



Equity, Anti-Discrimination and Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedure

For Soaring Sparrows Pty Ltd

Document Control

- **Policy Title:** Equity, Anti-Discrimination and Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedure
 - **Date Policy Developed:** 16/09/2025
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 - **Version:** 1.0
 - **Policy Owner:** Director
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Purpose

This policy ensures that Soaring Sparrows Pty Ltd provides an inclusive, respectful, and safe workplace and service environment. It protects participants, staff, and visitors from discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or bullying. The policy demonstrates compliance with the NDIS Practice Standards, Fair Work Act, and South Australian and Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, contractors, and volunteers of Soaring Sparrows Pty Ltd.
 - Participants and their families/carers.
 - Visitors, advocates, and other stakeholders engaged with the organisation.
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Definitions

- **Equity:** Ensuring fair treatment, access, and opportunities for all individuals, recognising that people may have different needs and starting points.

- **Diversity:** The presence and acceptance of differences among people, including but not limited to age, gender, culture, language, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.
- **Inclusion:** Creating an environment where all people feel valued, respected, and able to participate fully.
- **Discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law (e.g., age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion).
- **Harassment:** Unwelcome or offensive behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- **Bullying:** Repeated or unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person that causes them to feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated, or threatened.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone unfairly because they have made a complaint, raised a concern, or participated in an investigation.
- **Complainant:** A person who makes a complaint about discrimination, harassment, bullying, or other breaches of this policy.
- **Respondent:** The person against whom a complaint is made.
- **Protected Characteristic:** Personal attributes protected by anti-discrimination legislation, such as age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, or cultural background.
- **Investigation:** The process of reviewing and assessing a complaint in a fair, confidential, and impartial manner.
- **External Agency:** An organisation outside of Soaring Sparrows that can provide advice or investigate complaints, such as the NDIS Commission, Fair Work Ombudsman, Equal Opportunity Commission SA, or Australian Human Rights Commission.

Policy Statement

Soaring Sparrows Pty Ltd is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly, respectfully, and without discrimination. We will:

- Provide a safe environment free from harassment, bullying, and victimisation.
- Promote cultural and linguistic diversity, gender equity, disability inclusion, and equal opportunity.

- Respond promptly and effectively to any reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
 - Take disciplinary action where policies or legislation are breached.
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Responsibilities

Director/Management:

- Lead by example in promoting respect, equity, and inclusion.
- Ensure staff are trained in anti-discrimination and harassment prevention.
- Respond promptly to complaints and take appropriate action.
- Monitor workplace culture and participant experiences.

Staff/Contractors/Volunteers:

- Treat all people with respect and fairness.
- Avoid behaviours that could be discriminatory, harassing, or bullying.
- Report incidents or concerns to management.
- Cooperate with investigations into complaints.

Participants and Visitors:

- Treat staff and others with respect.
 - Raise concerns if they feel they have been treated unfairly or harassed.
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Procedures

1. Promoting Equity and Inclusion

- Provide training and information to all staff about anti-discrimination and harassment.
- Display policies and participant rights in accessible formats.
- Encourage open discussions about inclusion and respect.

2. Making a Complaint

- Any staff member, participant, or visitor can make a complaint verbally or in writing.
- Complaints can be made to any staff member.

- Anonymous complaints will be accepted and investigated where possible.

3. Responding to Complaints

- All complaints will be taken seriously and treated confidentially.
- The staff member will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days.
- An impartial investigation will be carried out.
- Appropriate actions may include mediation, retraining, warnings, or disciplinary action.

4. Protecting Complainants

- No person will be victimised for making a complaint in good faith.
- Support will be offered, including access to advocacy or counselling if required.

5. Escalation

- If the issue cannot be resolved internally, staff and participants may contact external agencies including Advocates, the NDIS Commission, Fair Work Ombudsman, Equal Opportunity Commission SA, or Australian Human Rights Commission.

Related Legislation

- **Commonwealth:**

- Fair Work Act 2009
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

- **South Australia:**

- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)

- **NDIS:**
 - NDIS Act 2013
 - NDIS Code of Conduct
 - NDIS Practice Standards
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Other Relevant Documents

- Participant Rights and Responsibilities Policy
 - Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Policy
 - Feedback and Complaints Policy
 - Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
 - Code of Conduct
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Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if:

- Legislative or regulatory changes occur.
 - Feedback indicates improvements are required.
 - An audit, review, or incident highlights a gap.
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Approval

Approved By: Kathryn Soar

Position: Managing Director, Soaring Sparrows Pty Ltd

Date: 19/09/2025
