

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers at Hanover.

Policy Summary:

The following standards have been developed in response to the growing diversity within the Australian community and the importance that Hanover places on having in place both a policy and a set of standards that ensure an appropriate inclusive response to clients' needs and current and potential employees.

Both the commonwealth and state governments have equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation and Victoria has the Charter of Human Rights. This legislation aims at developing a more inclusive society and embraces racial and sex discrimination, human rights and equal opportunity, disability and sexual conduct.

The rights of children have been outlined by the United Nations in the "Declaration of the Rights of Children"

In the community services sector considerable work has been done particularly to embrace cultural and linguistic diversity and ability/disability.

In Hanover's efforts to create and maintain an inclusive client/tenant focused culture, including accompanying children that embraces diversity in our employment of staff and is sensitive, respectful and empowering, it is seen as important to define culture in its broadest sense and embrace the seventeen attributes, on the basis of which it is illegal to discriminate, as outlined in the Victorian Anti-discrimination legislation.

- breastfeeding
- carer status
- disability/impairment
- gender identity
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association

This approach acknowledges that mainstream services need to adopt approaches that maximise inclusiveness.

Hanover also acknowledges the importance of specialist services that have been deliberately established to meet the specific needs of some client groups and will endeavour always to work in partnership with those services in circumstances where that is appropriate.

Policy Principles:

Access

Each service is to ensure that people can easily approach that Hanover service to seek assistance with their individual needs without fear of discrimination on the basis of country of birth, language, culture, religion, politics, ability, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Accessibility is to be enhanced through a commitment to active promotion of the service and assistance to use it.

Equity

Equity involves ensuring the service is delivered on the basis of fair treatment of all eligible clients/tenants and accompanying children. Services are to ensure consistent approaches in dealing with clients and accompanying children regardless of who they are or where they come from.

Communication

Communication is to embrace a two-way process of informing people about the service and seeking their views on how it can best meet their needs. The exchange is enhanced when it is clear and provided in creative and inclusive ways.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness involves working with clients and accompanying children to identify and address their needs. Particular circumstances, as far as practical, are to be dealt with, with sensitivity and understanding.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness relates to the degree to which the service meets individual and community needs. Emphasis is to be on achieving quality outcomes for the client whatever their background or current circumstances.

Efficiency

Service efficiency involves the provision of a timely and cost effective response. Available resources are to be directed through a client-focused approach.

Employment

Employment relates to practices that promote equal opportunity for all potential employees and volunteers and for management to support those staff.

Inclusion and Participation

Hanover's commitment to advocacy will be used to influence attitudes and policy at all levels including the community to ensure clients, staff and volunteers are included in consultations and encouraged to participate in community events.

Accountability

Accountability is about having reporting mechanisms in place to ensure access and equity objectives for clients are met with effectiveness and efficiency in a responsive

manner. Transparent mechanisms are to be in place to receive feedback and highlight each service's commitment to inclusiveness.

External Files/Links:

Legislation 2
Declaration

Charter Human Rights & Responsibilities (Vic) 2006
Declaration of the Rights of the Child

References to Standards:

Disability Discrimin Act 1992: Disability Discrimination Act 1992	1: Various
Homlessness Assistance Svc 1: Upholding & promoting rights	HASS 1.1: Rights-based approach
Homlessness Assistance Svc 1: Upholding & promoting rights	HASS 1.2: Consumer participation
Homlessness Assistance Svc 2: Access to support for people experiencing homelessness	HASS 2.1: Access to support for people experiencing homelessness
Homlessness Assistance Svc 3: Direct service delivery & case management	HASS 3.1: Providing equitable access to support services
Homlessness Assistance Svc 3: Direct service delivery & case management	HASS 3.3: Responsive support
Homlessness Assistance Svc 4: Direct service delivery to specific groups	HASS 4.1: Supporting parents and accompanying children
Homlessness Assistance Svc 4: Direct service delivery to specific groups	HASS 4.2: Supporting young people
Homlessness Assistance Svc 4: Direct service delivery to specific groups	HASS 4.3: Supporting women, children and other people experiencing family/domestic violence
Homlessness Assistance Svc 4: Direct service delivery to specific groups	HASS 4.4: Providing culturally competent services
NCHS Section 3: Tenant Rights and Participation	3.02: Tenant Participation
NCHS Section 3: Tenant Rights and Participation	3.04: Access to Services of the Organisation
NCHS Section 7: Human Resource Management	7.02: Supervision, Training and Development of Staff
Racial Discrimination Act 1975: Racial Discrimination Act 1975	1: Various
Sex Discrimination Act 1984: Sex Discrimination Act 1984	1: Various
Vic Housing Performance Std 2: Management of the Agency	2.01: Organisational Structure
Vic Housing Performance Std 5: Tenancy Management	5.05: Client Participation

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