

# Equal Employment Opportunity

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## Management Plan 2023







## **Acknowledgment of Country**

We acknowledge and honour the traditional custodians of the land and waterways on which we live, work and play, and recognise their continued connection to Country.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge our shared responsibility to care for Country.





## CEO's Message

Central Coast Council employs more than 2,000 people to provide critical services to the community. As an organisation, we believe in promoting an inclusive culture and employing people who have different perspectives, experiences and knowledge that enhance and enrich the work we do.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan 2023-2026 reflects our commitment to breaking down the barriers that place many at a disadvantage.

This plan provides a strategic link between the Local Government Act 1993, the Workforce Management Strategy, the Code of Conduct and the Equity Diversity and Respect Policy. It also connects with other strategies and programs such as the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, The First Nations Accord, Positive Ageing Strategy, and the Youth Strategy.

It ensures Council enables access to equal employment opportunities, supports the growth of a safe workspace for all, where all employees are treated fairly, and more importantly, are encouraged to be their authentic selves.

We all play a role in ensuring the success of this plan and it will require everyone's commitment to create and maintain an inclusive, supportive working environment that reduces barriers to achieve equality.

**David Farmer**

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Central Coast Council



# Our Commitment

**Central Coast Council is committed to creating a supportive culture that celebrates the richness and diversity of all employees. We are dedicated to fostering an environment that strives to break down the existing barriers which place many at a disadvantage in our workplace.**

Through this Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan, we will endeavour to implement appropriate measures ensuring that everyone is given equal opportunity to actively participate in their employment.

We believe that differing employee perspectives, knowledge and experiences can enhance and improve a workplace by increasing its capability to deliver quality services to our community, thereby making the Central Coast a Smart, Green and Liveable region with a shared sense of Belonging and Responsibility.

We are committed to ensuring Central Coast Council is a rewarding and safe working environment, free from all forms of harassment and discrimination, where every employee feels welcomed, respected, supported and included. By identifying that a 'one-size-fits-all-approach' compromises the achievement of equal opportunity, we recognise that appropriate support needs to be provided to ensure we all succeed. This EEO Management plan provides us with a clear path of action on how Council will improve access and participation for all employees by outlining our objectives and how they will be achieved over the next four years.

This plan provides a strategic link between the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act), the Workforce Management Strategy, Code of Conduct and the Equity Diversity and Respect Policy. This plan also connects with other Council strategies and programs such as the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, The First Nations Accord, Positive Ageing Strategy and the Youth Strategy.





# Our Values

The core values of Central Coast Council are reflected in every decision we make relating to our employees and our community. They connect us to one another and unite us as we work together towards the improvement and advancement of our local government.



## Serve

Deliver amazing services through empowering people.



## Improve

Look for better ways of doing things.



## Collaborate

Build relationships based on mutual trust.



## Be Safe

We look out for each other and the community.



## Be Your Best

Strive to be your best every day.



## Be Positive

Build one team spirit.



## Objectives

The objectives within this document have been developed to comply with Part 4 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and more specifically section 345. This section outlines the strategies/ actions Central Coast Council will commit to during the duration of this plan with the aim to implement and embed meaningful actions that support equal employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups. The actions and strategies that have been included in this document have derived from these existing Central Coast Council strategies and policies or have been included to meet legislative requirements.

### Objective 1 Policies, Procedures and Reporting

To develop, implement and report on Policies and Procedures that drive a unified culture.

Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Design and implement the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan as required under Section 345 of the Local Government Act 1993	Legislated	Design and develop an Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.	People & Culture	Jun 2023
Ensure new and existing policies and procedures are designed to conform with EEO principles, Local Government (State) Award and Anti-discrimination legislation to contribute to the development of a positive culture	Legislated	All policies and procedures conform to EEO principles and legislative requirements, and Central Coast Council's Equity, Diversity and Respect (EDR) policy is embedded across the organisation.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Review Workplace Leave and Flexibility Policy and associated FAQs and update Managers on how to support employees who are carers for people with a disability.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E7.1 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Policy revised and implemented	People & Culture	Mar 23
Review performance review and performance management procedures to ensure that they are non-discriminatory in content and administration.	Legislated	No substantiated claims are received regarding non-compliance with EEO principles through performance review or performance management processes.	People & Culture	Jun 2023
Develop and Implement a Youth Employment Strategy	Youth Strategy Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Strategy developed and implemented.	People & Culture	Jun 2023



Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Maintain an age-friendly work environment and continue to support the professional development and wellbeing of mature aged Council staff, guided by Council policies and implementation of the Ageing Positively at work strategy	Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Flexibility and support are provided as employees move towards retirement.	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing
Complete annual reporting by undertaking an analysis of workforce data to identify trends and focus areas	Legislated	Workforce data regarding identified diversity groups (including non-English speaking, youth, Aboriginal and disability groups) is collected and reported on an annual basis to the Executive Leadership Team.	People & Culture	Jun 2023

## Objective 2 Communication and Education

To build awareness across all levels of the organisation of the importance of Equal Employment Opportunity Management principles and their responsibilities

Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Inform all staff of Council's EEO Management Plan and where the documents can be located	Legislated	Equal Employment Management Opportunity Plan communicated through internal communication tools i.e. toolbox talks, Executive messaging.	People & Culture	Jun 2023
Council's revised EEO Management Plan to be published on the intranet for employees to access and EEO Management Plan made available for the public on Council's website.	Legislated	An Intranet page that includes Council's Equity, Diversity and Respect Policy and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and other relevant documents.	People & Culture	Jun 2023
P&C advice to all staff on policies and procedures that support the application of Equal Employment Opportunity principles.	Legislated	No complaints or formal grievances are received regarding P&C advice not complying with EEO principles	People & Culture	Jun 2023







Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Rollout disability awareness training to Councillors as part of Induction Program and Executive Team as part of leadership training.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 AB3.2	All Councillors are training within 6 months of starting their term.	Governance & Risk; People & Culture	Dec 2024
Deliver training to all customer facing staff on disability confidence training.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 AB3.1 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	At least 100 customer facing staff complete disability confidence e-learning or face to face training each year.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Deliver training to Council staff on Applying Universal Design- Planning and Design Staff	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 AB3.1 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	All Planning employees have attended Universal Design training.	People & Culture	Dec 2025
Disability Awareness training included into Council's Induction Program for new employees	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 AB3.1	All new Council employees receive disability awareness training at induction via online e-learning in first 90 days or combined with other face to face training.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Support Council's First Nations Accord to meet the Australian Local Government Association's expectations in meeting closing the gap initiatives.	Workforce Management Strategy 2022 First Nations Accord	Cultural Awareness training rolled out to leaders and all staff in partnership with the local Aboriginal community and parties to the First Nations Accord.  Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country used at all major Council events.	People & Culture Leadership team	Dec 2023
Support internal business units to coach and mentor young people in skills development through traineeships and apprenticeships	Youth Strategy Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Increased numbers of young people are engaged in programs/ employed in relevant areas of experience	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing
Ensure all aspects of EEO are covered in the induction program and delivered to all new employees.	Legislated	Confirmation of employee's completion of EEO training at the beginning of their employment and those who do not complete the training are followed up to ensure compliance.	People & Culture	Ongoing



Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Conduct training on Equity, Diversity and Respect and EEO principles to all staff.	Legislated	All staff are re-trained in Equity Diversity and Respect awareness including information about what constitutes an EEO grievance and subsequent grievance handling procedures.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Increase awareness across the organisation that Council information is available and accessible to people with a disability by having at least one representative from each relevant unit/ section across Council complete online accessible document training.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 SP1.2 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Number of employees who completed accessible document training	People & Culture	Ongoing
Managers and supervisors provided with specific training on how to deal with issues relating to EEO, harassment issues and grievance handling procedures in accordance with the Local Government Award 2020.	Legislated	All managers and supervisors receive training in EEO and grievance handling policies and procedures.	People & Culture	Jun 2023
Build capacity of Council event staff to deliver accessible and inclusive events, activities and programs	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 AB3.1	Minimum of 1 Council events staff receiving training / upskilling on accessible events	People & Culture	Ongoing

### Objective 3 Recruitment, Selection and Appointment

To ensure council utilises a diverse talent pool and that equal employment opportunities are available to all.

Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Ensure Talent Acquisition activities conform with Equal Employment Opportunity principles.	Legislated	Policy and procedures reviewed on a regular basis and recruitment activity complies with Local Government Act 1993, Section 349 by following a merit-based process.	People & Culture	Jun 2023



Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Ensure flexibility in the application of recruitment processes such as the interview and on boarding process to support candidates that require reasonable adjustments.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E3.2 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Review has been conducted with input from Access and Inclusion Reference Group	People & Culture Leadership team	Dec 2023
Job advertisements are written in a way that is easily understood and do not contain discriminatory language or phrases that may discourage EEO target groups from applying for the position.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E3.3	All job advertisements conform with EEO principles.	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing
Job Advertisements are provided in formats that are compatible with assistive technology, and there is an opportunity for applications to be accepted in an alternative format.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E3.1	Number of people identifying as having a disability who have applied for a role with Council	People & Culture	2023
Maintain an age-friendly work environment and continue to support the professional development and wellbeing of mature aged Council staff, guided by Council policies and implementation of the Ageing Workforce Strategy	Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025 Goal 1.3 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Mature age staff are provided with support and flexibility as they move towards retirement  Tools are provided on intranet for leaders to manage conversations with mature workers	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing
An Expression of Interest (EOI) occurs where it is considered more than one employee possesses the essential comparable skills and competence to perform the higher-level position as per Council's Higher Grade pay procedures.	Legislated	No substantiated claims are received regarding non-compliance with EEO principles for offers of acting in higher duties positions	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing
Review position descriptions to remove non-essential criteria that impacts people from disadvantaged groups e.g., requirement for a driver's license.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E3.3	Number of position descriptions where amendments are made.	People & Culture Leadership team	Ongoing







## Objective 4 Improved participation in the workplace for EEO Target Groups

Increase the level of diversity across Council's workforce through the implementation of strategies that improve access to and participation in the workplace.

Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Develop a diversity and inclusion strategy that includes a focus on women in leadership.	Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Endorsement of the strategy by Executive Leadership team	People & Culture	Jun 2024
Develop a diversity and inclusion strategy that includes a focus on Aboriginal employment that demonstrates Council's support of strategies and programs to recruit and retain Aboriginal employees.	Workforce Management Strategy 2022 First Nations Accord	Strategy implemented that looks at increasing the number of identified positions across Council.	People & Culture	Jun 2024
Provide inclusive entry level opportunities for work experience placements through upskilling across business units	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E4.1 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Number of work experience placements from disadvantaged groups.	People & Culture Leadership team	Dec 2024
Ensure that undergraduate positions, traineeships and apprenticeships with Council are accessible to and promoted to EEO target groups- with a commitment to providing reasonable adjustments and flexibility as required.	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E4.2 Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Number of people from EEO Target Groups who have participated in undergraduate positions, traineeships, and apprenticeships.	People & Culture	Dec 2024
Continue Undergraduate programs to support and mentor young people in roles relevant to their area of study	Youth Strategy Workforce Management Strategy 2022	Undergraduate program continues and increased numbers of young people engaged in these roles.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Training and Professional Development opportunities within Council, including leadership programs are explicitly accessible and inclusive and where needed reasonable adjustments are made to facilitate access and delivery	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 E5.1	Training information, delivery and premises are accessible, and adjustments have been made to enable full participation	People & Culture	Ongoing



## Objective 5 Implement, evaluate and review of Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan to enhance diversity in the workplace

Evaluate, review and report on progress which will guide future strategies or amendments.

Strategies/ Actions	Linkage	Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Timing
Monitor data from Council-wide surveys i.e. Sentiment Surveys, to ensure there are no EEO issues impacting on employees.	Legislated	Identifying EEO issues and address issues or opportunities by making corrective actions.	People & Culture	Ongoing
Review the Grievance Register on a quarterly basis	Legislated	No substantiated claims of non-compliance with EEO principles received	People & Culture	Ongoing
EEO Management Plan objectives are reviewed at least annually and updated to reflect legislative and other procedural changes	Legislated	The objectives of the plan are reviewed annually and updated to reflect required changes	People & Culture	Ongoing
Report on the EEO Management Plan in Council's Annual Report.	Legislated	Annual report completed by due date	People & Culture	Ongoing







## Definitions

**Disability** is defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) as: total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; total or partial loss of a part of the body; the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body.

**Discrimination** is treating people less favourably because of their:

- Gender;
- Pregnancy status;
- Race (including colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or ethno-religious background);
- Religion;
- Culture;
- Marital status;
- Disability (actual or presumed; current, past or future; physical intellectual or psychiatric disability or long-term illness);
- Age;
- Homosexuality (actual or presumed); and/or
- Transgender status (actual or presumed).

### Discrimination

- **Direct** is when a person or group is specifically excluded from or has significantly reduced chances of gaining a benefit or opportunity.
- **Indirect** is a requirement (a rule, policy, practice or procedure) that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that has an unequal or disproportionate effect or result on particular groups. Unless this type of requirement is "reasonable, having regard to all the circumstances".

**Equal Employment Opportunity** is when all employees are treated equally and fairly in all aspects of their employment. This means that employment and promotion decisions are made based on the skills and abilities and are compared against the requirement of the position, regardless of personal attributes.

**Harassment** is behaviour which occurs when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, or sexual preference. It can also happen if someone is working in a hostile or intimidating environment. This is often described as workplace bullying.

