

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the commitments incorporated in Council's Corporate and Operational Plans and comply with Commonwealth & State legislation relating to equity and access. Council has considerable obligations under the various Commonwealth anti-discrimination Acts and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) to ensure that public facilities, open spaces, services, programs, activities and information are accessible and provide equitable access to all members of the community.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all Council employees, Councillors, contractors acting on Council's behalf or engaged in Council business, ratepayers, residents and visitors to the Region.

Policy Statement

1. Whitsunday Regional Council acknowledges that equitable access reinforces the rights of all individuals and organisations and maximises the participation of all individuals and organisations in the use of its facilities and open spaces, and the access of services, programs, activities and information it provides.
2. Whitsunday Regional Council commits to taking the following principles into account during its decision making processes:
 - a) providing equitable access, wherever possible, to Council provided services, programs, activities, information, buildings and open spaces for all ratepayers, residents, employees Councillors, contractors and visitors,
 - b) the use of community engagement to improve decision-making, and
 - c) a more inclusive community.
3. Council further commits to:
 - a) improving Council's planning, design and implementation processes to incorporate best practice access and equity principles in the provision of facilities, services, programs, activities, information and open spaces,
 - b) proactive planning for equitable access for all individuals and organisations,
 - c) increased utilisation of services, programs, activities, information, buildings and open spaces by all individuals and organisations, and
 - d) strengthening, within legislative restrictions, Council's ability to pursue equitable access through development assessment.

Applicable Legislation

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Queensland)

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)

Racial Discrimination Act
1975 (Commonwealth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010

Building Act 1975 (Queensland)

Human Rights Act 2019

Definitions

Access refers to the practice of ensuring that all members of the community will have the opportunity to access facilities, open spaces, services, activities, programs and information regardless of individual circumstances, characteristics, abilities, culture or background.

CEO refers to the Chief Executive Officer of the Whitsunday Regional Council appointed in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009.

Council refers to the Whitsunday Regional Council.

Discrimination refers to the practice or act of treating an individual or organisation unfavourably because of certain prescribed attributes, or because of their association with an individual or organisation with those attributes. The attributes are described by State and Commonwealth discrimination legislation.

Employee refers to any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of the Council.

Equity/equitable refers to the practice or act of ensuring that facilities, open spaces, services, activities, programs and information are provided to the community in a fair manner regardless of individual circumstances, characteristics, abilities, culture or background.

Inclusive refers to the practice or act of creating an environment where individuals or organisations feel included regardless of individual circumstances, characteristics, abilities, culture or background.

Organisation/s refers to government organisations, community organisations and groups, not-for-profit organisations and service providers.

Related Documents

Corporate Plan 2021-2026
Operational Plan 2021/2022

Human Rights Compatibility Statement

This Policy has been assessed as compatible with the Human Rights protected under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Equity and Access Policy

Community Services - Community Development
COMM_14

COUNCIL POLICY			
Date Adopted by Council	22 September 2021	Council Resolution	2021/09/22.19
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Responsible Officer(s)	Manager Community Development & Libraries	Revokes	LSP_C&ENV_12
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