# Abstract

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| **Purpose** | This policy aims to outline VicHealth’s positive commitment to provides an inclusive culture, work place and practices that embraces, encourages and supports diversity, inclusion and equity. The policy helps to direct employees’ everyday behaviour, decisions and language. This Policy should be read with the Bullying and Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination Policy. |
| **Scope**  | This policy applies to:* All employees.
* Board/Committee members.
* Contractors and suppliers to VicHealth.
* Other workplace participants.
 |
| **Policy Owner** | Executive Manager, Corporate Services on behalf of the VicHealth Board. |
| **Effective date** | October 2018 |

# Policy statement

VicHealth is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that embraces, supports, reflects and promotes inclusive and equitable behaviours and practices, and respects individuals and groups of people, by:

* Ensuring all employees are treated fairly and with mutual respect
* Fully utilising and developing the potential of every employee
* Promoting inclusive practices to reduce bias and discrimination
* Keeping all policies and procedures consistent with EEO principles
* Broadening employee morale and motivation by increasing staff confidence in the fairness of our HR practices and access to employment opportunities
* Ensuring objectives are achieved through our EEO training program, which includes the training of staff on EEO and related issues.

For VicHealth, Diversity and Inclusion means:

* Embracing workforce diversity, including age, gender, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, language, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and disability.
* Valuing diversity of perspective: leveraging the diverse thinking, skills, experience and working styles of our employees and other stakeholders.
* Building a flexible organisation: providing opportunities for work arrangements that accommodate the diverse needs of individuals at different career and life stages
* Respecting stakeholder diversity: developing strong and sustainable relationships with diverse shareholders, communities, employees, governments, customers and suppliers.

VicHealth does not tolerate bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour and as such will investigate all allegations of such behaviour. For further details refer to the VicHealth Bullying and Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination Policy, together with the Employee Grievance Policy.

# Diversity and inclusion

VicHealth is committed to providing a diverse work environment, consistent with its values and equal opportunity in employment law and legislation. VicHealth strives to ensure its workplace embraces diversity by:

* Creating an inclusive environment respectful of all cultural backgrounds and beliefs, including recognising and celebrating various multicultural events across the business, such as NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day
* Fostering a culture that supports and respects the values and needs of all individuals, regardless of their age
* Focusing on an individual’s strengths and contributions when it employs and promotes people, creating a physical and cultural environment that supports participation and reasonably accommodates access and/or other requirements.
* Ensuring recruitment and selection processes across all levels are structured so that a diverse range of candidates are considered
* Actively reviewing its all organisational practices, policies and procedures to reduce bias, both conscious and unconscious, on a regular basis.

# Equity

VicHealth embraces the cultural richness of our communities and ensures that all staff can achieve their full potential regardless of their background. This may entail action to reverse the impact of disadvantage stemming from a person or group’s differences (such as those based on identity, social standing, economic status, demographic characteristics, or geographic location).

# Education and training

* All new employees will be provided an overview of this Policy as part of their induction.
* People and Culture Staff and EEO Officers will be provided with relevant training periodically (e.g. every two years) via a recognised training provider.
* All employees and board members will receive regular Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Training.

# Legislative requirements

**Legislation**

The alignment of this policy with Commonwealth, Victorian and local government policies and legislation reflects consistency in VicHealth’s approach to diversity. This policy conforms to the following declarations and laws that seek to protect the rights of all people:

**Relevant Legislation**

* Equal Opportunity Act 2010
* Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
* Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
* Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001

**Relevant other State Documents**

* Victorian Public Sector Commission Code of Conduct for Employees
* Victorian Public Sector Commission Code of Conduct for Board Members

# Definitions

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| **Diversity** | The visible and invisible differences that exist between people, such as gender, culture, race, ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, age, economic class, language, religion, nationality, education/qualifications, and family/marital status. It also refers to diverse ways of thinking and ways of working. |
| **Inclusion** | The active embrace of everything that makes us different, and the upholding of this value in a collaborative environment (in this instance, the workplace). |
| **Equity** | Fairness for all. Treating people equitably does not mean treating all people the same. |

# Related VicHealth documents and policies

VicHealth related documents

* Diversity and Inclusion Framework
* Bullying and Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination Policy
* Reconciliation Action Plan
* Disability Action Plan
* Employee Culture Charter
* Fair Foundations: The VicHealth framework for health equity
* Gender Equity Strategy
* Employee Grievance Resolution Policy
* Recruitment and Selection Policy
* Privacy Policy
* Employee Culture Charter
* Workplace Flexibility Policy

# Where to get more information

Employees can obtain additional information for the following:

* Employee Grievance Resolution Policy.
* People and Culture Team
* VicHealth’s Equal Opportunity Employment Officers
* Human Rights Commission: [humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/).
* Worksafe: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>
* Fair Work Commission: <https://www.fwc.gov.au/>

**Document Management**

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| **Policy Number** | PO-CS-5104 |
| **Policy Name** | Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy |
| **Location** | HR->Equity & Diversity & DRF->Quality->HR->Policies |
| **Date for Review** | October 2021 |

**Document History**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue date** | **Version** | **Details of changes** | **Author** |
| 5.12.2012 | 1.0 | Approved by the Board | D Mitchell |
| 23.04.2014 | 1.0 | Policy Review date changed from Dec 14 to Dec 15 as per Policy Management Framework Guidelines | R. French |
| February 2016 | 1.1 | Periodic Review – Administrative amendments | J Brown |
| Oct 17 to Aug 18 | 1.1 to 1.7 | Periodic Review including staff consultation via D&I Committee and review by external HR and D&I Consultants. Separation harassment and discrimination aspects of the policy into a separate policy  | D Mitchell |