



# Diversity & Inclusion Policy

## 1. Introduction

Everyone is welcome at Windana, and diversity and inclusion are the foundations of the welcoming services we provide.

We acknowledge that there are distinct demographic groups that have long been disadvantaged and that people from diverse communities are often at higher risk of requiring the services Windana provides. We recognise that racism, homophobia, ageism, sexism and other forms of discrimination are challenges both for our organisation and society as a whole. Our society aims to create a peaceful, multicultural democracy through formal mechanisms that assure and protect fundamental human freedoms. These freedoms are translated into inalienable, inter-connected rights, that are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and underpin the foundations of this policy.

**Diversity** refers to the individual differences and valuing knowledge, skills and perspectives that people bring into the workplace. Windana considers diversity as a range of characteristics such as: origin, age, gender, sexual identity, LGBTIQ+ identity including sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status, race, religion, cultural heritage, lifestyle, education, physical ability, intellectual ability, neurodiversity, appearance, language, profession, trade or occupation and other factors, including an individual's lived experiences of alcohol and drug addiction and recovery, mental health or family and domestic violence. We value the differences between people and the contribution these differences make to our organisation.

**Inclusion** occurs when individuals feel valued, connected, and respected, regardless of their personal attributes, similarities or differences. Windana is committed to creating an inclusive workplace, where all individuals have access to equal opportunities and resources, and can offer their unique perspectives, abilities, and talents to contribute to Windana's mission.

## 2. Scope

Diversity and inclusion is everyone's business – and is inherent to Windana's values and ways of working. This policy applies to Windana's board and all staff. The term staff refers to and includes all employees, volunteers, students and independent contractors.

## 3. Policy

This policy provides the framework by which Windana actively manages, promotes and celebrates diversity and inclusion. Our goal is to proactively and intentionally, create and manage a culture that is diverse, inclusive, and accessible and that respects and celebrates difference.

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We will ensure that our workplaces are welcoming, safe, accessible, and inclusive for all clients, residents, staff and visitors by continuously reviewing, seeking and acting on feedback.

We also recognise that our services are enhanced when our workforce is reflective of the full diversity of backgrounds, experiences, identities and faiths of the communities we serve.

This policy exists to ensure Windana embeds diversity and inclusion principles throughout the organisation to ensure a positive experience for all.

Windana aims to:

- Affirm the significant place and identity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples hold as First Australians and commit to building a culturally safe environment which demonstrates our commitment to respecting and valuing Aboriginal peoples.
- Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Create a place where all clients, residents and staff feel safe, welcomed and valued - today and every day
- Actively create services that are inclusive to people of all diverse backgrounds and identities and experience
- Actively and flexibly seek to accommodate the unique and diverse needs of all clients, residents and staff
- Commit to ensuring that all clients, residents and staff are treated with respect, dignity, and openness
- Create psychologically safe environments and experiences
- Develop connections with organisations and groups to influence the meaningful participation of people from diverse backgrounds, faiths, communities and experiences
- Seek feedback to ensure that our practices, policies, and procedures do not prevent people from diverse backgrounds faiths, communities and experiences having equitable access to opportunity.
- Embrace fairness, equality, equity and inclusiveness in which we do not tolerate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation, of staff, clients or residents
- Attract and retain a diverse workforce to boost the quality of our decision-making and drive innovation through the diversity of thought and experience
- Empower staff to reach their full potential and offer their skills, experience and knowledge to enhance the quality of care for clients
- Create a desired workplace culture that is aligned to Windana’s values

**4. Policy Provisions**

***Equitable Access to Windana Services***

Windana is committed to ensuring our services are inclusive of all people and we create programs and environments that are welcoming, engaging, accessible and supportive for all. We do this by:

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- Ensuring each person receives a service that promotes and respects their legal and human rights and enables them to exercise control like everyone else in the community.
- Providing services in an environment that ensures people are free from discrimination, abuse, neglect and exploitation and having processes in place to manage these issues if they arise.
- Promoting ethical, respectful and safe service delivery which meets, if not exceeds, legislative requirements and achieves positive outcomes for clients and residents.
- Recognising, supporting and respecting people’s inherent right to freedom of expression and the right to make decisions about and exercise control over their lives.
- Recognising the vital role of families, friends, advocates and carers in assisting to safeguard and uphold the rights of our clients and residents.
- Welcoming, supporting and encouraging, people from all backgrounds and communities to participate in our services and programs and not withholding service based on self-identity
- Regularly reviewing our processes to ensure our client and resident journey is inclusive and welcoming to all; a journey in which they are treated respectfully, are communicated with appropriately and feel safe to self-identify at a time and place of their choosing
- Identifying and actively reducing barriers to service provision that exist for people from all backgrounds, cultures, faiths, identities and communities, including individuals with lived experiences and those with disabilities
- Regularly reviewing our communications to clients and residents to ensure we use materials, software, resources, language and methods appropriate to, and supportive of, their diverse backgrounds, language, and abilities.
- Partnering and collaborating with individuals and organisations that respect and acknowledge diversity and have inclusive practices, to ensure our services remain responsive and respectful

**Awareness and respect for diversity of culture**

Windana is committed to developing trust and cooperation with culturally diverse communities reflecting the multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi faith communities we serve. We are particularly committed to developing meaningful relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on our path to reconciliation.

We commit to:

- Ensuring that services are provided with sensitivity to and an awareness of the cultural beliefs and practices of clients and residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes an awareness of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families and communities.
- Acknowledging, and respecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ceremony and culture through the acknowledgement of country or arrangement of a welcome to country
- Conducting Acknowledgement of Country at all official meetings at Windana, including executive and team meetings and therapeutic community graduation ceremonies.
- Engaging Aboriginal elders to conduct Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies for special ceremonies

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- Celebrating the rich diversity of the communities in which we work in and aim that this diversity is reflected in our workforce and in our organisational practices
- Creating communications that are relevant and meaningful to individual communities
- Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of staff, clients and residents in relation to their cultural identity
- Ensuring all staff have the right to work and volunteer in a climate characterised by mutual respect and integrity that embraces their uniqueness and enables them to reach their full potential.
- Understanding how to manage a diverse workforce and recognising that individual differences and contributions benefit the organisation, clients and residents
- Consulting with diverse individuals and communities to ensure their views and perspectives are represented on any relevant decisions and actions

### **Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO)**

Windana will provide equal opportunity in respect to employment and employment conditions. We do by:

- Identifying and actively reducing barriers to organisational process and practices that exist for staff of different backgrounds and communities, including individuals with lived experiences, disabilities and ensuring we are culturally, linguistically and LGBTIQ+ and multi-faith inclusive
- Ensuring decisions regarding recruitment, selection, training and development and career opportunities including secondments and promotions are based on merit, performance, and capabilities
- Providing equitable and fair terms and conditions of employment including remuneration, leave and other conditions
- Providing all Windana staff with access to line management and regular supervision
- Providing all Windana staff with the appropriate resources, tools, and support including training and development opportunities and access to EAP

### **Measurable objectives**

Windana will establish, on an annual basis, measurable objectives for the achievement of diversity and inclusion. These objectives may include:

- Establishing goals for under-represented groups within resident and client groups
- Establishing goals for gender equity at all levels employed within the organisation
- Establishing goals for representation of under-represented groups at all levels within Windana
- Implementing initiatives to address any identified pay equity gaps
- Implementing leadership programs that promote equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion practices and a diverse and inclusive organisational culture
- Implementing training and development programs that promote and embed EEO, diversity and inclusion practices within the organisation.

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## **Monitoring and reporting**

The CEO will regularly report to the board on the progress towards achieving diversity and inclusion objectives.

People & Culture will regularly measure and report on the progress towards achieving workforce diversity and inclusion objectives and will conduct an annual assessment of the measurable objectives.

Disclosure of diversity and inclusion reporting and outcomes will be made to key stakeholders on an annual basis. For example, via the Windana's website, our annual report and reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

## **Compliance**

All People Leaders including CEO, General Managers, Managers, Program Coordinators and Team Leaders have a responsibility to ensure the workplace is psychologically safe, free from discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and that all employees comply with this diversity and inclusion policy.

**General Managers** responsible for service delivery will:

- proactively monitor program performance in meeting policy requirements in relation to service delivery.
- conduct regular reviews of processes involved in their programs to assess and ensure that Windana provides equal access of service to all diverse groups in the communities we serve.

