

1. BACKGROUND

Under the Local Government Act 1993 section 345 Council is required by law to prepare and implement an Equal Employment Management Plan, including policies and programs.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy supports diversity in the workplace which means having employees from a wide range of backgrounds. This can include having employees of different ages, gender, ethnicity, physical ability, sexual orientation, religious belief, work experience, educational background, and so on.

2. PURPOSE

Coonamble Shire Council aims to provide an environment of equal employment opportunity in its workplace. Council believes that Equal Employment Opportunity creates a more harmonious and productive workplace, which results in better service provisions to the community.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVE

Equal Employment Opportunity at Coonamble Shire Council is based on the following principles:

- Fair practices in the workplace.
- Management decisions made without bias.
- Recognition and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers.
- Improved productivity by ensuring the person with the most merit is recruited or promoted, skilled staff are retained, training and development are linked to employee and Council needs, an efficient workplace free of discrimination and harassment and reduced staff turnover.

4. LEGISLATION

- Council's Code of Conduct.
- Local Government Act 1993.

- Local Government (General) Regulations 2005.
- Anti-Discrimination Act (NSW) 1977.
- Industrial Relations Act (NSW) 1996.
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014.
- Disability Discrimination Act (NSW) 1992.
- Local Government (State) Award 2020.
- Racial Discrimination Act (Comm)1975.
- Sex Discrimination Act (Comm) 1984.
- Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986.
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999.
- Age Discrimination Act 2004.

5. APPLICATION/SCOPE

This Equal Employment Opportunity Policy applies to all candidates seeking employment with Council, people who work for Council, volunteers and representatives of Coonamble Shire Council.

6. POLICY

EEO is a positive way of describing the absence of discrimination in the workplace. This means that employment decisions are not made on the basis of irrelevant characteristics, such as person's gender or gender identity, race, marital status, sexuality, pregnancy, disability, age, homosexuality and transgender. Basing employment decisions on such characteristics is unfair, bad management and also unlawful under Federal and State Equal Opportunity Laws.

In order to ensure EEO principles are followed, employment decisions must be made on the basis of the individual merit of employees and applicants against the selection criteria for the vacancy.

EEO also means the absence of harassment or bullying in the workplace. Unlawful harassment can be based on any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination but is commonly sexual or racial in nature. Harassment is any form of behaviour that is unwelcome, which is based on one of the prohibited grounds and which offends, humiliates or intimidates any person.

6.1 EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Equal Opportunity Management Plan aims to demonstrate a commitment by council and staff to provide a work environment that accepts the principles of equal employment opportunities and avoids discrimination.

Coonamble Shire Council values the creation and maintenance of a fair and equal workplace in which individuals have the opportunity to genuinely and effectively compete for employment and training opportunities, free from any real or perceived discriminatory practices.

Council’s Plan comprises four key strategies for an effective approach to EEO, as follows:

- Policies and procedures
- Communication and awareness
- Training and development
- Implementation, evaluation and review

6.2 RESPONSIBILITY

The overall responsibility for implementation and monitoring of this policy and plan lies with Management. However, all employees of Council have a responsibility in the practical application of the policy. For EEO to be effectively implemented in Council there must be a commitment from all Executive Leaders, Managers, Supervisors and employees for ensuring that this policy is followed and promoted. As EEO is the responsibility of all staff, Council will ensure that advice on EEO matters is available on an on-going basis to all staff.

7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	Is the principle which ensures that all employees and potential employees are treated equitably and fairly, regardless of race, sex, marital status, age physical or intellectual impairment or sexual preference. EEO describes programs designed to ensure that all workers are given an equal chance when they apply for employment, promotion or training.
Discrimination	Any unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, or disability.

Harassment	Is an act or instance of harassing, torment, vexation, or intimidation.
Workplace Bullying	Any verbal, physical, social or psychological abuse by your employer (or manager), another person or group of people at work.

