



Policy Context	
Standards or other external requirements	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 National Employment Standards Human Services Standards
Relevant legislation	Fair Work Act Fair Work Regulations 2009
Contractual obligations	Department of Health and Human Services Consumer Affairs Victoria Commonwealth Department of Social Services Ageing on the Edge Project – Wicking Trust

2.21 HAAG Diversity Policy

INTRODUCTION

HAAG works to ensure that people from all backgrounds have equal access to HAAG services and equal opportunity to contribute to the organisation. The policy encompasses HAAG's work with people from a diversity of religious and cultural backgrounds as well as people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and intersex (LGBTI).

PURPOSE

The HAAG diversity policy ensures that people from all backgrounds and identities have access to information about the Home at Last and Retirement Housing Advice Services and are able to use the services they need in a language they can communicate in. The policy ensures all older people have the opportunity to contribute to HAAG working groups, meetings and policy development. The policy also covers employment at HAAG.

The diversity policy aims to move beyond simple 'tolerance', towards understanding, celebrating and embracing a multitude of cultures and identities as well as the diversity of experiences and understandings within these groups.

The policy supports HAAG's Strategic Plan which states that "Candidates from diverse backgrounds are specifically recruited as HAAG staff, committee members or members". Directives from the strategic plan under this strategy have been included as part of the policies.

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All organizational staff	Governance sub	April 2018	April 2019

DEFINITIONS

Diversity – Diversity refers to acceptance and respect for people from all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

It also acknowledges that there is diversity within diversity - that is, each individual is different, and holds unique beliefs and understandings within any group. Therefore the views of a single individual cannot be taken as representative of an entire group.

PRINCIPLES

- The HAAG diversity policy is informed by research conducted by various groups and bodies including Ethnic Community Council of Victoria, Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia, National Ageing Research Institute and HAAG's own research through projects in 2015 and 2016 with community leaders.
- The HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group will have input into the diversity policy
- The HAAG Diversity policy should be integrated into other areas of policy such as membership, Equal Opportunity in Employment, Volunteers.
- The diversity policy will be in line with HAAG's obligations under equal opportunity and anti-discrimination law
- This policy will be reviewed based on the evolving needs of the communities we work with. Reviews will take place in the HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group.
- HAAG acknowledges that further work is required to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and organisations.

SCOPE

All organisational staff

POLICY

Human Relations and Recruitment

- HAAG will consider ability and not disability when we employ and promote people
- HAAG will consider a worker or job applicant's language skills when recruiting for roles that involve contact with communities and individuals.
- A worker's connection to their community will be considered in roles involving community engagement.
- HAAG will foster a culture which supports and respects the values and needs of all individuals, regardless of their age, background, religion or LGBTI identity

HAAG Membership (from strategic plan)

- HAAG will actively encourage people from culturally diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities and people who identify as LGBTI to become members of HAAG through messaging:

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- in the office through posters
- in newsletters
- in social media
- an invitation to become a HAAG member to people who are housed by Home at Last using an interpreter if needed
- HAAG will foster the inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds in meetings and events

HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group

As of its terms of reference, the HAAG Cultural Diversity Reference Group will:

- Contribute to internal HAAG policies
- Build awareness of HAAG in their community
- Feed specific information about community needs into HAAG
- Group Members advocate for their communities
- This group will be ongoing with the aim to have a representative of this group move onto the Committee of Management

Use of HAAG services

- People from all backgrounds will have equal access to HAAG services through use of interpreters (including Auslan)
- Clients will not be discriminated against because of their gender, sexuality, disability, cultural or religious beliefs.

Access to information about services (research findings from 2016 HAAG Research ‘A Home for Diversity’ project)

- HAAG will work to actively engage groups and individuals from diverse communities in information about HAAG’s services through use of bi-lingual workers and in-language brochures
- HAAG will work with new high need groups to develop materials, presentations and relationships with service providers, aiming for one new group/year.
- HAAG will begin working with disability groups, LGBTI groups and Indigenous groups and acknowledges that it has done little work in these areas in recent years

Lobbying and policy work

- HAAG will include diverse voices in its policy development, lobbying, media work, position papers and communications work
- These voices will be sought through the Cultural Diversity Reference Group

Other policies

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- Funding is sought for ongoing CALD-specific initiatives as identified by CALD advisory group

PROCEDURE

Human Resources and Recruitment

1. A diversity statement will be included in all recruitment documents such as position descriptions to ensure that people from diverse backgrounds feel welcome to apply for a role.
2. HAAG will create a physical and cultural environment which supports participation and accommodates special needs
3. HAAG will actively recruit people from diverse backgrounds.

HAAG Membership

1. After re-housing, all CALD clients offered membership and membership explained using an interpreter
2. People involved in the CALD project(s) are invited to become members of HAAG
3. Barriers to CALD participation overcome by offering interpreters at events and meetings
4. Part of quarterly newsletter dedicated to CALD member drive/breaking down barriers to participation, including translated information.
5. Develop sections of the website to specifically reach out to CALD members
6. Welcoming messages for people identifying as LGBTI put into newsletters, on social media and posters put up at HAAG office.
7. Membership forms are made available in at least 10 languages other than English

Cultural Diversity Reference Group

1. The Cultural Diversity Reference Group will meet bi-monthly and discuss issues that affect the communities involved in the group and how HAAG can address these issues
2. CALD-specific issues identified and communicated to Communications team for inclusion in media, lobbying, position papers etc

Use of HAAG Services

1. Workers will use interpreters (telephone and in-person) when a need is identified by the client or the worker
2. Written materials including brochures and other important information to be translated where possible, using a professional translation service.
3. Where brochures are translated, a process of consultation with a community reference group, to test meaning and understanding of key concepts should be used.
4. Sufficient time will be allocated to each client needing the use of an interpreter.

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Access to information about services

1. HAAG will work to develop materials about its services in as many languages as possible
2. HAAG will actively promote their services within communities identified as having a high level of need
3. HAAG will make itself aware of stigma and community perceptions through ongoing CALD projects
4. HAAG will use 'word of mouth' to promote services through community representatives engaged in HAAG
5. HAAG will acknowledge the role of elder abuse in preventing people from CALD backgrounds and others living with family from seeking help
6. HAAG staff will continue ongoing training and professional development in the skills required to communicate effectively with people from CALD backgrounds.
7. HAAG will increase engagement with disability groups, LGBTI groups and Indigenous groups

Lobbying and policy work

1. HAAG will seek out CALD perspectives from its Cultural Diversity Reference Group in developing its policies, lobbying tools and position statements.

RELATED POLICY

HAAG Equal Employment Opportunity

HAAG Staff Recruitment and Selection

HAAG Volunteers

HAAG Membership

HAAG Anti-racism and Discrimination

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