawful under State or Commonwealth law.

HNECC will endeavour to ensure that in the application of all company policies, practices and procedures, no discrimination takes place and that all employees enjoy equal access to opportunities within the organisation. The basis of employment decisions is consistent with the merit principle whereby only criteria related to the ability to do the job are used in selection. Affirmative action is compatible with the principle of appointment and promotion on the basis of merit ensuring equitable treatment of all applicants; and to provide a balanced representation of women and men across all occupational groupings and classifications and on all decision-making bodies. HNECC is committed to achieving the following EEO objectives:

- to ensure all employees are treated fairly;
- to fully utilise and develop the potential of every employee;
- to keep all policies and procedures consistent with EEO principles;

- to boost employee morale and motivation by increasing staff confidence in the fairness of our human resource practices and access to employment opportunities; and
- to ensure achievement of our objectives through our EEO program which includes the training of staff on EEO and related issues.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees, Managers and the company must aim to leverage the competitive edge that diversity provides us by:

- striving to create an inclusive environment respectful of all cultural backgrounds and beliefs, including by recognising and celebrating various multicultural events across the business;
- fostering a culture which supports and respects the values and needs of all individuals, regardless of their age;
- considering ability and not disability when we employ and promote people and aiming to create a physical and cultural environment which supports participation and reasonably accommodates special needs;
- ensuring recruitment and selection processes across all levels of HNECC are structured so that a diverse range of candidates are considered;
- actively reviewing HNECC's recruiting practices, policies and procedures to reduce bias, both conscious and unconscious, on a regular basis;
- educating each other on diversity and inclusion;
- implementing programs that:
 - are provided in a way that maximises fair and equitable access to all employees and seek to ensure that employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equal opportunity and diversity; and
 - assist in the development of a broader and more diverse pool of skilled and experienced employees and that, over time, will prepare them for senior management and board positions; and
- setting targets around diversity and inclusion.

References/Related Documents

HNECC Code of conduct

Equal Employment Opportunities

HNECC policies:

- Flexible working arrangements policy
- Leave policies
- Bullying and harassment policy
- Professional Development policy

Definitions

Diversity

Diversity encompasses differences in backgrounds, qualifications and experiences, and also differences in approach and viewpoints.

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination occurs when a person (or persons) is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances because of something that is special to that

individual or small group of people (an attribute). This can include but is not limited to, one or more of the following prohibited attributes:

- Sex
- Gender identity
- Marital status
- Sexual preference
- Lawful sexual orientation
- Pregnancy; or possibility of pregnancy
- Breastfeeding
- Family/carer's responsibilities
- Physical or intellectual disabilities or impairments which do not prevent the person doing the job
- Race, nationality, colour or ethnic origin
- Irrelevant Criminal or medical record (e.g. HIV)
- Religion
- Ethical belief
- Participation in an employee's association
- Physical features
- Industrial activity, and
- Age
- Political beliefs or activities

Types of discrimination:

- **Direct Discrimination** occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat a person with an attribute unfavourably because of that attribute for example, refusing to promote someone because of their gender, marital status or race.
- **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when a condition of employment is imposed which appears to be neutral, but has a disadvantageous effect on people in certain groups. For example, scheduling meetings regularly in the evenings or on weekends (where there is no operational requirement) may discriminate against people with family responsibilities.

The Fair Work Act 2009 also provides that in some circumstances, an action may not be considered discrimination. This includes where the action:

- is permissible under State or Territory anti discrimination laws
- is based on the inherent requirements of the particular position concerned
- is taken against a staff member of an institution run in accordance with religious beliefs, and the action is taken in good faith and to avoid injury to those religious beliefs.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Equal employment opportunity (EEO) means the absence of discrimination or less favourable treatment in employment based on attributes such as a person’s sex, age, race, disability, etc. In other words, a 'fair go' for all employees.

Document Control

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V1.0	Approved	Maureen Beckett	25/01/2016	Reviewed and approved for circulation

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