Title: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) POLICY & MANAGEMENT PLAN		
Department: People, Risk & Improvement		
Version	Date	Author
1	10/10/2007	
2	October 2011	
3	February 2012	
4	13/03/2013	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement
5	10/03/2021	Human Resources Officer
<p>This policy may be amended or revoked at any time and must be reviewed at least three (3) years since its adoption (or latest amendment). The Manager of People, Risk & Improvement will be responsible for the review of this policy. Review of this policy will incorporate relevant legislation, documentation released from relevant state agencies and best practice guidelines.</p> <p>Review Date: 10/03/2024</p>		
Amendments in the release:		
Amendment History	Date	Details
Policy developed and adopted	10/10/2007	Approved by the General Manager
Policy reviewed and amended	October 2011	Approved by the General Manager
Adopted by Council	09/11/2011	Council Minute No. 9490
Policy reviewed and amended	February 2012	Approved by the General Manager

Adopted by Council	13/03/2013	Council Minute No. 0387
Policy reviewed and amended	May 2014	Approved by the General Manager
Policy reviewed and amended	30/05/2017	Approved by the General Manager
Adopted by Council	14 April 2021	Resolution 2021/58
Annexure Attached: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan attached.		

Appendix 1: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan

Key strategy 1: Policies and procedures

Objective: All policies and procedures conform with EEO principles

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurement
1.1 Ensure review of Council policies and procedures is undertaken within an EEO framework	Executive Leaders, Managers and Supervisors	Annually	Policies and procedures comply with EEO principles
1.2 Ensure position descriptions, recruitment advertising, performance appraisals and training reflect EEO principles	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	Recruitment procedures comply with EEO principles
1.3 Communicate EEO information to new employees, as part of their induction process	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	New employees receive EEO information during induction
1.4 Recruitment and selection policy clearly outlines procedures for screening, interviewing and appointment which comply with EEO principles	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	Recruitment & selection policy developed, reflecting EEO principles
1.5 Job evaluation and performance appraisal policies, procedures and practices ensure employees are paid fairly and equitably	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Completed	Policies and procedures developed, reflecting EEO principles

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurement
1.6 Ensure access is available through the Employee Assistance Program for employees requiring assistance	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement,	Ongoing	Employees are aware of, and have access to EAP

Key strategy 2: Communication and awareness

Objective: All staff understands EEO principles and their responsibilities and rights in relation to EEO

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurement
2.1 Include updated information / posters on EEO on staff notice boards	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	Current information displayed
2.2 All new managers / supervisors receive a copy of EEO Policy and Management Plan and are briefed as to their responsibilities at their induction	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement,	Ongoing	New managers/supervisors are briefed on EEO Policy & Management Plan as part of their induction
2.3 All aspects of EEO are covered in Coonamble Shire's new staff induction program	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement,	On-going	Staff induction package includes information on all aspects of EEO.

Key strategy 3: Training & Development

Objective: All staff have equal access to training and development opportunities relevant to their needs

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurement
3.1 Complete training and development policy and procedures ensuring they conform with EEO principles	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Completed	Training & Development policy and procedures developed, reflecting EEO principles
3.2 Ensure staff responsible for approving training are aware and adhering to EEO principles	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement,	Ongoing	Training & Development policy and procedures are communicated to staff responsible for approving training

Key strategy 4: Implementation, Evaluation and Review

Objective: EEO Management Plan is successfully implemented, effectively evaluated and periodically reviewed.

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurement
4.1 Staff with specific responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the EEO Management Plan are identified and their responsibilities communicated to them	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	On-going	Relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to implementation of the EEO Management Plan
4.2 Implementation of EEO Management Plan monitored	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	Implementation monitored and progress reported
4.3 EEO Management Plan reviewed and amendments considered periodically	Manager- People, Risk & Improvement	Annually	EEO Management Plan reviewed and amendments made, if appropriate

