



## Equity and Access Policy

Approved/effective date	02/06/2020
Due for review	13/05/2023

### Purpose

The Access and Equity Policy set out in this document is drawn up on the model of the Federal Government's Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society. The Charter is the key document guiding the Australian Government's Access and Equity strategy. It helps to ensure that government programs (and those programs funded by the government but delivered by contractors, including not-for-profits) meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse society.

### Principles

The principles underlying the Charter, which have been taken into account in the formation of this Access and Equity Policy, are:

- Access – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will make services available to everyone who is entitled to them, free of any form of discrimination on the basis of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race or religion.
- Equity – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will develop and deliver services on the basis of fair treatment of all those clients who are eligible to receive them.
- Communication – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will use all necessary strategies to inform eligible clients of the services available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. Providers shall also consult with their clients regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of services.
- Responsiveness – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.
- Effectiveness – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will be focused on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds.
- Efficiency – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will optimise the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to service delivery that meets the needs of clients.

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- Accountability – As a service provider, Torquay Community House will have a reporting mechanism in place which ensures it is accountable for implementing access and equity objectives for its clients.

## **Policy Statement**

Torquay Community House acknowledges that its legal and moral responsibilities cover the areas of:

- Access in the provision of services offered by Torquay Community House
  - Access in employment by Torquay Community House
  - Access in the provision of information offered by Torquay Community House
  - Access to any training and development offered by Torquay Community House
  - Access to events hosted by Torquay Community House
1. All Torquay Community House staff and volunteers shall wherever feasible have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to all people.
  2. Torquay Community House will ensure its programs are designed and constructed to provide equal access for all users.
  3. Torquay Community House, in its role as an employer, will ensure all people have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, staff training and promotion.
  4. Torquay Community House shall wherever feasible assess proposals for any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs for their direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to any decision to pursue such proposals.
  5. Any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds shall wherever feasible be developed by Torquay Community House in consultation with people from those backgrounds.
  6. Torquay Community House shall wherever feasible for any new (or substantially revised) policies or program initiatives have a communication strategy developed and sufficiently resourced to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these changes.
  7. Torquay Community House shall provide resources so that publicly available and accessible information on its policies and programs is where necessary communicated appropriately to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and especially to those identified as having a high level of non-compliance.
  8. Torquay Community House shall institute complaints mechanisms that enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about its performance.

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9. Torquay Community House shall require that any agents, contractors, or partners of Torquay Community House deliver outcomes consistent with this policy, and shall in bidding for tenders or contracts budget where appropriate for special provision for linguistic and cultural diversity.

## **Procedure**

1. Torquay Community House shall where necessary provide for the special needs of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by English or other language assistance through the use of interpreters or facilitators.
2. Torquay Community House shall where necessary and feasible provide for the special needs of clients in remote areas through developing outreach and community liaison arrangements.
3. Torquay Community House shall incorporate cultural diversity issues in any training programs it provides.
4. Torquay Community House staff and volunteers shall where necessary receive ongoing cultural diversity training so that they develop knowledge and skills to work effectively from a cultural framework.
5. Torquay Community House shall where necessary provide information in languages other than English, and through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication.
6. Torquay Community House shall where appropriate consult with other providers and government agencies to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to clients' needs.
7. Torquay Community House shall promote diversity in the membership of its Committee of Managements, committees and working groups.
8. Torquay Community House shall in its client data collection record, where appropriate, such data as birthplace; whether a person's first language spoken was English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; Australian South Sea Islander background; date of birth; year of arrival in Australia; birthplace of parents; sex; and religion (the collection of data will not always include all these items, as the relevance of these data items will vary depending on the service delivery context).
9. Torquay Community House shall protect the privacy of individual clients when collecting this data. Consideration will be given to: collecting only data essential to the particular service delivery or evaluation purpose; guaranteeing anonymity; and ensuring that all data collection proposals are non-intrusive.
10. Torquay Community House shall, where appropriate, keep records on the proportional take-up rates of clients categorised by their country of birth or their cultural or linguistic background compared with their percentage composition of the total population in the service target group or catchment area.
11. Torquay Community House shall maintain client satisfaction data.

**Responsibility**

It shall be the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that the requirements of these procedures are complied with. This policy and these procedures shall be reviewed every year by the CEO to ensure that it continues to comply with relevant state or federal legislation or regulation.