

Diversity and inclusion

Policy Number: G2 (QH-POL-132)

Publication date: July 2021

Purpose: To outline Queensland Health's commitment to workforce diversity and maintaining a safe, inclusive and supportive workplace that reflects the diversity of the community.

Application: This policy applies to employees working for Queensland Health.

This policy does not apply to employees of Queensland Ambulance Service. Instead, Queensland Ambulance Service employees are to refer to the Queensland Ambulance Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Delegation: The 'delegate' is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Service Human Resource (HR) delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Human Rights Act 2019*
- *Industrial Relations Act 2016*
- *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Public Service Act 2008*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2019
- Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 3) 2019
- Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.5) 2018 (MOCA 5)
- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health and Department of Education) Certified Agreement (EB10) 2018
- Queensland Health Building, Engineering & Maintenance Services Certified Agreement (No.7) 2019
- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 10) 2019

Related policy or documents:

- Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 (QH-POL-242)
- Guideline – Flexible working arrangements (QH-GDL-242)
- Workplace conduct and ethics HR Policy E1 (QH-POL-113) Anti-discrimination and vilification HR Policy E2 (QH-POL-101)
- Sexual harassment HR Policy E5 (QH-POL-228)
- Workplace bullying HR Policy E13 (QH-POL-266)
- Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3 (QH-POL-210)
- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service
- Queensland Health Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022



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1 Queensland Health’s commitment

Queensland Health is committed to:

- creating a psychologically safe, diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves
- providing a workplace that is fair, accessible, flexible and inclusive where all employees feel they belong
- the recognition of an individual’s human rights under the *Human Rights Act 2019*
- recognising the strengths, requirements and circumstances of individual employees and valuing their contributions
- finding ways to actively support a diverse and inclusive workforce now and in the future, including encouraging employees to undertake development to further understand the concepts and importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

These elements enable all employees to feel safe to innovate, bring their whole selves to work and fully participate in their teams and the workplace. This commitment is considered and reflected in strategic and operational plans, policies, procedures and new initiatives.

Queensland Health expects all employees will:

- create new and different ways of thinking, interacting and working to ensure others’ perspectives and contributions are valued
- remain conscious about the unintended impacts of bias on work, systems and people
- positively support Queensland Health led diversity and inclusion initiatives
- role model respectful and fair behaviours.

Queensland Health aims to attract and retain an appropriate mix of diversity, skills and experience at all levels to actively facilitate a more diverse and representative workforce and management structure.

From time to time efforts may be focused on priority groups by developing targets and objectives that enable more equitable access to opportunities, and information will be released detailing diversity and inclusion initiatives and progress in achieving approved targets and objectives.

2 Workplace diversity and inclusion

Diversity

Diversity is defined as the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their:

- social identity e.g. age, caring responsibilities, cultural background (this includes Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people), disability, gender, Indigenous background, sexual orientation, beliefs and socio-economic background
- professional identity e.g. profession, education, work experiences and organisational role.

Inclusion

Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people (e.g. different ages, cultural backgrounds and genders) feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation.

Inclusion refers to the act of creating workplace environments in which any individual or group feels welcomed, respected and valued to fully participate and contribute. Inclusive workplaces incorporate new and different ways of thinking, interacting and working, into the way business is done so all individuals are able to fully contribute or feel that they belong.

3 Why workforce diversity and inclusion is important

To achieve its vision for Queenslanders to be among the healthiest people in the world by 2026 Queensland Health must be a leader in workplace diversity and inclusion. Diversity and inclusion are critical enablers for the innovative, flexible and responsive workforce that is required to meet the current and future challenges of the Queensland health system.

Benefits of diversity and inclusion include:

- A workplace where all employees feel safe and confident to contribute their ideas and perspectives and the ability to maximise their potential.
- A workforce that reflects the diversity of clients and the broader Queensland community - allowing access to a broad range of experience and perspectives.
- More creative, innovative and effective solutions for achieving Queensland Health's vision.
- A more productive and fulfilling workplace, reducing the high costs associated with turnover, absenteeism and lost productivity.

