

Cultural Diversity Policy

AUTHORITY: The Board

RESPONSIBILITY: All Staff, Volunteers and Student Placements.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Laverton Community Integrated Services (LCIS) is committed to leading the way in fostering and encouraging the growth of a harmonious culturally diverse community which offers a large variety of cultural possibilities and is founded on mutual respect.

LCIS is committed to ensuring the participation of people from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds in the activities, planning and decision making of all business branches of LCIS. These principles are enshrined in the LCIS Vision and Mission Statement, Statement of Purpose, and Code of Ethics.

LCIS will wherever possible provide culturally appropriate services. Within the limitations and constraints of available funding, LCIS is committed to providing practical and equitable outcomes for all participants.

LEGISLATION

LCIS is required by Commonwealth and State legislation to ensure that it does not discriminate in the provision of services. The relevant legislation is:

Federal:

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
- VIC Sex Discrimination Act 1984

State

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 VIC
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 VIC
- Multicultural Victorian Act 2004 VIC
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 VIC

POLICY:

All services, programs and processes undertaken by LCIS will be informed by the following key principles:

- All services and programs provided will be accessible to people from any cultural, linguistic, and religious background.
- Participants from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds should not experience barriers to access and participation.
- Staff and management will recognise and respond to specific issues of ethnicity, gender, disability, financial disadvantage, sexual preference, social, cultural, and geographic isolation.
- Within the limits of LCIS and its business branches resources, information will be readily accessible, and in people's first language where possible.
- Service provision will reflect sensitivity, relevance, and awareness to different cultural and religious practices.
- There will be a fair allocation of resources based on need.

- All participants will have the right to contribute to decision- making processes and to express views without suffering any prejudice.
- Cultural diversity is not to be used to justify inappropriate behaviour.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY:

LCIS will aim to make these principles a reality by:

CONSULTATION:

- Developing and implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan to provide a structured approach to ongoing consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to improve access, participation and cultural safety in all LCIS Services for First Nations Peoples
- Developing and implementing a stakeholder engagement strategy to guide consultation with diverse cohorts including CALD and LGBTIQ+ community representatives, to ensure services are responsive to diverse community needs.

INFORMATION PROVISION:

- Developing protocols and procedures on the use of interpreting and translating services, within the limits of available resources
- Taking into account diverse cultural and linguistic information needs of LCIS participants, in the design and delivery of any information, including any promotional material. It is important to ensure that all relevant information about LCIS and its services, are made available in languages and ways which can be understood by everyone in the community including the illiterate. Options may include;
 - Translation into relevant community languages
 - Use of ethnic media (radio and press)
 - Use of audio and video tapes, graphics, and pictures for presentation of information eg posters
 - Using other organisations' noticeboards and newsletters, including organizations that work with specific community groups.
- Developing a marketing strategy (for both existing and potential LCIS service users) that takes into account the needs of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Consulting with relevant ethnic community organizations to ensure information is appropriate.
- Developing an evaluation strategy to ensure that information is getting to the right people and being used and understood.

DATA COLLECTION:

- Utilising appropriate data collection methods to enable LCIS to target, plan, develop and evaluate all programs and services in a way that is relevant, equitable and accessible. This will be done by:
 - Collecting data on people using LCIS services including their ethnicity
 - Evaluating the data collected and developing strategies to address any issues identified.
 - Analysing data (eg Census) on who lives in our community and using this in planning processes.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION:

LCIS will:

- Pay attention to the views of all participants.
- Evaluate whether the activities the community wants and needs are being provided.
- Identify any weaknesses or gaps in existing services.
- Ensure information collected from talking to people, evaluations and surveys is included in annual planning process.
- Ensure evaluation and planning occurs on a continuing basis.
- Be committed to continuously improving the range and quality of services offered.

EMPLOYMENT:

LCIS will:

- Develop employment and volunteer selection processes which are equitable and assist to develop diversity in the staff and volunteer team. These may include:
 - Include in the selection criteria for all jobs "Understanding of multicultural issues".
 - Identify any particular positions where experience and knowledge of a community language, other cultures and multicultural issues are required.
 - Include people on staff selection panels who are knowledgeable about education and social issues affecting diverse cultural, linguistic and religious communities.

- Use community language newspapers and radio as a way of advertising vacancies.

DECISION MAKING:

LCIS will

- Ensure active participation by members of diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious communities in all aspects of decision making within the organisation's structures. This will be done by endeavouring to:
 - Involve people from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds in working parties and the Board.
 - Provide appropriate training and support to members of committees from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds to assist in their active participation.
 - Work towards the people on the Board having a diverse range of backgrounds, interests, and attributes.

TRAINING:

LCIS will:

- Provide appropriate and high-quality cross-cultural training for all staff, volunteers and management.