### Target Groups/Disadvantaged Groups

are groups identified as experiencing levels of discrimination and disadvantage in the workplace and for whom EEO strategies are developed to address these disadvantages.

**Workplace Bullying** shall mean conduct at work where a person or group of people repeatedly act unreasonably towards an employee or group of employees, and that behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

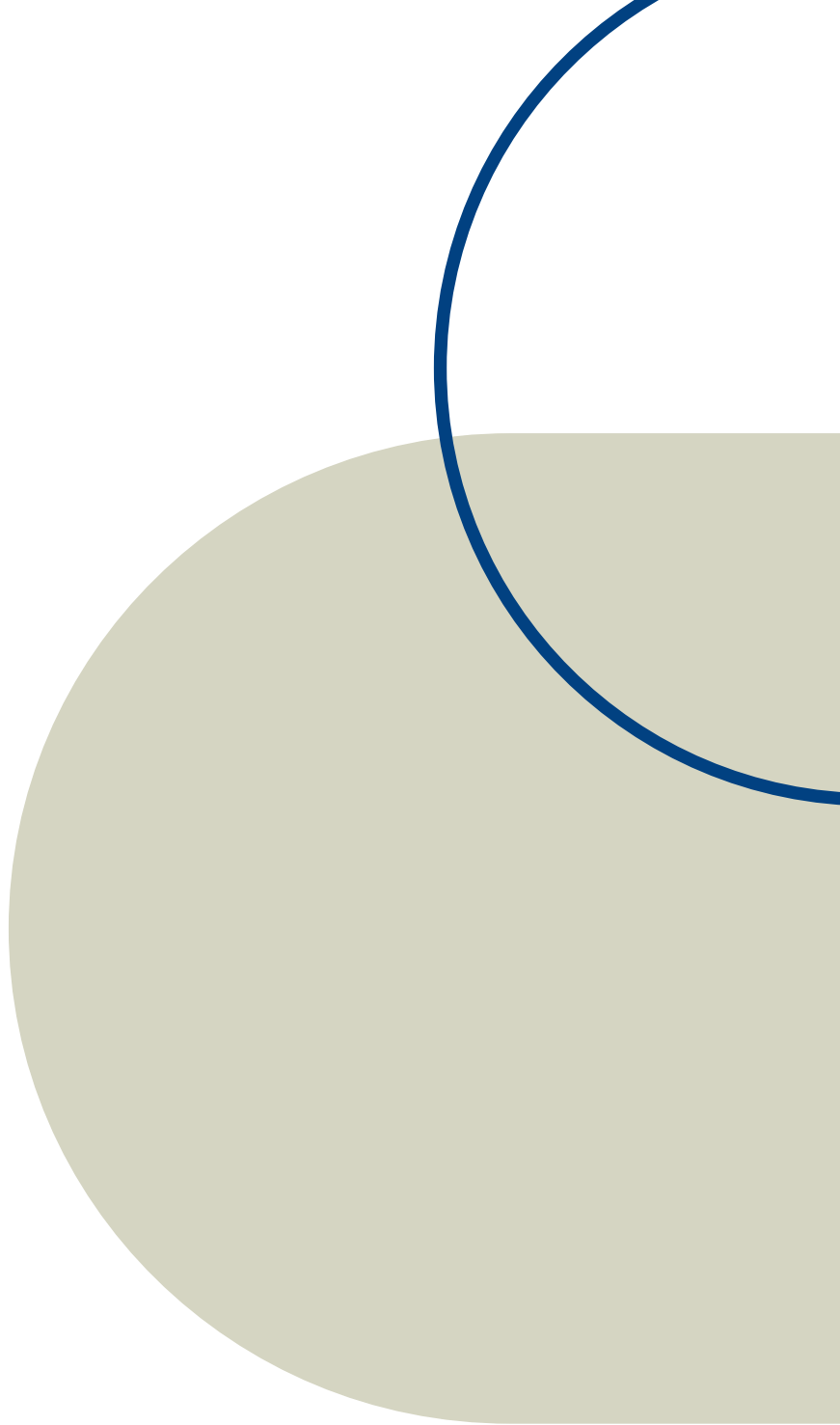
**Repeated behaviour** refers to persistent behaviour that demonstrates a range or pattern of behaviours over a period of time.

**Unreasonable behaviour** is behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

**Unlawful behaviour** is any behaviour that constitutes a criminal offence or defamation

**Values and Behaviours** are a common set of values and behaviours that position organisational wide standards of work at Council. There are six values (Serve, Improve, Collaborate, Be your Best, Be Positive, Be Safe) under pinned by supporting behaviours.









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