Human Resources Policy

Equity and Diversity

Policy Number: G2 (QH-POL-132)
Publication date: September 2013

Purpose: To promote the understanding and achievement of equity and diversity within Queensland Health.

Application: This policy applies to employees working in and for the Department of Health and non-prescribed Health and Hospital Services.

Delegation: The ‘delegate’ is as listed in the Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual and the Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual – HRM Functions of the Director-General, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Public Service Act 2008
- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 8) 2011 (EB8) (Part 10)
- Medical Officers’ (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2012 (Part 9)
- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (EB8) 2012 (Section 46)
- Health Practitioners’ (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 2) 2011 (Section 71)

Related policy or documents:
- Commission Chief Executive Policy 01/13: Equality of Employment Opportunity Reporting
- Flexible Working Arrangements HR Policy C5 (QH-POL-242)
- Anti-Discrimination HR Policy E2 (QH-POL-101)
- Sexual Harassment HR Policy E5 (QH-POL-228)
- Contact Officers HR Policy E8 (QH-POL-265)
- Workplace Harassment HR Policy E13 (QH-POL-266)
- Reasonable Adjustment HR Policy G3 (QH-POL-210)
- Flexible Work Arrangements Guide
- Work Life Balance Guide
- Equity and Diversity Strategic Plan
- Queensland Health Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan
- Hospital and Health Service/Department of Health Equal Employment Opportunity Plans

Policy subject:

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1. Equity and Diversity in Queensland Health

Queensland Health is committed to promoting equity and diversity in its workforce and in its management practices, including (but not limited to) Equal Employment Opportunity.

Queensland Health expects that all employees will:

- be treated with respect and fairness
- work in a place free from all forms of harassment and unlawful discrimination
- have access to, and compete equitably for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer opportunities
- choose, and pursue, their own career path
- have access to relevant training and development opportunities
- have all employee complaints/workplace grievances addressed promptly by their supervisor or other appropriate person.

1.1 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Queensland Health will promote employment equity through:

- the application of practices to enable target group members to compete for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer, and pursue careers, as effectively as those who are not members of target groups
- the elimination of unlawful discrimination in the area of employment.

Queensland Health will develop, implement and report against an EEO Management Plan. The EEO Management Plan will include the requirement for the development and implementation of measurable EEO initiatives within operational and strategic plans.

1.2 Diversity

The focus for diversity is on all employees, unlike EEO which focuses on ensuring equity of opportunity for specific target groups. Diversity recognises that employees differ not just on the basis of race, gender and ethnicity but also on other dimensions such as age, lifestyles and geographic origins. Diversity involves not only tolerance of employees regardless of their differences, but acceptance of employees because of those differences and valuing their individual contribution to the workplace.

Queensland Health will promote diversity by implementing policies and strategies that:

- are sensitive to and informed by the needs of employees from diverse backgrounds and responsive, as far as practicable, to the particular circumstances of individuals
- allow equitable access by all employees to information regarding their entitlements and how to obtain them.
### Definitions:

<table>
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<th><strong>Diversity</strong></th>
<th>Recognition that employees differ not just on the basis of race, gender and ethnicity but also on a variety of other dimensions such as age, lifestyles and geographic origins.</th>
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| **Employment matters** | Section 30 of the *Public Service Act 2008* defines employment matters as:  
(a) recruitment procedure, and selection criteria, for appointment or engagement of people as employees  
(b) promotion, transfer or redeployment of employees  
(c) training and staff development for employees  
(d) terms and conditions of service and separation of employees  
(e) any other matter relating to the employment of employees. |
| **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** | Treating people in the target groups listed in section 30 of the *Public Service Act 2008* on their merits at every stage of the employment relationship. |
| **Merit Principle** | The general principle that decisions regarding recruitment, selection, promotion or transfer opportunities must be made on the basis of each applicant’s relative merits. In deciding the relative merits of applicants, the following matters must be taken into consideration:  
- the extent to which each applicant’s abilities, aptitude, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience and personal qualities are relevant to carrying out the duties in question  
- the extent to which each applicant has potential for development. |
| **Target Groups** | Section 30 of the *Public Service Act 2008* defines the following target groups as:  
- people of the Aboriginal race of Australia or people who are descendants of the indigenous inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands;  
- people who have migrated to Australia and whose first language is a language other than English, and the children of those people;  
- people with a physical, sensory, intellectual or psychiatric disability, whether the disability presently exists or previously existed but no longer exists;  
- women, irrespective of age;  
- a group of people prescribed under a regulation. |

### History:

| **September 2013** | Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project. Policy amended to  
- update the title from ‘Equal Employment Opportunity’ to ‘Equity and Diversity’  
- include content from the former Diversity HR Policy G1  
- remove text on the benefits of diversity  
| **July 2008** | Amended to reflect *Public Service Act 2008*. |
| **April 2008** | Developed as a result of the HR Policy Consolidation Project. |
Previous

- Diversity HR Policy G1
- IRM 3.15-2 Equal Employment Opportunity
- IRM 3.15-1 Diversity
Equity and Diversity – Schedule One
Roles and Responsibilities

The following information is provided as the minimum mandatory standard practice, procedure or process to enable satisfactory compliance with this Queensland Health HR policy.

Local guidelines/procedures may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. Any local guidelines/procedures must be consistent with this policy and schedule and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

Roles and responsibilities for equity and diversity in Queensland Health (QH)

1. Human Resource/People and Culture Units

Human Resource/People and Culture Units will undertake the role of expert consultant in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and diversity matters and provide assistance to employees at all levels. Other specific responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- taking a lead role in the implementation of EEO and diversity initiatives and, in particular, developing and promoting employee awareness strategies
- supporting line managers and employees in the successful application of initiatives such as the Flexible Working Arrangements HR Policy C5 and guidelines
- developing and implementing Hospital and Health Service/Department of Health equity and diversity plans (including EEO plans)
- developing Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services EEO Annual Reports
- preparing regular status reports on EEO issues as required for Senior Management and relevant QH consultative forums and implementation groups
- preparing informal reports on equity and diversity issues as required for Senior Management, relevant QH consultative forums, and the QH Equity and Diversity Reference Group.

2. Managers and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors are responsible for the promotion and ongoing effective management of EEO and diversity across Queensland Health. This is to be achieved through personal leadership and demonstrating commitment to EEO and diversity principles and goals. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- being aware of the requirements of the Public Service Act 2008 and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- being familiar with and promoting relevant HR policies including the Anti-Discrimination HR Policy E2, Sexual Harassment HR Policy E5, Equity and Diversity HR Policy G2 and Reasonable Adjustment HR Policy G3
- ensuring that all employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to EEO and Anti-Discrimination
- ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and equitably in all aspects of their employment within QH
- modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour in relation to equity and diversity principles and practices in all aspects of their employment within QH
- ensuring work areas are free from harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment
- encouraging and assisting employees, including target group members to take up developmental and career opportunities
- promoting cultural awareness and cultural respect
- consulting with all staff as part of decision-making processes
• implementing work practices, policies and strategies to eliminate discriminatory behaviour
• taking prompt action to resolve issues relating to EEO or unlawful discrimination
• developing, supporting and promoting the Contact Officers – refer to Contact Officers HR Policy E8.

3. Employees

Queensland Health employees must ensure that they:

• contribute to the creation of an inclusive environment that values and utilises the input of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives
• treat other employees with respect and fairness
• share responsibility for maintaining a workplace that is free from discriminatory behaviours and practices
• ensure that they do not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other employees
• accept that others have a right to different perspectives and opinions.