



# WHAT IS EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY?

## What is EEO about?

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is about:

- \* making sure that workplaces are free from all forms of discrimination and harassment,
- \* providing programs to assist members of EEO groups to overcome past or present disadvantage.

This means having workplace rules, policies, practices and behaviours that are fair and do not disadvantage people because they belong to particular groups.

In such an environment, all workers should be valued and respected and have opportunities to develop their full potential and pursue a career path of their choice.

## EEO groups include:

- \* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders,
- \* members of racial, ethnic, and ethno-religious minority groups,
- \* people with a disability, and
- \* gay and lesbian workers

## Fair practices and behaviour

EEO aims to achieve fair practices and behaviour in the workplace, including:

- \* recruitment, selection and promotion practices which are open, competitive and based on merit. This means the best applicant is selected for the job,
- \* access for all employees to training and development,
- \* flexible working arrangements that meet the needs of employees and create a productive workplace,
- \* grievance handling procedures that are accessible to all employees and deal with workplace complaints promptly, confidentially and fairly,
- \* communication processes to give employees access to information and allow their views to be heard,
- \* management decisions being made without bias,
- \* no unlawful discrimination or harassment in the workplace, and
- \* respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all employees and customers.

## Discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group. Under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, it is against the law in NSW for any employer, including the Government, to discriminate against an employee or job applicant because of their age, sex, pregnancy, disability (includes past, present or possible future disability), race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality, marital status, sexuality, or gender identification.

**Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW: What does the Board do?**

The Anti-Discrimination Board was set up in 1977 to administer the Anti-Discrimination Act.

- \* It investigates and conciliates complaints of discrimination, harassment and vilification. The Board is impartial in this process. It does not take sides. The Board tries to help both parties involved come to an agreement about how the problem can be resolved.
- \* It informs and educates the people of NSW, employers and service providers about their rights and responsibilities under anti-discrimination law.
- \* It makes recommendations to the government about amendments to anti-discrimination law.