



Policy & Procedure

ACCESS & EQUITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

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Responsible Person:	CEO	Reviewed by:	CEO
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Approved and adopted by:	Board of Governance	Next Review Date:	March 2028

Scope

This policy applies to all Staff, Trainers and Volunteers at NRCHI.

This policy is for all students who are enrolled in courses at NRCHI.

Objective

North Ringwood Community House Inc will comply with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) and will not act in a way that is incompatible with a human right protected by the Charter or fail to give proper consideration to such a human right.

North Ringwood Community House Inc aims to ensure that individuals have equal opportunities to participate effectively in programs and services whatever their age, gender, indigenous culture, ethnic origin, ability, economic circumstance, religious or political affiliation, and whatever their level of literacy or numeracy.

By providing accessible, equitable and equal opportunity programs, training and services we aim to enhance life and work opportunities for people in our local community.

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- This policy is in keeping with our undertaking to deliver the highest quality services and products – declaring our position on cultural diversity and accessibility.
- Staff are encouraged to be pro-active in improving all aspects and quality of the service provision.
- Diversity in our community is reflected in the management and service provision.
- Inclusiveness is the key focus to managing diversity in program and service provision, and where necessary, affirmative strategies are implemented to increase participation of individuals and specific communities.
- Quality education programs and services that increase the capacity of individuals to participate in work, community life, further education and/or community activities will be delivered.
- North Ringwood Community House will develop and implement a range of strategies for its management and delivery of educational services and support services to diverse groups in the community.

North Ringwood Community House Inc will develop and sustain programs, practices and services that are responsive to the needs of a diverse and evolving community by:

- Valuing and responding to the diversity of the local community;
- Providing accessible and flexible programs and services;
- Offering choice to participants;
- Responding to members of the local community with special needs;
- Ensuring that policies and procedures within North Ringwood Community House are open to public scrutiny;



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- Demonstrating a clear commitment to equity and access for all groups within our community;
- Identifying and breaking down potential barriers to participation.
- Inducting new staff to include all appropriate information and training;
- Providing information in English, ensuring that only plain English is used;
- Ensuring that North Ringwood Community House is accessible to people with disabilities;
- Educating staff and volunteers to help people access translation and interpreting services;
- Networking with community groups and providing support to people with disabilities to form partnerships, joint ventures and maximise referrals;
- Promoting programs and services to the community in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse client population to ensure that all prospective participants are well informed on the options available to meet their individual needs;
- Providing an effective range of programs and services to meet community needs and expectations;
- Undertaking the elimination of policies, practices, structures, assumptions and behaviors which may contribute to the disadvantages suffered by under-represented groups in the community.

Implementation Process:

- To facilitate maximum participation for all individuals, specific information about special needs is requested on the enrolment form
- Enrolment in class is dependent on resources, class size, availability of appropriate support and ability to meet class pre-requisites.
- Where the participant requires the assistance of a support person, the role of the support person will be to maximise the individual's ability to participate in the class. This may include:
 - a) Simplifying & explaining tasks instructions where necessary
 - b) Allowing the individual to complete as many tasks and make as many decisions as are realistic
 - c) Participating in activities with the group
 - d) Regularly liaising with trainer and CEO on how adequately the particular program is meeting the needs of the individual.
 - e) Consulting with the CEO and trainer about any changes.
 - f) Providing the student with the option of verbal assessment, if applicable (accredited training).

Legislative Obligations

North Ringwood Community House Inc acknowledges its legal obligations under State and Federal Equal Opportunity law, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Act 2006, Working with Children Act 2005 and the Occupational, Health & Safety and Act, to ensure that our working and teaching practices are fair and equitable, and our working and learning environment non-discriminatory.

Strategies

To effectively recognise, value and enrich the diversity of our local community, North Ringwood Community House Inc will:

- Know its local community and the make-up of demographics;
- Provide affordable flexible programs accessible to all;
- Participate in planning and professional development that enables us to better understand the needs of our local community and deliver accessible services;
- Develop delivery strategies which address managing diversity principles;



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- Actively promote the learning needs of diverse communities in this locality through development of information sharing and innovative approaches;
- Be aware of legislative requirements and government policy;
- Develop resourcing strategies to enable us to meet the needs of our diverse community

Managing Diversity Implementation Plan

- Whole organisational inclusiveness approach through small groups, flexible timetabling, flexible approaches to program and service delivery, low cost fees for programs, support services, participant involvement in planning and management of organisational activities, services and programs.
- Working towards representation on Board of Governance that reflects the diversity of our local community.
- Make provision for isolated and socially disadvantaged members of our community.
- Partnering with disability service organisations.
- Providing training for all staff in managing the diversity of participants.
- Provision of a physical environment that is accessible to all.
- Rewriting policies in plain English particularly those that demonstrate our commitment to equity and access.

Accredited Training & Adult Community & Further Education (ACFE) Programs

Disability Access Statement included in Student Information Book:

The Disability Act 2006 includes the following principle for people with a disability:

- People with a disability should have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community.

Disability Access Statement

People with disabilities are encouraged to access and enrol in all North Ringwood Community House courses.

NRCHI undertakes to arrange (within its means) on behalf of the student appropriate support for those with special needs.

- Providing language and literacy support in all programs.
- Providing low cost accessible computer classes targeting older adults, those with language and literacy needs, unemployed and low-income earners.
- Providing a diverse range of accredited and non-accredited courses.

General Adult Education Program

- Provision of a wide range of choice in general education programs.
- Provision of Art & Craft, Health & Leisure, Information, Social Activity and Community Development Programs.

Relevant Acts

Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975; Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984; Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992; Commonwealth Racial Hatred Act 1995; Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995; and the Disability Act 2006.

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter of Human Rights includes the following principles:



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- Human rights are essential in a democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of law, human dignity, equality and freedom
- Human rights belong to all people without discrimination, and the diversity of the people of Victoria enhances our community.

Related Documents

EEO Policy & Procedure
Staff Handbook
Student Handbook

Document Locations

Electronic file folders accessible by NRCH Administration staff
Policy & Procedure Manual
Website

Date reviewed	Version	Details of changes (if any)	Date of next