

# Diversity

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Northern Support Services (NSS) aspires to be an organisation that is physically, culturally and emotionally safe; where there is no assault on, challenge to or denial of people's identity, understandings, needs or person. Everyone involved in NSS has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of our clients, our employees, and other key stakeholders. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable persons including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability. NSS is resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in providing services through NSS promote the inherent dignity and fundamental right of all our clients to be respected and nurtured in a safe environment. This commitment is reflected in our mission and vision and put into practice through our policies and procedures.

## Policy

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Diversity is about celebrating and recognising differences in people. NSS recognises that valuing difference allows each person to contribute their unique experiences and can impact positively on not only internal activities and relationships, but the experiences of the community as a whole and provides opportunities for everyone to achieve their full potential.

NSS promotes and celebrates the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of clients and/or nominee, employees and all other relevant parties affiliated with NSS services. NSS recognises that because of the linguistic differences, additional support may need to be provided to cultural, linguistic and religiously diverse clients and or nominees.

NSS does not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender identity or sexuality, or age, and encourages the involvement of marginalised groups in service delivery

## Purpose

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This policy and procedure is about reinforcing NSS's commitment to valuing and respecting diversity, reducing disadvantage, eliminating discrimination and supporting communities that are inclusive of all people, by providing services that are in NSS' scope to all participants.

## Scope

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This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, participants and nominees.

## References/Legislation

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- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (2013)
- Disability Act (2006)
- Disability Act (2006) Policy and Information Manual
- Child Safety Standards
- Multicultural Victoria Act (2011)
- Victoria Government, Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2011)

- Victoria Government, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)
- Information on Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service

## Procedures

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NSS enhances diversity through a range of activities including:

- NSS has policies and procedures in place that define how it supports and promotes diversity
- The Quality Management System records complaints, compliments, consultation, planning, and corrective and improvement actions in a way that allows NSS to monitor and measure how well it supports and promotes diversity
- For clients and/or nominees who require interpreters, NSS employees provide interpreters by contacting the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS) on their behalf. Refer to Interpreting and Translating Service policy and procedure.
- NSS provides information to clients and/or nominees in a way that is easily understood through easy English.
- NSS gathers information from clients and/or nominees regarding their cultural background to provide culturally appropriate services through the Intake Form. Refer to the Service Access policy and procedure and the Individual Needs policy and procedure for further information.
- NSS participates in events that highlight diversity in the local community.
- NSS encourages the involvement of clients' families and community in service delivery for through consultation. Refer to Consultation policy and procedure.
- For employees, volunteers or clients that observe particular religious or spiritual activities, NSS will gather this information and support people to carry out their practice within their daily activities.

Refer to Discrimination and Harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity policy and procedures for further information related to employees.

## Responsibilities

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Title	Responsibility
All employees	Ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and that harassment toward anyone in the organisation based on gender, sex, age, cultural or religious affiliations is not permitted.

## Definitions

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Word	Definition
Culture	Forms and goals of interactions among members of a group, and how they understand and communicate with one another.
Cultural sensitivity	Appreciating that there are differences among cultures.
Cultural competence	Being skilled in understanding interactions among members of a culture on their own terms.
Cultural safety	The outcome of interactions where individuals experience their cultural identity and way of being as having been respected or, at least, not challenged or harmed.