



# ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Responsible Officer	Executive Manager: Community Engagement.
Approved by	Chairman
Review by	Executive Manager: Community Engagement
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## INTRODUCTION

The Access and Equity Policy set out in this document is drawn up on the model of the Australian Government's Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society. The Charter is the key document guiding the Australian Government's Access and Equity strategy. It helps to ensure that government programs (and those programs funded by the government but delivered by contractors, including not-for-profits) meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse society.

## PURPOSE

Community Veracity acknowledges that its legal and moral responsibilities cover the areas of:

- access in the provision of services offered by Community Veracity
- access in employment by Community Veracity
- access in the provision of information offered by Community Veracity
- access to any training and development offered by Community Veracity
- access to events hosted by Community Veracity

The Charter integrates a set of service delivery principles concerning cultural diversity into the strategic planning, policy development, budget, and reporting processes of service delivery, irrespective of whether these services are provided by government agencies, community organisations, or commercial enterprises.

## POLICY

### Access

As a service provider, Community Veracity will make services available to everyone who is entitled to them, free of any form of discrimination on the basis of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race or religion.

### Equity

As a service provider, Community Veracity will develop and deliver services on the basis of fair treatment of all those clients who are eligible to receive them.



### **Communication**

As a service provider, Community Veracity will use all necessary strategies to inform eligible clients of the services available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. Providers shall also consult with their clients regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of services.

### **Responsiveness**

As a service provider, Community Veracity will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

### **Effectiveness**

As a service provider, Community Veracity will be focused on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds.

### **Efficiency**

As a service provider, Community Veracity will optimise the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to service delivery that meets the needs of clients.

### **Accountability**

As a service provider, Community Veracity will have a reporting mechanism in place which ensures it is accountable for implementing access and equity objectives for its clients.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It shall be the responsibility of the EXECUTIVE MANAGER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. to implement this policy and to report to the Board annually on its progress.

## **PROCEDURES**

All Community Veracity staff shall, wherever feasible, have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to all people.

Community Veracity will ensure its programs are designed and constructed to provide equal access for all users.

Community Veracity, in its role as an employer, will ensure all people have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, staff training and promotion.

Community Veracity shall, wherever feasible, assess proposals for any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs for their direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to any decision to pursue such proposals.

Any new (or substantially revised) policies or programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds shall, wherever feasible, be developed by Community Veracity in consultation with people from those backgrounds.



Community Veracity shall, wherever feasible, for any new (or substantially revised) policies or program initiatives have a communication strategy developed and sufficiently resourced to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these changes.

Community Veracity shall provide resources so that publicly available and accessible information on its policies and programs is where necessary communicated appropriately to

people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and especially to those identified as having a high level of non-compliance.

Community Veracity shall institute complaints mechanisms that enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about its performance.

Community Veracity shall require that any agents, contractors, or partners of Community Veracity deliver outcomes consistent with this policy, and shall, in bidding for tenders or contracts, budget, where appropriate, for special provision for linguistic and cultural diversity.

Community Veracity shall, where necessary and feasible, provide for the special needs of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by providing language assistance through the use of interpreters or facilitators.

Community Veracity shall, where necessary and feasible, provide for the special needs of clients in remote areas through developing outreach and community liaison arrangements.

Community Veracity shall consider cultural diversity issues in the design and delivery of any training programs it provides.

Community Veracity staff shall, where necessary, receive ongoing cultural diversity training so that they develop knowledge and skills to work effectively from a cultural framework.

Community Veracity shall, where necessary and feasible, provide information in languages other than English, and through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication.

Community Veracity shall, where appropriate, consult with other providers and government agencies to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to clients' needs.

Community Veracity shall promote diversity in the membership of its boards, committees and working groups.

Community Veracity shall keep in its client data collection record, where appropriate, such data as birthplace; whether a person's first language spoken was English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; Australian South Sea Islander background; date of birth; year of arrival in Australia; birthplace of parents; sex; and religion (the collection of data will not always include all these items, as the relevance of these data items will vary depending on the service delivery context).



Community Veracity shall protect the privacy of individual clients when collecting this data. Consideration will be given to:

- collecting only data essential to the particular service delivery or evaluation purpose;
  - guaranteeing anonymity; and
- ensuring that all data collection proposals are non-intrusive.