4 Enabling diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of **all** employees, (refer Attachment One). Further guidance on your responsibilities may be provided by your local human resource unit.

Queensland Health sets clear expectations for leaders and employees regarding the actions, conduct and behaviours that support a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace.

These expectations are outlined in the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service and the organisation's values and are reinforced through general communication and mandatory training. Leaders and employees are encouraged to speak up if they see conduct or behaviour that is not consistent with expectations.

History:

July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – amended to update references and naming conventions – amended to include the organisation's commitment (section 1), clarify workplace diversity and inclusion (section 2), its importance (section 3), enabling functions (section 4) and role responsibilities (Attachment One).
July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – formatted as part of the HR Policy review – amended to update references and naming conventions – amended to reflect <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> – application amended as a result of changes outlined in the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019.

November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – formatted as part of the HR Policy review – amended to update references and naming conventions – amended to reflect inclusion and diversity terminology – application amended to Department of Health
September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project. • Policy amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 – add definition for Equal Employment Opportunity.
July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to reflect <i>Public Service Act 2008</i>.
April 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed as a result of the HR Policy Consolidation Project.
Previous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity HR Policy G1 • IRM 3.15-2 Equal Employment Opportunity • IRM 3.15-1 Diversity

Attachment One – Responsibilities to ensure a diverse and inclusive workplace

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 standard practice and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

1 Executives

Executives are required to:

- be aware of the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* and *Human Rights Act 2019*
- be familiar with and promote relevant HR policies including the Anti-discrimination and vilification HR Policy E2, Sexual harassment HR Policy E5, Workplace bullying HR Policy E13, and Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3
- act and make decisions to ensure diversity and inclusion in the workplace and to protect and promote human rights
- model inclusive leadership behaviours, such as empowerment, accountability, courage and humility, and lead the work of the organisation in a way that is respectful, equitable, fair, unbiased and inclusive
- demonstrate personal commitment to diversity and inclusion principles and goals
- take responsibility for meeting diversity and inclusion targets and objectives and fostering a psychologically, socially and culturally safe work environment
- ensure appropriate resources are available to support managers and employees to successfully implement diversity and inclusion initiatives
- disseminate information through internal communications to detail progress towards diversity and inclusion targets and objectives and celebrate key achievements.

2 Managers and supervisors

All managers and supervisors are required to:

- be aware of the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* and *Human Rights Act 2019*
- be familiar with and promote relevant HR policies including the Anti-discrimination and vilification HR Policy E2, Sexual harassment HR Policy E5, Workplace bullying HR Policy E13, Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3 and address any unacceptable workplace behaviour
- act and make decisions to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace and to give proper consideration to human rights
- model inclusive leadership behaviours, such as empowerment, accountability, courage and humility, and manage/lead teams in a way that is respectful, equitable, fair, unbiased and inclusive
- demonstrate personal commitment to diversity and inclusion principles and goals
- take responsibility for meeting diversity and inclusion targets and objectives, and fostering a psychologically, socially and culturally safe work environment
- ensure everyday decisions and work practices are reviewed with a diversity and inclusion lens to optimise accessibility, flexibility and inclusion
- take steps to educate employees about inclusive behaviour
- support employees to balance their work and personal, community, cultural or caring responsibilities by providing access to flexible working arrangements
- take appropriate action to address instances of exclusion or unintended bias

- be familiar with and promote compliance with this policy and related policies.

3 All employees

All employees are required to:

- undertake the work of the organisation in a way that is respectful, equitable, fair, unbiased, inclusive, empathetic and understanding and in accordance with the principles of the Code of Conduct
- continuously improve their own understanding of diversity and inclusion
- value the perspectives and contributions of others
- remain conscious about the impacts of bias on work, systems and people
- speak up about unacceptable workplace behaviour or behaviour that is not consistent with expectations
- be familiar with, and act in accordance with, the organisation's commitment to providing workplaces free from unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, workplace harassment and bullying
- act to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace