

**POLICY**
**ACCESS AND EQUITY**

<b>POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER:</b>		<b>POL 1.12</b>	
<b>Original publication date</b>		<b>14 December 2012</b>	
<b>Revision number</b>	<b>Issue Date</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Approval date</b>
0	14 Dec 2012	Res:12/171	14 Dec 2012
NAME CHANGED 22/11/13 FROM 5.28			
1		Res: 16/222	9 Dec 2016
<p>This document is to be reviewed every 4 years. Next review date: <b>December 2020</b></p>			
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>		General Manager	

# PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Council is committed to provision of water services having due regard to the cultural and linguistic diversity and the needs of people with disability within the constituent local government areas serviced by Riverina Water County Council.

## 1.1 Policy Objectives

- 1) To recognise and value the diversity of the community.
- 2) To provide for community participation in decisions relating to Council's water service programs and policies.
- 3) To foster communication and community understanding so that the rights and responsibilities of all people are recognised.
- 4) To provide disability access to its office associated facilities and workplace.

## 1.2 Scope of Policy

Applies to all residents and ratepayers within the constituent local government areas serviced by Riverina Water County Council.

The provisions of this policy relate to access to water supply services, policies and communications relating to this function.

## 1.3 Definitions

**Access** means that any individual who is entitled to water supply services from Riverina Water County Council will, regardless of cultural or linguistic difference or disability, be able to receive such service within the standards and in the time frames provided by Council.

**Equity** means that Council resources will be allocated so that all who are entitled to a water supply service will have equal opportunity to benefit from that entitlement at the standard and in the timeframe proposed by Council.

**Access and equity** are about ensuring that all people have the opportunity to gain access to water supply services and facilities provided by Council, regardless of their race, culture, religion, language, age, gender or disability.

## 1.4 Legislative Context

### STATUTORY POSITION

The legislative requirements that govern Council in this regard are:

#### **The Local Government Act 1993 (Section 8)**

Specifies that a Council's Charter includes providing directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community, with due regard to the cultural and linguistic diversity of its community.

## **MULTICULTURAL NSW ACT 2000**

This Act:

- (a) promotes the equal rights and responsibilities of all the people of New South Wales within a cohesive and multicultural society in which:
  - (i) individuals share a commitment to New South Wales and to Australia, and
  - (ii) diversity is regarded as a strength and an asset, and
  - (iii) English is the common language, and
- (b) recognises and values the different linguistic, religious and ancestral backgrounds of the people of New South Wales.

## **Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992**

The objects of the Act that relate most to Council are:

- to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability in the areas of work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs
- to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

## **Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)**

This Act prohibits discrimination at work, racial vilification, sexual harassment, sex discrimination, transgender discrimination, homosexuality discrimination, marital status discrimination, disability discrimination, compulsory retirement discrimination, HIV/AIDS vilification or age discrimination.

Council is bound under this Act in three main areas of work

- the service Council provides to the community and the way in which the water supply services are provided
- how Council runs meetings and makes decisions
- Council employment practices

## **1.5 Related Documents**

- Good governance Policy
- Code of Conduct

## **1.6 Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all Council Officers to abide by the intent of this policy.

## **1.7 Review procedures**

Policy to be reviewed every four 4 years following Council elections

## **PART 2: POLICY CONTENT**

### **2.1 Policy Statement**

Council will ensure that:

- resources are fairly distributed
- the communities within the Riverina Water County Council constituent local government areas have opportunity for input into decisions relating to water supply program development and service delivery
- the rights and responsibilities of all consumers are recognised AND
- Water supply services and programs are effectively targeted to meet the needs of all members of the community.

#### **Implementation**

To ensure that this policy is implemented across Council, reference to this policy will be made in procedural documents that guide the day to day operations of staff.