

Human Rights Policy

Applies to:	All Intereach employees, both paid and unpaid, and Family Day Care educators.				
Definitions:	Refer to Schedule of Definitions: <i>discrimination, employees, human rights.</i>				
Version:	4	Date approved:	June 2017	Next review date:	June 2020

1. Policy Statement

Intereach recognises that all people are free and equal in dignity and rights. Intereach is committed to working within a human rights framework in alignment with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (refer to end of document). We ensure that the people we work with, including employees, people using services and community members who interact with Intereach employees and services,:

- are treated with respect;
- do not encounter discrimination based on their gender or gender identity, age, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural background, physical or intellectual abilities, country of birth, religious beliefs, sexuality, pregnancy and breastfeeding, marital or domestic status, parental status or family or carer responsibilities, union membership, medical record, or physical appearance (including height, weight, size or other body characteristics)
- experience a safe and secure environment;
- have their privacy and confidentiality maintained;
- are provided with clear and accessible information about services, including any fees;
- are encouraged to contribute to decision-making around services and issues that affect them; and
- are able to be represented by an advocate if needed.

We ask people who work with us to be respectful, act safely, maintain privacy and confidentiality in group settings and give us feedback about our services.

2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide clear guidance to employees and Family Day Care educators as to key human rights-based practices and considerations.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to:

- ensure that organisational systems, practices and behaviours support a human rights-based approach ; and
- induction and training is available to employees that encompasses a human rights-based approach.
- It is the responsibility of Executive Directors, Operations to ensure that:program design and delivery recognises and supports human rights.

It is the responsibility of managers to:

- monitor and maintain equity of access to programs, services and service information.

It is the responsibility of employees and Family Day Care educators to:

- treat all people they work with in a respectful way;
- not discriminate, or support others to discriminate, against individuals or groups;
- participate in training and professional development activities to improve and maintain an understanding of human rights-based practice;
- encourage service users to participate equitably in decision-making, where possible; and
- maintain privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.

4. Guidelines

4.1. Human rights-based approach

We recognise human rights as those defined in the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (refer to end of document). A human rights approach empowers people to know and claim their rights and increases the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions. This means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that affect their human rights. All activities undertaken at Intereach are underpinned by a human rights-based approach that rests on the five key human rights principles of:

- participation;
- accountability;
- non-discrimination, equality and attention to vulnerable groups;
- empowerment; and
- linkages to human rights standards and the progressive and sustained realisation of rights.

4.2. Person-centred approach

A person-centred approach acknowledges that working equitably with people requires an equal partnership where individuals are supported to have a say in decisions that directly affect them. A person-centred approach supports human rights by promoting participation and minimising opportunities for discrimination and exclusion by ensuring individuals are listened to and supported based on their strength, abilities, aspirations and preferences. For more information, refer to the *Working with People Practice Manual*.

4.3. Inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can be vulnerable to direct and indirect discrimination and exclusion from services and access to information. We aim to ensure Intereach services, activities and systems are culturally accessible by:

- understanding the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the communities where we work and barriers to their inclusion through population and service data, consultation with Aboriginal groups and individuals and involvement with Aboriginal groups and activities;
- providing service information, including surveys, posters, flyers and brochures, using language and images relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- participating in and celebrating national and local cultural celebrations, and
- ensuring signage and office design is welcoming and promotes the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

4.4. Inclusion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

People who are culturally diverse, such as people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including those who are recent migrants, can be vulnerable to direct and indirect discrimination and exclusion from services and access to information. We aim to ensure Intereach services, activities and systems are culturally accessible by:

- understanding the cultural diversity of the communities where we work, and barriers to inclusion, through population and service data, consultation with culturally diverse groups and individuals and involvement with community groups and activities;
- providing service information, including surveys, posters, flyers and brochures, in relevant languages;
- participating in and celebrating national and local cultural celebrations,
- ensuring signage and office design promotes cultural inclusion; and
- organising interpreters where available and where needed.

4.5. Accessibility for people with disabilities

People with disabilities can be vulnerable to direct and indirect discrimination and exclusion from services and information. Indirect discrimination can include office design that limits equitable access and written publications and documents that cannot be read or accessed by a person with a disability. We aim to ensure Intereach services, activities and systems are accessible to people with disabilities by:

- ensuring that office design allows for equitable access for community members and employees with physical, speech or sensory, psychiatric and intellectual disabilities;
- providing service information, including surveys, posters, flyers and brochures, in accessible formats (see the *Communication Guide* for more information), such as
 - accessible PDF and Word documents, and
 - large print and Easy English versions;
- ensuring the Intereach website complies, where practicable, with Level AA checkpoints from the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0;
- understanding the diversity of the communities where we work and barriers to inclusion through population and service data, consultation with disability groups and individuals with disability and involvement with community activities;
- participating in and celebrating national and local celebrations; and
- supporting access to TTY and Speak and Listen communication services.

4.6. Inclusion of people who are gender and sexuality diverse

People who are gender and sexuality diverse (such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTI), can be vulnerable to direct and indirect discrimination and exclusion from services. We aim to ensure Intereach services, activities and systems are inclusive of people who identify as LGBTI by:

- understanding the diversity of the communities where we work and barriers to inclusion through consultation with LGBTI groups and individuals and involvement with community groups and activities;
- participating in and celebrating national and local LGBTI celebrations; and
- ensuring signage, office design and policies support the inclusion of LGBTI people.

4.7. Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Home Care

Where relevant, people receiving services from us will also be provided with the Australian Government Department of Social Services Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Home Care as per the Aged Care Act 1997, Schedule 2 User Rights Principles 2014.

5. Policy context: this policy relates to:	
5.1. Standards or other external requirements	Home Care Standards National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Aged Care National Standards for Disability Services NSW Disability Services Standards Human Services Standards (VIC) Home Care Standards
5.2. Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011 Clause 155 (Cth) Anti Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) Racial Hatred Act, 1995 (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC) Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (VIC) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (VIC) Health Records Act 2001 (VIC)
5.3. Internal documents	Code of Conduct Policy Complaint Handling Policy EEO, Harassment and Discrimination Policy Privacy Policy People and Culture Framework Working with People Practice Manual Communication Guide Days of Celebration

6. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1	August 2010	Executive Team	August 2013
2	October 2013	Leadership Group	October 2016
3	August 2016	Leadership Group	August 2019
4	June 2017	Combined Leadership Group	June 2020

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

Article 1	Right to Equality
Article 2	Freedom from Discrimination
Article 3	Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
Article 4	Freedom from Slavery
Article 5	Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
Article 6	Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
Article 7	Right to Equality before the Law
Article 8	Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
Article 9	Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
Article 10	Right to Fair Public Hearing
Article 11	Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
Article 12	Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
Article 13	Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
Article 14	Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
Article 15	Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
Article 16	Right to Marriage and Family
Article 17	Right to Own Property
Article 18	Freedom of Belief and Religion
Article 19	Freedom of Opinion and Information
Article 20	Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
Article 21	Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
Article 22	Right to Social Security
Article 23	Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
Article 24	Right to Rest and Leisure
Article 25	Right to Adequate Living Standard
Article 26	Right to Education
Article 27	Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
Article 28	Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
Article 29	Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
Article 30	Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights