



Illawarra Venues Authority

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) POLICY

SUBJECT: Equal Employment Opportunity
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1. INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the principles of equity and justice, the Illawarra Venue Authority is committed to policies and programs, which ensure that persons possessing equivalent skills and qualification have an equal chance of obtaining a job and advancement.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) results when the person best qualified for a position is selected for that position without regard to irrelevant factors. In other words, any characteristic not related to job performance, such as a person's race, sex, age, marital status, physical impairment, intellectual impairment, or homosexuality, or transgender, HIV/AIDS must not be allowed to unlawfully impact on the selection process.

EEO refers to the right of every individual to be given fair consideration for a job for which that person is skilled and qualified.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is about:

- Making sure that workplaces are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, and
- Providing programs to assist members of EEO groups to overcome past or present disadvantage.

This means having workplace rules, policies, practices and behaviours that are fair and do not disadvantage people because they belong to particular groups. In such an environment, all workers are valued and respected and have opportunities to develop their full potential and pursue a career path of their choice.

EEO groups are people affected by past or continuing disadvantage or discrimination in employment. As a result they may be more likely to be unemployed or working in lower paid jobs. These groups are:

- Women
- Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
- Members of racial, ethnic, and ethno-religious minority groups
- People with a disability.

EEO strategies for these groups include recruitment programs and access to training and career development.

EEO is designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- A diverse and skilled workforce
- Improved employment access and participation by EEO groups
- A workplace culture displaying fair workplace practices and behaviours.

2. FAIR PRACTICES AND BEHAVIOUR

EEO aims to achieve fair practices and behaviour in the workplace, including:

- Recruitment, selection and promotion practices which are open, competitive and based on merit. Merit assessed by clearly defined, job-related criteria ensures that the best applicant is selected for the job
- Access for all employees to training and development
- Flexible working arrangements that meet the needs of all employees and create a productive workplace
- Grievance handling procedures that are accessible to all employees and deal with workplace complaints promptly, confidentially and fairly
- Communication to give employees access to information and allow their views to be heard
- Management decisions made without bias
- No unlawful discrimination or harassment in the workplace, and
- Respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all employees and customers.

3. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing him or her because they belong to a particular group. It is against the law in NSW for any employer, including the Authority's, to discriminate against an employee or job applicant because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Pregnancy
- Disability (includes past, present or possible future disability)
- Race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality
- Marital status
- Carer's responsibilities
- Homosexuality, or
- Transgender.

Both direct and indirect discrimination are against the law. *Direct discrimination* means treatment that is obviously unfair or unequal. For example, if an employer will not hire a person because of their gender such as being a woman, this is likely to be **direct sex** discrimination.

Indirect discrimination means having a requirement that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unfair to particular groups e.g. not considering an employee's overseas skills and training when determining his or her level of pay can constitute indirect race discrimination.

4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER EEO

4.1. As an *employee*, you have the *right* to a workplace that is characterised by:

- Freedom from unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Fair practices and behaviour in your workplace
- Competitive merit-based selection processes for recruitment or promotion
- Training and development that enables you to be productive in your work and to pursue your chosen career path

- Equal access to benefits and conditions including flexible working arrangements
- Fair allocation of workloads, and
- Fair processes to deal with work-related complaints and grievances.

4.2. As an employee, you also have the responsibility to:

- Work to the best of your ability and provide quality service to customers and colleagues
- Recognise and respect the skills and talents of other staff members
- Act to prevent harassment, discrimination and bullying against others in your workplace
- Respect cultural and social differences among your colleagues and customers, and
- Treat people fairly (don't discriminate against, harass or bully them).

4.3. As a supervisor/manager

As a supervisor/manager, you have the same rights and responsibilities as staff members and you also have the responsibility to:

- Take steps to ensure that all work practices and behaviours are fair in your workplace, including fair allocation of workloads
- Ensure the work environment is free from bullying and from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Provide employees with information and resources to enable them to carry out their work
- Consult employees about decisions that affect them
- Provide all employees with equal opportunity to apply for available jobs, higher duties, job rotation schemes and flexible working arrangements
- Ensure selection processes are transparent and the methods used are consistent
- Provide all employees with equal access to fair, prompt and confidential processes to deal with complaints and grievances
- Give your employees equal access to relevant training and development opportunities
- Identify special training and development needs of EEO group members in your team and help them gain access to training and development opportunities, and
- Participate in learning opportunities and seek feedback to help you manage staff effectively.

5. THE BENEFITS FROM EEO

5.1. Employees benefit by:

- Working in a fair environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Equal access to jobs, training and other development opportunities, and
- Fair processes to deal with work-related complaints and grievances.

5.2. Managers benefit by:

- More co-operative workplace relations and reduced workplace conflict
- Increased employee job satisfaction and morale, and
- Increased productivity.

5.3. The Authority benefits by:

- A more productive workplace
- Improved efficiency of staff and better services to customers through the selection of the best applicants
- Skilled staff are encouraged to remain
- Improved quality of work.

5.4. The Authority's customers and clients benefit by:

- An efficient and effective organisation, and
- Services, which are responsive to the needs of our diverse community.

6. EEO REPORTING

The Authority, like other Public Sector agencies in NSW, is required under Part 9A of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to plan and implement EEO. It must take positive steps and show progress in achieving EEO outcomes. The Authority's will report on the progress and achievements of its EEO program and provides statistics in its annual reports to the NSW Parliament and in annual reports to the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment.