

Policy



Equal Employment Opportunity

Approved by Council: 21/08/2024

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and to outline Council's commitment to ensuring our workplace is free of discrimination and supports a diverse workforce.

Safety

Teamwork

Accountability

Respect

Policy statement

Rous County Council (Council) is committed to ensuring our workplace is free of discrimination and that equal employment principles are at the foundation of how we operate. A well-managed diverse workforce will equip the organisation to meet future challenges in a competent and innovative manner.

Council aims to have a diverse workforce; employing workers from a wide range of backgrounds. This includes workers of different ages, gender, ethnicity, physical ability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, work experience and educational background. Council commits to ensure that all recruitment and employment decisions are merit-based and adhere to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* and *Local Government Act 1993*.

EEO principles

All employees and potential employees have the right to equality of opportunity and fair treatment in employment.

Employees shall not receive less favourable treatment due to personal or vocational attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity, physical ability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, work experience and educational background.

Council supports and encourages a diverse workforce reflective of the diversity of the community it serves. It commits to implementing business processes that remove systemic barriers to the participation and promotion in employment of EEO groups such as:

- Women
- Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islanders
- People from racial, ethnic and ethno-religious minority groups
- People whose language first spoken as a child was not English
- People with a disability
- People with a disability requiring adjustment at work, and
- Carers

In addition, Council has a trained EEO Contact Officer to provide support and advice to both employees and management. The duties of this position include:

- providing a neutral contact point for concerned workers
- informing supervisors, and the Leadership Team of complaints, current issues, and emerging issues
- providing support and information throughout the complaints handling process.

Discrimination

Council does not tolerate any form of discrimination.

EEO principles are underpinned by practices that fulfil the requirements of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*. These include practices that ensure discrimination (of an employee or job applicant) does not occur. This means that employees of Council and/or applicants will not be discriminated against based on attributes including: gender; parental status; race; impairment; age; sexuality, political or religious belief.

Direct discrimination

Treating people in similar circumstances differently, because of irrelevant characteristics or attributes or because of assumptions about the individual or group. Examples of such are:

- denying a person a job because they are over 45
- overlooking a person for management training because of their nationality.

Indirect discrimination

Treating people unreasonably based on requirements which cannot be met by most members of a particular group. Examples include:

- promotion by seniority thus excluding many women because they have taken time out of the workforce to care for children
- employing workers based on their height, although height is not pertinent to effective performance of the job.

Complaints

Council takes matters relating to EEO very seriously and encourages employees and or job applicants to report potential breaches. In the first instance this may involve raising the matter directly with the person involved. If this is not practicable and/or does not resolve the matter, a formal written complaint can be lodged: [Feedback and Complaints form](#)

EEO policy goals

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy is aligned with the [Workforce Management Plan](#) to support our goal of becoming a regional employer of choice. It focuses on recruiting diverse talent, integrating EEO principles into training, and fostering a supportive culture, thereby reinforcing the Plan's objectives of leadership development, investing in our workplace, improving our employee experience and workplace change. This alignment ensures a strategic and integrated approach, as detailed in Appendix 1, where the specific, achievable actions and measures are outlined to ensure meaningful progress and effective implementation.

Appendix 1

What we are going to do?	Who is accountable for making this happen?	When will it occur?
GOAL 1: Policies, procedures and practices consistent with EEO principles, legislation and guidelines		
Measure: Evidence of EEO principles, legislation and guidelines in policies, procedures and practices		
Review and update (where necessary) people related policies and procedures	People and Culture Manager	According to review cycle
Consider the needs of EEO groups in work reorganisation or structural changes	Leadership Team People and Culture Manager	As required
GOAL 2: Recruit and select a diverse workforce based on sound EEO principles		
Measure: Workforce that is representative of our community		
All recruitment and selection activities promote and comply with EEO principles (e.g. procedures, processes, position descriptions, advertising, representative selection panels, terms and conditions)	Hiring manager, People and Culture Business Partner	Ongoing
^Document and promote the employee value proposition (EVP) – including an EEO statement	People and Culture Manager	FY 2025/2026
^Establish an apprenticeship/graduate program targeting EEO groups	People and Culture Manager	FY 2025/2026
GOAL 3: Embed EEO objectives, requirements, and responsibilities into training and development activities		
Measure: Evidence that training programs have EEO components or are based on EEO principles		
^All new employees are made aware of EEO objectives, requirements and responsibilities as part of the induction process	All supervisors/managers People and Culture Manager	Ongoing
^Succession plans are reviewed using EEO principles	Leadership Team	Annually
^Management training programs to include module(s) related to EEO principles and practices	People and Culture Manager	Ongoing
All employees to undertake “refresher” training to maintain currency of EEO principles and practices	People and Culture Officer	Every 2 years
GOAL 4: Engage in regular EEO related communication with employees (supported by our EEO data)		
Measure: Evidence of regular communication with employees and Senior Management Team		
Use multiple communication channels to support the release of policies and procedures	People and Culture Manager	As required
^Promote and celebrate EEO achievements through channels including Staff Forums, Rous Connect and Rewards and Recognition Program	General Manager All Employees	Ongoing
^Analyse and report on our EEO workforce data to the SMT as part of the workforce planning cycles	People and Culture Officer	Annually
GOAL 5: Create a workplace culture, aligned to our values which support EEO practices		
Measure: Majority of employees understand their EEO responsibilities and demonstrate appropriate behaviours		
^Performance conversations include behaviours that support our values and EEO principles	All Supervisors/Managers	Ongoing
^ Seek feedback from employees (around EEO practices) by including EEO questions in engagement surveys	People and Culture Manager	Ongoing

Key: ^ Initiative from the Rous Workforce Management Plan 2022-2025

Contact officer

People and Culture Manager

Related documents**Policies**

Code of Conduct

Procedures

Bullying and Harassment procedure.

Complaints Handling procedure.

Legislation

Local Government Act 1993.

Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987.

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.

Other

Code of Conduct procedures.

[Feedback and Complaints form](#)

Workforce Management Plan.

<i>Office use only</i>	File no.: F20/324-01	Next review date: 2 years	
Version	Purpose and description	Date adopted by Council	Resolution no.
1.0	Equal Employment Opportunity policy.	19/04/2017	32/17
2.0	Updated to reflect new EEO goals and objectives of workforce management plan 2022-2025	21/08/2024	47/24