**People & Culture** will:

- proactively monitor organisational performance in meeting policy requirements in relation to workplace diversity and inclusion
- in partnership with the executives and all People Leaders, ensure that all staff are offered regular training in relation to Diversity and Inclusion, legislative and other responsibilities relating to anti-discrimination, workplace bullying & harassment, and equal employment opportunity
- conduct regular review of the processes involved in recruitment, remuneration, performance management and training and development to assess the implementation of and compliance with this policy in relation to employment practices
- conduct regular reviews of processes related to staff recruitment and management to ensure Windana provides equal access of employment to all diverse groups in the communities we serve

## **5. Key Responsibilities**

Windana is committed to supporting all employees and managers in the achievement of a diverse and inclusive workplace.

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**Board** is responsible for ensuring Windana has the resources, goals and monitoring practices to provide a safe and inclusive environment for clients, residents and all staff.

**Executive team** (CEO and General Managers) is responsible for:

- the approval of initiatives to achieve measurable objectives relating to diversity and inclusion of service provision and employment.
- document risk and monitor risk management processes in relation to diversity and inclusion
- demonstrate leadership in the development and implementation of Windana’s Reconciliation Action Plans

**People Leaders** are responsible for developing and encouraging a positive and inclusive environment, where all employees are treated with respect and dignity, including:

- building and supporting diverse and inclusive teams
- ensuring staff participate in Diversity & Inclusion training
- monitoring and reviewing practices and processes to ensure they are inclusive for all
- investigating and addressing behaviour that is potentially discriminatory as a matter of priority

**All staff** are responsible for

- Providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive service to all clients and residents and colleagues
- Ensuring that services are provided with sensitivity to and an awareness of the cultural beliefs and practices of clients & residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; this includes an awareness of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families and communities
- Maintaining privacy and confidentiality of staff, clients and residents that self-identify
- Active participation in training in relation to diversity and inclusion, including but not limited to cultural, LGBTIQ+ and disability awareness training.
- Identifying and raising with their colleagues and their people leader any practices that create barriers to inclusion for clients, residents and staff.
- Supporting a continuous improvement mindset and innovative solutions to improve diversity and inclusion at Windana.
- Respectfully calling out behaviour that discriminates against clients, residents or staff by raising this with the individual, their people leader, their general manager or people & culture

**6. Definitions**

**Diversity** - Refers to the visible and invisible differences that exist between people, including (but not limited to) race, colour, physical features, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, lawful sexual activity,

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age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, breast feeding, carer responsibilities, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, industrial activity, profession, trade or occupation or trade union membership. It also refers to diverse ways of thinking and ways of working.

**Inclusion** - Refers to ensuring that current, future and potential employees have equitable access to opportunities in the organisation without any barriers or obstacles as a result of their race, colour, physical features, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, lawful sexual activity, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, breast feeding, carer responsibilities, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, industrial activity or trade union membership.

**Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO)**- Is the principle that all persons can have equal access to employment opportunities based on merit, without fear of discrimination or harassment.

**Equality** - the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities; it means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.

**Equity** - the quality of being fair and impartial; providing resources and opportunities as needed to create equal outcomes for all

**Human Rights** – are rights inherent to all people regardless of nationality, place of residence, ethnic origin and religion etc

**LGBTIQ+** - An internationally recognised acronym which is used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people collectively. Many sub-groups form part of the larger LGBTI movement. For more information see [here](#)

**7. Related Windana Documents**

- POL 41 Code of Conduct and Practice
- POL 42 Confidentiality and Privacy
- POL 58 Working Respectfully (Workplace Bullying & Sexual Harassment)
- POL 63 Client Complaints and Feedback
- POL 108 Client Access and Equity
- POL 117 Learning and Development
- POL 135 Recruitment and Early Employment
- POL 153 Child Safe Code of Conduct

**8. Other Related Documents**

- Equal Opportunity Act Victoria (2010)
- Racial Discrimination Act – Commonwealth (1975)
- Sex Discrimination Act – Commonwealth (1984)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act- Victoria (2001)
- Age Discrimination Act – Commonwealth (2004)
- Multicultural Act – Victoria (2011)

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Multicultural Policy Victoria (2012)

[Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act – Victoria \(2006\)](#)

[Well Proud -GLBTIQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Victoria \(2011\)](#)

[Fair Foundations: The VicHealth Framework for Health Equity – Victoria \(2013\)](#)

Approved at 23 June 2022 QSR meeting



Andrea McLeod, CEO

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