Human Resources Policy

Workplace diversity program

Version 1
Issued: February 2015
Human Resources Policy
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I, Phil Bowen, Parliamentary Budget Officer, approve this human resources policy in accordance with section 18 of the Parliamentary Service Act 1999.

Phil Bowen PSM FCPA
Parliamentary Budget Officer
Dated: 26 February 2015
Contents

Introduction .............................................................................................................. 4
Legislative framework .............................................................................................. 4
Roles and responsibilities ......................................................................................... 5
  The PBO .............................................................................................................. 5
  Managers ........................................................................................................... 5
  Employees .......................................................................................................... 5
Workplace diversity strategies .................................................................................... 6
Review ..................................................................................................................... 8
Introduction

1 The Parliamentary Budget Office (the PBO) is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive work environment in the PBO that values the contribution of all our employees and supports their wellbeing in the workplace by supporting workplace diversity.

2 Workplace diversity focuses on the differences and similarities that employees bring to an organisation.

3 Workplace diversity is a broad concept, which encompasses both equity and diversity. The key workplace diversity principles are:
   - treating people with respect and dignity
   - valuing the differences and diversity of people
   - eliminating unfair and inappropriate barriers
   - making judgements based on equity and merit.

4 The PBO recognises that the diversity of its employees is one of its greatest strengths. This program intends to help employees recognise, respect, use and manage diversity within the workplace, to create an environment where the perspectives, abilities and experiences of employees are used to their fullest to help the PBO in its work of supporting the Parliament.

Legislative framework

5 Section 18 of the Parliamentary Service Act 1999 (PS Act) requires the PBO to have a workplace diversity program in place to help give effect to the Parliamentary Service Employment Principles. Part 4 of the Parliamentary Service Determination 2013 describes additional requirements which must be met in support of section 18 of the Act.

6 Subsections 10A(1) (f) and (g) of the PS Act state that the Parliamentary Service is a career-based service that provides workplaces that are free from discrimination, patronage and favouritism and that the Parliamentary Service recognises the diversity of the Australian community and fosters diversity in the workplace.

7 Additionally, other Commonwealth and territory legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment decisions on the grounds of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, age and disability.

8 The Fair Work Act 2009 (Fair Work Act) also provides employees with certain rights in relation to some entitlements related to workplace diversity.
Roles and responsibilities

The PBO

9 The PBO is responsible for developing and implementing a workplace diversity program and ensuring that various legislative requirements are met.

10 The PBO aims to provide a work environment that is supportive, flexible and fair, and a workplace in which differences between employees are respected.

11 The PBO will also:
   • ensure that the principles of workplace diversity underpin the PBO’s human resource policies and practices
   • provide a working environment which supports the work health and safety of employees, including mechanisms to support employees achieve work-life balance
   • aim to provide all employees with the opportunity to perform to their full potential
   • raise awareness of workplace diversity issues and initiatives
   • maintain and build the diversity within the PBO
   • support the Parliamentary Service 2013-15 Reconciliation Action Plan, as updated from time to time.

Managers

12 Managers must:
   • lead by example in modelling the Parliamentary Service Values, and upholding the Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct
   • foster a culture where the diversity of employees is recognised, valued and utilised
   • encourage the use of the flexibility available in the PBO’s employment terms and conditions
   • adhere to the merit principle in selection processes, including supporting employees who require reasonable adjustment
   • work to resolve workplace issues quickly, sensitively and effectively
   • seek to maintain a workplace that is free from discrimination
   • help employees to understand this program.

Employees

13 Employees must:
   • treat each other with respect and courtesy, consistent with the Parliamentary Service Values, the Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct
   • seek to improve the quality of work outcomes by incorporating diverse ideas, opinions and perspectives
   • be inclusive and recognise and value the contributions of others
Workplace diversity program

- support employees who require reasonable adjustment and flexible work arrangements
- comply with all anti-discrimination laws.

Workplace diversity strategies

Specific objectives and strategies include the following:

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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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| Use employees' differences to improve outcomes and achieve the PBO's goals | • raise employee awareness of the value of diversity in the workplace, including the provision of information in induction packs  
• consider reasonable requests for flexible working arrangements in accordance with the Fair Work Act and the PBO’s employment terms and conditions  
• ensure that merit is the basis for all engagement and promotion decisions  
• ensure employees have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  
• provide for discretionary leave to allow employees to meet religious and ceremonial obligations, including attendance at National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee week activities  
• help employees maintain a work-life balance while developing or maintaining a career and give support to those who are transitioning to the next stage of their lives  
• celebrate at least one diversity calendar event per year, including but not limited to International Women's Day, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee Week, International Day of People with Disability or National Families Week |
| Enhance the opportunities for employees to participate and contribute to the work of the PBO | • encourage employees to identify their skills and develop new ones as part of the PBO’s Performance Management Framework  
• explore opportunities to improve managers’ leadership skills to manage diverse teams  
• ensure that reasonable adjustment takes place for employees, including the provision of flexible work arrangements, and adjustments to work practices and the work environment  
• deliver education programs to employees, and specifically to managers and supervisors, on the benefits of workplace diversity and how to promote and embed it in their branches |
### Workplace Diversity Program

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| **Objective** | • provide support and assistance to meet the individual requirements of employees with special needs  
• support job rotations, where appropriate, within the PBO and to other relevant departments, agencies or organisations  
• establish an arrangement with the onsite childcare provider to allow employees to salary package childcare |
| **Ensure that employment practices value and respect the diversity of the Australian Community** | • provide support and information to employees who are pregnant to ensure they are aware of their entitlements, including return to work options  
• implement a ‘keep-in-touch’ program for employees who take extensive amounts of parental leave  
• provide access to, and information on, development opportunities that support all employees to develop their careers and move into leadership positions if they so desire  
• provide employment terms and conditions that recognise heterosexual and same-sex relationships on an equal footing  
• foster an inclusive work environment in which employees are able to be open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity  
• ensure that reasonable adjustment of the workplace occurs when a person with a disability is the preferred candidate |
| **Uphold and promote the Parliamentary Service Values, Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct and to discourage and eliminate harassment, bullying and unlawful discrimination in the workplace** | • provide training to employees on the identification and elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying  
• maintain various policies and practices that uphold and promote the Parliamentary Service Values, Parliamentary Service Employment Principles and the Parliamentary Service Code of Conduct |
| **Ensure that work structures, conditions, systems and procedures foster diversity and allow employees to manage work and personal life**<sup>1</sup> | • ensure that relevant human resource policies consider diversity in employment  
• seek to ensure that information systems allow people to enter information without the specification of gender being required  
• ensure that relevant policies are applied fairly and consistently across the department and that they are made available to employees |

<sup>1</sup> Building-related provisions are delivered in conjunction with the Department of Parliamentary Services, who manage the Parliament House site.
### Objective

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| • provide designated car parking spaces for employees who are disabled and for those who have young children and bring them to the onsite child care centre  
• provide employees with access to a breastfeeding room and associated facilities in support of returning to work and carers’ commitments |

### Review

15 This program will be reviewed in accordance with clause 50 of the *Parliamentary Service Determination 2013*.