

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

“In the birth of Christ, God says each of us:

You are loved.

You belong.

You are home.

(Pope Francis, Christmas Homily, 24 December 2019 – paraphrased) [biblerepository.com]

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (the Diocese) is committed to supporting workers to reach their full potential and participate fully in the workplace. The Diocese does this by promoting a culture that values the diverse backgrounds, skills and experience of our people and fosters an environment where workers feel respected, supported and a sense of belonging.

(2) Through this commitment and by fostering an inclusive and supportive workforce the Diocese is best placed to fulfil its mission of serving all in the community so that they may experience life to the fullest.

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This policy applies to all workers of the Diocese, and if decreed by the Bishop it will apply to parishes.

(4) Matters relating to fair treatment such as workplace bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sex-based harassment and discrimination are addressed in the [Fair Treatment Policy](#).

(5) Nothing in this policy is intended to require the Diocese to act inconsistently with its religious mission, beliefs or law exemptions available under applicable anti-discrimination legislation.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Diocesan Executive and Bishop	• Demonstrate commitment to and compliance with this policy. • Cultivate a positive and inclusive workplace that encourages, recognises and celebrates positive contribution. • Promote participation and wellness and the creation of a workplace where dignity, diversity, unity and wellbeing prevail. • Model inclusive and respectful behaviour.
Director of People and Culture	• Ensure consistent implementation and application of this policy. • Facilitate and establish appropriate governance and review of this policy and associated procedures.

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Director of Agency, Director of Shared Services and Assistant Directors or equivalent/Managers	• Ensure consistent implementation and application of this policy. • Lead by example and demonstrate commitment to and compliance with this policy. • Foster an environment where workers are comfortable in raising issues or concerns. • Support a culture that promotes positive contribution and feedback, applying the principles of fairness and transparency. • Model inclusive and respectful behaviour.
People and Culture	• Provide advice to managers and workers on matters related to this policy. • Monitor industry benchmarks and recommend adjustments to Diversity and Inclusion practices.
Managers	• Comply with legislative obligations. • Take reasonable steps to ensure participation and wellbeing of workers. • Create a safe work environment for all workers, that promotes connectedness and unity. • Role model behaviour in accordance with this policy. • Respond to concerns raised by workers in a timely, appropriate, fair and confidential manner. • Ensure workplace systems, frameworks and practices under their control, do not cause harm.
Workers	• Behave professionally and respectfully in all interactions with others and contribute to a unified, safe, supportive and respectful environment. • Comply with legislative obligations. • Raise issues or concerns if they witness behaviour or conduct of others that may be in conflict with this Policy. • Respect the confidentiality of other individual's circumstances supported in line with this policy. • Understand and adhere to this Policy.

Section 4 - Valuing Diversity

(6) The Diocese recognises that our workplaces are representative of the communities that we serve. The Diocese values the unique backgrounds, skills, experience and perspectives of every worker, recognising that diversity strengthens our ability to serve with compassion, justice and excellence.

Section 5 - Inclusive and Equitable Culture

(7) The Diocese is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable workplaces that recognise the inherent dignity of every person, and promotes a collaborative culture that supports participation and unity by:

- Upholding dignity, respect and belonging for all;
- Valuing and embracing differences;
- Removing barriers to participation and opportunity;
- Providing safe, welcoming and respectful workplaces, free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and exclusion; and
- Promoting unity through respectful dialogue and shared purpose.

Section 6 - Diversity and Inclusion Practices and

Initiatives

(8) The Diocese fosters diversity and inclusion through formal and informal frameworks, programs and initiatives which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Access to flexible work arrangements that support different stages and personal situations including transition to retirement;
- b. Initiatives that support employment and pay equity between male and female workers;
- c. Phased return to work;
- d. Cultural celebrations and awareness activities;
- e. Fair treatment policies and training;
- f. Equitable access to learning and development;
- g. Reasonable adjustment processes;
- h. Accessible physical, digital and learning environments;
- i. Transparent role design and performance expectations;
- j. Accessible recruitment and selection processes and practices;
- k. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), wellbeing and mental health initiatives;
- l. Feedback mechanisms, such as staff engagement surveys; and
- m. Clear, confidential reporting and support pathways through complaints and grievance pathways.

Guiding Principles

(9) The development and implementation of diversity and inclusion frameworks, programs and behaviours is guided by and must consider the following:

- a. Human dignity – recognising all people are made in the image of God;
- b. Respect and belonging – ensuring all people feel safe and valued;
- c. Equity and fairness – addressing barriers and disadvantage;
- d. Participation – enabling meaningful inclusion at work; and
- e. Accountability – Sharing responsibility between Leaders and workers to create inclusive environments and culture.

Section 7 - Diversity and Inclusion Principles

Shared Responsibility

(10) All Diocesan workers are expected to contribute and demonstrate through their behaviour a workplace that upholds human rights, dignity, diversity, gender equality, inclusion and tolerance.

(11) In developing and applying workplace systems, processes, frameworks and practices, workers share responsibility for ensuring these are fair, equitable, person-centred and aligned with this Policy, supporting safety and dignity.

Speaking Up

(12) All workers have the right to raise genuine work-related concerns without fear of retribution and have those concerns treated seriously, confidentially, promptly, impartially and in a manner that is free from victimisation.

(13) Workers are expected to promote fair treatment and raise concerns if they witness behaviour in conflict with this

Policy.

Decision-Making

(14) To support sound decision making when developing and implementing diversity and inclusion frameworks, programs and processes, the following must be considered:

- a. Alignment with Diocesan values and mission.
- b. Contribution to the success of the team, the Diocese or the community we serve.
- c. Transparency, fairness and equity; and
- d. Compliance with budgetary and delegated authority requirements.

Section 8 - Consequences of Breaching this Policy

(15) Any worker found to be in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including where a serious breach occurs, dismissal.

Section 9 - Notations

(16) If there are any inconsistencies between a policy document in existence before the commencement of this policy, and a policy document developed after the commencement of this policy, the later applies to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 10 - Document Review

(17) This policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change or at least every 3 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	11th August 2026
Review Date	11th August 2029
Approval Authority	Moderator of the Curia
Approval Date	2nd July 2026
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Eve Youman Director People & Culture
Enquiries Contact	Eve Youman Director People & Culture People and Culture

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Diversity" - Is a term that refers to the variety of differences among people, including their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and more.

"Inclusion" - Inclusion means actively creating environments where all people feel welcomed, respected, supported and able to participate meaningfully in work, decision-making, learning and service delivery.