



# **Best practice race relations and antidiscrimination strategies – June 2023 snapshot**

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This document provides a high-level overview of Windana's policies, practices and educational initiatives that promote positive race relations and antidiscrimination. It reflects our ongoing journey as of June 2023.

## **Windana obligations**

At Windana our work and culture is founded on the principles of dignity and respect. We aim to build respectful, effective and trusting relationships with all our stakeholders, including staff, clients, residents and other people, communities and organisations outside Windana who we interact with. We work to foster welcoming, diverse and inclusive places, where people have positive relationships with each other. We are committed to creating environments that are free from sexual harassment, bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Windana has a legal responsibility to take all reasonable steps to prevent racial discrimination which includes putting in place policies and procedures to create a discrimination-free environment and removing barriers to equitable access.

Furthermore, promoting equity and antidiscrimination is aligned with the Windana Values developed by our community of staff and clients:

- We are curious and courageous to drive change.
- We pursue learning and growth.
- We are driven by hope.
- We are committed to caring without judgement.
- We collaborate through open and honest relationships.
- We are one connected community.

## **Policies and related legislation**

### **Working Respectfully Policy**

Our Working Respectfully Policy outlines the minimum expectations of staff behaviour. It is in line with our principles and commitment to creating a workplace based on mutually-respectful and positive working relationships.

The policy requires that all staff:

- Treat everyone with courtesy, respect, kindness, consideration and sensitivity to their rights, their background and culture and work towards the creation of a culturally safe workplace for all clients and staff.
- Respect diversity of culture, beliefs, gender identity, sexuality, experiences, disability, ethnicity, race, age, political beliefs and other characteristics among clients and other staff.
- Avoid bias, unlawful discrimination and racism.

### **Code of Conduct and Service**

Windana expects that its staff always display the highest standards of professional and personal conduct in working with each other and with clients, residents and all stakeholders.

Our Code of Conduct and Service prescribes that Windana employees are expected to demonstrate culturally safe and inclusive conduct. Specifically, staff are expected to:

- Uphold the significant place and identity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People hold as First Australians.
- Promote Windana's commitment to reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians (our first [Reconciliation Action Plan](#), at the 'Reflect' level, was launched in December 2022 and is an important part of formalising this journey).
- Respect diversity of gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age or political beliefs; avoid bias, unlawful discrimination and racism.
- Foster a positive, inclusive and culturally safe workplace through role modelling, and supporting the rights, dignity and safety of all stakeholders, including clients and other workers.

### **Diversity Policy**

Our goal is to create a culture that is diverse, inclusive, and that respects and celebrates difference proactively and intentionally. We will ensure that our workplaces are welcoming, safe, accessible, and inclusive for all clients, residents, staff and visitors.

- We affirm the significant place and identity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples hold as First Australians.
- We do not tolerate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation, of staff, clients or residents.

Windana is committed to ensuring our services are inclusive of all people and we create programs and environments that are welcoming, engaging, accessible and supportive for all. We do this by:

- Ensuring each person receives a service that promotes and respects their legal and human rights and enables them to exercise self-determination like everyone else in the community.
- Providing services in an environment that ensures people are free from discrimination, abuse, neglect and exploitation and having processes in place to manage these issues if they arise.
- Recognising the vital role of families, friends, advocates and carers in assisting to safeguard and uphold the rights of our clients and residents.
- Identifying and actively reducing barriers to service provision that exist for people from all backgrounds, cultures, faiths, identities and communities, including individuals with lived experiences and those living with disability.

Our work towards ensuring the above points is ongoing. Some tangible projects in progress that relate to our commitment to managing, promoting and celebrating diversity in all its forms, and increasing inclusion, are:

- Our current journey to Rainbow Tick Accreditation (quality framework to help health and human services organisations become safe and inclusive for the LGBTIQ community)
- Our first Reconciliation Action Plan
- Current review of our model of care, drawing on the principles of trauma informed care.

## **Racial Discrimination Act**

The Racial Discrimination Act is also an overarching legislative framework that Windana follows.

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) makes it against the law to treat people unfairly because of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status. The Racial Discrimination Act also makes racial hatred against the law.

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 gives effect to Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Its major objectives are to promote equality before the law for all persons, regardless of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin, and make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

The Racial Discrimination Act is administered by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The Racial Discrimination Act protects people from racial discrimination in many areas of public life, including employment, education, getting or using services (such as alcohol and other drug treatment at Windana), renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places. The Racial Discrimination Act also makes racial hatred unlawful.

The Racial Discrimination Act was originally passed in 1975 and was last updated in 1995 after three major national inquiries – the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the National Inquiry into Racist Violence and the Australian Law Reform Commission Report into Multiculturalism and the Law – found a link between racist conduct in public and racially-motivated violence.

## **Learning Modules**

Windana has a suite of online learning modules that provide all staff including people leaders with education about preventing, recognising and responding to discrimination, harassment and bullying. These modules include:

### **Working Respectfully (for all staff)**

- Sexual Harassment Prevention
- Workplace Bullying
- Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunity
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace
- Disability Awareness in the Workplace
- Aboriginal Cultural Safety

### **Leading Respectfully (for people leaders)**

- Creating Value Through Diversity and Inclusion
- Understanding Diversity and Inclusion
- Understanding Unconscious Bias
- Strategies for Tackling Unconscious Bias
- Managing Fairly and Equitably

- Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunity
- Sexual Harassment
- Workplace Bullying

## **Diversity and Inclusion data, benchmarking and action plans**

Windana conducts annual Diversity and Inclusion surveys to gain insights into our workforce composition. In addition, these surveys help us understand the experiences of various employee groups, including those with intersectional identities, within our organisational culture. The data collected enables us to make informed decisions about the future direction and goals of our diversity and inclusion initiatives, as well as our overall business strategies.

We analyse the collected data and compare it against our client base, the Australian census, other Australian organisations, and the Diversity Australia Council's Standards. This benchmarking process allows us to develop action plans that drive positive change within our organisation.

Overall, the Diversity and Inclusion surveys serve as a valuable tool in shaping our approach to diversity and inclusion and ensuring a safe, flexible and respectful environment for our staff, clients and other stakeholders.

Our People & Culture team, and various leaders across Windana, also take steps to research best practice and policies relating to diversity and inclusion, including:

- Accessing resources and information from [Diversity Council Australia](#) (of which Windana is an organisational member)
- Reviewing and referencing other organisations' governance materials via the inter-agency document sharing portal, [Prompt Documents](#)
- Engaging with external contractors to guide best practice (e.g. working with Collaborative Culture to enrich the development process of our Reconciliation Action Plan and review our intake process)
- Embarking on innovative projects to include diverse needs and experiences, such as the inter-agency [Integrated Care Pilot](#).

## **Education opportunities for clients and residents**

Promotion of diversity and inclusion, which includes education opportunities for clients and residents in positive race relations and antidiscrimination takes place through various activities and mechanisms across our programs and services.

Some of these include:

- Therapeutic Community and withdrawal unit manuals, rules and respectful behaviour guidelines that are communicated to clients and residents.
- Cultural learning activities led by the Us Mob group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents at Maryknoll Therapeutic Community.
- Acknowledgement and celebration of events such as National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, IDAHOBIT, International Women's Day and others through diverse ways unique to each location.

- Various community discussions, education topics, visits from community members, and excursions to events.

Education opportunities are expected to increase as we move through our 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan into our second plan, at the 'Innovate' level, and through other projects such as our process to attain Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

## Useful links

- Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool - <https://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au>
- Racism. It Stops with Me - <https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au>
- Australia Human Rights Commission - Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: A guideline for employers - <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginaland-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/targeted-recruitment>
- Australia Human Rights Commission – Racial Discrimination - <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/racial-discrimination>
- Vic Health. Preventing race-based discrimination and supporting cultural diversity in the workplace [https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/VH\\_Race-based-discrim\\_10.pdf](https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/VH_Race-based-discrim_10.pdf)
- Australia: National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy <https://cfnhri.org/updates/australia-national-anti-racism-partnership-and-strategy/>
- AHRI Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Model - <https://www.ahri.com.au/wp-content/uploads/1b-AHRI-Diversity-Inclusion-Maturity-Model.pdf>
- <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/8.-mandatory-rap-actions-and-deliverables.pdf>
- Australia's Framework for Human Rights - National Action Plan <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/issues/education/training/actions-plans/Australia.pdf>
- Victorian Government Anti-Racism Taskforce <https://www.vic.gov.au/anti-racism-taskforce>
- Racial Discrimination Act: The two minute version <https://www.amnesty.org.au/racial-discrimination-act-the-two-minute-version/>
- Common Grace - The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 [https://www.commongrace.org.au/the\\_racial\\_discrimination\\_act](https://www.commongrace.org.au/the_racial_discrimination_act)